

# Nature Cure - a self-healing system

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## 1. DEFINITION AND BASIC PHILOSOPHY

Nature Cure is the teachings about life, the life process and the basic conditions that are necessary for a life in health and how to regain health in a natural way without the use of medicines. Nature Cure teaches that the body is self-healing self-regenerating and that health is the normal, natural state of body and mind.

Health is not only the absence of disease symptoms but also a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing. All who have been born with reasonably good health should, barring accidents, be able to live a whole life in good health. But to live in good health humans need

to live under natural conditions. We are dependent on a suitable biological, psychological and social environment. When someone is ill there are one or more causes for it. Disease, by whatever name it is known, is basically the response of mind and body to the departure from necessary for total health, i. e., disease is the result of an environment or conditions that are unfavourable. Disease is manifested in the form of structural, biochemical and mental imbalance. When these departures are normalised the self-healing powers of the body will restore health if it is possible. All healing power is within. Healing is the response of mind and body that take place automatically when the conditions are favourable.

Nature Cure is the art of caring for the sick in a way, which is natural to the organism and the mind. The overall aim with Nature Cure is to find the causes of disease and then eliminate them. At the same time we try to supply everything that is needed in the form of the natural requirements of health. A Nature Cure program aims to build health rather than to treat or to cure disease. Its aim is normalisation. When health is built, disease will disappear by itself.

The human organism, like all living organisms, is self-healing, self-regulating, and self-reproducing. Biological processes within are totally responsible. These powers are an innate part of all living organisms - man, animals, and plants alike. Everyone knows that if you accidentally cut yourself the body will heal itself provided it is kept clean. Nature alone will heal injuries. It will heal itself from disease and eliminate poisonous substances, providing that the conditions are right.

## 2. WHAT IS NATURE CURE?

Nature Cure can be divided into two main parts:

(1) It is the teachings in theory and practice about which biological circumstances and other conditions that are favourable for a life of optimal health, i.e. basically the teachings about a natural lifestyle and how to maintain health.

(2) The teachings in theory and practice of how to care for one's self or someone else in a natural way when in a disease state. Its aim is normalisation. This means that one is striving to obtain normality physically, physiologically and mentally. Natural treatment is not a treatment in the normal sense of the word and it is not directed at attacking the disease. These teachings are unique to Nature Cure but the principles are simple:

First we must find the causes of the disease and then we must remove them as much as possible.

1. Then we supply all the normal requirements for health as much as possible.
2. With the help of natural therapies, we further support the healing process by striving to obtain normality of the body structure, biochemistry and mind.
3. Every human is unique and should be treated as such.
4. Finally, we supply rest. This is done so that the available nerve energy can be used where it is needed most i. e., for healing.

Nature Cure is based on scientific facts, dialectics and over 180 years of experience. (Dialectics can be defined as the science or art of development and dynamics in nature, society and thought, but there are also other definitions.)

### 3. A BRIEF HISTORY OF NATURE CURE

Vincent Priessnitz laid down the principles upon which Nature Cure is based. He was born in 1799 in Gräfenberg, Jeseník (Freiwaldau), in Silesia, today part of the Czech Republic. He grew up on a farm and he had a remarkable perception and ability to learn from nature. As a child, he noticed the habits of animals and what they did when they were sick or injured. He found that sick and injured animals rest in a secluded place and come out only to drink and to immerse injured or sick parts of the body in the water. He also noticed that sick animals don't eat any food.

One day he noticed an injured doe which had been shot in the leg. He saw it dragging itself with difficulty to the spring where it laid down with the injured leg in the water. Priessnitz watched the animal for many days and saw it repeating the treatment at intervals. In a shrub. It ate no food but drank and made a great impression on

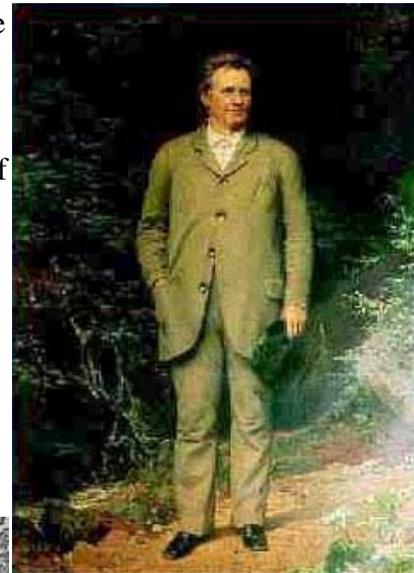


an accident which almost took unconscious and a surgeon Priessnitz life was in danger

would remain an invalid for life. When Priessnitz regained consciousness he applied cold compresses to his chest and drank water only. His symptoms receded in a few days and he was soon able to do some light work again. After several months he was recovered. Priessnitz then started to treat his neighbours and news of his good results spread. He was using mainly diet, exercise, positive thinking and hydrotherapy.

