



True Health

Physical-Mental-Spiritual

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Individualized Health Care

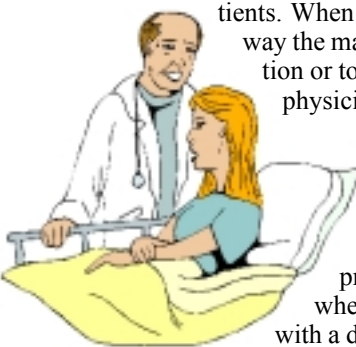
Since the seventeenth century, medical science has waged war on illness based on the assumption that each disease has one or more specific causes. The disease-centered model generates “one size fits all” treatments. If the treatment fits your condition, you may have a good outcome – possibly even a miraculous recovery. Unfortunately, medical treatments sometimes produce significant side effects that may be worse than the illness.

The disease-centered model tends to limit therapeutic options. Recent advances in genetics and drug therapy promise a brighter future – a future in which the individual reigns supreme.

Pharmacogenomics

Pharmacogenomics represents the highly publicized merging of drug treatment with genetic research. Its goal is to move beyond the “one-size-fits-all” approach by developing individualized treatment plans based on genetic profiles.

To educate the public about the potential of human genetic research, the American Medical Association (AMA) has posted this public statement on its Web site: “In the pre-genomic era, one-size-fits-all was the way most physicians treated their patients. When a patient does not respond the way the majority typically does to an infection or to a prescribed medicine, then the physician is forced to change therapy.



In the future there will be more individualized therapy, which will protect patients from adverse reactions. Depending on your genetic profile, you will be prescribed one medication, whereas your neighbor will end up with a different prescription or perhaps

no prescription at all.”

Kent Bottles, M.D., believes that “The sequencing of the human genome is only the tip of the iceberg. It is the beginning of a revolution that many predict will transform medicine... Physicians will become mentors and counselors, advising patients on the best treatment path given their unique genetic predisposition – even in this sophisticated, high tech field, the physician-patient relationship is likely to improve, highlighted by individualized therapies and personal attention.”

Individualized Alternatives

Many traditional and alternative medicine approaches are based on individualized health care. For example, practitioners of *ayurveda* (traditional East Indian medicine) and *Traditional Chinese Medicine* (TCM) tend to regard illness as imbalance of one sort or another. In these systems of healing, treatments are customized to help each individual achieve balance.

Biological terrain assessment (BTA) is an innovative model

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Manual Healing Renaissance



Manual healing refers to the use of the hands to diagnose and treat illness.

Manual healing research is a priority at the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM – a division of the National Institutes of Health). NCCAM has funded studies involving massage, osteopathic manipulation, and chiropractic.

NCCAM’s recognition of the importance of manual healing reflects a growing interest in the field at many levels, ranging from weekend classes in massage to advanced training in medical schools.

From an historical perspective, the current interest in manual healing could be viewed as a renaissance. A hundred years ago, bodyworkers of all types were commonly available. I regard the early twentieth century as a golden age of manual healing in America. Significantly, this was also the time period when Edgar Cayce was giving readings that strongly endorsed and prescribed diverse manual healing treatments. For various reasons, manual healing declined in popularity and prestige. NCCAM’s recognition and support for manual healing research is a strong confirmation that manual healing has made a comeback and will remain a viable treatment option. Here’s a brief survey of the three primary forms of manual healing currently available.

Chiropractors Galore

Chiropractic research is a major area of manual healing research for NCCAM. Since 1997, NCCAM has funded the Consortial Center for Chiropractic Research consisting of faculty and administrators from five chiropractic institutions, the University of Iowa, and Kansas State University.

Creating a solid scientific research basis for chiropractic theory and practice has long been a priority for the profession. In parallel with scientific documentation, the resurgence of chiropractic was supported by a series of legal battles that went all the way to the United States Supreme Court. Give the chiropractors credit; they have acquitted themselves well in court and in the marketplace. I suspect that chiropractic officials have a secret strategic plan to put a chiropractic office in every strip mall in America. Modern chiropractors tend to be versatile, offering a broad range of services beyond treating back pain. If you think you may benefit from this type of manual healing, looking in the phone book yellow pages or asking friends about their experiences will help you locate the best practitioner for you.

