I'LL HOLD SPACE FOR YOU

Adaptive fashion ready to wear collection for ASOS: a collective journey of human centerd healing and design

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In a global environment that is simultaneously dealing with and **healing** from the disturbances of the COVID-19 pandemic we have confronted the realities of crises in health, economic structures, and social justice. No industry has been untapped by the drastic shifts to reevaluate the values of humanity, especially the fashion industry. As a result, consumers have changed their daily habits due to the constant driving fear of infection.

Accommodations have been designed in response to the general public however, arrangements such as remote interactions, casualwear, protective gear, and home furnishings centered around holistic wellness have always been a growing necessity for people with disabilities. In the past two years we have experienced a renewed acknowledgement and education of oppressive systems, and the next three years will be about making this knowledge actionable for more inclusive experiences. One of the pathways to achieving a level of authenticity within diversity and inclusivity is found within adaptive fashion.

Adaptive clothing is clothing designed around the needs and abilities of people with varying degrees of disability, including congenital disabilities, acquired disabilities, temporary disabilities, cognitive disabilities, and physical disabilities. This approach to fashion, which is becoming a standard due to the pandemic, stems from the notion of fashion psychology and enclothed cognition. These concepts relate to the effect which clothing has upon a person's mental process and the way they think, feel, and function in areas like attention, confidence, or abstract thinking.

Adaptive fashion is the future that will assist the holistic health of everyone, not only those with disabilities or a neurodiverse way of living. This is a promising market for retailers, such as ASOS, that is estimated to increase in demand drastically, due to the shift of demands post pandemic. ASOS is the retailer to host the collection because of its unique position as a global digital platform that has already provided a wide range of inclusivity in sizing, ethnic backgrounds, stages of life, disability, and gender identification through digital access, long before the shifts of the pandemic. This company has earned loyalty through true authenticity in diversity and inclusion.



Quality and adjustability will be vital in the design of fashion items in order to reduce the probability of returns. Many have also had to grow accustomed to determining value perception from a digital perspective - this is challenging as many are spending consciously due to economic uncertainty and many digital platforms are not suitable for those with neurodiversity. 10% of 1 billion disabled people experience clothing challenges that impact their relationship to fashion, especially post pandemic. The rise of inclusive mindsets has correlated to the rise of making comfort sustainable through accessibility. There has been growing demand in modest wear, plus size, and women's lifestage (pregnancy, menopause, older age) markets. The umbrella category for these niche markets is adaptive fashion. Intimate influences to consumer perceptions of fashion include the new post-pandemic experiences with mindfulness, architecture, art, sound, and healing as a habit with access to all. These cultural experiences are being used by consumers to aid healing and mindfulness to make wellness a shared communal experience. This is crucial for the psychological stability of societies in the face of global socio-economic and health crises.



15% of the global population is disabled, including psychosocial disabilities which is commonly dismissed in society as not being "disabled enough". 80% of the poorest people have disabilities and live in low income and middle income countries. The loss of jobs during the pandemic means that many did not receive disability allowances or unemployment benefits. People with intellectual disabilities living in congregate residential settings had a higher ritsk of death from Covid-19. In these regions there are inadequate social safety protections or no welfare states. This means that purchase drivers and the motivation of serviceable/accessible products are extremely crucial for these consumers



The healthcare segment within adaptive fashion represents an opportunity to serve those with chronic illness or recovering from the global pandemic. These post-pandemic consumers desire fashionable designs that offer them a dignified experience when undergoing medical treatment or therapy.



Many people who identify as neurodiverse or on the autism **spectrum** have strong preference for sensory friendly clothing. Sensory friendly clothing is designed for those with hypersensitivity to touch (tactile sense). These items include **soft** fabrics, soft threads, tagless clothing, self dressing mechanisms, stretchy waistbands to alleviate abdominal pressure, limited seams, weighted vests, and compression clothing. Items with a thick dry frit material also appeal to consumers because it can help provide a sense of calmness to the wearer. Additional products that appeal to consumers post pandemic are noise weighted lap pads, chair balls, chair socks, chair glides, and alternatives to the general



Wellness enhanced materiality is on the rise and the elements included in this are:
- thermoregulating fabrics, cooling, sweat wicking, circulation boosting, anti allergenic, and skin firming properties.