His methods became known as the water cure (later hydropathy, hydrotherapy, nature cure and naturopathy). He also gained a good reputation far away from his home. His home became a sanatorium in 1822. This sanatorium was soon to be world famous and to start off a movement that soon spread to other countries. Visitors soon came from whole Europe and even from America. One year he had visitors from 37 different countries. Although he had excellent results, some people did not like his vocation. He became a target for antagonism and repeated attacks from the medical profession. He was charged with the unauthorised practice of medicine. He was trialed and sentenced to imprisonment. But Priessnitz appealed to a higher court for suspension of the verdict. Priessnitz defended himself and asked how the court could force such an indictment against someone who had never prescribed any medicines, nor encouraged the use of them. They might as well arrest him for advising his neighbours to do exercise or change their diet. No one could be found who had been harmed or dissatisfied with Priessnitz treatment, and he was discharged. He was even issued with an official permit to run his own establishment.

Through the years there were several further complaints from the medical profession who tried to stop his practice. They pressed the government to do an investigation. A commission



was sent to investigate Priessnitz and his practice. The commission was very impressed with Priessnitz and the results of his approach.

After the commission's report in 1838, Priessnitz was never again threatened with prosecution or subjected to public attacks. Instead, he was to enjoy the same privileges as medical doctors in regards to the practice of hygienic remedies. He now had a licence to practice legally. The report stated that "...it will always remain that his curing method is still a new and remarkable discovery in the area of medicine". (At this time there was no separation of medicine and natural healing methods as we have today. Today we don't look at Nature Cure being a part of medicine but rather a philosophy opposed to the philosophy and practise of medicine.) Several governments sent people to study Priessnitz methods. Priessnitz understood the cause of disease, the role of dietetics, of the skin, the importance of exercise and fresh air and the importance of keeping a positive mental attitude. Most importantly he discovered that acute disease is a healing process. It is an effort greater than normal to expel toxic waste products and perform healing. (See point 7.)

In his lifetime and during the second half of the 19th century the use of water for healing became popular in Europe and North America. Priessnitz did not leave any literature behind and after his death he was largely forgotten. However, many people, both physicians and laymen studied with him, wrote books and spread his methods to other countries. The first book published in English was called "Hydrotherapy" and was written by R. T. Claridge - a man who initially visited Priessnitz as a sceptic. (A document was written in 1847 by Priessnitz daughter using Priessnitz' own words but this was never published. (1+2) ) Some others who followed Priessnitz path were Louis Kuhne, Sebastian Kneipp, R. T. Trall, Adolf Just, Benedict Lust, James C. Thomson, Henry Lindlahr and John Tilden. Dr W. Winternitz introduced Priessnitz methods at the medical faculty of Vienna. He was called "the scientific father of hydrotherapy". Mahatma Gandhi, who was inspired by Kuhne, opened a sanatorium in Pune in 1944. Two geniuses who were instrumental for Nature Cure were Professor Edmond B. Szekley who in the 1930's through his own research made Nature Cure into a science, and legendary Australian Nature Cure practitioner Kenneth S. Jaffrey. During the first part of the 20th century interest for hydrotherapy diminished but is now on the rise again. Priessnitz' original philosophy and methods however have unfortunately been forgotten. Priessnitz was famous all over the world. He was called "the Columbus of medicine". He could be said to be the founder of nature cure, naturopathy and the modern Spa movement. His principles are also the base for natural treatments still used in medicine today. In the German speaking world "Klassisches Naturheilverfahren" based on Priessnitz' teachings is used by medical practitioners. In USA many hydrotherapy institutions opened as Priessnitz' teachings spread to America. Considering these facts it is remarkable that very few people today know his name, even among professionals. (3+4)

#### 4. BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF HEALTH

Just like there are factors that cause disease there are factors that cause or produce health. To stay healthy we are dependent on a number of biological, psychological and social circumstances. Certain factors through the history of man up to today have contributed to produce the state of health (or disease) as we find in humans today. To maintain health we need to live under similar circumstances to those that produced health for our ancestors. At the same time as we need to avoid as far as possible the factors that causes disease. The factors necessary for optimal health can be summarized as follows:

1. Fresh air and correct breathing
2. Pure water
3. Relaxation, rest and sleep - Necessary for elimination of toxic waste and regeneration of the nervous system.
4. Natural foods in the right amounts and with the right balance between different food groups and nutrients The diet should be alkaline forming.
5. Exercise - Humans are created for movement and we need daily physical exercise. When living close to nature no organised exercise is necessary. But when living an average modern life, 30 minutes or one hour or more per day of exercise is of great benefit. Exercise improves our general health and makes digestion and sleep better. Exercise we may get through sports, dance, walking, in our work etc.
6. Natural radiation, such as sunlight in balanced amounts
7. Sunlight is free nutrition from the cosmos that requires no nerve energy to digest.
8. A suitable climate - Humans need to live under certain climatic conditions. Certain temperature, humidity and certain changes in climate are most favourable for human health.
9. Positive mental attitude - When maintaining a positive mental attitude we largely create our reality while at the same time facilitating the free flow of nerve energy, blood and lymph circulation.
10. A balanced social and family life - Refers to friendships, community, security, love, physical touch, intimacy, communication, culture, profession and occupation.
11. Structural integrity - All parts of the body, muscles, ligaments, bones, organs, etc. should ideally be maintained in their correct position. No organs or parts of the body should ever be removed. A body in structural balance is necessary for the free flow of nerve energy, blood and lymph circulation.
12. A life in harmony with nature, cosmos and their rhythmical cycles - We ought to live in harmony with the daily and yearly rhythmical cycles. A healthy nature and healthy soils are a basic condition for health in humans.
13. A good heredity - This is the only point that we cannot influence in any way. However, the heredity of future generations is determined, directly and indirectly, by how we live now.

