

Portland Helmich

Over the course of her career, Portland Helmich has explored storytelling from all sides -- as a television host, reporter, voice-over talent, producer, writer, and actress.

She attended New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, majoring in acting. At NYU, she studied at Circle-in-the-Square Theatre School and at David Mamet's Practical Aesthetics Workshop with teacher William H. Macy. In her early twenties, she performed in theatre, commercials, and on soap operas like *All My Children*. In time, though, she tired of city life and moved to Burlington, Vermont for a drastic change of pace.

It was there that her special interest in natural health and alternative medicine emerged. While in Vermont, she created the natural health series, *Journeys Into Healing*, which she hosted and produced for Wisdom Television, a satellite network. She also worked as a freelance alternative medicine correspondent for Oxygen and produced for *HealthWeek* on PBS. Unrelated to health, but related to television, she spent two years producing segments for and hosting *Rural Free Delivery*, a magazine series that had her traveling the state of Vermont, telling stories about locals who made their living off rural Vermont crafts.

In 2002, she moved to Boston, where she worked as a medical producer at WCVB-TV, Boston's ABC News affiliate. Working under tight deadlines, she churned out daily stories about the latest advances in health and medicine while uncovering as many natural health stories as possible. Simultaneously, she did voice-overs and produced over 20 segments about everyday people who found the spiritual in their work, hobbies, personal relationships, and life challenges for the uplifting magazine series *New Morning*, which aired on the Hallmark Channel. She wrote for natural health magazines like *Body + Soul*, *Alternative Medicine*, and *Spa*, and her voice was frequently heard on WGBH Radio in Boston, where she filled in as a news host during the NPR programs *All Things Considered* and *Marketplace*.

Later, she worked at CN8, the Comcast Network, where she filled in for Barry Nolan as host of *Nitebeat*, a live evening talk show, and served as a segment host on *American Builder*, a Comcast home improvement show. Meanwhile, she did freelance health reporting for *The American Consumer* on PBS.

In 2006, she got the opportunity to realize a dream -- Veria, a new natural health and wellness channel, put her at the helm of *What's the Alternative?* She created and serves as host and executive producer of the national television talk show, which centers around alternative approaches to improving health and healing the body/mind. The series currently airs on Verizon FiOS and the Dish Network on Veria TV. Helmich has created 52 programs to date, covering topics like macrobiotics and cancer, acupuncture and depression, overcoming grief, infertility, autism and the Specific Carbohydrate Diet, iridology, conscious eating, qigong, organic clothing, naturopathic baby care, stress reduction, holistic veterinary care, reducing household toxins, herbal medicine and menopause, and more. "This is the work of my heart," Helmich muses. "It's such a perfect blend of my skills and interests."

Helmich holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in acting from New York University and a master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language from St. Michael's College in Vermont.