Massage Flourishes

As a health profession, massage is flourishing. My knowledge of this fact comes from first-hand experience. While assist-

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I have a question about the March newsletter. On page two, top right-hand column, a sentence reads: "As with the manipulations, the spinal centers should receive special attention." When you say "spinal centers" are those nerve plexus or chakras or something else?

Great question with deep implications! In most instances when the Cayce readings recommend manipulation or massage of a spinal center, the intent clearly seems to be that it is a nerve plexus. However there are some readings in which Cayce seems to be discussing spinal centers as "energy centers" more akin to chakras. It is interesting to me that Cayce used various words and concepts associated with Eastern religions (e.g., karma and kundalini) yet never used the word chakra. In one reading a woman asked a question containing that word, but Cayce did not mention chakra in the response. Likewise, I do not find any explicit reference to acupuncture points or meridians. Dr. Bill McGarey has written about similarities between Cayce's energy medicine approach and acupuncture theory in this book *Acupuncture and Body Energies*.

Since Edgar Cayce made so many referrals to osteopathic physicians and borrowed heavily from their language and concepts, it has been helpful for me to study the early osteopathic sources. Many of the early osteopathic texts contain a section on "centers." Even then the meaning of the term was somewhat vague and controversial. Andrew Davis (*Osteopathy Illustrated*, 1909) was probably the most emphatic on the subject. He objected to the idea that osteopaths treat nerve centers along the spine: "A more erroneous statement could not be made. It is wholly devoid of the truth. When it is an established fact that all nerves have their origin in the calvarium, the assertion that we reach nerve centers by manipulations, directly, is too palpably untrue for ordinary intellect to entertain." Ouch!!

What Dr. Davis was really saying was that he objected to the centers along the spine being called "nerve centers." He agreed, as almost all of the early osteopaths did, that manipulations to centers along the spine could regulate the physiology of the body. For Davis, the question was mainly conceptual and semantic, not practical.

One of my favorite early osteopaths, Charles Hazzard (*Principles of Osteopathy*, 1898), provided a flexible solution to the problem. He just called them centers: "I speak of the centers more in an Osteopathic than in purely physiological sense, meaning that a certain point along the spine which has designated itself as a center in response to the work upon it; results justify such statements. In other cases these so-called centers are the physiological centers indicated by the authorities." In other words, Hazzard was saying don't get hung up on the words, it is the results that count. When you manipulate certain locations (centers) along the spine you get specific therapeutic effects. This is an important area of research that we are pursuing at Meridian Institute.

To me, the most intriguing aspect to this whole question relates to the spinal centers as connections of the soul to the physical body. In addition to the endocrine glands (spiritual centers), Cayce said that spinal centers at the third cervical, ninth thoracic, and fourth lumbar are primary links by which the soul manifests in the physical body. The body-soul connection is a hot topic in science these days as well. We will explore this fascinating subject in more detail in the July issue. - D.M.

balance, and minerals in these fluids. Based on BTA, a practitioner may prescribe nutritional supplements, bodywork, or lifestyle changes to improve biological terrain.

Functional medicine is another alternative approach that emphasizes balance within the individual as contrasted to the treatment of disease. Illness is an expression of some underlying imbalance and breakdown of normal function. Therefore, functional medicine evaluates organ "function" rather than organ "pathology."

This approach focuses on biochemical individuality that recognizes the uniqueness of each patient at the physiological level – each patient's physiological system marches to the beat of a different drummer. Thus, treatment should be custom-tailored to meet each patient's unique needs.

Sidney Baker, M.D., expressed the functional medicine perspective when he observed that "Disease-oriented medicine is directed to finding the generalized formulas for treating groups of people who resemble one another in certain symptomatic respects ... Individual-oriented medicine's approach is to find everything possible that can be done to optimize the health of a given unique individual."

Functional medicine is well-positioned to interface with the emerging genetic revolution in health care. Its proponents acknowledge the importance of heredity in determining physiology. Yet, the expression of genetic factors can be strongly influenced by lifestyle and health practices.

