

The Valley Floor from a Health Expert's Perspective

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I was born and raised in San Diego. I watched as its charm disappeared into concrete, its open space obliterated by growth.

Immersed in the healthcare field I watched as San Diego's citizens, historically laid back ocean lovers, became stressed and frazzled. The more concrete that was poured, the more stress appeared and the more the health of locals suffered.

I often heard from my clients "I am tired. I am tired of this rat race. I wish I could get off the treadmill".

Always my reply, "*your health* can't wait for the rest of the world to slow down for you. You must be the one willing to say no to the cultural madness. Be willing to be an example of the off-the-treadmill life you are looking for."

One of Dr. Deepak Chopra's most frequent recommendations for a return to and maintenance of health is to be in nature. "Be present with the peacefulness of nature, its sunrises and sunsets" his prescription. Our connection to nature, peace and quiet is a requirement in a health giving lifestyle.

My attraction to the Telluride area was not only its beauty and a return to open space and charm, but its people. Here was a community of people who were willing to say no to corporate greed, people who appreciated and protected the Earth on which they lived.

From an outsider's point of view, what Telluride has both in landscape and a community consciousness is very special. It is a community with a healthful vision, that off-the-treadmill place to revel in. I was excited to be a part of it.

There is an opportunity here in Telluride to be present on this planet in a very unique way. A way that honors connection to nature and the environment. It is an out-of-the-ordinary experience to be in a town that chooses to lead by example; protecting the health of its citizens by protecting the health of its surroundings.

In health, prevention is the best approach. At the level of prevention it is easy to turn the body toward health. Once into the disease cycle and faced with medications and surgery as the answer, the turn toward health is more challenging. The damage often cannot be undone.

Many carry the belief that "if only I had more money - I would be healthier, happier". More, bigger and better seems the mantra. I can tell you from my experience working with the health of those of all income levels, money is not the

ticket home.

I am too new to the complexities of the Valley Floor issue to know with assuredness about a yes or no vote. Both sides present compelling arguments. What I do know is that I hope it doesn't become as one of those moments that appears in my work with many of my clients. The moment when they remark, "If only I had paid attention sooner. I could have made a better choice for myself." Now it is harder to undo the damage.

I am impressed with the enthusiasm and debate with which Telluridians approach decisions. You pay attention. After listening to all of the pros and cons of the Valley Floor issue I encourage you to sit quietly and tap into the unique collective consciousness of Telluride. Ask what is in the best interest for the health of this community and listen to what your intuition may have to share with you. I encourage my clients to participate in their health in such a way and am always impressed with their self-discovery and conclusions.