

Common Sense Medicine

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Welcome to Common Sense Medicine ® where we try to see our bodies and the practice of medicine that we have established to care for them in a new way. Before studying medicine I got a graduate degree in the history of science and ideas so I am interested in why we do things the way we do.

In medical school it became clear that we still practice medicine as we did a thousand years ago. We have refined it and made it scientific, but the principle way of thinking is still the same. (If you want more look at the article on blood-letting under articles of interest.) To summarize, current thinking is analytical; it takes the body apart in trying to find what is wrong. Sometimes this works and surgery can fix it, but often the problem is more subtle, being manifest in the networks of the human body where analysis is impossible. We try to fix these problems with drugs, but the drugs themselves often get recalled a few years later because they too are derived by analytical processes that disregard the networked connections that then are responsible for the unintended negative consequences that get the drug pulled a few years later.

Analysis is linear thinking, but the body is not linear. We introduce these ideas in a more developed way in our book, *The Boids and the Bees: Guiding Adaptation to Improve our Health, Healthcare, Schools, and Society*, and, as the title implies, linear thinking is not limited to our bodies and healthcare. Educators wanted to know how our children learn so they experimented with lab rats learning a maze; they learned best with reward for doing it right and repetition for doing it wrong. Smiley faces and repetition are now the standard teaching methods everywhere, but this analytically based method completely ignores the innate drive of every living organism to explore, learn about, and master their own environment. Even politics fits and there are many articles with political and economic interests.

Common Sense Medicine is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to reforming our health care by looking at our current crisis in a new and different way that recognizes us as adaptive organisms. This is necessary because if we don't see the problem differently we keep making the same mistakes over and over.

Our fundamental mistake is thinking that our system can be analyzed where we take it apart, look at the parts that make up the system, find the faulty one(s), fix them, and put the system back together, working like new. This has been the way we have dealt with problems ever since we joined together in groups larger than tribes.

But that kind of thinking ignores our complexity. It requires that we see humans as mechanical; and we aren't. It's not that easy. Analysis works well when one is dealing with a mechanical process. We make machines and they are simple. We can take them apart, find out what is not working, fix it, and the device works better. But human beings are not machines, and treating them as such is the fundamental error of western medicine.

Sure we can point to the progress we have made by using this model, and there are things that go wrong with us that we can see in this mechanical way and fix. But it is not our best model. We change our models when anomalies start piling up that don't fit, that's when someone comes up with a new model that is better and explains more. That is where we are now in the practice of medicine. We need a new model.

At Common Sense Medicine ® we think this new model is recognizing that human beings, indeed all living organisms, are better seen as the adaptive organisms they in fact are. The ability to adapt is a characteristic of

all living organisms, but it is ignored when we see with analytical eyes. We are established to help fund research that sees human beings in this way. It is funded by royalties from the sales of our book, where applications of this new way of thinking are described in many of our problematic systems. If you would like to help fund this endeavor we encourage you to purchase the book. If you have read the book and want to support this further please send a check to the address below. If you wish to follow up on what research we are funding please include your E-mail address.

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