

# My Lifelong Quest for Alternatives

By



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(American Indian name "Summer Cloud")

Controversy is an interesting thing: People seem to both eschew those who are controversial but yet are drawn to them like iron filings to a magnet. There are as many flavors of controversy as there are kinds of ice cream, but for the most part they seem to fall along a spectrum that runs from controversy that fosters progress (albeit not necessarily without fits, starts & setbacks) to controversy that is antithetical to progress or even turns it on its head (Some controversial people & ideas are just downright evil, immoral or otherwise dire problem children).

Back in the 60s controversies and controversial people were almost normative. From the anti-Vietnam War movement to [Hugh Hefner](#) and his hedonistic *Playboy* philosophy to the counterculture admonitions of [Dr. Timothy "turn on, tune in, drop out" Leary](#), the young generation – we Baby Boomers, that is – tended to be rebels with many causes and by-and-large thrived on controversy.

Many writers including "yours truly" cut our intellectual teeth on questioning authority and the accepted wisdom of the older generation. I was never as radical or rebellious as the icons of the counterculture, never touched an illicit drug (then or ever) and found much in the beliefs and practices of my parents and ancestors of merit as opposed to worthy of trashing, yet at the same time I was open to modifying my position on pretty much anything in the face of evidence or reason that left hanging on to it untenable.

I, like my contemporaries, was no stranger to experimentation but did so by focusing on alternatives to conventional ways of getting things done. For example, I found education without walls (what I later called "AltEd") appealing over boring rote classroom work and wound up pursuing degrees in biological anthropology from a [school that was in the vanguard of pioneers](#) in the then fledgling external degree or distance education movement<sup>1</sup> (A trend that has since been embraced by all manner of colleges & universities including most if not all of those deemed strictly ivy league). In my case, I liked the fact my trek through *AltEd* included being

mentored by Columbia University archeology graduate, Dr. Peter Pick (whose wife interestingly enough was one of the producers of [Austin City Limits](#) on PBS).

My natural attraction to alternatives led me eventually into the world of, well, *alternatives in health care* aka alternative medicine (Now better known as complementary-alternative or integrative medicine). Here, too, I sought out AltEd approaches to learning which culminated in my earning a doctorate in nutritional medicine (I started out in US-based program and wound up grandfathered into a [Ministry of Education accredited](#) school in the Philippines).

Mind you, my goal was not so much to be involved in doing hands-on clinical work but, rather, to investigate and write about *AltMed* treatments, especially those that were either scientifically validated or likely to be so in the future. This process of exploring the world of AltMed took me beyond this and into contact with many notables in a variety of nonmedical disciplines including biochemist [Karl Folkers, Ph.D.](#) (UT-Austin) who is often referred to as the "Father of CoQ10 research", astronomer [Carl "COSMOS" Sagan, Ph.D.](#), and Harvard paleontologist [Stephen Jay Gould, Ph.D.](#) These men and many others helped steer me way from many scientifically questionable (and some flat out evidentially bankrupt) ideas that I had been taught or otherwise exposed to, both in the realm of biology medicine and beyond.

During this process of heady learning & growth I ventured into writing and published by putting out my own little newsletter titled "Biological Medicine" (1986-8). Among the subscribers was a



California-based AltMed osteopathic physician, [David Steenblock](#), who seemed intrigued with my steady stream of ideas, opinions & hypotheses and, as-a-result began touching bases with me by phone & mail. In early 1988, on the cusp of heading to Oregon to do a preceptorship of sorts with a licensed naturopathic physician and professor at [National College of Naturopathic Medicine](#) (Portland, Oregon), a man who had

actually studied under the very chap who founded the discipline of naturopathy in the US ([Benedict Lust, MD, ND](#)), I was "intercepted" by Dr. Steenblock and invited to visit his clinic in southern California at his expense. Long story short, before heading back home to Dallas (Texas) Steenblock offered me a job as his clinic staff writer and nutrition educator. Oregon was out, California was in!

My initial "tour of duty" (others followed) with Dr. Steenblock was genuinely exiting and eye-opening. I got to look over his shoulder so-to-speak and learn firsthand about many medical processes and procedures. He had 2 nurses, one Iranian, the other German, who took me under their respective wings and let me look in on everything from doing IV therapies to cardiac stress tests as well as a wide variety of clinical laboratory tests done in-house.

In addition, I was present when Dr. Steenblock installed his first (of what would be many) hard shell hyperbaric oxygen chambers and began doing work with treating people saddled with various neurologic and circulatory issues including chronic stroke (He later focused on stroke

and became known as "The Stroke Doctor" -- a moniker he adopted as his trademark, so to speak).

Not being averse to "routine grunt work", I also put in time in the front office helping the office manager juggle her heavy daily schedule of work which included getting patients processed and in to see Dr. Steenblock and the billing paperwork filled out and submitted or filed.

