



October 2002

Written by David McMillin

Surgical Success

Following the suggestions that are provided in this newsletter each month will help you to decrease the odds for having to consider surgery as a form of healing. Yet, sometimes surgery is the best option. This article will give you some practical suggestions for achieving surgical success – for yourself or a loved one.

Prepare for Surgery

My first recommendation for persons who are considering surgery is to obtain a copy of *Prepare for Surgery, Heal Faster* by Peggy Huddleston (Angel River Press, \$14.95). Huddleston is a psychotherapist who graduated from Harvard Divinity School. Her studies focused on the ways positive emotions and the human spirit enhance healing. The book's subtitle (*A Guide of Mind-Body Techniques*) signals the author's intent to discuss the constructive use of consciousness to enhance surgical success.

The text is clearly written with sufficient repetitive emphasis so that even an extremely anxious patient with a serious disorder will get the message. Here are the five steps of Huddleston's approach:



Step 1: Relax to Feel Peaceful – Research indicates that relaxation calms the nervous system and boosts immune response while balancing the glandular and cardiovascular systems. The health benefits of stress reduction carry over into surgery and recovery. A companion audio tape is available to help you

achieve peacefulness.

Step 2: Visualize Your Healing – Before and after surgery, see and feel your ideal surgical outcome. Use all of your senses to make the imagery come alive. Focus on the desired surgical outcome rather than the process for getting there.

Surgery continued on page 2

Ragweed Remedies



When it comes to seasonal allergies, ragweed is king. Ragweed is a common, persistent weed that grows in fields and along the roadside throughout most of the United States. A single ragweed plant is capable of producing over a billion grains of pollen per season.

Ragweed pollen is the number one cause of hayfever symptoms such as sneezing, runny nose, and itchy, watery eyes. Ragweed allergy has also been linked to sleep disturbances, fatigue, and loss of concentration.

Ragweed season runs from about August 15 through November, or until the first frost.

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), a division of the National Institutes of Health, has issued these strategies for persons who suffer from ragweed allergies:

- ▲ Avoid the outdoors between 5-10 a.m. Save outside activities for late afternoon or after a heavy rain, when pollen levels are lower. Ragweed pollen counts are highest between 5-10 a.m. and on dry, hot, and windy days.
- ▲ Keep windows in your home and car closed to lower exposure to pollen. To keep cool, use air conditioners and avoid using window and attic fans.
- ▲ Be aware that pollen can also be transported indoors on people and pets.
- ▲ Dry your clothes in an automatic dryer rather than hanging them outside. Otherwise pollen can collect on clothing and be carried indoors.

Cayce on Ragweed

Edgar Cayce discussed ragweed in approximately 100 readings. In addition to obvious questions about allergic reactions, he also provided some surprising recommendations for using ragweed

Ragweed continued on page 4



For many many years, I was forced to take papaya enzymes with every meal in order to keep my elimination system working. Never went anywhere without those little orange pills. Then in 1987, I had a fabulous dream that told me to eat blueberries, cooked onions, and pita bread, and told me that if I would just eat these three foods that I could stop taking the papaya enzymes. Could hardly believe it, but started eating those three foods on a regular basis. Within ten days, I was forced to stop taking the enzyme supplements. I continue to eat lots of cooked onions even today, and use blueberries occasionally when my elimination system needs more activity. It is now fifteen years since that dream in 1987, and I only take the enzymes a few times per year after really heavy meals.
W.S. Virginia Beach

What an inspiring story of self healing using dream guidance and natural foods! I intend to do an article on healing dreams in the coming months. With regard to blueberries, I have gotten considerable positive feedback on the blueberry article. Sometimes simple things have great impact. Thanks for sharing. D.M.