Our collection meets the needs of our audience through the design process as well as through marketing and inclusive shopping experiences. The **Evolution Collection** has products that accommodate for leg braces and other forms of support tools, provide the psychological sense of balance and security to the wearer, provide adjustability of hems to accommodate for missing limbs, easy access closures for dexterity disabilities, and body mapping support for targeted comfort around joints and medical pressure points.

We combine Indigenous wisdom and ecological identity to service psychosocial and sensory disabilities through textile infusion of medicinal herbs. Topical and dermatologic therapy are assistive remedies for calming sensory processing disorders. These textiles have an important role in relieving stress, rejuvenating the body, curing skin diseases, and helping sleep.

In addition, acupressure pathways to provide restoration of the mind and body are increasingly a more common preference for many people in their journey for wellness post pandemic. Deep pressure through the joints and muscles is calming and can

help alleviate symptoms of PTSD and sensory processing disorders, therefore our collection has inventive techniques that combine the properties of healing textiles and acupressure compression fabrics.

















Root

Heart Intuit

Shade



100 % Bamboo



Bamboo Cotton



Hemp Stretch Jersey



Organic Cotton



Jute Fibre



Organic Silk Fabric



Organic Cotton Yam

Bamboo Cotton Spandex

- GOTS certified
- Cruelty free
- Antibacterial
- Thermoregulating
- Cooling
- Sweat wicking
- Circulation boosting
- Anti allergenic
- Skin firming

The skin is the largest organ in the human body and acts as a border/conduit for outside substances to enter the body. For most consumers of mass-produced fashion, toxins and chemicals from industrial clothing are assimilated into the body through skin. In contrast, **Indigenous cultures** have historically used clothing as a way to heal. Clothing can be worn to treat skin infections, arthritis, eczema, psoriasis, stress, asthma, blood pressure etc. Derived from the theory of touch, the body loses toxins when it comes in contact with herbal clothing, which can also improve metabolism.

These textiles are free of toxic irritants, are sustainable, organic, and biodegradable, These dyes are popular for beautiful shades and primordial elegance. To make colors saturated, mordents such as myrballams, rubhabs leaves, oils, minerals, alum, and iron vatete are used instead of heavy metal mordents.



John Wort's

Flower





Neem

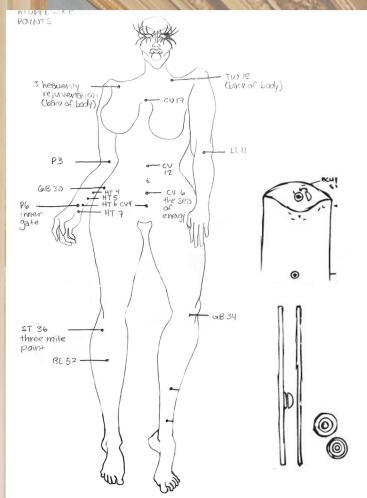


Burdock Root



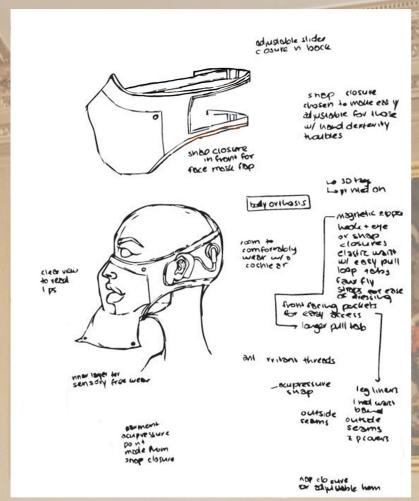


ACUPRESSURE POINT MAP



Removable snap 3D studs are placed on acupressure points under garment liner to prevent uncomfortability while in use

ADAPTIVE FACE MASK - featuring a transparent section of fabric to allow for those who are hearing impaired to read lips.



