

Your Health Story: Understanding the "Why" Behind Your Symptoms

What is a Health Timeline?

Most doctors look at what is happening to you *right now*. A health timeline is different—it looks at your whole life story. By looking at your past and your present, we can find the "root causes" of why you feel the way you do. We use a simple tool called **ATM** to see how your health "fire" started and what is keeping it burning.

Why This Matters For You

- **You are heard:** Your symptoms aren't "all in your head." There is a logical, step-by-step reason why you feel this way.
- **Find the "Spark":** We can identify the exact moment your health shifted so we know exactly what we are fighting.
- **Stop the "Fuel":** By finding the things that keep you feeling sick today, we can finally help your body start to heal.

Understanding the "ATM" Framework

Think of your health like a forest fire. To understand the fire, we look at three things:

1. **Antecedents (The Wood):** These are things you were born with or grew up with. They "set the stage."
 - *Examples:* Your family history, your birth story, or how many antibiotics you took as a kid.
2. **Triggers (The Spark):** This is the event that started the trouble. Most people say, "*I haven't felt right since...*"
 - *Examples:* A bad flu, a car accident, a divorce, or a very stressful job.
3. **Mediators (The Wind):** This is what keeps the fire burning *today*. Even if the spark is gone, the "wind" keeps the symptoms alive.
 - *Examples:* Not getting enough sleep, eating foods that cause inflammation, or constant daily stress.

What You Can Do Today

1. **Identify Your "Spark":** Look back at your life. Was there a specific year or event after which your health changed? Write that down.
2. **Spot the "Fuel":** What is one thing in your daily life right now that makes you feel worse? (Example: "I feel more tired when I stay up late" or "My joints hurt more when I eat sugar").
3. **Find Your "Quiet Periods":** Think of a time in your life when you felt great. What was different then? This helps us see what your body looks like when it's resilient.

Questions to Discuss with Your Practitioner

- Looking at my history, what do you think is the biggest "fuel" keeping my symptoms going right now?
- How can we work together to turn down the "wind" so my body can finally start to heal?
- Are there things from my childhood (the "wood") that might be making me more sensitive to stress today?

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