The Need for Foundation:
A New Practitioner Perspective

CRAG T. FASULLO, ND

“The work of the naturopathic physi-
cian is to eliciting healing by helping the pa-
tients to create or recreate conditions for
health to exist within them. Health will
occur when the conditions for health exist.
Disease is the product of conditions which
allow for it.”

Jared Zeff, ND

“Disease is primarily nature’s effort to
eliminate morbid matter and to restore the
normal functions of the body…” It is the
natural and inevitable result of violations
of nature’s laws. It is instructive and cor-
rective in purpose, and will remain with us
only as long as we need its salutary
lessons.”

Henry Lindlahr, M.D.

We are told that perspective comes
only with experience. Prior to that,
there is only theory to hold onto, some-
to else’s perspective to occupy the place of
your own. This is adequate for a time, but
soon there is a stirring need for something
more. Something deeper. The new clinician
soon realizes that the profession of natu-
ropathic medicine is more than a relatively
arbitrary selection of tools in hand, we
repeat our oath: to rely on the healing power
of nature, to treat the whole person, to do
no harm, etc. We know the principles of the
medicine well enough, as we’ve been seeing
them written out in various places for four
plus years. Yet, it soon becomes glaringly
obvious that something is missing from this
equation. Certainly, naturopathic medicine
is directed to Nature Cure, the seminal text
by Henry Lindlahr that first gave concise
expression to our medicine (with the wonders
of modern technology, the entire book is freely
available online in electronic form). As we
approach the centennial anniversary of its
publication, the contents are startlingly
applicable to modern naturopathic medicine.
In an age when it is so easy to be wooed
and wowed by the latest and greatest in
naturopathic therapy, let us regain a frame of
historical reference. Lindlahr identified the
highest methods of cures as those which:

• Establish normal surroundings and
natural habits of life in accord with Nature’s
laws.
• Economize vital force:
Build up the blood on a natural basis,
that is, supply the blood with its natural
constituents in right proportions.
• Promote the elimination of waste
matter, and postpone without in any way
injuring the health, the toxic load
• Arrange the individual in the highest
possible degree to the consciousness of
personal accountability and the necessity
of intelligent personal effort and self-help.”

It identified naturopathic medicine as “a
distinct system of primary care – an art, sci-
ence, philosophy and practice of diagnosis,
treatment and prevention of illness” which
is “distinguished by the principles upon
which its practice is based.” These prin-
ciples are the very statements that make
up our oath. The question that remains is
how, at all, do these principles inform our
clinical practice?

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Address acute concerns
1. Establish the conditions for health
2. Stimulate the healing power of nature (vis medicae naturae)
3. Address weakened or damaged systems or organs
4. Correct structural integrity
5. Address pathology using specific natural substances
6. Address pathology using specific pharmacologic or synthetic substances
7. Suppresse or surgically remove pathology

Finally, now, by applying this model to help prioritize therapeutic approaches benefitting each unique patient, we begin to feel grounded, rooted, in the establishment of a clinical context – to treat disease (and people) by restoring health. This instruction informs what it truly means to be a naturopathic physician, clearly identifying the profession by supplying a foundational platform from which to practice. It is from these initial stages of professional development that the current Foundation of Naturopathic Medicine textbook project has been born. This is a tremendous project – epic in nature, slow and steady in manifestation. With well over two hundred authors, it is the solution for how to finally converge the many philosophical perspectives within the profession, and bring a common thread to the diversity of naturopathic medicine. It is the fulfillment of a widespread need and desire for a mutual point of reference from which the entire profession can proceed. From this stake in the ground, I believe the profession can grow. We will continue to evolve by engaging in the respectful proposal and publication of diverse views of modern clinical and scientific applications with roots in traditional naturopathic concepts. Playing a small role in this project has opened my eyes to the potentially tremendous benefit of its application. Making use of this text, I imagine how a consistent foundation of applied clinical philosophy and theory running through the entirety of academic training will lend itself to a deepening of self-understanding and self-identification among new practitioners. This is the common coherence that we all desperately need. There is strength in our diversity, but not until we all speak a common language will our profession be fully recognized by the larger medical community. This consistency of thought will help us to rigorously communicate our diversity to each other in clinically and scientifically useful ways. Most importantly, it is this common language that will allow each individual practitioner to proceed with a confidently guided hand, best able to manifest the full potency of our medicine.

For more regarding the Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine Project, contact Pamela Snider, ND at foundationsproject@comcast.net or visit www.foundations-project.com. At NCNM, the FNM Project’s academic home, contact Susan Hunter, at shunter@ncnm.edu or visit www.ncnm.edu.

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- p41 Early and late antigen provides mobility to the spirochete
- V5E-1 Late antigen appears after spirochete infection
- p180 Late stage antigen
- DbpA An essential protein needed for overall virulence

**References**