

BARBERSHOP TALK



FOOD is medicine and medicine is food



by Robert L. Woodard  
The Wynnefield Barber

Food can take you on a journey of cultural tradition that spans around the globe. Each culture has a method to their madness about what to eat or what not to eat. However, looking at it from a cultural tradition perspective, the environment and where you come from plays the biggest role in why you eat what you eat. If you are an Eskimo who lives in cold weather, your diet consists of fat and blubber. It makes you wonder, how can eating that much fat be good for you? The answer is that your environment paints the picture. If you lived in Africa, it would not be good for you to eat high amounts of fat because the heat mixed with excess fat would cause health problems in hotter regions.

Philadelphians have an advantage. We experience hot and cold weather. There are people from various parts of the planet living here. Food and traditions become a part of many conversations at Woodard's Barbershop in the Wynnefield neighborhood. Barbers were the original doctors. Since I talk with many doctors, I learn quite a bit about health related issues.

Food is medicine. Medicine is food. The application of food according to your environment is key to good health. We have many cultural neighborhoods just waiting to share their diverse cultures with others. However, most cultures celebrate their traditional ceremonies separately from other cultures. So the *Barbershop Talk Human Family Day* became a reality to help bring cultures together – to learn from other diverse cultures how they handle healing with plant-based foods.

It is said that Hippocrates of Kos was the Father

of Medicine, but if you go back in time, there was the Egyptian priest Imhotep. He was known as one of the first healers. Dr. Sebi of the USHA Institute, who recently passed, was one of the latest healers in modern times. They all used food as medicine. Human beings will return from whence we came – ashes to ashes and dust to dust. Returning to the dirt is just a part of us. Out of the darkness of dirt comes the medicine of life – plant-based food.

How to eat to live becomes a key component to our health. Learning from each culturally rich tradition will help us not only survive, but learn how to live together. Living life is a gift and human beings are our most valuable natural resource.

I thank Mayor Jim Kenney for going to the United Nations and taking the spirit of our city with him. As a result, the *Barbershop Talk Human Family Day Foundation* is asking him to be the recipient of our "Good Neighbor of the Year" Award. His visit to the UN was historical and I'm proud of our "City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection" and its representation of all the diverse cultures here. Uniting in spite of our cultural differences is the key to a better world society.

I look forward to our press conference in memory of the sacrifices of one of our greatest neighbors on Earth – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Of all of the outstanding sacrifices of Dr. King, he wanted to be remembered only as "the man that tried to love somebody." We must take these words to our diverse cultures. Then we as Philadelphians can become an example to the rest of the world. How we view race plays a major role in this society. Take the "RACE Test" today at [www.BarbershopTalkHFD.org](http://www.BarbershopTalkHFD.org). **PRH**



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