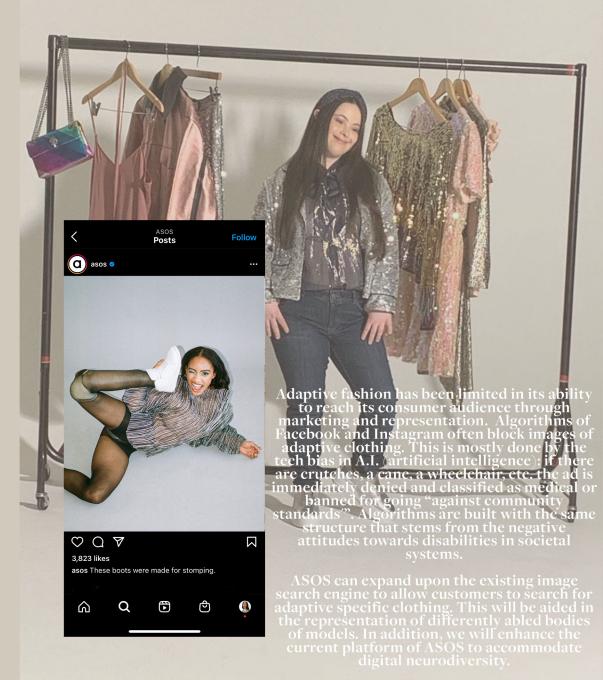
adjustable strap that goes around entire head instead of ears to prevent uncomfortability for those with sensory disorders ad to allow for room for a person's cochlear if necessary

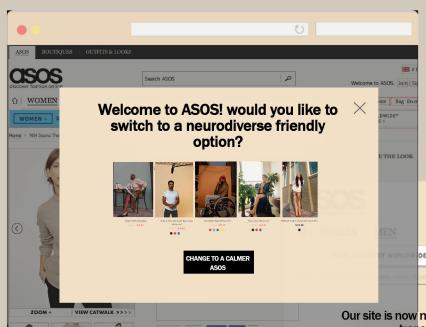


The disability community is quick to notice every time a commercial profiles people with disabilities. Unfortunately, in many cases, it is an actor or model pretending to have a disability -- something that doesn't just irritate many people with disabilities, but also their families and the organizations that support them. Our ads with

ASOS will feature a true person with a disability and tell their story. To ensure disability is being properly represented in our marketing content, we will consult and work with the disabled talent agency C Talent and Zetta Studios. We will also partner with social media influencers with disabilities who are open and willing to promote our collection products and services to their followers. There are blind photographers on Instagram, wheelchair users with great dancing moves on YouTube, and poets with autism on Facebook.

employee advisory committee,
employee resource group consisting of people
with and without disabilities and make it one of
their goals to evaluate company-wide workplace
accessibility. These groups offer employees an
opportunity to network, address common issues
and concerns, and receive support from those
who share similar backgrounds, experiences, or
interests.





Upon the dependence of technology and digital paces during the pandemic, many of us have experienced similar symptoms that neurodiverse people have had to manage their whole life, this includes: information overload and overstimulation, attention deficit, challenges in social interactions, and discomfort or anxiety. Adopting the languages and analysis of the disability movement opens a new range of possibilities for understanding and engaging with the way the internet changes our minds, behaviors, and relationships.



WHAT DO YOU THENK OF OUR NEW HOMEPAGE?

Our site is now more usable in this digital world with adjustable color schemes, slower web transitions, descriptive alt text, and no surprising videos/animations.

"Change to a Calmer ASOS", the website design will adjust slightly in accordance with WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) for cognitive accessibility. The user can switch between this version of the ASOS website settings and the original at any time, allowing for personalization in an inclusive website design. The major aspects of web and digital marketing design to consider are: language, type, visual hierarchy, color palettes, and









Alt text: Ambassador @mamacax and her sister Lei stretching with dumbells before a workout outside on a basketball court.

Ethnographic Research Through Community Interviews





What condition(s) have you been diagnosed with or have self diagnosed?
Clinical depression and anxiety.

How has life with your condition changed since the pandemic?

It made it worse. Hardest part was that the pandemic caused isolation and not being able to stay busy. I was constantly separated from people and froced to be antisocial.

How is your experience now with in person classes, in person work, and in person shopping?

Cruel irony. You miss people the entire time the pandemic started but it now feels so weird to see people all the time. I have developed sensory overload now that it has been two years since being around people. I have lost a lot of social touch.

You also realize how unsanitary society was before the pandemic. It seems like we have learned nothing. The society is inconsiderate due to economic production.

What is your relationship to your clothes?

I am mindful about what I put on because the clothes I wear add to my confidence. Its a way to present myself before people meet me. I like to present myself as put together, something clean. It contributes positively to my mental health.

