

Culture and health attitudes

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United States and China Health Attitudes Although every culture has different belief of being healthy, they all share the same definition. According to Mastsumoto and Juang (2013) healthy is defined as, " a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being not merely the absence of diseases or infirmity" (p. 180). Not only do it takes physically, mentally, and socially well-being but diseases free to be classified as healthy in all cultures.

The United States and the China culture share many differences and similarities when it comes to the belief of being healthy. Recently, there was an interview between a twenty-five year old Chinese girl and me. This girl owned her own business. She was born and raised in China but moved to the United States when she turned twenty years old. She told me she learned that China and the United States share many differences and similarities toward being healthy. The Chinese girl told me in the interviewed in China, they mainly believe in the principle of yin and yang to be healthy.

According to the Wikipedia Encyclopedia (2012), " The concept of yin and yang is also applicable to the human body; for example, the upper part of the body and the back are assigned to yang which is cold foods, while the lower parts of the body are believed to have the yin character which is hot foods. Yin and yang characterization also extends to the various body functions, and - more importantly - to disease symptoms (e. g. , cold and heat sensations are assumed to be yin and yang symptoms, respectively). " Yin and yang is what Chinese people use as a balance between good and bad health.

They believe that imbalance of yin or yang is what leads to poor health. For example, if a person eats too much of yin, which might be spicy foods, they

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are told that the yin caused them to have poor health; this person sure drinks some herbal teas to balance him or her back to good health. Although China believes in good health, there are a lot of mental health people there. The Chinese girl also told me that there are a lot of people in China that have mental health problems - over millions. Most of the mental health problems are due to depression.

There are a lot of mental health patients in China that attempt suicide. According to Li, Philips, and Cohen (2012), " More women attempt suicide than men. The most frequent causes of the attempts were interpersonal conflict (87%), psychological problems (33%), and conflict between others that affected the subject (27%)" (para 1). The Chinese girl said the main cause of the women attempting suicide is due to interpersonal conflict, psychological problems, and conflict with the other people. There are no solutions for the mental health problems in China.

Not only do they have mental health problems but also chronic diseases. China is known to have more chronic diseases than any other diseases. The Chinese girl told me they are known to have a high risk of cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer. Summary chronic diseases now account for an estimated 80% of deaths and 70% of disability adjusted life-years lost in China (Longde, Lingzhi, Fan, Yamin, and Burton, 2005). The chronic diseases death and the disability adjusted life-years lost are very high in China.

The chronic diseases are mostly related to high blood pressure and tobacco used. Most of these people that die from chronic diseases are middle-aged people. The Chinese girl talked about how the Chinese uses the yin and yang

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to diagnosis chronic diseases. She also stated they use herbal to try to cure these chronic diseases. I told the Chinese girl unlike China, the United States also have a theory they use to become healthy. I told her the United States believe in the influence of the biomedical model of health.

The biomedical model of health is where the doctors look at parts of the body to figure out what is wrong with the body and fix it (Helman, 1991). An example of biomedical model of health would be a person going to the doctor because he or she is having chest pain. First, the doctor will do an x-ray on the chest. Secondly, the doctor will diagnosis from the x-ray of the person had a chest or a heart attack. Last, the doctor will give the person some medicine to cure his or her chest pain. Mental health is more common in the United States than in China.

The Chinese girl stated that she read that over twenty million people in the United State have mental health (Manderscheid and Henderson, 2004); which is more than China. The age of mental health patients in the United States is over 18. Although, in the United Sates, most women suffer from mental health than men, mental is not due to depression of attempt suicide but depression of mood disorders. There is no cure for mental health problems in the United States. Not only is the United States common known for mental health problems but also diseases that lead to death.

I told the girl in the interview that the United States three death diseases are heart disease, cancer, and stroke. Heart disease is the first leading death in the United States. Heart disease occurs mostly in men than women; it is mostly in older people (Fang, Kate, and Nora, 2011). Heart diseases are mostly could bysmokingand not eating healthy. To cut the heart disease

status, a person should exercise, do not smoke or quit smoking, and eat the right foods such as fruits and vegetables. Cancer is the second leading death in the United States.

According to Klabunde, Brown, Ballard-Barbash, White, Thompson, Plescia, & King, (2012), " Each year, approximately 350, 000 persons are diagnosed with breast, cervical, or colorectal cancer in the United States, and nearly 100, 000 die from these diseases" (para. 1). There are over twenty-five percent of people in the United States diagnosed with cancer. The cause of most cancers is unknown. There is no cure of cancer. Stroke is the third leading death in the United States. Fang, Kate, M. and Mary (2012) stated that over fifty percent of the United States has been diagnosed with a stroke.

Stroke is known to be cause by high blood pressure, stress, high cholesterol, and smoke. The cures to be stroke free is to exercise, eat healthy, and do not smoke. In conclusion, the interviewed between the Chinese girl and I was to help realize that there are a lot of differences and similarities of being healthy in each culture. China and the United States have theories of being healthy; they just have different theories - China theory is called yin and yang while the United States theory is called biomedical model of health. Both China and the United States have mental problems; the United States just have more.

Another example of the cultures similarities are they both have diseases that cause death such as heart disease and cancer.

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