Some functional medicine proponents believe that this model fulfills Thomas Edison's prediction that "The doctor of the future will give no medicine, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease." Functional medicine cuts across professional barriers. Medical doctors, osteopaths, naturopaths, and chiropractors practice functional medicine.

Cayce's Approach

For the most part, Edgar Cayce tended to use a person-centered model that focused on the uniqueness of each individual when he gave physical (medical) readings. If he had chosen to use a disease-centered approach, he could have probably covered the whole field of medical pathology with a few hundred readings, instead of the nearly 10,000 physical readings that he gave.

Cayce viewed each person as an *entity*, an enormously complex interaction of physical, mental, and spiritual processes in a flesh form. Cayce noted that "Each *entity* is a universe, or a combination of uni-

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this letter is intended for personal growth and development and should not be considered as a guide to self-diagnosis or self-treatment. Please see your physician for any medical problems.

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of health care based on the premise that a cell's environment determines its integrity. It is not outside organisms that make us ill, but the inability of our body to ward off pathogens. A group of people may be equally exposed to flu virus but not everyone develops an infection. Or if an infection develops, the way it manifests in the system will be somewhat different in each case based on the strength of the immune response and the vitality of the system.

Practitioners of BTA measure blood, saliva, and urine for electron levels, pH

Illness as Symbol

Serious illness can thrust us onto the path of transformation. We may begin to wonder and ask deep questions: Is suffering good for the soul? Are symptoms messages from a deeper level of the psyche? Is physical disease symbolic of mental or spiritual transgression? Do we make ourselves sick?

The concept of illness as a growth opportunity has been around for ages. Yet in our modern materialistic culture, the idea that disease can be purposeful makes many uneasy. This is a controversial topic that will require some deep reflection. Simplistic answers to the mystery of health and illness can be misleading, so let's take it one step at a time.

The Medical Model

Medical science teaches us that most illness is a result of chance or accident. We happen to catch a cold because we happen to come in contact with a rhinovirus. Or if we succumb to a genetically linked disorder, it's a matter of chance. The random combination of sperm and egg is the hereditary equivalent of rolling dice.

Likewise, treatment contains a strong element of chance. A medication that is a miracle cure for one individual may be fatal for someone else with the same diagnosis. Scientific medicine seeks to load the dice and beat the odds at every turn.

The medical model does concede that illness may be produced by psychological factors. Then it is said to be psychosomatic or psychogenic. Diseases that have no discernible physical cause will sometimes be classified in this way, particularly if the patient is insistent and persistent that the physician cure the problem. In such instances, a referral to a psychiatrist or psychologist may be made. The idea that illness is produced by nonphysical causes is usually a last resort for physicians using the medical model.

Illness as Symbol

At the other philosophical extreme is the view that illness, especially physical illness, is a purposeful process that can be a growth experience. There are no accidents. Life is on purpose. Chance is an illusion. We create our own reality and are totally responsible for everything that we experience – everything, even disease.

In this model, illness is regarded as a metaphor or symbol. As Louise Hay put it in her book *You Can Heal Your Life*, "... we create every so-called 'illness' in our



body. The body, like everything else in life, is a mirror of our inner thoughts and beliefs." The metaphysics of this model has been around for a long time. The book of Proverbs states that "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Edgar Cayce kept reminding us that "mind is the builder" and that "thoughts are real things."

Hay points out that dysfunctional thoughts and beliefs that cause illness are often unconscious. Getting in touch with core beliefs is the answer. Hay provides numerous exercises and affirmations to identify and transform unhealthy thoughts and beliefs. The cookbook style of identifying specific illnesses with specific mental patterns is perhaps a bit simplistic, but can be helpful as a starting point in grasping the concept of illness as symbol.

Illness as Sin

In at least three readings Edgar Cayce observed that "all illness is sin." This is probably the most extreme example of illness as symbol. In one reading containing this expression, a man's painful gallstones were said to result from "resentments [that] have choked up conditions within ..." (3341-1) The use of the word "choked" as a symbol of resentment in the mental body is certainly appropriately descriptive of gallstones that choke the gallbladder.

