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LET’S PRETEND!

Part 1

By: Hesh Goldstein

When I was a kid, most of my time was spent pretending. Pretending to be Superman, pretending to be a cowboy, pretending to be a hero and, at times, pretending to be a doctor. As I grew up I realized that pretend time was growing to a close and reality time was getting closer and closer at hand. Little did I realize that, for some, *pretend* is a way of life. How so, you ask? The following are some of my perceptions and observations into the ongoing world of *pretend*.

The way conventional medicine is practiced today, is *pretend medicine*. The doctors and the drug companies *pretend* to make patients healthier by giving them drugs. The Fraud and Drug Administration *pretends* to protect the safety of the public. Medical journals *pretend* to print only peer-reviewed, scientifically sound research papers. Drug companies *pretend* to care about the lives and health of patients. Non-profit disease front groups *pretend* to be searching for the cure, while, in reality, most of them are only searching for more ways to recruit patients into conventional medicine treatments like drugs, surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, and above all, donations.

How do we know that this is all pretend? Besides the junk science, corruption, fraud, collusion, conflicts of interest and outright dishonesty that characterizes modern medicine, there is one more very salient factor to consider: **The results!** If modern medicine really worked and wasn't just *pretend*, wouldn't we be the healthiest population in the world?

We pay more for health care, per person, than any nation in the world. We take more drugs, undergo more surgical procedures and have more hospital visits than anyone else. If the drugs-and-surgery approach to medicine actually produced healthy human beings, we would be the “master race”.

Instead, we are the most diseased people on the planet. We have more disease, disorders and illnesses than any population that has ever been observed in the history of civilization. Why? *Pretend medicine*, that's why!

So, where are we headed with all this make-believe in abundance? For openers, the U.S. of A still *pretends* to offer the best health care in the world, yet we pay the highest drug prices on the planet, have the highest rates of chronic degenerative disease and have earned top ranking for the most citizens without health insurance of any industrialized nation. We are also number 1 in mental disorders.

The politicians *pretend* to get serious about health care reform. These health reform proposals *pretend* to reduce health care costs through a shell game illusion that simply shifts the burden of paying for disease management services to whatever group hires the fewest lobbyists. And, once the reforms are complete, the corrupt politicians take the spotlight and *pretend* to have helped the American people. Remember the recent Medicare drug benefit shibai? That was Washington's way of *pretending* to help senior citizens save money, many of whom were left out in the cold due to massive failures in a government database that some highly paid consultant *pretended* would actually work.

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As the plot thickens, mainstream media *pretends* to offer objective reporting on the health care crisis, relying on journalists who *pretend* to actually know something about health.

Conventional medicine exists in a dream world. While cancer groups, researchers and drug companies promise a better quality of life and health, the reality is far different: accelerating chronic disease, skyrocketing health care costs that are putting U.S. companies like General Motors out of business and hundreds of thousands of Americans being killed by medication side effects – an atrocity that the Fraud and Drug Administration still hasn't seemed to notice.

So, what do you think? Maybe it's time we all stopped *pretending*? Maybe it's time that conventional medicine stopped "playing doctor" and started helping patients heal with diet and lifestyle changes and natural therapies that are safe and effective and actually work? You see, once someone is killed by prescription drugs, we cannot *pretend* to bring them back.

Aloha!