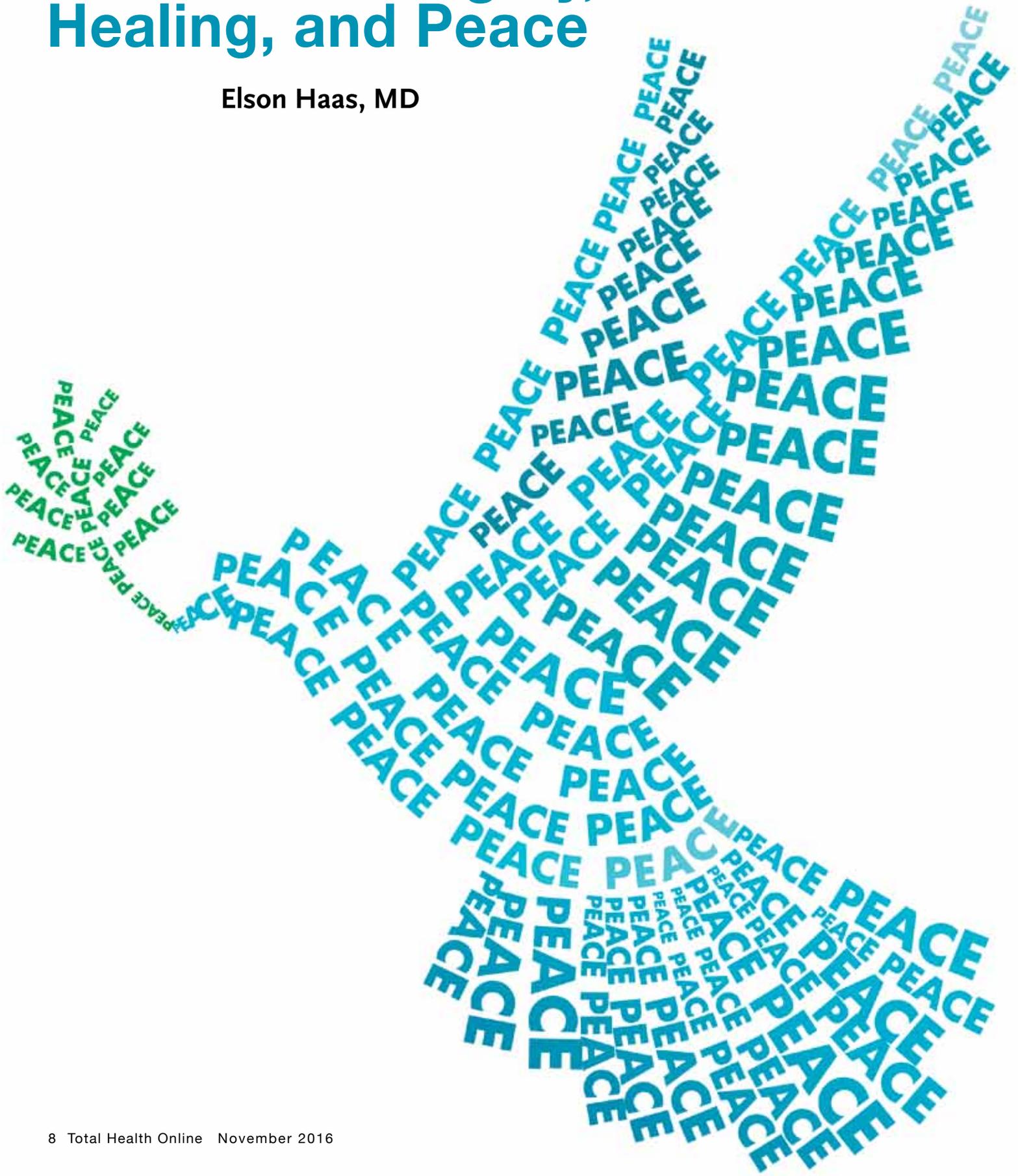


# From Politics, Medicine, and War to Integrity, Healing, and Peace

Elson Haas, MD



**IN THIS NEW ARTICLE I AM ENGAGING IN POLITICS,** which I usually try to avoid, but these days it's difficult to not notice what's happening. From my health studies, I like to go beyond the dualities of life, merging the yin and yang into one.

This is an excerpt from a longer article that is being posted as a Blog on my website at: <http://elsonhaasmd.com/blog>. Check that out, and next month, I will provide the completion for you in *TotalHealth*.