I do not feel like there are a lot of options. A lot of clothing is very western. I have a problem with very formal wear, western standard of formality. I am attracted to Korean outerwear, it's freeing.

What is your favorite piece of clothing in your closet?

My linen pants, but I had to learn how to crop them myself because I feel more comfortable with air around my ankles.

What do you wish those with "typical" neural processes knew about those who process the world atypically?

Advocate for patience and self education

PERSON 2



What condition have you been diagnosed with or have self diagnosed?

High functioning anxiety ADHD, mild depression, insomnia, and OCD.

How has life with your condition changed since the pandemic?

It has aggravated symptoms further. Sitting in a small space majority of pandemic with my thoughts and reflecting daily. Seeing issues and stressors build more. There used to be constant distractions, 3 jobs, grants, scholarships, interactions to further career, busy work, but now that I had to stop all that I had to realize I wasn't that organized. I am extremely anxious but I never thought of it as a diagnosed problem. Health issues with family, graduating, economic depression., loss in the job market, trauma from school, processing that while living in a space I didn't feel safe in before college. Balancing relationships with parents while also trying to be an adult. Socio-political aggravation occurred around me. It was a deep hard struggle.

Do your clothes contribute to your day to day experiences?

I wear very comfy clothes when I don't feel comfortable in my body. I have chronic pains and eczema. When I want to feel good about myself I try to dress up and do cute styles. I feel like the better I look the better I would feel. When my endometriosis is at its peak is when I default to comfy clothes.

What is your favorite piece of clothing in your closet?

My nightgowns or this long brown dress I have that looks like a Picasso painting. Anything loose fitting. Elevated, ethereal. Soft silky dress, best of both worlds.

What is a piece of clothing that you wish was more comfortable for you to wear?

Shorts and skirts. Waist to hip ratio causes skirts to sit uncomfortably. Shorts are either too tight on the thighs or too loose on the waist. Material is also itchy

PERSON 3



What condition(s) have you been diagnosed with or have self diagnosed?

Type One diabetic since 2018. I wear medical devices. The first two months I had insulin and finger sticks. Many think you go it from eating unhealthy food but that is not the only way. It has nothing to do with my diet, it's an autoimmune disease.

What daily situations cause discomfort?

I was nervous going out to eat, not every restaurant has the earb count provided. My phone alerts me that my sugar is dropping. I have to tell everyone that I am diabetic. Getting unnecessary attention affects my everyday life. I don't hide it. I am proud of my devices but some people try to force me to tell them how it is. This is still a fresh diagnosis for me. People have tried to touch it without my permission (impeding on boundaries). Recently I have developed an insecurity about scarring. I can only keep it on my arms and legs as my most comfortable spot. I see them as battle scars. I won't stop wearing short sleeves but there is still a bit of insecurity with the constant scarring. It affects how I feel about my body. Sometimes I would have to give myself insulin in the bathroom to comfortably take off my clothing.

Do your clothes contribute to your day to day experiences?

You can change the pattern/color of your patches. I try to get more neutral color sinpatch patches to keep it neutral with my outfits. I want to explore patterns with my outfits. I will sometimes wear certain shirts to show off my devices. I feel like a futuristic warrior. I feel empowered. It starts conversation amongst the community amongst people who experience diabetes or are advocates. I hate when it's just a big bump in my jeans though. I am also very clumsy so I may accidentally bump into it. Right now I am wearing high waisted jeans but I try to wear clothes that will not press on me. I also try not to wear super tight sleeves because on my arm the glucose monitor is a bit thicker.

PERSON 4



What condition(s) have you been diagnosed with or have self diagnosed? Clinical depression, anxiety, ADHD (all

How has life with your condition changed since the pandemic?

Lack of accommodations and justice in educational institutions. Loss of housing, financial assistance and job. I was Laid off during pandemic. I had to demand for accommodations from institutions that fought at every step of the way to have remote accommodations. I became a caretaker for my 15 year old sister and 70 year old paternal figure. My eating habits cahnged and contributed to daily condition (I eat once or twice a day). This is due to financial insecurity and food insecurity. I have developed an eating disorder. Due to my ADHD I also forget to eat or have difficulty securing food. Pandemic exposed these habits and caused mental/emotional turmoil. I lost 15 pounds during this. I also had to endure the passing and mourning of family

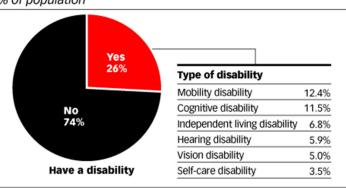
What is your relationship to your clothes

Most days I don't get dressed because I don't feel good. I am separated from all my clothes due to displacement. I believe that if I look good I feel good but it's been a struggle. I am always doing something with my fingers, hands, or moving my feet. I play with zippers all the time, I put my hands in and out of my pockets. I get uncomfortable with the tongue of shoes, textures under my shoes, etc.

