If your entire life were a full-course meal, how would you savour the dish in front of you right now? Eating is a fundamental act for most creatures, including human beings. Interestingly, the way we eat symbolically reflects how we actually live our lives. In our hyper-busy modern society, the tendency of not taking the time to enjoy meals, having too much 'on our plates', and obsessing and confusing our own choices with another’s choices tells us something about the source of our increasing health concerns, such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.

Rather than simply addressing a set of symptoms caused by modern life, naturopathic medicine emphasizes the unique wholesomeness of a person so that each individual can express and experience the full potential of the vis Medica-trix Naturae of ultimately who he or she really is. This state of overall mental wellness and fulfillment is referred to in positive psychology as ‘flourishing’. It is also a state in which a person is able to live within an optimal range of human functioning, one that connotes goodness, generativity, growth, and resilience. It is the opposite state of pathology or languishing, living a life that feels both hollow and empty.

This holistic view of mental health is reflected in the Public Health Agency of Canada's definition of mental health as "the capacity of each and all of us to feel, think, and act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges that we face. It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual well-being that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections and personal dignity".

In Japanese, such a ‘flourishing’ life or life well-lived is called Ajiwai-no-aru Jinsei, meaning a flavourful or Delicious Life. This manner of expression reflects a typical Japanese cultural virtue that prefers a symbolic and indirect communication, rather than the concrete and direct descriptions used in the West. As Japanese tradition cherishes such a style of living and aesthetic understanding of life, as written in the Edo period medical textbook Yokokun, the practice of daily living naturally evolved into a wellness and healing practice of cultivating and appreciating the symbolic beauty of life as a whole found in each moment.

With the strong philosophical and spiritual influences of Shintoism, Taoism and Buddhism, Japanese aesthetics are not a stable state of vanity or perfection, rather they are a transient cycle of harmony, imperfection and transcendence of ‘what is’. Examples include witnessing the blossoming spring flowers after a long cold winter, a child learning to stand on his feet after countless falls, and even the resilient recovery of people after a natural disaster. Joy and happiness in life can be found by taking ownership and responsibility of making and savouring lemonade when life gives you lemons. It makes sense that the Japanese word ‘delicious’, written as "美味しい", literally means 'savouring the beauty', of not just food or pleasant flavours, but our wholesomeness including all sensations, emotions, feelings, memories, and spiritual and social connections; even the sourness, bitterness, sorrow and conflicts that are also essential in life. The act of savouring also enables the mindful use of thoughts and 

Integrative and Holistic Practice of Naturopathic Medicine in Mental Health: Savouring One’s Authentic Beauty to Heal and Flourish.

By Mami Ishii, ND
• Ideal way to address the toxic overload that lies at the root of a whole range of modern health conditions
• More integral and well-rounded than other cleansing programs
• Balances the laxative/purgative aspect of cleansing with that of rebuilding
• With four constituent formulas that complement one another for a wholistic process of detoxification
• Touches on all the main systems of detoxification in the body
• A detoxifying synergy that is effected through the lymphatics, kidneys, liver, and bowel

• Non-drowsy natural relief of hay fever and allergy symptoms
• Eases itchy eyes, sneezing, congestion, and the many discomforts associated with hay fever and allergy
• Balances TH2 (humoral) and TH1 (cellular) immunity
• A specially customized version of our original Deep Immune® formula that includes astragalus, reishi, and schisandra, with the addition of herbs specific to allergy relief such as nettle and southern prickly ash
• A formula rendered more potent by homeopathic ingredients proven to be effective, including Galphimia glauca 12CH and Histaminum 7CH
• Available in liquid form in standard (50 mL, 100 mL and 250 mL) & bulk (500 mL, 1000 mL and 3650 mL) bottle sizes
Each stage of life offers unique experiences for our precious gifts and beauty to unfold. These opportunities include celebrating and sharing joys, and overcoming challenges and hardships to realize who we are. These stages in human life have been theorized in many different ways. In psychology, it includes the cognitive developmental stages by Piaget, the psychosexual stages by Freud, psychosocial stages by Erickson to the hierarchy of needs by Maslow. In the practice of ancient medical systems, this concept is theorized more comprehensively addressing the wholesomeness of a person, rather than a part (e.g. psychology), via the harmonious relationship between body, mind/psyche, soul/spirit and society (BPSS). The entire system of a person (the BPSS development) is reflected in the chakra stages in Ayurvedic medicine, medicine wheel stages in North American indigenous people’s teachings and the five elemental cycle in Traditional Chinese Medicine. Although it may not be as old as others, the classification of Miasm in Homeopathic medicine may be considered as one as well.

By combining the art of modern science and traditional healing, each naturopathic visit can be a healing ritual to celebrate the transcending shift in life that a person goes through to grow and cultivate an ability to savour one’s Delicious Moment, where the beauty of wholeness can be fully embraced. Naturopathic doctors have the privilege of having the training, understanding, and experience to support this holistic process to encourage their patients’ authentic flourishing.

At the Integrative Mental Health Centre of Toronto, we support our patients’ flourishing journey through savouring experiences of Delicious Moments from the BPSS approach so that each session focuses on harmonizing and unifying the wholeness. For example, in order to flow the Vis Matrix Naturae, it is necessarily to release the burdens of stress and tensions so that body work, acupuncture, aromatherapy, musical vibration and herbal infusions can be combined to induce pleasant responses at the physical level (B). Those tangible sensations engage the senses, bring the mind back into the body and affirm the safety, comfort and trust in one’s body in the present moment (P). When the body is open and relaxed, the mind can also be engaged to experience wholeness through psychotherapy, guiding the patient to realize their own strength and potential. Hypnotherapy and visualization techniques are quite useful to induce a state of profound relaxation, and to work at deeper level of consciousness where emotions and feelings are often stored. When the mind is deeply relaxed and one can experience the comfort of pleasant physical and emotional states, it can restore the flexibility to reframe partial or biased memories and find hope and purpose to create greater meaning and connection with and in their own life (S). The collaborative teamwork between the practitioner and patient, often combined with other family members and health care professionals, is also followed (S). Lastly, this concept is also taught to the patient so that he or she can practice savouring more Delicious Moments at home through their daily activities such as diet and exercise. With this holistic BPSS approach, we find our patients experience and reconnect with their authentic beauty, often spontaneously. Over time, they start voluntarily building healthier and more joyful thoughts, emotions, and actions, which contribute to the improvement and cure of their original concerns, along with generating more fulfillment and sustainable positive changes in life.

The aesthetics in the practice of naturopathic medicine have great potential for both healing and promoting optimal wellness, especially in mental health. Cultivating and savouring Delicious Moments exercises each individual’s power to flourish while creating and enjoying their own unique Delicious Life.

If our entire life were a full-course meal, we may not have a control over the ingredients or preparation, but we have full control of how we savour it, and when we move on to the next dish. And so it is with our patients. Bon Appétit!

References:
IS YOUR LIVER A4+?
LOOKING FOR A NEW AND UNIQUE LIVER PROTECTANT?

Bring some sunshine into your life by treating yourself to our A4+ liver protectant.

Nurtured by the coastal plains and the Amazon basin of Peru, Sabell Corporation introduces Isula™ Ancestral Herbal Extracts’ latest product, A4+.

Isula™ A4+ captures the best of Mother Nature molded with a marriage of science and traditional medicine.

This formula has been scientifically proven to protect the liver in a way never experienced before.

It is well known that the liver is a regenerating organ – wait until you see how your liver reacts to the protection given by A4+.

Product available for free trials. Contact your Ecotrend sales representative or info@ecotrend.ca for more information.