

## Balancing Mind and Body through Macrobiotics

by Osbon Woodford

The term "macrobiotics" is derived from the Greek words "macro" and "bios" meaning great life or long life. The macrobiotic philosophy is a spiritual approach to freedom and balance; it gives us an understanding of nature and how we are part of it and subject to its laws. With this understanding it is possible for us to make positive changes in our lives on many levels: physical, mental, and emotional, because all are connected.

Macrobiotics is also an ancient philosophy that explores the connections between people, food, nature, and the universe. It is thousands of years old and has existed in every culture. Macrobiotics is, in fact, a rediscovery of this ancient philosophy about freedom or balance and how to apply the natural laws to ourselves in order to have freedom.

Macrobiotic freedom is about balance in every aspect of our lives: in our thinking, our feelings, our bodies, our food, our exercise, our relationships, and our pasts and futures. For example, it is important to balance our physical bodies with wholesome food such as whole grains, whole grain products, land and sea vegetables, soups, beans, soybean products, seeds, nuts, seasonal fruits and occasional white meat and seafood. These wholesome foods are balanced by nature and people are balanced by nature. Therefore, the two can help to balance each other. Practicing macrobiotics involves following a wholesome, natural diet that does not include refined or artificially processed foods, meat, dairy, sugar, oils, and grease. These are unbalanced foods, and when taken into the balanced body, cause imbalance which leads to illness, disease or premature death.

On a mental level, the greatest key to spiritual freedom is in finding a balance between our thinking and feeling natures. Everything that is recorded and accepted by our minds is filtered and interpreted by our thinking and feeling natures. Facts and events have their impact on us according to what we think

about them and how we feel about them. Therefore, if negative thinking dominates our mind, we must use our feeling nature to counteract the negative thinking process. On the other hand, if our feeling or emotional nature is out of balance, we must use positive thinking to correct this state.

Macrobiotic balancing in general means to show physical and mental stability in the face of variants; to right ourselves when negative mental or physical external pressures are exerted upon us. We do this by recognizing the natural laws of nature and the universe. For instance, the moment we feel that a negative thought has power over us or an organ malfunctions, we can be pushed off center. Stilling ourselves and then applying natural laws enables us to return to our original position of positive thoughts and physical stability.

Macrobiotics identifies many laws, which, when understood and applied correctly, can be used as tools for creating balance and freedom. One of the most important laws is the one concerning the play of opposites, the universal principles of yin and yang, movement and rest, and other complementary opposites. With this understanding of opposites, we can always change a physical or mental condition to its opposite to achieve balance. This understanding of the play of opposites is an intuitive one, and common to of all the world's great religions, including Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Macrobiotics is an approach to wellness. It has a coherent, logical, and easy-to-learn guiding philosophy and specific recommendations for our lifestyle. Macrobiotics seeks to return to the original position of harmony with nature and the universe.