What do you wish those with "typical" neural processes knew about those who process the world atypically?

wish people would understand that it's a disability that we cannot help. Imagine me everyday trying to just feed myself, shower, go to school, get through assignments, reply to text messages, etc. Every little thing revolves around this neurodivergence.
There should be more grace.

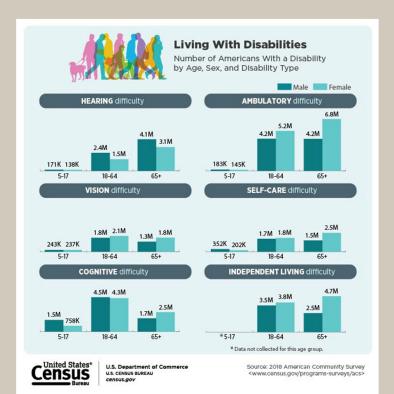
Share of US Adults with Disabilities, by Type, 2018 % of population



Note: ages 18+

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)," July 26, 2019

257202 www.eMarketer.com



The words **disabled** and **disability** are not considered taboo to use. There are misconceptions and miseducation due to being wrongly perceived in the media.

What is a disability? According to the most recent data from the

CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), one in every four Americans has some form of disability. While we typically think of the disabled as having a visible physical disability, the actual definition of the disabled has been expanded to encompass a wide range of conditions that can and do impact people in their daily lives. The federal government currently categorizes six types of disabilities: Mobility (serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs), Cognition (serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions), Hearing (serious difficulty hearing), Vision (serious difficulty seeing), Independent living (difficulty doing errands alone), and Self-care (difficulty dressing or bathing). 26% of American adults — totaling approximately 67 million people — live with some form of disability. A disability is any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions). Various types of disabilities affect a person's vision, movement, thinking, remembering, learning, communicating, hearing, mental health, and social relationships. Post pandemic, we are expereincing a rise in post viral acquired disabilities and a shift in the overall health of the collective

The **Invisible Disability Association** defines an invisible disability as a physical, mental, neurological condition that limits a person's movements, senses, and activities that is invisible to the onlooker. There is a large misconception that those with invisible disabilities are "not disabled enough".

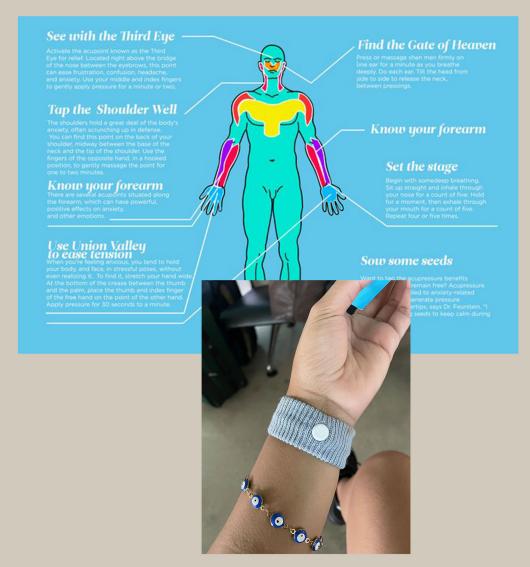
These conditions can include: fibromyalgia, OCD, autism, bipolar disorder (depression or hypomania), unilateral hearing loss, diabetes, Ehlers - Danlos syndrome (joint hypermobility and chronic pain), Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS) and hypermobility syndrome, cerebral palsy, down syndrome, spastic muscular dystrophy, and many others.

Acupuncture is an alternative medicine that is key in traditional Chinese medicine. It seeks to restore the flow of positive energy through the body by removing negative energy causing pain. This stimulates various systems of the body which can trigger the healing response.

