

insured and uninsured to seek health alternatives.

Just as Greatest Depression economic conditions cannot be cured with financial stimulus pills or monetary painkillers, so too chronic degenerative disease cannot be cured by silver bullet drug therapies or through the magic of medical doctors.

This incessant media promoted, advertising-supported and TV/movie indoctrination that Doctor and Big Pharma know best, will give way as evidence mounts to contradict both beliefs and people are forced to go it on their own. Bombarded with a steady onslaught of reports of drugs passed by the FDA that should have failed, of drug manufacturers lying about test results, and of “independent” doctors on pharma payrolls or taking kickbacks, aware consumers will embrace the Whole Health Healing concept.

The philosophy and practice of Whole Health Healing, a first line of defense, requires that the individual assumes responsibility for achieving and maintaining health. To do so entails both an extensive re-education process and an attitude change; that it can be done, that there is a desire to do it, and that how to do it can be learned. But it is an individual choice and an individual search; ordinary channels will not voluntarily provide the necessary information.

Should the first line of defense fail and a medical problem does not yield to do-it-yourself treatment, establishing a relationship with a Whole Health Healing practitioner becomes the second line of defense. These doctors integrate complementary/alternative modalities with standard, leading edge 21st century medicine; the best of the old with the best of the new.

Trendpost: *Resistant until recently, more and more traditional practitioners are coming to an understanding of Whole Health Healing and are acquiring the knowledge to apply it and/or willingly recommend patients to relevant specialists. While this is a big departure from just a decade ago, it still comprises but a small fraction of the medical/pharma complex.*

To date, with the exception of the elite cadre of cutting edge MDs, the most skilled Whole Health practitioners (Chiropractic Physicians, Naturopaths, Homeopaths, Acupuncturists, etc.) operate outside the medical establishment. And while Chiropractic Physicians will readily refer a patient to a medical doctor

for treatments outside their skill base, it's far less likely for a medical doctor to refer a patient to a Chiropractic Physician. In practical terms, assuming personal responsibility means the willingness to challenge the reticence and/or resistance of the establishment medical authorities.

Trendpost: *While steps have been taken by hospitals over the years to integrate Whole Health Healing concepts, they remain a peripheral interest. For example, there is as of yet no “Mayo Clinic of Whole Health.”*

With enormous cost-cutting pressures now bearing down on hospitals, the few alternative choices that exist will be further marginalized. This bottom line instinctive reaction ignores both the healing and profit potential of providing such services. Less shortsighted hospitals would do well to take advantage of the void. The trend will grow as informed health consumers, understanding the severe limitations of mainstream medicine, will patronize hospitals that provide Whole Health treatments.

Trend Forecast: As the Whole Health Healing trend grows and more people reject prescription drugs, big pharma will lose big bucks. In concert with big government, major attacks will be launched to kill the movement through legislation that will regulate or criminalize vitamins, supplements, herbal tinctures, etc. Forestalling this movement will require concerted, organized public pressure.

LITTLE PEOPLE SQUEEZE

To keep local, state and federal governments running, and to finance stimulus packages and bailout programs, politicians will put the squeeze on the already squeezed.

The biggest squeeze: property taxes. Levied in accordance with assessed values, for years taxes have been ruthlessly raised to keep pace with soaring real estate values. Now, however, in a period of rapid property devaluation, the response of governments across the nation has been not to lower taxes, but to raise them yet again!

Apart from the obvious injustice and illogic of raising taxes on declining property values during what is



universally acknowledged as the worst economic conditions since the Great Depression – it is dangerous.

Already on the margins, jobs in jeopardy, incomes declining, deep in debt, foreclosures looming ... when people have nothing left to lose, they lose it. Historically, empires crash when taxes are raised beyond the capacity to pay.

Yet, raising property taxes alone won't make up for budget shortfalls stemming from boom time tax revenues no longer available. (For example, 21 percent of New York State's tax revenues are derived from Wall Street-related activities.)

Governments at every level will be looking for any angle to wring the last penny from the working classes. Sales tax SWAT teams are swooping down on small businesses. Raiding pizza parlors, beauty shops, bars, service stations, delis, home offices ... no business is too small to leave behind ... the "revenooers" accuse them of cheating on sales taxes with threats to "Pay up or close down."

Cities are raking in cash by beefing up traffic enforcement squads ordered to write tickets for the most minor infractions. Speed traps are being set and speed limits are enforced to the mile.

Sales tax, sin tax, tolls, mass transit, parking tickets, license fees, park permits ... the government will be trying anything and everything it can think of to squeeze the little people who can't fight back.

Editor's Note: The "too big to fail," protected by loopholes, shelters and sophisticated accounting procedures are too big to touch, but the too-small-to-save are easy targets. Yet, governments beware! The reckless application of hassle taxes will push the overburdened to the limits of patience and endurance, and will be just one more provocation for revolution.

REGENERATIVE MEDICINE

The signs are clear that the time is ripe for stem cells to start coming out of the laboratory and into the clinic, to make the leap from theoretical to practical, from promise to product. It's hard to believe that human embryonic stem cells were first isolated and grown in a lab only ten years ago by Dr. James Thomson at the University of Wisconsin in collaboration with Dr. Michael West, now at BioTime, Inc. The breathtaking promise, the wild hype, and the raging controversy has turned stem cell research into a political lightning rod, a scientific holy grail, and the last best hope for millions of people with otherwise untreatable diseases.

Embryonic stem cells can become almost any of the more than a thousand types of specialized cells that make up the human body. Properly tweaked and bioengineered, they have the potential to generate replacement cells for a broad array of tissues and organs, such as the heart, the pancreas, the nervous system. These cells hold the promise of being able to repair or replace cells or tissues damaged or destroyed by many of our most devastating diseases and disabilities.

Make no mistake; there is still a great deal of research to be done, as any reputable scientist will admit. But in 2009, even with our disintegrating economic system, social and scientific forces will create a "perfect storm," urging on the stem cell research destined to start coming through on that promise.

First, there are the scientific advances. Though stem cell research is far from being mature, it's entered a kind of early puberty, full of energy and discovery. In 2008, scientists had great success using muscle-derived stem cells to repair the sphincters of 65 men made incontinent by prostate surgery; a researcher at MIT pinpointed stem cells within the spinal cord, a discovery that could lead to new, non-surgical treatment for paralysis; British surgeons used stem cells to create and implant a trachea in a woman; hundreds of patients were enrolled in clinical trials using stem cells to treat congestive heart failure, and there were many more breakthroughs.

Then there's the money. President-elect Obama has vowed to provide federal funding for stem cell research, an avenue blocked by the Bush administration. Eleven states are now providing research money,