These factors could be said to be the basic requirements for health. There are many factors that influence our health. The most of them are largely under our control. By our choice of lifestyle we to a great extent cause (produce) either health or disease. However, there are also some factors that we cannot control (heredity) or can only partly control, for example environmental factors or in the case of accident structural integrity.

## 5. THE CAUSE OF DISEASE

If we know the cause of disease we obviously have a better chance of regaining health. To stay in good health we need to avoid the things that cause disease. Nature Cure does not hold the orthodox medical belief that bacteria and viruses are the primary cause of disease. The laws of biology dictate that all organisms need a favourable environment to thrive. The presence of micro-organisms in the human body is not a primary cause of disease but a result of favourable conditions (i.e. for the micro-organisms). The role of micro-organisms is only secondary. Micro-organisms are not the cause of disease they are merely, like garbage collectors, waste disposal agents. Microbes cannot invade and make a healthy person sick, because the tissues of a healthy person are not a favourable environment. And, unlike some

schools of alternative medicine, Nature Cure does not assume that deficiencies are a primary cause of disease.

Health is dependent upon being in balance structurally, mentally and biochemically. Disease can therefore only occur when:

1. The body structure is disturbed, irritated or deranged as a result of injury, stress and strain.
2. The mental attitude is unbalanced as a result of mental trauma or shock or due to unsatisfactory relationships with others and a lack of communication resulting in anxiety, worry, fear and emotional conflict.
3. The biochemistry is unbalanced. This could be due to chemicals, unnatural food choices, drugs, alcohol, smoking etc.

Although imbalance in any one of these three areas can cause imbalance in both of the others, we generally consider the biochemical cause to be the primary.

### 5.1. NERVE ENERGY AND CIRCULATION

All organs and all functions of the body are under control of the nervous system. Internal cleanliness depends on efficient drainage of waste materials. Under normal circumstances, efficient and prompt drainage of body wastes is maintained by ample amounts of nerve energy (nerve force). When nerve energy is dissipated - from physical or mental over excitement or bad habits - the body becomes enervated. Enervation is a state of low nerve energy and therefore functional weakness.

When the body is enervated, the blood and lymph circulation is impeded, i.e. drainage is impeded, causing retention of toxins in the blood and tissues. As a consequence the functioning of the organs will gradually deteriorate and efficiency will be lowered. Enervation is caused by factors such as overwork, lack of sleep, lack of exercise, excessive physical activities, sexual excesses, excessive mental stimulation, overeating, mental imbalance and disturbance, excessive noise and vibration, etc.

Nature Cure teaches that disease is caused primarily by foreign substances and excesses of natural substances in the body. We call these substances toxins or poisons and we call the condition toxaemia, which can simply be defined as a poisonous condition of the blood and the tissues.

Toxaemia is caused by enervation, structural and mental imbalance, and by absorption of poisonous substances.

### 5.2. STRUCTURAL (MECHANICAL) IMBALANCE

This refers to bones, muscles, ligaments, joints and discs. The causes of structural problems may be subluxated or luxated joints, which mean that the joint is partly or totally out of its normal position; shortened or sclerosed muscles and ligaments, fractures and congenital (inborn) malformations.

Why do we get these kinds of problems? Connective tissues include all ligaments, muscles, tendons and discs. There are connective tissues throughout the body, but injury is most critical in the spinal area. In health, the connective tissues protect the nerves and nerve energy is undisturbed so that blood and lymph is flowing freely. As a result of toxic waste accumulating, accidents, lifting excessively heavy weights or incorrect lifting, faulty posture, one-sided working habits, inactivity, faulty dental work and missing teeth (producing occlusion- and TMJ problems) etc., connective tissue may become contracted and scar tissue (sclerosis) will be formed.

In health, the bony structure is held in place by the muscles and the ligaments. When the tissues are contracted, the bony structure may become malpositioned, causing the area of the nerves to be encroached upon. This interferes with the free flow of nerve energy, causing enervation. As a result, the blood and lymph circulation are decreased, so toxic waste accumulates. This hinders the functioning of the internal organs and, if nothing is done about its cause, it will produce malfunction of kidneys, bladder, stomach, intestines or other internal organs. Sciatic pain, pins and needles, tennis elbow, numbness and migraine may also be the result of scar tissue formation. These types of problems may be helped by physical therapy such as Naprapathic treatment, exercises such as stretching or yoga, hydrotherapy, natural diet and of course by avoiding the causes.

### 5.3. MENTAL IMBALANCE

All mental afflictions may cause enervation and thus toxemia. Excessive stress in various forms, too many responsibilities and duties, verbal, physical and sexual violence, shock, lack of communication with others, childhood traumas, family and social problems, may all cause a state of constant worry, fear, anxiety, emotional conflict, and negative attitude. Anything that causes excessive mental stress will cause depletion of nerve energy. This causes toxemia because there is not enough nerve energy available to transport away waste materials. This is how physical disease is created by mental causes. Mental problems are dealt with in psychotherapy which is aimed at solving conflicts and problems and adopting a positive mental attitude.

