

Tribute to Dr. Walter Crinnion, ND

Dr. Lyn Patrick, ND

I have known Walter since 1979, when we were a year apart at Bastyr University (then the John Bastyr College of Naturopathic Medicine). Since taking his postgraduate Physicians Course in Environmental Medicine (the very first one) in 2001, I have worked with him teaching, lecturing and writing for the past 18 years. Walter was a very special human being and I was blessed to know him. I doubt that I will meet or work with anyone as gifted in the remainder of my life; he was selfless, totally committed to teaching and helping other primary care providers, and as passionate about naturopathic medicine as his mentors, John Bastyr and Bill Mitchell NDs. I spent a precious day with him right before he left us and agreed to carry on his teachings in environmental medicine. We have lost a good soul and all of us are called on now to carry on his brilliance and his light. He has left very big shoes to fill and, believe me, it will take us all to fill them.

Walter J. Crinnion, ND was born in Oakland, California, USA, and graduated with the first class at what is now Bastyr University in Seattle, Washington in 1982. While there, he had the privilege of having John Bastyr, Bill Mitchell, and Joe Pizzorno NDs as teachers, mentors and, ultimately friends.

Walter embraced all of the naturopathic principles and soon began to explore why some patients were not getting better when safe and powerful natural healing techniques were used. He realized that some illnesses were due to environmental toxicant exposures. Since no one had begun to teach this aspect of medicine in medical schools, he began to search diligently through all the published medical journals and conferences to find answers. He became a student of Dr. William Rea, MD, a cardiothoracic surgeon who was a global pioneer of environmental medicine and a source of inspiration and knowledge for Dr. Crinnion in developing his environmental medical practice.

With over 30 years of medical practice, Walter Crinnion was considered one of the foremost experts in the field of environmental medicine. He created the environmental medicine curricula at Bastyr University, University of Bridgeport College of Naturopathic Medicine, and the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine (SCNM). At SCNM, he was endowed as Chair of the Department of Environmental Medicine from 2003 until 2013. He was also adjunct faculty at George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences through the MMI post-graduate fellowship as well as faculty at University of Western States.

Since 1999, he has been providing an online training course (SpiritMed Medical Education) for licensed healthcare providers who wish to become more proficient in environmental medicine. He founded the Naturopathic Association of Environmental Medicine

(now the National Association of Environmental Medicine), a member organization that sets standards of care and offers education. Dr. Crinnion has not only lectured across North America and Europe at medical conferences (including the CAND's Health Fusion conference in both 2011 and 2015) where he was a sought-after speaker, but also founded the Crinnion Opinion podcast and blog to keep his global followers informed about the latest information and protocols in the environmental medicine field.

His first book: *Clean, Green and Lean* was published by Wiley & Sons in 2009. He was a guest on ABC's *The View* with Barbara Walters in 2001, discussing toxic compounds in our everyday environment and how to protect ourselves. Dr. Crinnion was also asked by the Huffington Post to be a blogger, providing readers with current and accurate information about health and the environment. He was the editor of the environmental medicine section of the *Alternative Medicine Review* journal until 2014, and has been appointed to the editorial review boards of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Pharmaceutical Biology*, *Science of the Total Environment* and the *International Journal of Hygiene and Environmental Health*. Dr. Crinnion has also authored over 25 articles many of which have been published in peer-reviewed journals (available on PubMed). Walter helped create laboratory panels that have become part of the standard of care for detecting environmental toxicant exposures, and has also been a consultant to several nutraceutical manufacturers to design supplements addressing environmental toxicant exposure. In 2019, he authored, with Joe Pizzorno ND, the textbook *Clinical Environmental Medicine* published by Elsevier.

With the help of his colleagues and friends Lyn Patrick ND and Cheryl Gray RD, Dr. Crinnion had a lifelong dream come true in putting together an environmental medicine conference in the U.S. for the last three years, entitled the Environmental Health Symposium. This year's symposium honored the "decades of love, laughter, and wisdom that Dr. Crinnion has shared with the world."

Walter's life ended far too soon leaving behind a grieving family and colleagues. His legacy lives on with his loving family and friends and with hundreds of grateful patients and inspired students. He is survived by daughters Sara Hall (Josh), Joanna Oliver (Jeff), Rebecca Rathbone (Matt), and Kate Crinnion, grandchildren Scott and Joseph Rathbone, mother Virginia Crinnion and sister Mary Padgett (William). His father, Walter P. Crinnion, and daughter, Marie, pre-deceased him. Walter lived in Phoenix, Arizona with his daughter Kate. He loved the outdoors, cycled and kayaked, and was challenging himself by training for his third Ironman event.