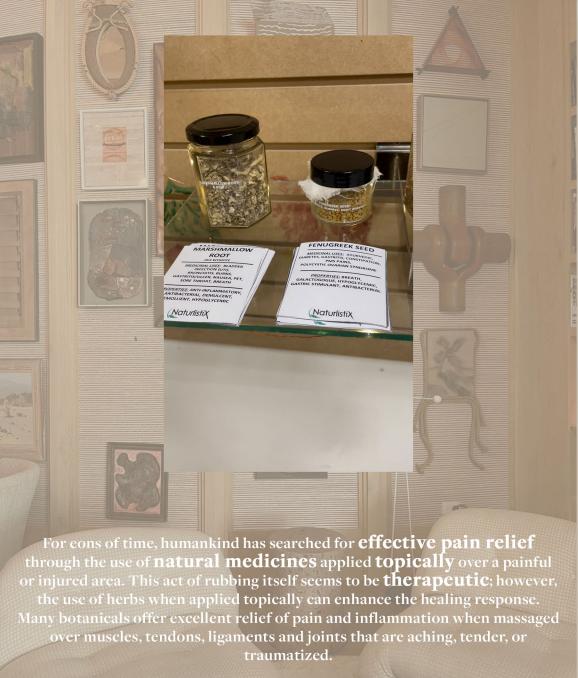
Acupuncture is used globally for overall wellness, stress management, and muscle pain. After treatment, many feel energized or relaxed. It has a neurological effect after the balancing of vital energies. Points are seen as places where nerves, muscles, and connective tissue can be stimulated. Stimulation increases blood flow and triggers activity of the body's natural painkillers. This form of therapy stimulates the central nervous system by releasing chemicals into muscles, the spinal cord, and brain. This promotes physical and emotional wellbeing by stimulating the body's natural healing abilities.

In our collection, we are inspired by the process of acupressure, a variation of acupuncture therapy.
Acupressure involves pressing/massaging acupuncture points to stimulate energy pathways topically (without breaking skin). This has been shown to be effective in reducing nausea and lessening labor pain. Acupressure is generally done by using the thumb, finger, or knuckle to apply gentle firm pressure.

When calming the symptoms of **sensory processing disorders** (SPD) some commonly used activities include applying deep pressure through joints and muscles, or providing scents to engage the olfactory system (lavender, rose, and vanilla to be calming; citrus, mint, and cinnamon to be alerting). Some people pair typical therapeutic treatments with alternative treatments such as acupuncture therapy to help alleviate symptoms of SPD.



The **National Institute of Health in the U.S.** published a consensus statement on the use of acupuncture as adjunct treatment or alternative treatment in the comprehensive management program for certain diseases in 2011. In 2011 acupuncture treated groups for children with autism were reported to have a superior improvement over behavioral therapy groups, herbal treatment groups, music treatment groups, or massage treatment. Rates of improvement were over **80**% versus over 50% in comparison groups. The treatment principle for acupuncture/acupressure therapy is to awaken, assist, and calm the mind as well as enlighten the mentality and improve developmental profile.



Traditionally in the Bahamas medical clinics are few and far between. So, in order to find a fix for sunburn, fever, or even chronic ailments such as: diabetes and high blood pressure, Bahamians turned to what was on hand i.e bush remedies. Using herbs, spices, flower petals, fruit pieces, tree bark, weeds, and leaves, locals make **medicinal products** that can cure conditions from the common cold to insomnia.

Some specific blends are even believed to be beneficial in the treatment of cancer. Bush medicine has been a way indigenous cultures in the Bahamas, other parts of the Caribbean, the U.S., and around the globe decolonized western medical practices built upon capitalism rather than **holistic health**. While these practices are not a substitute for medical treatment they complement as therapeutic tactics to provide a holistic approach to health in connection to the natural world.

Their knowledge and, in many cases, mastery of herbalism gave them the ability, to a certain extent, to control and heal their own bodies. People often visit the Bahamas and collect information on bush medicine. Then, they return to their countries and capitalize on the knowledge of African descendants.

During the Underground Railroad in U.S. history, **natural plant remedies** were equally or more effective in treating ailments of physical or psychological conditions of patients than colonial medicine. The means by which Black people in the Americas generated this knowledge was through a complicated series of relations with people of other races which spanned for generations across the country and contributed greatly to American

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Editor X

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