



Alternative and Complementary Medicine

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Brussels, 22 February 2015

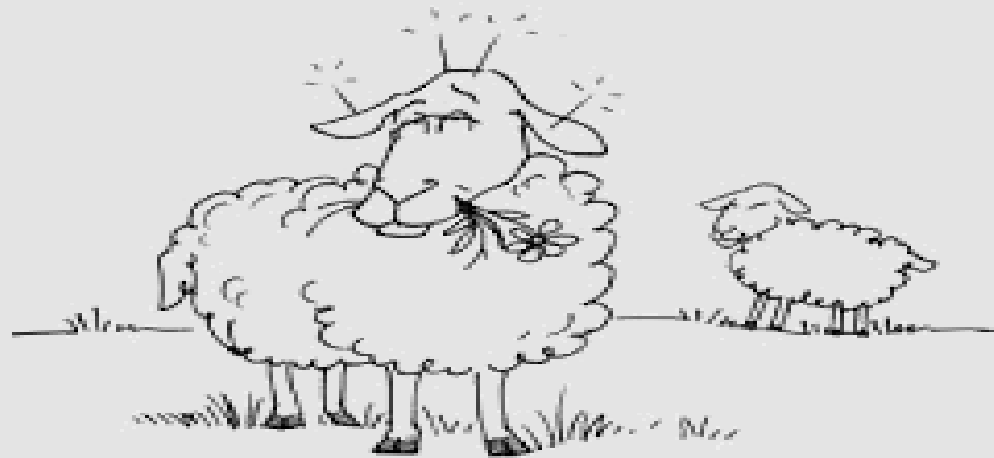
Alternative

- Any practice that is put forward as having the *healing* effects of *medicine*, but is not founded on *evidence* gathered using the *scientific method*



Complementary

- Are treatments that fall outside of mainstream healthcare
- These *medicines* and treatments range from acupuncture and homeopathy to aromatherapy, meditation and colonic irrigation



"Yes, very relaxing, but I prefer the herbs..."

**There is no universally agreed
definition of CAMs**



**Training
Academy**

STEP-UP: Skills Training to Empower Patients



Common complementary and alternative therapies

- These can be split into five main areas
- Name them!



Common complementary and alternative therapies

- Whole medical systems
- Mind – body medicine
- Biologically based practices
- Manipulative and body based practices
- Energy medicine



Whole medical systems

- Naturopathic medicine (mostly practised in the West; includes diet modification)
- Traditional Chinese medicine (includes herbal medicine, acupuncture and massage)
- Ayurveda (ancient Indian healing system; includes diet modification, herbal medicine, cleansing therapies, massage, meditation and yoga)
- Homeopathy (most commonly prescribes extremely diluted solutions of natural substances)



Mind-body medicine

- Relaxation techniques, meditation and visualisation
- Spirituality and prayer
- Yoga (may incorporate spirituality, meditation and body postures)
- Tai Chi (a Chinese martial art incorporating meditation and breathing exercises)
- Qi gong (includes meditation, body postures and breathing exercises)
- Aromatherapy (uses remedies derived from plants that are inhaled, applied to the skin or used internally)



Biologically based practices

- Vitamins and minerals
- Herbal remedies
- Animal-derived extracts
- Prebiotics and probiotics (aim to encourage the growth of beneficial microbes)



Manipulative and body-based practices

- Massage
- Chiroprody (invented in America; manipulates the spine)
- Osteopathy (invented in America; manipulates the spine, joints and muscles; American osteopathic physicians are also trained in conventional medicine)
- Shiatsu (traditional form of Japanese massage therapy)
- Reflexology (invented in America; applies pressure to the feet, hands or ears)
- Rolfing (named after American Ida Pauline Rolf; manipulates soft tissue)



Energy medicine

- **Acupuncture** (involves inserting fine needles into the body)
- **Reiki** (practitioners claim to channel healing energy through their palms)
- **Therapeutic touch** and distant healing (practitioners claim to manipulate energy “biofields” with their hands)
- **Bioelectromagnetic-based therapies** (involve unconventional use of sound, light, magnetism, and other forms of electromagnetic radiation)

Alternative vs complementary

What's the difference?

- A **complementary therapy** means you can use it alongside your conventional medical treatment. It may help you to feel better and cope better with your and treatment. It is important to discuss with your doctor any complementary therapy that you are thinking of using
- An **alternative therapy** is generally used instead of conventional medical treatment. All conventional treatments have to go through rigorous testing by law in order to prove that they work. Most alternative therapies have not been through such testing and there is no scientific evidence that they work. Some types of alternative therapy may not be completely safe and could cause harmful side effects



80-1

- This is the numbers of “healers” vs. doctors in South Africa
- Look at the epidemic and what does this say?!



Group work

- 4 groups
 - 1 group argue case for the use of complementary therapy
 - 1 group argue against the use of complementary therapy
 - 1 group argue the case for the use of alternative therapy
 - 1 group argue against the use of alternative therapy



Do they work for HIV?

- Therapeutic but *NOT* therapy
- Relaxing but *NOT* treatment
 - Ease stress
 - Sickness
 - Prevention of infections?
- Plant product = drug development

HOWEVER...

Science and the World Health Organization

- Therapies that are not considered credible by the scientific community at large
- The most notorious of these is homeopathy, which the World Health Organization recommends should not be used to treat HIV



Points to think about

- What information is available on the selected therapy?
- Who will be delivering it – what are their qualifications? In which settings?
- Side effects? DD interactions? Other?
- Disclosure – asked not to tell anyone?
- Cost?



Disclaimer

I DO NOT BELIVE IN THEM!

I DO NOT ADVOCATE FOR THEM

THEY CAN CAUSE GREAT HARM IN HIV PATIENTS

However,

SOME may have a therapeutic effect



Other resources

- www.avert.org
- www.i-base.info
- www.cancerresearchuk.org