### **Election Countdown—Politics as War**

This year's presidential race is made for the media, fully loving the Trump-Clinton debate and debacle. It's been ugly so far and it's likely going to get much worse up to Election Day. Of course, everyone has his or her views and the right to vote is honorable and representative of our "free" country: but it's a political battle for sure.

After listening to many passionate speeches and seeing so many people engaged and involved deeply in this polarized political process, with anger and many "fighting words." I realize that politics is a form of war.

I am also aware that this approach of warfare exists at many levels of our society and culture in addition to Politics. These other areas include Medicine, Farming, Food Manufacturing, and Personal Relationships. These are all places where our traditional "attack and conquer" approaches have potential negative consequences, and where a more integrative approach has had, and can have, long-term positive benefits.

As a physician I am particularly aware of this "attack and conquer" mentality in much of conventional Western medicine. Throughout my 40-year career, both in my practice with patients and in my books, I have emphasized the importance of a more integrative approach, which encompasses Natural and Eastern medicines, more awareness of lifestyle, especially nutrition, and considers the health of the environment as crucial to our personal health. Plus, I am always looking to find and correct any underlying causes of the health problems rather than just treating the end result, or the symptoms.

### **Medicine as War**

*"War is a short-term solution to complex problems."*

*Stephan Dinan—Sacred America, Sacred Earth*

On a personal level, I consider myself a pacifist and environmentalist. I am and have been a conscientious objector (CO) to war at all levels for most of my adult life. In fact, my formal CO application to the draft board in 1971 was one of my first writings in which I really developed and expressed my philosophy of life. I stated that I could not be part of the "war machine" like the efforts being used for fighting in Vietnam and other places around the world. After my initial application was

denied in Michigan, the process culminated successfully with confirmation of my CO status after my appeal was granted in San Francisco in 1973.

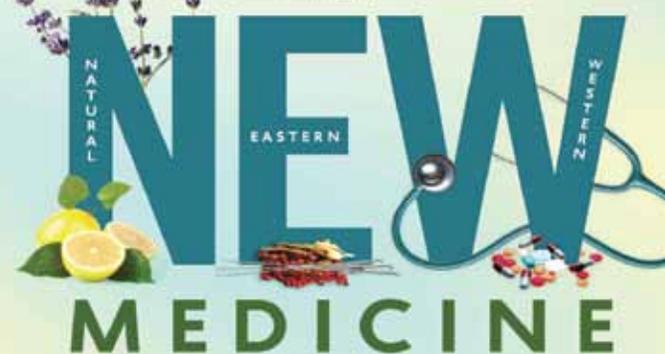
I was finishing up my training as a doctor during those years. As a practicing physician for the last four plus decades, and having done much study and writing about health and healing, I have come to see that Western Medicine is a form of war as well; at least it can be. I have called much of modern medical intervention an "attack and conquer" approach to our body. When something goes wrong, we may ask and look at "what we can take to make this go away," rather than a more healing approach with questions like, "why is this going on in my body?" and, "what is needed for real healing and not just symptom removal or suppression?" These are questions that have a more integrative and philosophical approach to health and life care. They seek more harmony and new balance, and take a deeper view. It may sometimes mean tolerating symptoms or pain to get the message about how to rebalance our body and life, yet the result is different and often deeper.

**M**edicine today is often fully accepted as a complete system and all that is needed for health care. It focuses mainly on identifying the symptoms or illness, naming it, and treating it with a drug, or perhaps surgery. This is often a cover up and does not usually apply to long-term healing. A more sustainable and lower cost process addresses the underlying causes, which are often lifestyle based, and seeks to correct from there. This is the integrative medicine approach and, in collaboration with my patients, I am always searching for "what creates what?" How do our diet, stress, and life activities affect our healthy outcomes or illnesses? I believe this is the future of health care and what I call NEW Medicine, N.E.W. being an acronym for the integration of Natural, Eastern, and Western approaches to address problems and support healing. This is all addressed in my new book, *Staying Healthy with NEW Medicine*. One of the most clear-cut "attack and conquer" approaches in Western medicine involves antibiotic treatment for infectious diseases. This has been a key discovery and strength of Western medicine that helped put it on the map as the primary modern healthcare modality. When it's appropriate, antibiotic treatment for bacterial infections can be an effective and life-saving benefit. Yet, often it doesn't work when there are viruses or other microbes involved, which is more often than not. In such cases, with insight into the causes, we can apply other treatments: there are now anti-viral, anti-fungal, and anti-parasitic drugs, as well as many natural remedies that can help. Most often it takes time and other healing methods to address the underlying factors. We have also been carried away with the use of antibiotics in factory farming, which can affect the health and microbial balance in the animals and then the people who consume them. —>