In a recent issue of *True Health* a supplement called Codiron was mentioned as having been recommended in the readings. In reading 560-6 Cayce described Codiron: "This is a stimulation of this character: Cod Liver Oil with Vitamins A, B, C, D and E, but in such measures that they will work well with the system." The name of Codiron was eventually changed to Adiron. In reading 1614-1 [R16], Gladys Davis noted that after the manufacturer went out of business Cayce then began to recommend White's Cod Liver Oil tablets. For those who wish to come close to duplicating the recommendations from the readings, simply taking a good multivitamin containing iron along with cod liver oil tablets or capsules will be the next best thing. Carl Nelson, D.C. Virginia Beach

Carl, thanks so much. Several readers asked about a Codiron substitute and you have provided a simple, practical answer to these queries. D.M.

Cayce on Surgery

It may surprise some readers to learn that Edgar Cayce sometimes recommended surgery. I recall a conversation with a young medical doctor many years ago about this topic. This fellow had read numerous books about Edgar Cayce and was excited to get into the actual readings. This was before the CD-ROM was available, so he had to the journey to the A.R.E. Library. The first reading he pulled off the shelf recommended surgery. His joking question to me was, "And this is the 'Father of Holistic Medicine'?"

I had to educate him about Cayce's holistic approach which integrates the best that medicine has to offer – from whatever source – with basic mental and spiritual principles. I quoted Cayce's frequent pronouncement that true healing comes from attuning to the divine. "Whether it is accomplished by the use of drugs, the knife [surgery] or what not, it is the attuning of the atomic structure of the living cellular force to its spiritual heritage." (1967-1)

The most perfectly performed operation will fail if the body does not respond by healing itself. The patient will bleed to death or the tissue will not rebuild unless the innate healing response within is activated. We have covered this ground before when we discussed the role of the glands as spiritual centers (see the August issue of *True Health*). Cellular replication by division is the basis of all regeneration, even the body's response to surgery.

I have made a deliberate effort to portray Cayce's views on surgery because I do sometimes encounter people who are in a position where surgery could be beneficial, yet they say that they are reluctant because it goes against the Cayce philosophy, is not holistic, etc. Let's get past that mental obstacle at the beginning. Surgery *can be* a holistic treatment, if it is approached with the right mental attitude and spiritual ideal.

I am reminded of Cayce's description of the healing temples in ancient Egypt (especially the "Temple of Sacrifice") where advanced medical procedures (including surgery) were performed as part of a holistic model. The purpose of the surgery in that context was to prepare individuals for purposeful living. Thousands of years later when he gave his medical readings, Edgar Cayce still continued to emphasize the need for coming to terms with the ultimate purpose of surgery – to allow us to fulfill our purpose for being alive. Is the purpose of surgery simply so that we can go back to the behaviors that probably created the condition in the first place? Or is it to pro-

Surgery continued on page 4

Surgery continued from page 1

Step 3: Organize a Support Group – Medical studies show that the emotional support you receive from loved ones has significant healing effects. Ask friends and family members to send you peace, tranquility, and love for the half hour or hour before your operation. If they don't know how to do this, suggest that they visualize a colorful image, such as wrapping you in a pink blanket of love.

Step 4: Use Healing Statements –

Huddleston provides four healing statements for use during the procedure. The first is said as the patient goes under anesthesia. The other three are spoken near the end of the operation. Getting the medical professionals to be respectful of your wishes and to cooperate with a positive attitude is essential. The author cites numerous research studies to support the efficacy of healing statements. She also gives you advice for talking with your surgeon about this important step. This section alone is worth the price of the book.

Step 5: Meet Your Anesthesiologist – Make an appointment with your anesthesiologist as far in advance as possible so that you can discuss questions you may have about the procedure. In addition to the standard information that you will receive about drug interactions and when to stop eating or drinking prior to the surgery, you can give your anesthesiologist the healing statements that will be spoken during the procedure (even if the surgeon is the one speaking the statements).

These five points are covered in detail in the book. The excellent foreword by Christiane Northrup, M.D., reinforces the premise of the book – you can use your mind to heal faster.

