



Smart Life Forum

Raymond Peat, Ph.D.

Protecting and Restoring the Nervous System

Cubberly Community Center
4000 Middlefield Road, Room H1, Palo Alto, California

October 20, 2005 at 7:00 PM



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(in the new SLF Wiki!)

Future Speakers:

- November 17, Robert Cathcard, MD, Steve Fowkes, Mike Coffee, Phil Jacklin
Roundtable on How to Prepare for Avian (Bird) Flu

- December 15, TBD
- Jan 19, David Brownstein, MD
Iodine; Why You Need it, Why You Can't Live Without It

Mini-Presentation by Ron Snyder, President of Breakthrough, Inc. (breakthrough-inc.com) will present a summary of Strategic Planning Results from our October 1, Board meeting. See summary report by Phil Jacklin at the end of the newsletter.

About Raymond Peat

He has a PhD. in Biology and Biochemistry with a specialization in physiology from the University of Oregon . From 1959 to the early 1980's he taught courses in anthropology, biology, physics, nutrition, immunology, metabolism and psychology at colleges in Oregon and Mexico . He also conducts private nutritional counseling.

He started his work with progesterone and related hormones in 1968. In papers in Physiological Chemistry and Physics (1971 and 1972) and in his dissertation (University of Oregon, 1972), He outlined his ideas regarding progesterone, and the hormones closely related to it, as protectors of the body's structure and energy against the harmful effects of estrogen, radiation, stress, and lack of oxygen. The key idea was that energy and the body's structure are interdependent, at every level.

Since then, he has been working on both practical and theoretical aspects of this view. He thinks only a new perspective on the nature of living matter will make it possible to properly take advantage of the multitude of practical and therapeutic effects of the various life-supporting substances--pregnenolone, progesterone, thyroid hormone, and coconut oil in particular.

"Marketing" of these as products, without understanding just what they do and why they do it, seems to be adding confusion, rather than understanding, as hundreds of people sell their misconceptions with their products. The very concept of "marketing" is at odds with the real nature of these materials, which has to do with the protection and expansion of our nature and potential. A distorted idea of human nature is sold when people are

treated as "the market."

Presentation

In talking about practical things involving the brain; that is, how to optimize its functions while giving it maximal protection, he intends to give a comprehensive picture of the brain in a scientific context. He will discuss how he diverges from the mainstream on major issues in science and medicine.

He will start by reviewing the orientation he got from his reading in the 1940's, and how that conditioned his reactions to his first biology classes, in high school (1950) and college (1953). Teaching evolution was still outlawed in many states, and textbooks said normal people have 48 chromo-somes. Some works were just beginning to provoke a strong reaction of denial, since they had implications that contradicted a strict view of genetic determinism and the absolute division between the physical and spiritual. Physics, chemistry, and astronomy were affected by similar ideological trends.

An alternative orientation tended to see nature as intrinsically creative, or at least in an over-all steady state, rather than in a state of progressive decline and depletion. These alternative views strongly influenced cell physiology, and especially brain physiology, even though the doctrine of progress through genetic change due to deletion of genes became the mainstream.

Experiments provided a view of the living substance that was compatible with the idea of a continuously creative nature. Research on polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, estrogens, ionizing radiation, and polyunsaturated fats provided physicochemical understanding of how the living substance can be damaged in ways that affect inheritability aside from damage to the genes/nucleic acids. Early researchers helped to clarify the nature of non-genetic injury, and early pharmaceutical research made it clear that inflammation should be viewed as mainly a pathological, rather than simply physiological, process. Damage was coming to be seen as the result of stimulating an inappropriate reaction, rather than as mere deletion of essential properties. The brain, the main organ of adaptation, turned out to be uniquely sensitive to agents that were claimed to be "below the threshold of injury" by mainstream biology and medicine.

An appropriate approach to the prevention and repair of damage couldn't be developed

within the mainstream paradigm. Dr. Peat's focus will not be on stimulants and neurotransmitters. Instead, he will emphasize antiinflammatory and stabilizing agents to support intrinsic regenerative powers. This becomes the basis for a developing therapeutic approach to the brain.

