



True Health

Physical-Mental-Spiritual

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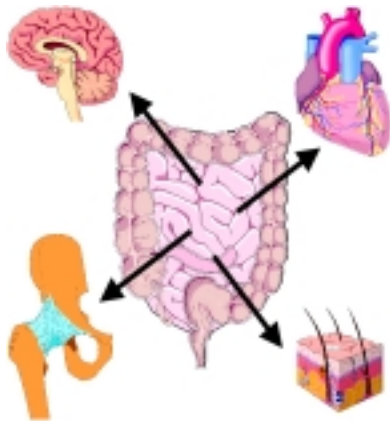
Understanding and Healing

Leaky Gut Syndrome

In her book *Digestive Wellness*, Elizabeth Lipski asserts that leaky gut syndrome “underlies an enormous variety of illnesses and symptoms.” Lipski explains that leaky gut syndrome is actually just a nickname for the more formal term “increased intestinal permeability.” One of the primary functions of the intestinal tract is to absorb nutrients and keep out toxins. If the walls of the intestinal tract become compromised, toxic agents (such as bacteria or large molecules) may be absorbed into the circulation along with nutrients. The toxins can circulate through the system, damaging tissues until being eliminated.

Lipski provides an extensive list of signs and symptoms associated with leaky gut syndrome. The list includes abdominal pain, chronic muscle or joint pain, gas or bloating, mood swings, nervousness or anxiety, skin rashes, diarrhea, recurrent bladder infections, fevers of unknown origin, constipation, and fatigue.

The vagueness and nonspecificity of such symptoms account for the designation of syndrome rather than a specific medical diagnosis. A syndrome is not an illness or disease. A syndrome refers to a group of signs or symptoms that collectively indicate an abnormal condition. Thus, in a medical sense, syndromes are rather slippery and difficult to define. Leaky gut syndrome lives up to its designation.



Lipski cites numerous potential causes of leaky gut syndrome including chronic stress, candida and other parasites, environmental contaminants, improper acid-alkaline balance from poor diet, and certain medications such as steroid drugs.

According to Lipski and other experts on leaky gut syndrome, this condition may be responsible for diverse disorders including autism, arthritis, chronic fatigue syndrome, schizophrenia, and skin disease such as psoriasis.

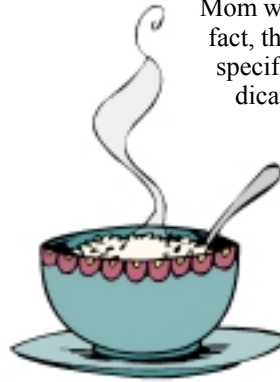
Leaky Gut and Psoriasis

In research conducted at Meridian Institute, we have focused primarily on leaky gut syndrome as it relates to psoriasis. In the numerous readings by Edgar Cayce that address psoriasis, leaky gut syndrome is the most common cause. For a forty-six-year-old man who wanted to know the source of his psoriasis, Cayce responded, “The cause is the thinning of the walls of the intestinal system, which allows the escaping of poisons ...” (289-1) Cayce maintained that each body has four primary channels for eliminating toxins: the gut (defecation), the urinary tract (urination), the respiratory tract (respiration), and the skin (perspiration). Cayce

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Eat Your Oatmeal!

A Healthy and Great Tasting Breakfast



Mom was right – oatmeal is good for you. In fact, the FDA has awarded the first-ever food specific health claim to oatmeal. Research indicates that eating oatmeal as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease.

During the past three decades, over thirty studies have demonstrated that oatmeal and oat bran can reduce serum cholesterol, a major risk factor in heart disease. Cholesterol comes from animal-based foods and is produced in the body primarily by the liver. Excess cholesterol can damage and clog arteries.

One of the major health benefits of oats can be attributed to beta-glucan, a soluble fiber responsible for lowering cholesterol. In the intestinal tract, beta-glucan acts like a sponge to absorb cholesterol-based bile acids and carries them out of the system. To replace the bile acids, the liver pulls more cholesterol out of the bloodstream, lowering cholesterol levels. As an added bonus, oats contain GLA (gamma linolenic acid), an essential fatty acid that may play a protective role in heart disease and cancer.