Association for
 Research & Enlightenment (A.R.E.)
 215 67th St, Virginia Beach, VA 23451
www.edgarcayce.org
 1-800-333-4499

Copyright © 2002 by the A.R.E., Inc.

This newsletter is one of the monthly benefits to A.R.E. members. Membership is \$48 per year. To join, see the contact information above, to send a letter to the editor, write c/o the editor at the above address or e-mail:

truehealth@edgarcayce.org

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.

Conscious Breath

Most of us take breathing for granted. It happens all by its self without a conscious thought.

A few years ago while doing a residential research program on asthma, I became aware just how much we take breathing for granted. One of the participants kept reminding me of the plight of persons with this chronic condition – “It’s breath or death,” she would say. At times, this woman had to practice conscious breathing just to survive.

In the years since that conference I have become even more aware of the value of conscious breath. You don’t have to have a serious medical condition like asthma to benefit from conscious breathing. Even those of us who are blessed with a fully functioning respiratory system can reap the rewards of applying conscious breath techniques.

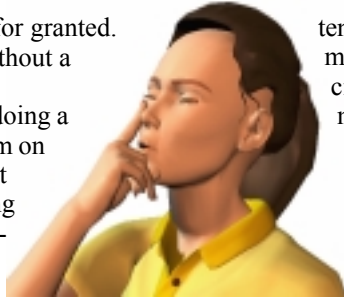
Therapeutic Breathing

Reading a book on mind-body healing by Elliott Dacher, M.D., was a major milestone in my understanding of the power of conscious breath. The title of the book is *Intentional Healing* (originally published as *PNI: The New Mind/Body Healing Program*.) It contains some basic breathing exercises that are integrated with visualization and affirmations for healing the various systems of the body. Dacher’s work is based on his own healing journey. I am always impressed with authors who report their own experience. The authenticity is palpable and I recommend the book to anyone who is serious about mind-body healing.

Dacher’s method is to use breathing as a means for increasing mindfulness and self-regulation. He refers to it as “controlled breathing.” Counting breaths is a simple way to begin the process. Try counting ten consecutive breaths. If you lose count, begin again. Count three groups of ten.

When you can confidently count breaths, Dacher suggests that you learn to time breaths by making the exhalation cycle twice as long as the inhalation cycle. For example, count from one to four on the inhalation and from one to eight on exhalation. He suggests thinking of peace on inhalation and relaxing the whole body on exhalation.

As simple as this sounds, don’t be surprised if you have trouble counting



ten consecutive breaths. The mind tends to wander, especially if you are not used to meditation.

By the way, breathing is the foundation for many traditional approaches to meditation. Dacher uses controlled, conscious breathing as a means for achieving mindfulness. Thus, he is utilizing mindfulness meditation as a therapeutic tool.

I like Dacher’s approach because it effectively integrates conscious breathing with other mind/body modalities into a practical system of healing. I have used Dacher’s methods for my own health and healing. It’s a solid approach that can help you heal.

Meridian Institute Research

Beyond his personal experience, Dacher bases his breathing exercises on research that documents the link between breathing and physiological regulation. Throughout the ages, yogis and spiritual adepts have used conscious breath to regulate various involuntary (autonomic) processes such as digestion, skin temperature, and heart rate through meditative practices. Breathing is the doorway to such control because it can be both conscious and unconscious. When you don’t pay attention, breathing goes on unconsciously like all the other autonomic nervous system (ANS) functions mentioned above. Yet it is the one ANS function that almost everyone can easily change just by conscious choice.

We have observed some of the physiological effects of conscious breathing in our lab at Meridian Institute. As part of a research protocol for studying the ANS, we have participants breath in a very precise pattern of six breaths per minute followed by twelve breaths per minute. When measuring heart rate variability and other ANS indices, we were amazed at the power of conscious breathing in these simple patterns to affect the body’s systems.