*Integrating Natural, Eastern and Western  
Approaches for Optimal Health*

# Staying Healthy

with



Elson Haas, MD

*Staying Healthy with NEW Medicine* is a great work for everyone wishing to maintain and improve their health, written by a leader in integrative, holistic medicine. Dr. Elson is 40 years in practice as a lifestyle and preventive medicine philosopher-physician.

NEW Medicine offers an integrated and practical vision that guides and empowers you to take more responsibility for your health and create better outcomes with lower costs.

Dr. Haas states, "We hear so much about integrative medicine nowadays, but what does this really mean? Right after medical school and internship, I began integrating important ancient and modern systems of health care into my practice. I now refer to this as NEW Medicine: N for Natural, E for Eastern, and W for Western. Each system has its value, its strengths and weaknesses. Together they make up a truly integrative approach to health and healing and to treating many conditions."

## **Staying Healthy with NEW Medicine**

Elson Haas, MD

Paperback: \$15.99

KINDLE eBook: \$9.99

282 pages

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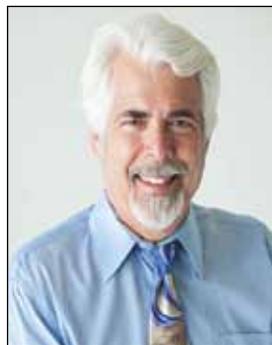
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→ In addition to the overuse of antibiotics that appears to have helped create drug resistant "super bugs," the modern Western world has become obsessed with antibacterial soaps, sprays, and such. I have never been a fan of what I call, "replacing dirt and germs with chemicals." This has some negative consequences, especially with persistent use over time, which is the key issue with many chemicals and toxins. In this regard, I think it is good news that the FDA recently banned 19 chemicals used in antibacterial products. We need to move away from "germaphobia" towards keeping our body and immune system strong while finding and using more natural disinfectants like alcohol, peroxide, bleach, grapefruit seed extract, and others.

Another area where the "attack and conquer" approach prevails is when we step into acute and crisis care, or treating advanced conditions in the hospital. Doing whatever is needed to extend life can be a costly, toxic, and very painful fight. The up side is that intensive care is very advanced these days and Western medicine can often save lives and give some people additional quality years. However, the down side is that people with advanced and serious health issues can be maintained and kept alive to suffer further, with what is often a poor quality of life. This is a serious concern within our current system especially in regard to the high costs of end-of-life care. Nowadays, individuals can decline these "life-saving" heroics and choose a DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) status, and in California (and a few other states) also choose to end their life with doctors' and hospice supervision.

In my experience, the more options and treatment programs we consider, the better choices we can make. That's why in modern medicine, it's ideal to encourage a more integrative approach by incorporating real "traditional medicines" (based on long-standing traditions) like those found in Natural and Eastern Medicines, which I discuss in my latest book *Staying Healthy with NEW Medicine*.

Next Month in *TotalHealth* I will continue this exploration about health care as well as look at our current Farming and Agriculture practices as a further expression of this "attack and conquer" approach and offer what I see as some viable alternatives. ■



**Elson Haas, MD** is a practicing integrative family physician since 1973 and is founder/director of the Preventive Medical Center of Marin ([pmcmarin.com](http://pmcmarin.com)) in San Rafael, CA. Dr. Haas is the author of 11 books on health, nutrition, and detoxification, including *Staying Healthy with Nutrition*, *The Detox Diet*, *The False Fat Diet*, and the classic, *Staying Healthy with the Seasons*. His most recent

books are *Ultimate Immunity* (Rodale 2015) and the just self published *Staying Healthy with NEW Medicine: Integrating Natural, Eastern, and Western Approaches for Optimal Health*. Learn more at [ElsonHaasMD.com](http://ElsonHaasMD.com). Dr. Haas, as Dr. Sun, creates entertaining educational products for children and families, including The Anatomix Comix™ with CD of songs and also available as Apps at [www.seasonsstudios.com](http://www.seasonsstudios.com).