### 5.4. BIOCHEMICAL IMBALANCE

Toxaemia is of course also caused by taking poisonous substances into the body. These substances may be eaten, inhaled, absorbed through the skin or injected. Here are some examples of such potential causes of toxemia:

1. Unnatural diet in the form of refined and adulterated foods; too much cooked food (especially fried, roasted burnt and smoked foods); irradiated foods and chemicals in foods.
2. Eating too much food or wrong proportions of foods (usually too much fat, protein and starch foods, i.e. acid forming foods). Natural and essential substances may also cause toxemia when consumed in excessive quantities.
3. The eating of non-foods such as salt, pepper and strong spices, poisonous herbs and other foods, sweets, royal jelly, vinegar, apple cider vinegar, food supplements, mineral tablets, synthetic vitamins, etc.

4. Poisonous habits like soft drinks, tea, coffee, alcohol, smoking (tobacco, marijuana etc.) and other recreational drugs; vaccinations, medicinal and pharmaceutical drugs.
5. Air pollution; industrial air pollution, dust, exhaust fumes, incense, harmful sprays such as hair spray, deodorant, and insect spray; mould and other poisons in buildings.
6. Tap water, which contains many chemicals in most places of the world. Drinking water may also be polluted in other ways.
7. Make-up, cosmetics, ointments, skin lotions, sun screens, perfumes etc., may contain poisonous substances that could be absorbed by the skin.
8. Chemicals in the environment and household products.
9. Any kind of implant in the body such as dental fillings, especially amalgam fillings and root canal fillings. A tooth with a root canal is dead and dead tissue will produce toxins which may pose a health hazard.
10. Mycotoxins in the food. Mycotoxins are produced by micro organisms (fungi) which thrive under certain conditions such as when nitrogenous fertilisers are used in agriculture, and high humidity.

Toxaemia is the primary cause of disease. Only in the case of starvation is deficiency the main cause of ill health.

## 6. THE "VIS MEDIATRIX NATURAE" OR THE HEALING POWER OF NATURE

When the living conditions are normal (i.e. natural) health will be maintained or, in the case of disease, health will be restored. The biological processes innate in every living organism are responsible for this. This innate life force is known as the "Vis Medicatrix Naturae" or the healing power of nature. In Nature Cure we simply use this quality with common sense.

Collectively, the healing biological processes are usually known as metabolism. Metabolism is performed by all the cells of the body.

Metabolism is divided into two main functions: anabolism and catabolism. Anabolism involves constructive processes whereby nutrients are consumed and new cells are built. Catabolism involves destructive processes whereby old and diseased cells are broken down and eliminated. In health the two have an approximate balance, however the catabolic processes are always slightly stronger. This explains why in general a young person heals faster than an old person does, and also why we die. The new cells produced in the body will always be of slightly lower quality than the old ones.

The materials and energy required for metabolism are derived from food, air, water and radiation from cosmos. These materials are absorbed and become a part of the cells.

The amoeba is a single-celled organism. Because it is only one cell, its metabolism is very efficient: nutrients are effectively absorbed, and waste products are efficiently eliminated. Some scientists even believe that some of the amoebas living today have lived on planet Earth since the beginning of life here. It does not seem likely that any organism can live for such an enormous period. But the amoeba can be used to illustrate why it is impossible to have as efficient a metabolism in a multicellular organism as in a single-celled organism.

It is impossible for a multicellular organism to acquire perfectly balanced metabolism because there will always be waste products that are not transported away quickly enough. Similarly,

nutrients will not always be in the right place at the right time. If metabolism were perfect we could, barring accidents, live forever.

As metabolism is responsible for all healing it follows that no special substances, medicines, remedies or food supplements are necessary or wanted for healing. However, favourable natural conditions discussed in chapter four are required for healing

## 7. THE HEALING CYCLE

(Also known as healing crisis, curative crisis, acute disease and Nature Cure house cleaning.) The philosophy of the healing cycle is unique to Nature Cure and is its central point. Under normal conditions, minor repair is done without any special effort. A healing cycle is a special effort of the body to repair and excrete toxic waste material to restore normality. This is done by rising the body temperature. This may happen after injury or poisoning but can also occur because of relaxation, an improved lifestyle or living conditions that enables the body to increase healing and elimination of toxic waste.

Medical practitioners treat thousands of diseases. By contrast, Nature Cure does not attach much importance to the various so-called diseases. We recognise only two kinds of disease: acute disease, which is also called a healing cycle, and chronic disease. In a chronic condition, the metabolic activities are lowered and part, or parts, of the body receive less blood, oxygen and nutrition than normal. The body temperature is 37.0oC (98.6oF) or below. Usually no pain is experienced. To heal a chronic condition, the body needs to become vitalised and to become acute.

