

Chapter Fourteen

Why the Chronic Patient Takes So Long



es, Nature Cure is all right, but it takes so long.” Now and then we hear this or a similar remark. Our answer is: “No, it does not take long. It is the swiftest cure in existence.”

The trouble is that, as a rule, **we have to deal with none but the most advanced cases** of so-called incurable diseases. People go to the Nature Cure physician only after all other methods of treatment have been tried and found of no avail.

As long as there remains a particle of faith in the medicine bottle, the knife or the metaphysical formula of the mind healer, people prefer these easy methods, which require no effort on their part, to the Nature Cure treatment, which necessitates personal exertion, self-control, the changing or giving up of cherished habits. This, however, is what most of us evade as long as we can. “Exercise, the cold blitzguss, no red meat, no coffee?—I’d rather die!”

Afraid of Cold Water¹

The most-dreaded terror on the threshold seems to be cold

¹ In the early days of Nature Cure the cold-water treatment was one of the most powerful healing agents. In order to administer this “blitzguss,” it was necessary to have the patients treated in sanatorium outfitted with the needed areas designed to accommodate the cold-water therapy. Since such facilities are expensive to build and maintain they are rare today. Other therapies have replaced the cold-water treatments in most Nature Cure physicians practice, not because of the ineffectiveness of this therapy, but only because of the impracticality of its use in a standard office facility. It is our plan, however, to reverse this trend in all our new Healing Research facilities.

water. Undoubtedly, it has kept away thousands from Nature Cure and thereby from the only possible cure for their chronic ailments. If we could achieve equally good results without our heroic methods of treatment, the sidewalks leading to our institution would be crowded with people clamoring for admission.

After all, this foolish fear is entirely groundless. Cold water is no more to be dreaded than the bogey man. It is one of our fundamental principles of treatment never to do anything that is painful to the patient. We always "temper the wind to the shorn lamb," the coldness of the water and the force of the manipulations to the sensitiveness and endurance of the subject. Beginning with mild, alternately warm and cool sprays, which are pleasant and agreeable to everyone, we gradually increase the force and lower the temperature until the patient is so inured to cold water that the blitzguss becomes a delightful and pleasurable sensation, a positive luxury.

It is amusing to watch the gradual change in the attitude of our patients toward the cold-water treatment. In some instances we have had to spend hours in earnest persuasion before we could induce a particularly sensitive person to try the first mild spray. A few weeks later if, perchance, something interfered with the cold water applications, the patient would indignantly refuse to take the other treatment if there was to be no cold water.

There is certainly no finer tonic than cold water, no more exhilarating sensation than that produced by the artistic application of alternating douches and the blitz.

The real cause of this cold-water scare, we believe, is to be found in the boasting of the veterans. When, with protruding chest and chin in air, they brag to the newcomers or to their friends about their heroism and the coolness with which they allow the cold-water hose to be turned on them, the listener shudders and exclaims: "This cold water may be all right for you, but it would never do for me."

No doubt, it is this bravado of the initiated that keeps many a novice from the first plunge into the mysteries of Nature Cure. If these timid ones only knew what they miss!

Business Versus Cure

From a business point of view it would, perhaps, be better to omit the cold water altogether. It would certainly be much less trouble; but then, the rugged honesty of Father Kneipp, the cham-

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pion of the cold-water treatment branch of German Nature Cure, has descended upon his followers and compels them to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, **to make use of everything that is likely to be of benefit to the patient and to effect a real and lasting cure.**

Our friends, the osteopaths, have only a pitying smile for our arduous labors. They ask: "Why fool with cold water and drive patients away, when pleasant manipulations bring the business?" If we query in return: "Do your pleasant manipulations cure obstinate chronic ailments?" They answer: "We do not expect to cure them. The effort involves too much labor and spoils the reputation of our work. Not one in a hundred chronics has the patience and perseverance to be cured. Besides, if a patient comes too long to the office for treatment he drives others away."

Some of the most successful osteopaths in this city make it a rule not to treat a patient longer than six weeks or two months.

In a number of cases this may be sufficient to produce marked primary improvement, but it is not enough to launch the patient into a healing crisis and, therefore, does not produce a real cure because it does not remove the underlying causes of the disease. If, after a while, the latent chronic condition again manifests in external symptoms, the patient returns for another course of treatment; he was "cured" so quickly before and thinks he will be helped again.

In justice to the osteopaths it must be said that we are not referring to those chronic diseases which are directly caused by lesions of the spine or other bony structures. If such dislocations or subluxations be the sole cause of the trouble, their correction by manipulative treatment may produce a cure within a few weeks.