Steel Cut Oats

Edgar Cayce also extolled the virtues of oatmeal in many of his readings. In particular, the high nutritional value of oats was recommended for persons with low vitality and debilitation. Specifically, oatmeal was said to be a good source of vitamin B-1, iron, and silicon.

However, Cayce consistently preferred steel cut oats to the highly processed commercial brands. Steel cut oats are produced when whole oats fall through a series of whirling blades. Cutting the free-falling oats preserves more nutrients than the rolling process used to make oat flakes for instant cereals.

The obvious drawback to steel-cut oats is cooking time. Cayce insisted that the oats be slow cooked at least two or three hours. In Cayce’s era, this typically meant using a double-boiler type cooking appliance to prevent overheating. If you have a double boiler and don’t mind getting up early or eating a late breakfast, by all means, use the double boiler method. For the rest of us, a crockpot will do just fine.

One approach is to put the oats and water in the crockpot the night before with the temperature set on low. The oats will slow cook all night. The method that works best for me is to plug my crockpot into a timer that turns it on for about two hours before I arise the next morning. In this format, I set the crockpot on the high setting.

You can purchase a simple timer that plugs into your wall socket for a few dollars at almost any hardware or discount store.

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Did Edgar Cayce always use the CAM [complementary and alternative medicine] approach? J.H. e-mail

Generally speaking, alternative medicine means treatment “instead of,” whereas complementary medicine is treatment “in addition to.” The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM, a division of NIH) defines CAM as a flexible approach in which (1) alternative therapies can be used alone, (2) with other alternative therapies, or (3) in combination with conventional medicine treatments. Thus, diversity is an inherent quality of CAM. In some readings, especially for simple and relatively benign problems, Edgar Cayce would recommend a single alternative treatment (CAM option #1). More often, various alternative modalities (such as diet, massage, energy medicine, spiritual healing, etc.) would be integrated into an individualized treatment plan (CAM option #2). When dealing with serious and potentially terminal conditions (such as advanced cancer), Cayce tended to use CAM option #3, wherein alternative and conventional treatments are combined (as discussed in the cancer treatment article). As an interesting historical and conceptual footnote, in addition to using CAM principles in thousands of readings, Cayce actually explicitly discussed complementary medicine in a reading given in 1938. A woman with kidney infection asked Cayce: “Have I sufficient spiritual knowledge, understanding, and strength to complete the healing of present bodily disharmonies without aid of doctors, or material means?” His sensible reply was about fifty years ahead of the NIH formal recognition of CAM: “As indicated, if these are used as *complementary* experiences for the physical, for the *attunement* of the mental, such may be much better accomplished.” (1472-8) In this instance, Cayce’s CAM treatment recommendations included chiropractic, electrotherapy, and herbal medicine integrated with mental and spiritual attunement. - D.M.

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states that 85 percent of toxins are eliminated through the gut via defecation. When some of the toxins are allowed to escape into the general circulation, they must be eliminated by one or more of the other channels. The skin lesions of psoriasis may be an indication that all of the other means of elimination have failed.

Leaky Gut and Comorbidity

The term “comorbidity” has been used to describe the overlap or coexistence of illnesses that occur together. Comorbidity can occur because one disorder increases the vulnerability to the other, is a different expression of the other, both are due to some third underlying cause, or by chance alone.

Understanding comorbidity is important because leaky gut syndrome has been associated with so many different and diverse conditions. If toxins leak out of the gut and settle in various parts of the body, a host of illnesses could result. In her book, Lipski lists thirty-one “common clinical conditions associated with intestinal permeability.”

Cayce on Comorbidity

The Edgar Cayce readings are a wonderful resource for understanding comorbidity in all its manifestations. With regard to leaky gut syndrome, a reading given for a man with psoriasis illustrates Cayce’s perspective. Cayce was asked, “What is [the] cause and cure for the psoriasis conditions on my body and scalp?” Cayce described how toxins were leaking out of the intestines and producing the skin lesions that characterize psoriasis. He then went on to tell the man that he was fortunate that the toxins were being eliminated through the skin for “... were it [the toxicity] to go to the valves of the heart, it would be heart trouble – as would be called; were it to go to the liver, it would be cirrhosis of the liver; were it to go to the spleen, it would be a hardening of one end of it; were it to go to the brain, it would be softening of the brain [dementia]; were it to go to the glands of the throat or thyroids, it would be that of goitre; or were it to settle in some other portion – were it to *settle* – it would become a tumor of some

character or nature [cancer].” (943-17)

Interestingly, the medical literature documents that there exists a significant comorbidity of psoriasis with several other conditions including bowel disease, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, and joint disease. Cayce’s explanation of how leaky gut syndrome could cause various diverse disorders is consistent with the modern medical literature.