Without a healing cycle there can be no true cure of chronic disease. A healing cycle may be brought on with the help of natural lifestyle and natural therapies. It may also occur after an accident, poisoning, physical exhaustion, emotional stress, lack of sleep and rest etc. The healing cycle is a sign of vitality, demonstrating that the body is healing itself. It is simply diagnosed by taking the temperature; if it is above 37.0oC the disease is acute: the person is having a fever. The heat of fever leads to increased metabolism - motion of matter - enabling the body to better eliminate toxic waste.

During a healing cycle old health problems may reoccur. Suddenly an organ or part of the body previously thought to be healthy (because no pain was felt) may cause pain or other symptoms. Common symptoms are fatigue, irritability, diarrhea, skin eruptions, a cold, influenza, inflammation, skin eruptions, tiredness, irritability, vomiting, diarrhoea, headache, etc. The symptoms will keep on as long as the elimination of poisons is high. What symptoms appear depends on the character of the previous chronic disease.

During the healing cycle the first poisons to be eliminated will be those that were accumulated in the body last. Poisons accumulated further back in time will be eliminated continually in the opposite order to how they were accumulated. It is the same with symptoms or so-called disease. The past medical history may be experienced in reverse order to how it originally occurred. However, the symptoms will usually be light and of short duration.

The outcome of a healing cycle depends largely on the living conditions of the person. If the conditions are good the result of the healing cycle may be more or less improved health. During a healing cycle it is important to conserve nerve energy. When someone has a healing

cycle they should ideally rest physically, physiologically, and mentally. This is equal to fasting.

That disease is not necessarily something harmful is not a new thought. Already Hippocrates had a good idea about what happens during a healing cycle. He stated: “Diseases are the crises of purification and of toxic elimination. Symptoms are the natural defences of the body” (5). The way of looking at what disease really is, is quite different in Nature Cure compared to most other systems of health. Vincent Priessnitz found out about the nature of chronic and acute disease over 170 years ago About 150 years ago Dr. Trall said, “Disease is just the contrary to what is taught in medical books. It is a remedial effort.” (6). As the reader can see this philosophy turns medical philosophy upside down!

NOTE: although it may be rare, not all fevers are healing cycles. Some are disease crises.

## 8. NATURE CURE APPROACH TO TREATMENT

While Nature Cure is a science, in practice it is more health education than anything else. People go to a practitioner of some kind because of mental or physical pain, discomfort or fear and very often they wish for a quick cure—PRESTO!—and suddenly they would be well. Undoubtedly, it is true that some patients feel better after taking a medicine or remedy of some kind, but Nature Cure philosophy holds suppression of symptoms and the placebo effect responsible for this. Feeling better is not the same as having improved the state of health.

The patient who visits a Nature Cure practitioner is taught first of all to leave wishful thinking behind and is encouraged to learn about natural health and healing and how to look after her/himself and to trust Mother Nature. Nature Cure focuses on removal of causes and providing, as far as possible, optimal conditions for health.

### 8.1. THERAPY AND DIAGNOSIS

A Nature Cure practitioner can be described as a diagnostician or detective who endeavours to find the causes of disease, and a natural health educator and therapist. She/he uses her/his knowledge of natural law, diagnostic skills and natural therapeutics to assist body and mind in its healing effort.

Some tools she/he uses are iris diagnosis, physical examination and the taking of history. Iris diagnosis is a method of diagnosing through looking into the irides of the eye. Different parts of the iris correspond to different parts of the body and provide information about the weaknesses and strengths and the state of health.

Natural therapies are used, to support the self-healing powers by normalising the body structure, the mind and the biochemistry.

#### 8.1.1. DIET THERAPY

With the help of individual diet therapy the recovery can be quickened by providing optimum nutrition which requires minimum nerve energy to digest. In Nature Cure, nutrition is taken

into consideration, not only for the chemical composition of food, but also for the total quality of food including the bio-availability of nutrients in foods, as well as the total composition and balance of the diet.

The diet should consist of natural foods. What is also important and little understood is how the diet should be balanced. It is possible and not that uncommon to cause disease by eating only good natural foods but in unbalanced proportions. A balanced diet should consist of all essential nutrients in sufficient but not excessive amounts. The bio-availability of nutrients is also important. For instance, the availability of calcium in greens is higher than it is in cows' milk, almonds and sesame seeds (6). Although avocado is not particularly rich in protein, it is still a good source of protein because the bio-availability is high. Bio-availability is a very much overlooked factor in traditional nutrition, where most of the time only chemical composition is taken into consideration. Humans need nutrients in an organic form. Synthetic and inorganic nutrients may cause more harm than good. Nature Cure does not advocate food supplementation but in the eating of natural foods. The most valuable foods are fresh raw food, untreated and organically or wildy grown. Heated foods are of a lower quality. State of mind and body when eating is also important for digestion. Eating when mentally or physically stressed, exhausted or excited will not produce effective digestion and assimilation, but will instead produce enervation. Most people in the western world have a poor diet. Hence, there is a lot to be won with a diet change.

#### 8.1.2. PSYCHOTHERAPY AND POSITIVE THINKING

Traumas and stresses of various kinds can, unless dealt with, cause a permanent state of fear, anguish and confusion. Breakthroughs can be obtained through understanding ourselves and our own actions, through understanding others, by communicating freely and by coming to terms with various difficulties. This may radically change one's outlook on life, solve conflicts, strengthen self-confidence, and change old destructive thought patterns and habits to new constructive and positive ones. A positive mental attitude has a great beneficial effect on our happiness. It greatly influences the physiological processes of the body including nerve energy and circulation, thus generally the state of health.