I returned to Texas in 1990 and continued to write, spin ideas & hypotheses and take on special projects, both long and short term. One of my brain children was a (then) novel approach to throwing metabolic monkey wrenches into tumor cells & processes so as to induce die-off, a complicated regimen I dubbed the "Metabolic Oncolytic Regimen" (Here is a link to my 2011 revised spin on the MOR <http://bit.ly/JsZmDA>. Another permutation published in the journal *Medical Hypotheses & Research* in 2005 can be accessed by [clicking this link](#)). At least a few MDs and DOs actually tried out the MOR on cancer patients and by the early 1990s it had racked up many cases of partial and lasting full remissions. This attracted the attention of various staffers at the *Office of Alternative Medicine* (later reborn as the [NCCAM](#)) including NIH post-doc toxicologist Li-Chuan Chin and got me funded by the NIH to attend the historic POMES cancer conference held in Bethesda (in 1996). A few years later the faculty senate and president of a controversial little CAM medical school in Sri Lanka (Open International University of CAM) recognized the promise of the MOR by bestowing an honorary MD degree and 2 medals in science on me.

These happenings led to more opportunities but not always in the realm of writing or "theory-spinning". I did a stint in a private agricultural research lab & greenhouse complex outside Lincoln, Nebraska which had as its primary aim finding "all natural" growth accelerants for culinary & medicinal mushrooms and then marketing them. My work mainly centered on starting the mushroom cultures and spraying them with the experimental environmentally friendly (biodegradable) accelerants and making rate-of-growth assessments (The treated mushrooms vs. untreated ones vs. ones treated with a standard commercial growth accelerant). Since I found myself with lots of free time, I wrote and spent time with a special companion I had brought along on my journey, [a starling I had raised from a fledgling and named "Calypso"](#) (I trained him to speak words & phrases and whistle various tunes and later discovered that he could create new phrases and sentences in proper context! Cornell ornithology researchers reported the same thing about starlings they were working with a few years later).



Following my stint in the land of corn fields and bitterly cold winters, I returned to Dallas and began working closely with the head of a somewhat unconventional and, yes, controversial branch of the Syro-Russian Orthodox Catholic Church. This church had an educational system that included eight seminaries spread across three or so continents, most of which were AltEd in nature; that is, either wholly nonresidential or partially residential. In time I wound up interim superintendent of this church's education system, a job that lasted 5 years! (Later the church's

main seminary & college awarded me a Ph.D. in pastoral psychology [ad eundem](#). Their pastoral psych program later morphed into one in "theocentric psychotherapy").

As the church-related work was at best a part-time undertaking (small schools), I took on working as a writer and product development consultant for various companies such as [Prestige Chinese Teas \(PCT\)](#), [Pacific BioLogic](#), [Earthrise](#) (5 years), Global Vision and more<sup>2</sup>.

After years of "working in the trenches" I needed, well..., an **alternative to the alternatives**. As I had fancied trying my hand at teaching, I began searching Internet job sites devoted to opportunities in education. It was here I spotted this then middle-aged man's fantasy dream job: Pulling up stakes and teaching abroad. Specifically, teaching ESL classes including writing in a university outside Tokyo (Located up in the mountain hamlet of Uenohara). Before you could say "Sayonara, America!" I was in the land of the rising sun to kick off what became an almost 5-year adventure (One that saw me teaching in not one but 2 universities and then at a private school in a quaint fishing village southwest of Mount Fuji! Later I taught weekend and night classes at various firms in Tokyo and Yokohama including the *Toshiba Institute of Language & Culture*, *Hitachi Laboratories*, a school that prepared young people to enter fire & police academies, an insurance firm and more).

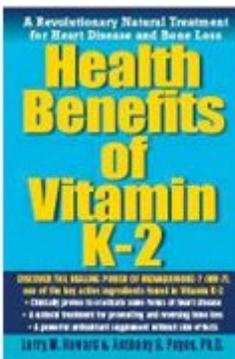
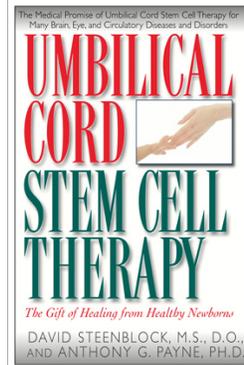


While in Japan I, being childless (not by choice but by virtue of things just not gelling for this to come about), turned a classroom lesson into a platform for creating an alternative to having a family: Namely, I would build one. No, not by adopting a child -- too much paperwork and trouble in Japan -- but rather by what I call "mutual assent & declaration". I laid this out [in this 2015 blog entry](#) but suffice it to say I wound up with a Nihonjin musume (Japanese daughter) in the fall of 1999 who married and gave me a magomusume (granddaughter Wakana) in November 2011 and a magomusuko (grandson Yoshito) in 2014. Photos of

both can be found on my [Pinterest page](#).