From a practical standpoint, I have found it helpful to share reading excerpt 943-17 with participants in our psoriasis research programs. In many instances I have observed an immediate attitude adjustment in the participants – from feeling victimized by the psoriasis to feeling thankful that the toxicity was manifesting as a skin disease rather than a more serious systemic condition. Attitudes towards some of the lifestyle changes recommended by Cayce also tend to shift toward being more committed to the Cayce treatment regimen.

Assessment of Leaky Gut

Based on symptoms or comorbid conditions, you may wonder if you are suffering from leaky gut syndrome. The primary tool for the assessment of leaky gut syndrome is a bowel permeability test available from laboratories that perform the service for physicians. In its most common form, a bowel permeability test consists of drinking a small amount of liquid containing special sugar molecules. Over a period of a few hours, urine is collected and a sample is sent to the lab for evaluation. The lab sends a report to your physician with graphs and data about how your results compare with others who have taken the test. If the findings are abnormal, the report offers suggestions for healing leaky gut syndrome.

Healing Leaky Gut Syndrome

There are a variety of therapeutic options for leaky gut syndrome. Obviously, removing the cause is a high priority. For example, if intestinal parasites are believed to cause the leaky gut, treatment options should focus on treating that condition. Lab reports that come with leaky gut tests typically suggest additional assessments that can help determine possible causes of leaky gut once the condition is diagnosed. The reports typically suggest possible treatments based on your data.

The Cayce readings contain a variety of therapeutic options for healing leaky gut syndrome. For this problem, Cayce often recommended an alkaline diet, yellow saffron tea, slippery elm water, and small doses of olive oil taken internally several times per day.



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Multidimensional Healing

One of the major challenges of researching holistic medicine is collecting data that reflects the whole person. We are each multidimensional beings with many facets. Whether we use a triune model (physical, mental, and spiritual) or some other concept to describe our multifaceted nature, developing research instruments that are sensitive to all the dimensions of life is essential.



To be sure, there are numerous questionnaires that measure physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual attributes. In our research studies we have used a wide variety of instruments that focus on physical and psychological symptoms. In keeping with holistic philosophy, we have also used the *Spiritual Well Being Scale* and the *Index of Spiritual Experience* to explore the soul dimension of health. And yet at times participants in our research programs have reported positive outcomes that did not register on any of these instruments. For a health researcher, that is very disturbing!

To address this dilemma, we created the *Healing Questionnaire*. The *Healing Questionnaire* is a simple, one-page document that lists six forms of healing. Wayne Jonus, M.D., had previously recognized four forms of healing: *cure*, *care*, *empowerment*, and *enlightenment*. In creating the *Healing Questionnaire*, we added *quality of life (QOL)*, because this aspect of healing has become so well established in mainstream medical research. We also included *soul development*, because the Edgar Cayce readings sometimes cited this as the most important form of healing.

As a research tool the *Healing Questionnaire* requires more work in terms of statistical reliability and validity. Apart from the research aspect, we have realized that the questionnaire appears to be most useful as a clinical intervention. In other words, just making patients aware of the various forms of healing that they may experience seems to increase the probability of a positive outcome. To understand how this can happen, let's look at each of the six forms of healing on the questionnaire.

Cure

Many of the people who come to our research programs equate healing with *cure*. Very often, the way they define cure is "put me back the way I was before I got sick, but don't ask me to change any-

thing." They want a magic bullet.

From a medical perspective, most chronic illnesses are incurable and of unknown causation. Traditional systems of healing (such as osteopathy) are based on the concept of "cure by removal of cause."

