



INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUR PILLARS

There is a long list of factors that increase a person's risk of contracting chronic illness such as neurodegenerative diseases. The most critical is chronic stress. The body reacts to chronic stress by releasing stress hormones such as cortisol, adrenaline and aldosterone, which increases inflammation and depresses the immune system. Once that happens the inflammation can occur in any organ or system in the body or brain that is vulnerable, potentially leading to chronic disease.

When the brain and body receive inputs from the environment, whether it be by way of poor nutrition, chemicals, infection, injury, life events, etcetera (which we will call "stressors"), the nervous system may instruct the body to react to these stressors as a potential danger. The parasympathetic nervous system, referred to as the rest and digest state, is the ideal state to be in most of the time when not in danger. It is in this state that the body can repair and regenerate. Conversely, the sympathetic nervous system, also called the fight-or-flight response, instructs the body to respond to stressors by creating inflammation and other chemical reactions in the body that ready it to protect itself from danger whether that be by escaping the danger or fighting it.. When chronic stress is at play, the parasympathetic nervous system shuts down, allowing the sympathetic nervous system to switch on. A chronic state of stress can lead to devastating health effects throughout the body. Therefore, the goal is to move through each day primarily in a parasympathetic state in order to avoid the catabolic effects of a chronic state of inflammatory stress..

Using food as medicine, a proper exercise regimen, stress management techniques and allowing the body to repair during deep sleep all manage chronic internal and external stress. These four pillars reduce systemic inflammation. Consistent use of these tools require daily practice, and developing a routine and sticking to it is a very effective strategy to enjoying the cumulative effect of an anti-inflammatory, healthy brain lifestyle. It takes time to train the body to enter a deep healing state, but the benefits are immeasurable.