#### 8.1.3. HYDROTHERAPY

In hydrotherapy, water is used in different ways; for example steam baths, sitz baths, spinal baths, cold body packs and local compresses. The purpose is to dissolve and assist in the elimination of poisonous substances stored in the body tissue through increasing blood circulation. Hydrotherapy can be used in many ways. Hydrotherapy must be used correctly and very individually. When done so, it is often very effective.

#### 8.1.4. FASTING IMPORTANT WARNING:

To fast requires knowledge. Fasting performed in the wrong way or under the wrong conditions or broken in the wrong way may cause serious harm and can even be dangerous to life. It is not recommended to fast unless being supervised by a competent practitioner. PLEASE NOTE: The information here given is not meant as instructions for fasting.

The approach of Nature Cure to fasting is unique. Normally we need food daily. According to Nature Cure philosophy fasting should only be undertaken when the body temperature is above 37.0° C (98.6° F). Short fasts of one to three days can however be undertaken at other times. Fasting and starvation are two different things. Fasting must not turn into starvation. By fasting is meant to abstain from drinking and eating of foods, other than pure water. Fasting is rest physiologically, mentally and physically. ( The combination of rest of the digestive system, mental rest and rest from physical exertion at the same time.) The reason why fasting enables the body to heal itself can be expressed in three words: conservation of energy. No nerve energy is lost in the process of digestion and little is spent on mental work or stress or for muscular activities.

#### 8.1.5. EXERCISE AND MECHANOTHERAPY

Individual exercise and mechanotherapy such as osteopathy, chiropractic or naprapathy can be used to help correct any structural misalignment.

Exercise and movement is beneficial for health but for a certain person with a certain condition some exercises are better than others. An individually adopted program can therefore be prescribed. Mechanotherapists are engineers of the human body. They believe that disease can be caused by a structural lesion or imbalance which causes interference with the function of the body. Chiropractic and osteopathy are both quite well known examples of mechanotherapy, and need no further presentation.

Naprapathy is based on the theory that interference to blood and lymph vessels can be caused by scar tissue in muscles and ligaments. Naprapathic treatment consists of manual stretching which is aimed at correcting connective tissue damage. It is a system of manually applied movements, both passive and active, designed to bring motion with consequent release of tension from abnormally tense and rigid structures of the body. This treatment helps to re-establish full nerve force and free blood and lymph circulation, thereby restoring the function of muscles and internal organs. Naprapathic treatment is also aimed at creating a correct posture and symmetrical body.

#### 9. RELAXATION = CONSERVATION OF ENERGY

Relaxation is the key to healing. Relaxation can be used as therapy but most of all it ought to be a part of daily life. When body and mind are in a relaxed state the nerve energy and blood circulation can be directed to the area where it is mostly needed and hence healing can take place. Nerve energy can be conserved in many different ways. For instance, when fasting (N.B. only when indicated clearly), not eating more than the body needs, getting sufficient sleep and rest, avoiding physical, sexual and mental excesses as well as non-foods, medicines and drugs. The one who is ill will recover more quickly if the environment is quiet and peaceful and when mental and physical stresses are minimised, the air is clean, foods are of good quality and where the sick can get sufficient sleep and rest. These factors produce maximum relaxation. Even for a healthy person, it is good advice to have a rest and relaxation break in the middle of the day or in the afternoon.

## 10. THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE CURE COMPARED WITH OTHER PHILOSOPHIES OF HEALTH

A better understanding of Nature Cure is achieved by comparing it with other philosophies of health.

### 10.1. THE PHILOSOPHIES OF NATURE CURE AND NATURAL HYGIENE COMPARED

Of all philosophies of health Natural Hygiene is perhaps about as close to Nature Cure as you can come. But there are still some matters where the two are opposed. Like Nature Cure, Natural Hygiene also believes that the body is self-healing and makes no use of drugs or remedies. Opinions of the movement have also changed with time and so does opinions from practitioner to practitioner. Natural Hygiene is a way of living using diet, exercise and fasting. Speaking in general, some areas where Nature Cure is different are:

1. Nature Cure uses only fasting during a healing cycle, except for short fasts up to three days.
2. Nature Cure does not prescribe in the theory of food combining.
3. Nature Cure uses irisdagnosis and other natural diagnostic methods, and therapies to support the self-healing processes, for instance mechanotherapy, hydrotherapy and psychotherapy.
4. According to some Natural Hygiene teachings it is not recommended to eat herbs or garlic and onion. Nature Cure welcome the addition of culinary non-poisonous herbs in the diet and is not against the eating of small amounts of garlic and onion provided that the individual like that food.

It is of interest to note that the great proponent of Natural Hygiene Herbert M. Shelton although generally speaking most of his life was against the principles of Nature Cure he also at times suggested that it was correct to use for instance naprapathic or chiropractic adjustments and hydrotherapy. Late in his life he abandoned the food combining theory and came to adopt the Nature Cure philosophy of the healing cycle.(8) It is also worthwhile noticing that in North America today, most of the well known practitioners of Natural Hygiene have a background in either chiropractic or medicine.