I departed Japan in February 2003 with a new Japanese bride, Sakura, and an invitation from Dr. Steenblock to work at his newly established namesake nonprofit research institute (SRI) in San Clemente doing writing, web content & strategy, copywriting, and dealing with the public. What started out as just me and a part-time administrative assistant/biostatistician grew by 2007 to a staff of seven (7) and sported a fully equipped lab & clean room devoted to nonembryonic (primarily umbilical cord blood) stem cell research.

While at SRI I coauthored "[Umbilical Cord Stem Cell Therapy: The Gift of Healing from Healthy Newborns](#)" with Dr. Steenblock which was published in 2006 by Basic Health Publications. This book, my 3rd after a full length one on naturopathic remedies (Westar Publishing, the book being out-of-print & the firm out-of business) and a mini-book primer on naturopathic medicine (San Francisco School of Chinese Medicine Press, 1994)<sup>3</sup>, could best be described as my solution or (ahem) *alternative* to sharing the same information over & over again each day with people who called wanting to know more about umbilical cord stem cells (UCSCs) & especially an experimental clinical UCSC treatment program in Mexico (SRI tracked patient responses to the treatments being done across the border and also spearheaded a pilot study on UCSCs and cerebral palsy in children [that was published in 2006](#)). In-a-word --or a few-- I hammered out the core manuscript in a few weeks time, added some input from Dr. Steenblock and SRI's resident biostatistician, and then promptly turned it over to the publisher's editor. Its release did precisely what I had hoped for and envisioned: It relieved me and others working at SRI from reinventing the information wheel *ad infinitum, ad nauseum*.



I left SRI in mid 2007 on the heels of an invitation from an SRI board member and CEO of a supplement raw materials firm who wanted me to help build his company's web presence and assist in growing and expanding it. Two of the things I did right off the bat was to coauthor a [book on vitamin K2](#) and attract investors who eventually put enough money into this firm to facilitate setting up an R & D lab. Unfortunately, fiscal challenges overwhelmed this company and it went belly up in August 2010. I let Dr. Steenblock know I was once again available and he grabbed me up right away and put me to work building up his websites and feeding him ideas and suggestions for investigation and (in some instances) for exploration in the lab at SRI.

In 2012 Dr. Steenblock began cutting back on his work as a clinician and by fall 2013 my work with his clinic as a writer and promoter had run its course and came to an end. Was there a new "alternative" on the horizon? *There was*. Actually, the alterative path had been there all along: Back when the raw materials firm went belly up -- and before Dr. Steenblock grabbed me up -- I had helped a fledgling [Mexican outfit](#) get underway and had, in fact, provided it with start-up web content as well as the protocol for an experimental, largely immunological cancer treatment predicated on the work of a *Wake Forest University* research scientist (This regimen was tried on end stage cancer patients who had exhausted conventional treatment options and were basically sent home to die. The treatment happily resulted in many instances of partial and complete remission, some within a relatively short period of time. It is discussed in this March 2018 article: <https://bit.ly/2J8kv8E>). Once my work with Dr. Steenblock's clinic came to an end I was immediately asked to "do my thing" (writing & pontificating) by this company which I naturally seized upon and have been busy doing ever since.

And, combining a lifetime of being a servant-helphmate with a calling to the [New Monasticism](#) movement, in 2015 I was ordained a novice lay monk in the [Knights of Prayer Monastic Order](#). I am now a full monk with the *KofP* and also serve as Secretary of the Fellowship Ministries for the Advancement of Indigenous Peoples (FMAIP), a California religious nonprofit I helped set up. I am also working towards planting a [monastic ecclesia \(community\) in north Texas which I will serve as Abbot](#).

A lifetime of seeking alternatives angle & solutions aside, there is obviously a large element of “one thing leading to another” in all this – plus ample doses of contingency. And just so you know, there are few areas of life that escape my relentless quest for viable alternatives, including life's final chapter. Consider what I came across and embraced with respect to the one event in life for which there is no alternative -- no escaping it, that is -- but yet has an alternative option with respect to what is accepted as traditional or "tried and true": [Exit, stage A!](#)

*Finis,.....albeit my quest goes on*

1. [Click to access an op-ed piece of mine on credentialism](#)

2. I was on the Scientific Advisory Board of Berkley Wellness Network – which brought the Swiss FDA approved herbal cardioactive drug “PADMA28” into the US. BWN was bought out by Pacific BioLogic – which asked me to continue on with them – which I did to 1999 or so.

3. My primer was published during my tenure as [titular Academic Dean](#) of the FSCM (1990-1999). This job was more honorary than "real world" (The SFSCM never had more than a handful of students and my work was thus done at-a-distance from my home office in Dallas).

### **Additional & Supplemental Reading Penned by "Yours Truly"**

[Through the CAM Looking Glass](#)

[A word about attacking people sans clear cause or justification as opposed to attacking bad or faulty ideas](#)

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