Having seen the computer readouts on our equipment, I am not surprised that Dacher holds therapeutic breathing in such high regard. Conscious breathing is one of the most powerful interventions that you can do to influence the basic physiology of your body.

Alternate Nostril Breathing

I first became aware of the concept of alternate nostril breathing during a lecture in graduate school. My professor, a clinical psychologist specializing in hypnotherapy,

described the physiology of this simple yet powerful yogic technique. Essentially, you use a finger or thumb to hold one nostril closed for a breath. Then alternate to the other nostril. My professor explained that as you breathe through the left nostril, the right hemisphere of the brain is activated and vice versa for the right nostril.

Considering the research that has been done on brain, you can see how this sort of method could balance the right (intuitive) hemisphere with the left (logical) side of the brain. I know I am oversimplifying a bit here, but you get the point.

By the way, research suggests that we tend to do this naturally in ninety minute cycles called the ultradian rhythm. This breathing cycle coincides with the ultradian sleep cycle associated with dreaming. The cycle continues on during the waking state, in the background so to speak. Thus, even with alternate nostril breathing, we are taking a natural, unconscious process and making it a conscious behavior to influence our mental/emotional state. My professor practiced alternate nostril breathing himself and recommended it to his clients as a means to improve mental health.

Edgar Cayce endorsed a specific method of alternate nostril breathing as a tool for deep meditation: “In breathing, take into the right nostril, *strength!* Exhale through thy mouth. Intake in thy left nostril, exhaling through the right; opening the centers of thy body ...” (281-28) With this type of conscious breathing, we have moved beyond simple therapeutic breathing to a more transformational mode.

Be aware that as you use some of the more intense breathing techniques (such as Cayce’s version of alternate nostril breathing) that you may alter your consciousness in profound ways. The A.R.E. offers abundant materials and resources on how to do deep meditation. A good first step is to become involved in an A.R.E. study group where you can safely learn how to do deep meditation.

Application

Consider practicing conscious breathing as a relaxation technique. If you are having health problems, obtain a copy of Dacher’s book and apply the techniques that he recommends. Use a positive affirmation in conjunction with conscious breathing.

Alternate nostril breathing is a powerful technique for producing relaxation and altering consciousness. Consider using this method as part of your daily meditation. Practicing conscious breathing in a supportive group environment can be especially helpful.



Health News



Diet and the Risk for Alzheimer's Disease

Diet may play a role in Alzheimer's disease. An important study published in the *Archives of Neurology* (Volume 59, 2002) suggests an increased risk of developing of the condition for individuals eating a diet high in calories and fat.

Elderly individuals free of Alzheimer's disease were studied for an average of four years to determine daily intake of calories, carbohydrates, fats, and protein. A food frequency questionnaire was administered at the beginning and follow-up visits. The results indicate that higher intake of calories and fats may be associated with increased risk of Alzheimer's disease in persons with a genetic predisposition for the disorder. Participants who ate the most calories and fat doubled the risk of developing Alzheimer's.

Some scientists believe that the dietary link in Alzheimer's may be related to nerve damage in the brain produced by free radicals that result when our cells burn (oxidize) fuel. The dietary guidelines for reducing free radical damage are consistent with the findings of this study. See *True Health* (November 2001) for information on "The Antioxidant Lifestyle."

Surgery continued from page 2

vide us with a healthy body and the time for creative service? Be clear about the purpose for surgery or any medical intervention beforehand. This is the first step in preparation.

Coagulation

In a strict medical sense, coagulation refers to blood clotting. Lack of coagulation results in excessive bleeding and poor wound healing. Proper coagulation is essential for any hope of surgical success.

Edgar Cayce's perspective on coagulation is more expansive in considering the systemic aspects of this process. For example, Cayce tells us that coagulation is an essential step in the immune response. Infectious forces are surrounded and "separated" from the body. Edgar Cayce liked the term "segregation" when discussing this aspect of coagulation.