For me, part of the attraction of the Edgar Cayce health readings is that they identify the causes of many diseases. Inherent in Cayce's approach is the premise that, "With the causes removed, the general system may be built back to normal reactions." (2772-2)

Care

As a form of healing, *care* deals with symptomatic relief and decrease in suffering. With *care*, there is less pain, discomfort, or inconvenience. Although medical science is seeking the cure of many diseases, it is in the area of *care* that most of the progress has been made.

Some people view *care* as a limited form of healing because it focuses so much on symptoms. To be sure, symptom suppression without consideration of the basic causes of illness has its limitations.

As with all the forms of healing on the *Healing Questionnaire*, Edgar Cayce viewed *care* as an appropriate and important form of healing. For a woman suffering attacks of asthma, Cayce gave dietary recommendations and prescribed spinal manipulations that were typical for this condition, but observed that, "... with the precautions as to diet, as to the care of self and of the general activity, the body may be bettered by same – but not cured of the condition ... there will still remain those tendencies." (2977-1) Note that the "care of self" may lead to a "bettered" condition, not cure.

For a man with terminal cancer, Cayce prescribed ultraviolet light and plantain salve to relieve the pain from sarcoma nodules. Cayce cautioned, "These will bring ease. These will not cure, but are sources of help ..." (3387-1) In this context, "ease" and "help" are indicative of *care* which is intended to relieve suffering. Like modern clinicians, Cayce definitely regarded *care* as a valid form of healing.

Quality of Life

In recent years, *quality of life (QOL)* has become an important form of healing for medical researchers. QOL relates to ac-

tivities of daily living – of simply being able to do the things that make life worthwhile and enjoyable. You have probably noticed the numerous medical ads on TV that show people enjoying activities, even though they may have a debilitating illness such as arthritis or asthma. Drug companies and advertising agencies are certainly tuned into QOL as a form of healing.

Edgar Cayce often spoke of the importance of improving QOL, especially in cases where a complete cure was not likely. For example, a sixty-three-year-old woman suffering from toxemia was told, "While the normal may not be *entirely* brought about, these may be assisted to such an extent as to bring many days of happiness to the body." (4594-1)

Empowerment

Empowerment means that we have a better understanding of the experience of illness and the skills for coping with it.

Empowerment involves the use of the will to make choices, take action, and be responsible. Empowerment is an attitude – a shift in perspective from being a helpless victim to a source of strength and courage.

One of the best examples of empowerment that I have observed in our various research programs involved a young woman who had been diagnosed with epilepsy. Her diagnosis was like a prison cell. In fact, she lived up to the diagnosis by having a seizure during the orientation meeting for a conference. Yet over a period of several months something remarkable happened. She experienced a major attitude adjustment. She went from being an "epileptic" to a person with epilepsy. This may sound simply like a play on words. For her it meant that she could get on with her life. Before becoming empowered, she felt like her life was over. After experiencing this form of healing, the *empowerment* was almost palpable. She exuded a glow of energy and positive feeling. Not surprisingly, she also experienced significant QOL healing in terms of getting a job, driving a car, having a romantic relationship – parts of her life that she had given up.

Enlightenment

As a form of healing, *enlightenment* is a greater realization of the value of life as it is. Some of the best examples of the healing power of *enlightenment* come from the work of Jon Kabat-Zinn. Dr. Kabat-Zinn is probably best known for his success in teaching mindfulness meditation to pain patients who have not responded to mainstream medicine. A higher level of consciousness can be profoundly healing.

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Health News



Sand Bathing

The Cayce readings are not alone in recommending sand bathing. A research letter published in *Alternative Therapies* (Nov/Dec 2001) documents the use of sand bathing at Turpan of Xinjiang Uyghur province in China. The practice of sand bathing is more than 200 years old and has been utilized for the treatment of osteoarthritis, hypertension, pelvic inflammation, and other conditions. In addition to its use for various diseases, sand bathing is inexpensive and produces few negative side effects. Researchers believe that mineral components in the sand and the effects of infrared radiation are responsible for the healing effects. Sand bath treatment consists of a fifteen-minute period in the sand followed by fifteen minutes of rest. The cycle is repeated four or five times daily for fifteen to twenty days.