### 10.2. THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE CURE AND MEDICINE COMPARED

Nature Cure takes an opposite stance to both modern and alternative medicine. Modern medicine is also known as allopathy. It makes use of any kind of substance to produce a result which is relieving symptoms of disease. Modern medicine is based on Louis Pasteur's germ theory that disease is caused by micro-organisms. It is little known that Pasteur on his death bed stated " ..the microbe is nothing, the terrain is everything".(9) Alternative medicine uses substances which may be derived from nature such as plants, animals or minerals. Among the many different schools of alternative medicine it is commonly believed that deficiencies cause disease. While recognising that micro-organisms and deficiencies exist, Nature Cure believes they are not the primary cause of disease. The primary cause of disease is poisoning.

In 1862 Dr R. T. Trall M.D., in a few simple words expressed the main philosophical

difference between natural healing and medicine. He stated: “Medical schools and books teach that medicines act upon the system. Natural philosophy teaches to the contrary that the living system acts on the medicine”.(6)

## 11. MORE NATURE CURE PHILOSOPHY

According to Dr. Trall drugs don't cure disease; instead, they suppress symptoms and hinder the healing process. He also said: “the grand fundamental error of medical men consists in mistaking the relation of living and dead matter.” [6]. Only a living organism can react, not an inanimate one. The body recognises medicines as unwanted materials and tries to expel them. If the expelling is successful, the medical treatment is “unsuccessful” as the body will keep on trying to heal the condition, and symptoms will continue. If the body does not manage to get rid of the drug, the treatment is “successful” (as the symptoms are disappearing): the drug is stored in the body and converts acute disease to chronic disease. According to Nature Cure, it is always the body that reacts to the drug, not the drug to the body. Drugs “cure” by stopping the body's own healing process; in other words, they “cure” the cure!

The effect produced by drugs and medicines does not indicate a cure. This phenomenon can be explained as the body recognising the medicine as posing a greater danger than the disease condition itself. Hence it focuses on eliminating the medicine-poison rather than continuing the healing it originally initiated. If you were fighting an enemy and a stronger enemy arrived, you would have to turn your attention to the second one. Skin rashes and acute bronchitis are signs that the body is functioning well and reacting normally to abnormal conditions. If the symptoms disappear after treatment with a drug, then so does the healing process. The disease will turn chronic. The problem is still there, but now more severe and more difficult to treat. This for instance, is the reason asthma is caused by suppressed skin conditions. Skin conditions are usually easy to cure, asthma is more difficult.

Medicines have never produced healing of living tissues. The administration of medication is a tacit suggestion that the patient may safely continue the lifestyle which caused the disease in the first place.

The fact that someone feels better after taking a medicine does not mean they became healthier. The assumption that medicines cure is a result of shallow thinking. Medicines appear to cure, just as it was once thought that the earth was the centre of the universe because on the surface it appeared so. However, things are not always the way they seem. Medicines are all poisons and you cannot poison people to health. Poisons do not instigate a healing process of living tissues.

Some central points in the philosophy of Nature Cure are:

1. Health is the normal state of the human body. Disease is the result of an unfavourable lifestyle and environment.
2. Nature has not provided cures for disease, only penalties for the breaking of natural law.
3. The body is self-healing. Biological processes within are totally responsible for all healing and regeneration. The same innate powers that maintain health are also

responsible for healing. There is no special function responsible for healing only. Nothing that comes from outside the body has the capability to heal it.

4. No medicines, remedies or food supplements are used to cure disease.
5. All disease is either acute or chronic. To obtain a cure for a chronic condition the body must be regenerated (the chronic condition must be converted into an acute condition).
6. Removing the causes is necessary to obtain a cure.
7. The supply of favourable living conditions.
8. A balanced alkaline forming diet based on raw and preferably organically grown or wild fruits and vegetables.
9. The use of natural therapies to enhance the healing process.
10. Supplying extra rest, physically, mentally and physiologically (fasting) when indicated.
11. The use of fasting—normally only used when the organism clearly indicates that it does not require food.

These points combined together make Nature Cure the unique healing art that it is.

Many people who have been given up as incurable by the medical profession have regained their health using natural methods. When natural law is followed many so called “incurable diseases” may be cured, even if they have been long standing. This is not to say that Nature Cure is a cure-all. Somewhere there is a point of no return, but this point is at a later stage in Nature Cure than it is in medicine. A full recovery may be impossible for a person who have lost important organs or for someone who has decided to try the natural way to health but does so too late. It is also impossible to go beyond the point of conception. Although our health can be improved we do have limits. Our genetic make-up, programmed at the time of our conception, will dictate these limits.

