

FOREWORD

I FIRST BECAME INTRIGUED WITH Ellen Moyer's work in 2012, when she attended a workshop I presented. At a break, she handed me a paper that listed my keys to "ultrawellness." Alongside my keys she had listed two additional sets of keys, relating to environmental health and the health of our society. We both thought the parallels were striking. Ellen told me she was writing a book about transforming our health, our environment, and our society. Now that the book has arrived, I can tell you, it was worth the wait.

For those unfamiliar with my work, I'm a practicing family physician, *New York Times* bestselling author, and internationally recognized leader, speaker, educator, and health advocate. I direct The UltraWellness Center and the Cleveland Clinic Center for Functional Medicine and chair the board of the Institute for Functional Medicine. You may have seen one of my public television specials or other television appearances in which I teach viewers how to achieve better health.

My specialty, Functional Medicine, focuses on keeping the whole patient healthy and treating the root causes of illness, if it occurs. Functional Medicine often successfully treats patients after conventional medicine has failed. One reason for Functional Medicine's effectiveness is its consideration of the impacts of the patient's environment, which can be considerable. *Our Earth, Our Species, Our Selves: How to Thrive While Creating a Sustainable World* emphasizes the ways in which humans literally *are* their environment. It explains how optimal human health depends on healthy air, water, soil, plants, animals, climate, consumer products, and much more.

Ellen Moyer is the right person to write this book. A registered professional engineer, she has more than three decades of experience assessing and cleaning up contaminated waste sites. She is a US Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)–accredited professional and has been actively involved in designing the green systems we will need for the future. She has studied the problems we're facing and brings extensive

experience in developing solutions to overcome and prevent them. Her background in anthropology allows her to take a big-picture view of our situation and borrow ideas from other cultures.

People often feel trapped in the status quo, believing that changing course will be difficult or unpleasant. *Our Earth* dispels these beliefs. It shows that we can transform our health and environment—along with our economy, democracy, and society—more easily than we might think. And we can thrive while we are doing it.

When we improve one area of life—our health, environment, or economy—the other areas improve as well, due to the interconnections between them. *Our Earth* shows how humans in the past have repeatedly responded to environmental and health crises by creating epic change, and it explains why we can successfully do so again. Our current challenges present us with a great opportunity to dramatically ramp up our way of life for the better. It's an incredible time to be alive because change is coming, and you and I can help shape that change.

Ellen Moyer pulls together a remarkably wide range of topics, drawing from diverse perspectives, and presents them in a fresh, straightforward, and accessible style. *Our Earth* inspires us with its hopeful and empowering message and motivates us to take enjoyable actions that help our planet, our species, and ourselves.

You'll see things differently after reading this book. I hope everyone will read it and thrive while advancing the health and environmental revolution we so urgently need. If you are concerned about our world and our prospects for addressing environmental and health problems, I prescribe *Our Earth, Our Species, Our Selves: How to Thrive While Creating a Sustainable World*.

Mark Hyman, MD
November 17, 2016