In another fascinating reading Cayce commented, "No one can hate his neighbor and not have stomach or liver trouble. No one can be jealous and allow the anger of same and not have upset digestion or heart disorder." (4021-1) That physical symptoms can be symbolic of mental or spiritual problems is definitely expressed in the Cayce readings. Yet, we should be cautious when interpreting the above excerpt. Cayce is not saying that everyone that has stomach or liver trouble hates his neighbor. Nor is he saying that everyone with indigestion or heart disease is possessed by jealousy or anger. There are hundreds of physical readings given by Cayce on these disorders that do not hint of hate, jealousy, or anger as a causative factor. Perhaps there is something more complex taking place when we become ill – something more than an oblique symbolic manifestation.

A reading given for a woman suffering from bowel problems illustrates this point. She asked Cayce, "Since all disease is caused by sin, exactly what sin causes the colon and elimination condition?" Cayce

responded, "The sin of neglect. Neglect is just as much sin as grudge, as jealousy – neglect." (3051-7) She then continued to pursue this line of questioning to identify a more symbolic sin for the various symptoms that she was experiencing. Cayce kept coming back to neglect as the basic cause of her physical symptoms. Apparently she was just not paying attention to the needs of her physical body.

Louise Hay states that bowel problems often relate to "fear of letting go of the old and no longer needed." Perhaps this woman's neglect was fear-based, but the connection is not obvious. In fact, in the numerous readings that Cayce gave for persons with bowel problems, the symbolic interpretation suggested by Hay is never mentioned. This is what I meant earlier when I said that simplistic answers can be misleading.

On a more general note, considering the amount of research data that has accumulated indicating that lifestyle choices contribute to or even cause a wide range of diseases, neglect as a sin could probably account for much of the disease that afflicts the human race. This interpretation is consistent with the idea that the basic meaning of sin is error or mistake.

Another, more theological explanation of "all illness is sin" may relate to Cayce's view that an initial rebellion and separation from God is the basis for our descent into the material realm. In this sense, any suffering or malaise that befalls us in our earthly sojourn could be regarded as a result of that "original sin."

Latent and Manifest Symbols

Sigmund Freud is probably the most famous and influential advocate of symbolic interpretation. Freud believed that all symbols could be interpreted at multiple levels. For example, the meaning of dream symbols can be interpreted as *manifest* or *latent*. *Manifest* means the obvious meaning. *Latent* is the hidden meaning.

With regard to illness as symbol, the question is whether the meaning of a specific condition is either *latent* or *manifest*, or both. If jealousy produces heart disease, the physical manifestation of the disease has a *latent* or hidden meaning as well as the obvious physical manifestation. If bowel disease (or any illness) results from neglect, the physical manifestation seems to me to be essentially *manifest* or direct with little if any *latent* meaning.

Of course, the medical model of illness is more supportive of the *manifest* meaning of illness. Even Freud, who is probably best known for his almost obsessive tendency to interpret symbols as having

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Health News



Tomatoes Prevent Prostate Cancer

A recent study published in *the Journal of the National Cancer Institute* (Volume 94, 2002) reports that a diet rich in tomato-based foods can reduce the risk of prostate cancer. When researchers analyzed the diets and prostate cancer data of more than 47,000 men (40-75 years old), they found that eating at least two meals each week containing tomato products reduced prostate cancer rates by 24 to 36 percent.

The study is consistent with previous prostate cancer research involving foods that contain lycopene, an antioxidant found in tomato products. Antioxidants are substances thought to protect against cancer by reducing tissue-damaging free radicals that are produced during metabolism. The researchers note that foods containing *cooked tomatoes* appear to be particularly beneficial in protecting against prostate cancer. Tomato sauce was a favorite food of the research participants and also seemed to provide the most protection. Cooking may allow the body to absorb more lycopene by breaking down the cell walls of the tomato.

Interestingly, Edgar Cayce was a big advocate of tomatoes, both raw and cooked. When canned, he cautioned against using sodium benzoate as a preservative. No specific cancer-preventive properties were cited in the Cayce readings recommending this food.