## 12. A HOLISTIC VIEW AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Even if the details can be very important, a holistic view is the foundation of Nature Cure. There are so many factors in our environment that influence us mentally, physically and chemically. All factors in lifestyle and environment as well as our heredity must be considered. Today’s society is a society of specialisation. Health science is no exception. Scientists and the health profession tend to be too static and look more at the details rather than the whole picture. As a result, the most basic knowledge is often missing, for instance what basic conditions are necessary for a life of good health, and which factors produce disease. Focus is put on alleviating the symptoms of disease rather than eliminating the causes of disease. A logical theory will often not be considered or dialectically analysed if there is “no existing scientific evidence”. Just because something is not scientifically proven it doesn’t mean it is not real. Natural processes has occurred for millions of years and kept plants, animals and humans alive without being scientifically proven. Many procedures used in medicine today are not scientifically proven, but this is sometimes forgotten. Many things that are scientifically accepted as truths today will be prove to be fallacies in the future. Good science is good but it cannot substitute common sense. The two should complement each other.

Nature Cure is a dynamic system which considers the facts and theories from every area of study that has anything to do with health such as anatomy, physiology, psychology,

sociology, pathology, physics, nutrition, human biology and history, archaeology, natural therapy etc. Not everyone is lucky enough to have the preconditioning to be able to live in good health. However, most people, with help of knowledge, could achieve health. Even many considered incurable can regain their health when for the first time the causes of their disease are removed. People are kept away from health and happiness because of a lack of openness, knowledge and dialectics. The key to change is education. This document is written in the best interest of health of humanity and in the hope of a better health education and health care system in the future based on biological truths. However, it would be futile to care for the health of humans and at the same time ignore and let happen the continual destruction of Mother Nature, who without, we cannot obtain health. Further, the beauty of living is dependent of Mother Nature. It would be impossible to talk about health without at the same time talking about Mother Nature.

We are dependent on being in harmony with nature and its laws for health and survival. Without food, water, and air we cannot survive. A prerequisite for future life on Planet Earth is that the bio-mass and biodiversity of the plant kingdom remains. We must stop destroying the forests and poisoning the soil and water. Every year thousands of tons of topsoil are eroding away, a lot of which is due to cattle farming and logging. According to John Robbins (Diet for a New America, 1987) every tree in the USA will be cut down in about 50 years at the current rate of disappearance (counting from 1987). All rainforests will be vanished in a few decades with current disappearance rate. In Australia 70,000 hectares of native forests are cleared every year for woodchip. Currently 10 times more trees are logged than the re-growth rate on our Planet. The destruction of forest and the following erosion is perhaps the greatest crime of our age against the future. Trees produce oxygen, they are the home and food for a myriad of animals and their disappearance causes erosion, loss of biodiversity, dramatic climatic changes such as floods and drought, cold and excessive heat. It is obvious that a Planet without trees has no future. With facts on hand it doesn't require a great deal of mathematic skill to figure out that with current destruction there is not a much time left to change. The current destruction of Planet Earth is a futurecide. If everyone would take their responsibility, the possibility for survival and health in the future would increase. Most of all the inhabitants of the rich countries need to change their way of living and consuming and the developing countries need to avoid making the same mistakes as the rich one has already made. We can, for instance minimize our consumption of paper (i.e. bio-mass/forest). The computer user could start to use 100% recycled paper or wood free paper and minimize paper use. The best way for the individual to participate to a positive development is to start with her/himself. Hopefully the immense environmental problems can be solved with help of education, dialectics, willpower and international co-operation. "A new way of thinking is necessary if humanity is to survive, this is the most urgent problem of our age". Albert Einstein

### 13. BOOKS

Books are planned in English and Swedish that will look deeper into the history, philosophy and practice of Nature Cure. Translators to other languages are sought. In English there are 22 books by Kenneth S. Jaffrey, most of which are available. The new science of healing by Louis Kuhne is recommended, and has been translated into over 20 languages. For further information call +46-479-105 50.

## 14. FINAL THOUGHTS

Medicine appears to be digging its own grave. Hopefully it is only a matter of time before people wake up the fallacy of medical philosophy. Although many people—both lay people and medical doctors—already see that medicine is not the answer to our health problems, it is still not clear to even these people what the answer is. A great reason for this is that there is so much false information around. Many end up following alternative medicine. However, this is not the answer because it commonly has the same problem as modern medicine: it treats symptoms rather than attending to causes.

For a paradigm shift away from medicine to take place it is necessary for many people to go out and teach true natural health and healing, the true alternative to medicine (as opposed to alternative medicine).

Robert Mendelsohn, M.D. writes that modern medicine relies on faith to survive (10). It has an enormous propaganda apparatus to achieve this. Lies and fallacious theories become truths in people's minds when constantly repeated. But hopefully this faith will slowly disappear as more and more individuals discover that natural living and truly natural healing methods together with a conservation of the natural elements; air, water, soil and biodiversity is the only way to produce health.

This is only a very brief introduction to Nature Cure. Although literature is not easy to find, I invite you to study further, this almost forgotten, but true healing art, Nature Cure. You can search internet to find more information. Perhaps more information will be added to this page in the future if there is positive feedback to this website. I welcome your feedback.

“All truth goes through three stages. First it is ridiculed. Then it is violently opposed. Finally, it is accepted as self-evident.” Arthur Schopenhauer

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The philosophy of this article does not coincide with current medical or alternative medical philosophy. No opinion or advice here given is suggested by the author to represent a cure for disease and no responsibility for action taken by the reader is taken by the author. For a person in ill-health it is advisable to find a natural health practitioner for guidance and tuition.

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