The main orientation he will be describing, is one that he considers a substantial, "materials science" approach to the organism, and especially to the brain. This in contrasts to our culture's dominant interest in genetic, cybernetic, membrane-action-potential and information based approaches. He will attach it to major traditions of the 20th century, starting with the early view of the living substance as having the coherent properties of liquid crystals, down to the implications of NMR (nuclear magnetic resonance) studies of living tissues.

The picture that Dr. Peat presents will be intended as background, making it possible to interpret a very large amount of research done between 1930 and the early 1960s that has been thoroughly hidden from students. Work on this research involves many overlapping aspects. Some examples are: carcinogenesis, mutagenesis, inflammation, induced atrophy and excitotoxicity, estrogenicity, and accelerated aging which can be produced by polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, "estrogens", ionizing radiation, poly-unsaturated fats, and interference with oxidative metabolism.

The role of the drug companies, food industries, and radiation-lobby in suppressing awareness of these important biological generalities will be briefly discussed, especially as those forces have guided the culture and economy down a toxic path. In addition some particular therapeutic approaches will be covered, along with the implications these ideas have for continuing research.

Report on the October 1, SLF Strategic Planning Board Meeting, by Phil Jacklin

Normal Board business was set aside so that we could work with Ron Snyder. Ron facilitated our discussion and helped us, as he says, "align for results". The meeting was a great success.

Question: *What trends define the situation in which the SLF finds itself?* Board Responses included:

- (1) Drug Industry Control of Medicine
- (2) The Coming of Age of Anti-Aging Medicine
- (3) the Explosion of Basic Biological Research
- (4) the Growing Popularity of So-Called 'Alternative Medicine'
- (5) Internet Access to Health Information
- (6) Increasing Individual Self-Reliance about Personal Health
- (7) Battle Lines Drawn - People vs. Big Business, Human Needs vs. Corporate Interests.

Question: (to each Board member) *Leaving aside questions about whether we can get there, what is your vision for SLF?*

- (1) that through the work of the SLF, the American public would know what we know.
- (2) that SLF become a model for other health organizations throughout the country.
- (3) that SLF become strong enough to step up and protect people from medical practices that cause unnecessary suffering and death.
- (4) that SLF empower people to take responsibility for their own health – and challenge their doctors when necessary
- (5) that, even though we often can't reach our own families without changing medical practice, we commit ourselves to educating the public about the new science and medicine.
- (6) that we, as individuals, move from enlightened self-interest to an SLF moved by concern for the whole human family.

It was amazing to discover the passion – and sometimes the outrage – of our Board and it moved us to 'think big'.

Question: *Okay, then what is your vision of what the organization should be five years out?*

1. A national organization – the Sierra Club or Common Cause of health protocols.
2. A trusted source on the world wide web, the place to go for health info.
3. The model for SLF organizations "franchised" across the country.
4. A health organization based on a network of active face to face communities.
5. An organization active in a non-partisan way in legislative issues of public policy. In short, we want to create an organization based in communities committed to credible health education and health reform on a national scale.

Question: *What new initiatives can we take to start to make this happen?*

1. We need to do more for beginners and help them catch up. When we investigate issues, we need to leave tracks, logs and maps so they can find the information they need. For example, we need to do more with mini-reports and BioMed 101.
2. We need to do live webcasts of our meetings.
3. We need a corp of well-prepared speakers with good PowerPoint presentations to go out to health support groups and service organizations.
4. We need to take our first step toward a professional staff by raising money so we can hire a part-time Executive Director.
5. We need to move to a larger venue, after we do some advertising and use our new SLF cards.
6. We need to build our membership while finding ways to build participatory communities of shared concern within the organization.
7. We need to have health product and information Fairs.
8. We need to expand our Newsletter so that it is more than a speaker preview.
9. We need to codify our operating procedures and incorporate as a non-profit.
10. We need to create an SLF ListServe so that our members and others can have access to the stream of items now shared by Board members.

