

## Questions for Sandra Moss, Ayurvedic Practitioner and Author



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- Sandra Moss

**Bill Zirinsky:** You have a new book about Ayurveda and depression. What is it called, and please briefly tell us about it?

**Sandra Moss:** *Healing Depression the Mind-Body Way* (published by John Wiley & Sons in 2009) asserts that there is no one-size-fits-all treatment for depression. According to Ayurveda, both the diagnosis and treatment of depression must be guided by the individual's psycho-physiological constitution. Uprooting depression requires designing a tailor-made health program that employs "antidepressant strategies"—nutrition, yoga poses, exercise, breathing techniques, and meditation—that are in sync with the specific physical, mental, and emotional needs of the individual. The book also addresses how to maximize the digestive power in our mind-body to effectively metabolize life experiences.

**BZ:** And your previous book. What is the title, and what is it about?

**Sandra Moss:** *The Myth of Cholesterol* (published by MCD Century in 2005), explains that, for the care of the physical and emotional heart, we must go beyond monitoring our cholesterol level to looking at the inflammatory triggers in our lives—the true culprits of heart disease.

**BZ:** What do you love about the Ayurvedic approach?

**Moss:** One word answer: Everything. First of all, in my opinion, Ayurveda is the ultimate form of mind-body medicine. This ancient system of medicine has provided me with an exceptional framework for deeply understanding how our physiology functions at the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual level. Sharing this understanding with clients, in and of itself, is helpful to them. The Ayurvedic approach is also in sync with the way I naturally think; it's a great thing to practice something that makes intuitive sense to me.

**BZ:** How long have you been practicing Ayurvedic medicine, and what is your training in it?

**Moss:** I began seeing clients out of my office on South Main Street in 2007, but was involved in training for several years before that. I have been very fortunate to have received wonderful mentorship and training from some truly gifted practitioners: My formal educational training is from *New World Ayurveda*, where I trained with Dr. Paul Dugliss, M.D., here in Michigan. I also did an intensive program in *panchakarma* in Hawaii with Dr. Suhas Kshirsagar, M.D. (Ayurveda). As an apprentice to Dr. Light Miller, N.D., I learned the medicinal use of essential oils as well as *tarpana* (forgiveness rituals for emotional release). The learning never stops.

**BZ:** You were in medical school for awhile, is that correct? Why did you leave?

**Moss:** Yes, I was a medical student at the University of Michigan School of Medicine where I was almost a year shy of completing the program before a serious illness radically changed my course of study. Indeed, in the course of becoming a doctor, I became my own patient—and this has made all the difference in the way I have come to understand the practice of medicine, be it mainstream or complementary. *Ayurveda* provided for me a road back to true wellness, which is why I am dedicating the rest of my life to learning and practicing it.

**BZ:** Do you integrate some other modalities into your practice?

**Moss:** As an Ayurvedic practitioner, I have at my disposal any number of remedies to restore vitality and proper function to the physiology—from wonderful herbal formulas that address the root cause of problems and not just symptoms, fabulous essential oils, *panchakarma* (purification techniques that involve body work) to a wide range of more subtle therapies such as yogic breathing techniques and *marma* therapy (acupressure) that are profoundly effective.

**BZ:** Where were you raised?

**Moss:** I was raised in Ecuador, South America for the first decade of my life. However, my truly "exotic"

experiences I collected while living in the Bronx, New York where I had the good fortune to be surrounded by people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds. (One of my fondest memories growing up was the wonderful scent of food representing different parts of the world wafting through doorways of homes as I walked through the neighborhood on my way home after school.)

**BZ:** Do you like living in the Ann Arbor area? What do you most love to do in the fall in southeastern Michigan?

**Moss:** Absolutely! Walking around either downtown or in Gallup Park is a favorite activity of mine, especially in the fall.

**BZ:** Where in the world would you most like to visit, for an adventure?

**Moss:** As part of my undergraduate education, I trained as a primate behaviorist; so I have had some incredible travel experiences traipsing through jungles observing monkeys, living in remote places for extended periods of time. For a feast of the senses at this point in my life, however, I would choose the other end of the spectrum—a luxury vacation anywhere in Europe, say Paris.

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**The Grief Process, Astrology, and Ethical Considerations on Death with Ellen Bluhme-Goik • Sept. 13 and 20, 10-12:30** • Suggestions will be presented on how to talk to people in grief and how their experience of death is reflected in the natal chart, transits, and progressions. Practical information is provided for the practicing astrologer to recognize how underlying issues may resurface in a client's life during the grief process. \$30.

**Hard Times - Winning Strategies with Pat Perkins • Oct. 11, 2-4 p.m.** • We will discuss career indicators in the chart and the timing techniques necessary to achieve the best possible results for a new job and/or career. Free.

**Saturn in Libra with Connie Ranshaw • Oct. 13, 1-3:30 p.m.** • Saturn, always the teacher and change-maker, will be giving us new challenges and rewards starting Oct. 30 when it enters Libra. We will discuss what is returning and what new energies are coming. \$20.

**2012: An Astrological Perspective with Lisa Dygert • Nov. 15, 7-9 p.m.** • We will discuss the complexity of the Mayan calendar and what the Mayan philosophy tells us to expect in 2012. \$20.

**Financial Astrology Part I with Shirley Gray • Four Sundays starting Oct. 11, 1-3:30 p.m.** • This class is for those who want a general understanding of astrological timing and the ways it can be used in investing or business, the planets and signs that rule various industry groups, reading retrograde planets, the importance of Jupiter and Saturn, the business planets, and more. \$60.