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sexual content (especially phallic symbols), had to concede that sometimes a cigar is just a cigar. The question of whether illness can have a purely physical cause will be discussed in next month's newsletter. The short answer, according to Edgar Cayce, is yes.

Working with Symbols

Interpreting illness as a symbol of mental or spiritual distress is one of the ways that we can experience healing as a transformational process. In working with symbols, keep in mind that symbols can have both *latent* and *manifest* meaning.

Latent Meaning – In seeking to understand physical symptoms of illness, I like to begin with an open and flexible mind. Sometimes symbols can be interpreted in a cookbook fashion where a specific symbol is linked to a specific core issue. Louise Hay's books can serve as a good starting point for this type of interpretation. Interpreting illness in a symbolic way may require a more personal approach where you will need to understand what the illness means to you. Meditation and dream incubation are two good ways to access the symbolic meaning of illness. *The Hidden Meaning of Illness* by Bob Trowbridge is an excellent resource for understanding the *latent* meaning of illness.

Manifest Meaning – Keep in mind that symbols may not necessarily have a *latent* or hidden meaning. To be on the safe side, I recommend that you always use a holistic approach to understanding and treating illness. This means honoring the physical as well as the mental and spiritual. Thus, in addition to seeking the mental and spiritual causes of illness, be aware that illnesses may have a physical cause. Or, if there is sin involved, it may be as simple and direct as neglect of the physical side of life.

By working with the *manifest* as well as *latent* meaning of illness, you will be less likely to experience unnecessary guilt or inappropriate treatment. These two potential negative side effects of the transformational process represent the shadow side of transformation. Next month we will explore the shadow of transformation within the context of "purely physical" illness.

Visit the **True Health** Web site:
www.edgarcayce.org/th
for more information on individualized health care, manual healing, and illness as symbol.

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ing in upgrading the curriculum of the Cayce/Reilly School of Massotherapy, I searched the Internet for massage programs to become aware of what is currently being offered. I filled out a form on a Web site that coordinates inquiries for a number of schools. Much to my wife's annoyance, my request for information unleashed torrents of brochures, catalogs, and phone calls over a period of several months. As the saying goes, be careful what you ask for, you may get it!

The good news is that there is an abundance of flexible programs that cater to adults seeking a new career and laypersons who want basics for home application. If you are interested in pursuing a career in massage, consider calling the Cayce/Reilly School of Massotherapy (757-457-7270).

Osteopathy Revived

Whereas modern chiropractors had to fight for the right to practice manual healing in America, osteopathic physicians have had that right continuously for almost a hundred years. The problem is that many osteopaths don't do manual healing. This has been a pattern for decades, but may be changing.

Studies show that students in osteopathic medical schools increasingly show interest in manual healing training (osteopaths usually prefer to call it manual medicine or osteopathic manipulative treatment – OMT). Another positive indicator is the formation of the American Academy of Osteopathy (AAO), a group of osteopathic

physicians dedicated to manual healing.

The AAO will send you a list of physician members in your state. To order the list, send a request along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a check in the amount of \$5.00 to cover administrative costs. Address correspondence to:

American Academy of Osteopathy
3500 DePauw Boulevard, Suite 1080
Indianapolis, IN 46268-1136

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verses, within itself." (1020-1) This uniqueness and variability from one individual to the next must be addressed in healing.

Cayce's treatment recommendations exemplify the individualized health care model. He tended to blend diverse healing modalities into a complex and highly integrated treatment plan for each person at a particular point in time.

At the Health and Rejuvenation Research Center (HRRC, a division of the A.R.E.) we have created an assessment program based on Edgar Cayce's individualized, person-centered approach. In addition to questionnaires developed to parallel the Cayce physical readings, we also utilize principles and techniques of biological terrain, functional medicine, and other individualized health care approaches.

If you are interested in learning more about the HRRC Assessment Center program, contact Deborah Thompson, R.N., at 757-496-6411. To locate a health professional who is open to the Cayce approach, call 800-333-4499 and ask to receive the health professionals list for your area.