Neurological Correlates of Transformational Experiences

Dr. Douglas Richards, Meridian Institute research director, recently received an award in the John Templeton Foundation's *Creative Research in Neurobiology* competition for his essay, "Neurological Correlates of Transformational Experiences." The Templeton Foundation supports research and scholarship in the dialogue between religion and modern science and medicine. This competition was intended to produce new ideas for exploring the higher faculties of humanity (e.g., creativity, mystical experiences) using the techniques of neurobiology.

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You may have to add more water than regular oatmeal. I find that two cups of water with one-half cup of steel cut oats works well. Double the ingredients for a full family portion. Adjust to your needs and the performance of your crockpot.

Steel cut oats can be purchased at most health food stores. I buy in bulk to save money – but even in name-brand boxes, steel cut oats are a great value.

You will be pleasantly surprised that steel cut oats have a chewy texture. For more flavor, add fruit (but not citrus). I like blueberries or raisins. Sweeten with a little honey or maple syrup if you like. A little cinnamon adds some zing!

Yes, mom, I know now that oatmeal is good for me. But my steel cut oats taste great, too!



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In his book *Healing Words*, Dr. Larry Dossey captures the essence of *enlightenment* as healing when he observes that "one's authentic, higher self is completely impervious to the ravages of any physical ailment whatever ... at the most essential level, we are all 'untouchables' – utterly beyond the ravages of disease and death."

At a practical daily level, enlightenment translates into a feeling peacefulness and resolution. Thus, regardless of whether you are experiencing a good symptom day or a bad one, at a deeper level of consciousness, all is well.

(716-1) Such cases often involved karma, or the soul meeting itself.

Other Forms of Healing

The *Healing Questionnaire* encourages people to think outside the box in terms of positive healing outcomes. I encourage clients to imagine what type of healing they will experience. I even suggest that there may be other forms of healing that are not on the list. In our residential research programs, participants often describe additional manifestations of healing that are important to them. One of my associates has encouraged me to add death to the list of healings. You be the judge as to what healing means to you.

Imagining Healing

As a clinical tool I have found it helpful to work with the *Healing Questionnaire* as a meditative experience. If you are in need of healing, try this simple process.

Become quiet and relaxed. If you are familiar with meditative practice, this will be easy. Otherwise, listening to some quiet, relaxing music may be helpful to alter your consciousness. Begin with *cure* and imagine what your life would be like if you were cured of the condition. Then move along the list to *care*, and so forth. With each form of healing, use your imaginative senses to explore healing possibilities. See and feel what the healing would be in each form of healing. What would be different in your life? How does the healing feel at an emotional level?

This process will engage the mental and spiritual forces for healing. As you apply therapies that are appropriate for your problem, replay in your mind the healing images that were evoked during the meditative experience. Cayce stated that this would make the treatments more effective.

Healing as Transformation

Healing is always possible – it is only a matter of what form the healing may take. As you work with this model, explore the possibilities for your healing journey.

Working with a multidimensional model of healing tends to be transformative. Health challenges are viewed as opportunities for growth at all levels. We will continue with this theme next month when we consider the concept of "illness as symbol."



Soul Development

Soul development was added to the *Healing Questionnaire* because many of the Cayce readings explicitly referred to this form of healing in a way that was not included in the other types of healing. Cayce insisted that the context of the human experience is that of the soul making its way through eternity, finding its way back to the Source. The various experiences along the soul's journey, whether health or illness, are opportunities for soul growth and development.

With regard to the multidimensional nature of *soul development*, healing often involves family members and caregivers. In numerous cases, Cayce asserted that the healing process was as much for caregivers as for the identified sick person. In a reading for a young man with epilepsy, the caregivers were told, "Let the attitudes of those about the body, and those making the applications, be *never* those of censure, but rather that there is given each the opportunity for ministering to a soul seeking its course to its Maker." (1784-1) Thus, healing can be a spiritual initiation for all involved. We will explore healing as spiritual initiation in a future article.

Karma was often cited in readings that discuss *soul development* as a form of healing. For example, in a reading given for a woman with multiple sclerosis, Edgar Cayce encouraged her to adopt the attitude that, "The physical conditions that have come upon me are those most necessary for my own soul's development."

Visit the **True Health** Web site:

www.edgarcayce.org/th

for more information on boosting your energy level, increasing vitality, and enhancing innate healing.