Coagulation may also play in health maintenance. At a microscopic level, the body is constantly eliminating wastes and rebuilding tissue. According to Cayce, the body uses coagulation to "encase" wastes and toxic substances for elimination from the body. Furthermore, there is a constant wear and tear on the organs of the body from normal processes that takes place at a cellular level. Coagulation provides a protective "coating" to worn tissues within the body so that rebuilding, replenishing, and rejuvenation can take place. Maintenance of the walls of the blood vessels is an example of this type of coagulation described by Cayce.

With this expanded concept of coagulation that goes beyond short-term blood clotting, it is clear that proper coagulation

is extremely important for longer-term healing. Monitoring and improving coagulation helps to ensure that recovery from surgery will be optimal. Here are some simple suggestions from the Cayce readings for improving coagulation and preparing the body for surgery and recovery:

- ▲ At least one meal each day should consist of raw vegetables, especially leaf lettuce and celery. Green vegetables are a great source of vitamin K, known for its critical role in coagulation.
- ▲ Eat an abundance of yellow foods that provide vitamin B-1 (such as yellow corn, yellow peaches, and yellow squash).
- ▲ Drink at least one glass of citrus juice each day.
- ▲ For meats, eat fish, fowl, or lamb.
- ▲ If you are debilitated (rundown with low vitality), sipping beef juice may be helpful.
- ▲ For extreme debilitation, consider adding organ meats, such as broiled liver to your diet.
- ▲ Avoid junk food or too much sweets.

Combining Cayce's suggestions for improving coagulation with Huddleston's mind-body approach will likely improve your chances for a successful surgery and recovery.

Ragweed continued from page 1

therapeutically.

Consistent with the NIEHS recommendations, Cayce's advice for a four-year-old girl suffering from seasonal allergies was to avoid contact with pollen of any nature (795-3). He also suggested an herbal inhalant containing eucalyptus oil, tolu balsam, tincture of benzoin, pine needle oil, and creosote (trade name "Herbal Breath-

ing"). This inhalant was commonly prescribed for ragweed and seasonal allergies.

The readings also frequently noted that pressures along the upper thoracic area of the spine can contribute to respiratory problems including ragweed allergies. Spinal manipulations were typically recommended by Cayce in such cases.

As a therapy, he sometimes prescribed various forms of ragweed as a mild laxative. In several instances, he even recommended ingesting ragweed as a medicine to prevent ragweed allergies. He explained that ragweed acts as an eliminant by stimulating the liver. The liver is a major detoxifying organ of the body. If the liver is sluggish or congested, the body may not be able to keep up with allergens. Stimulating and cleansing the liver improves eliminations and may thus decrease allergic reactions. This is one way of thinking about the possible therapeutic effect of ragweed. Another possibility is that ingesting small amounts of ragweed serves to inoculate the system.

When a forty-one-year-old woman asked Cayce about the source of her allergy problems, he identified ragweed as the culprit. His advice to her was to chew the leaves of ragweed that is still growing to prevent her hayfever. Cayce cautioned: "But it must be chosen very young, and the leaves alone chewed – but don't spit it out because it is bitter! It's not poisonous, and it is a good eliminant, and it will relieve the allergy - or eliminate that causing the hay fever *for this particular body!* For it is not caused by the same in all." (903-35) This last statement must be kept in mind. Allergies are complex physiological reactions that manifest uniquely in different bodies. Also note that the ragweed was to be ingested when it is "very young," before it reaches the pollen bearing stage.

In other readings involving ragweed allergy, Cayce opted for a medicine such as Simmon's Liver Regulator that stimulates the liver and improves elimination. When Simmon's Liver Regulator was no longer available commercially, Cayce recommended ragweed tincture as a substitute. He noted that ragweed was the primary ingredient of the commercial product. Ragweed tincture and Herbal Breathing are available from Baar Products (800-269-2502).

Visit the *True Health* Web site:
www.edgarcayce.org/th
 for more information on surgery,
 ragweed, and conscious breath.