But notwithstanding the teachings of orthodox osteopathy, the majority of chronic ailments have their origin in other causes. In most cases, the existing spinal lesions are themselves the result of other primary disease conditions which must be removed before the bony lesions will remain corrected.

The mode of treatment depends upon the object that is to be accomplished. If it is to make the patient feel better with the least possible expenditure of time, money, personal effort and self-control on his part, and the least amount of exertion on the part of the physician or healer, then osteopathic manipulations or metaphysical formulas may be in order. But if the object is to cure actually

and permanently a deep-seated chronic disease, all the methods of the natural treatment, intelligently combined and adapted to the individual case, will be required in order to accomplish results.

Pull the Roots

Cutting off their heads does not kill the weeds. The first sign of improvement in the treatment of a chronic disease does not mean a cure.

Diagnosis from the Eye, borne out by everyday practical experience, reveals the fact that symptomatic manifestations of disease are due to underlying constitutional causes; that the chronic symptoms are Nature's feeble and ineffectual efforts to eliminate from the system scrofulous, psoric or syphilitic taints and the disease products resulting from food and drug poisoning, or to overcome the destructive effects of surgical mutilations.

An abatement of symptoms is, therefore, not always the sign of a real and permanent cure. The latter depends entirely on the elimination of the hereditary and acquired constitutional taints and poisons.

When, under the influence of natural living and methods of treatment, the body of the chronic becomes sufficiently purified and strengthened, a period of marked improvement may set in. All disease symptoms gradually abate, the patient gains in strength, both physically and mentally, and he feels as though there was nothing the matter with him any more.

But the eyes tell a different story. They show that the underlying constitutional taints have not been fully eliminated—the weeds have not been pulled up by the roots.

This can be accomplished only by healing crises, by Nature's cleansing and healing activities in the form of inflammatory and feverish processes; **anything short of this is merely preliminary improvement**, "training for the fight," but not the cure.

When you order a suit of clothes from your tailor, you do not take it away from him half-finished; if you do, you will have an unsatisfactory garment.

No more should you interfere with your cure after the first signs of improvement. Continue until you have thoroughly eliminated from your system the hidden constitutional taints and the drug

poisons which have been the cause of your troubles. After that you can paddle your own canoe; right living and right thinking will then be sufficient to maintain perfect health and strength, physically, mentally and morally.

Is the Chronic Patient to Be Left to His Fate Because Allopathy Says He Is Incurable?

Frequently we have been severely criticised by our friends, our coworkers or our patients for accepting certain seemingly hopeless chronic cases. They exclaim:

“You know this man has locomotor ataxy and that woman is an epileptic: you certainly do not expect to cure them,” or, “Doctor, don’t you think it injures the institution to have that dreadful-looking person around? He is nothing but skin and bones and surely cannot live much longer.”

Sometimes open criticism and covert insinuation intimate that our reasons for taking in incurables are mercenary.

If we should dismiss today those of our patients who, from the orthodox and popular point of view, are considered incurable, there would not remain ten out of a hundred; and yet our total failures are few and far between. Many such seemingly hopeless cases have come for treatment month after month, in several instances for a year or more, apparently without any marked advance; yet today they are in the best of health.

Yes, it is hard work and frequently thankless work to deal with these patients. It would be much easier, much more remunerative and would bring more glory to confine ourselves to the treatment of acute diseases, for it is there that Nature Cure works its most impressive miracles. On the other hand, to achieve the seemingly impossible, to prove what Nature Cure can accomplish in the most stubborn chronic cases, sustains our courage and is its own compensation.

The word chronic in the vocabulary of the “Old School” of medicine is synonymous with “incurable.” This is not strange; since the medical and surgical symptomatic treatment of acute diseases creates the chronic conditions, it certainly cannot be expected to cure them. If, by continued suppression, Nature’s cleansing and healing efforts have been perverted into chronic disease conditions,

the following directions are given in the regular works on medical practice:

“When this disease reaches the chronic stage, you can no longer cure it. You may advise the patient to change climate or occupation. As for medication, treat the symptoms as they arise.”

We know that the symptoms are Nature’s healing efforts; when these are promptly treated, that is, suppressed, it is not surprising that the chronic does not recover. In fact, **it is the treatment which makes him and keeps him a chronic.**

Why Nature Cure Achieves Results

Nature Cure achieves results in the treatment of chronic diseases because its theories and practices are entirely opposite to those just described. However, when the Nature Cure physician claims that he can cure cancer, tuberculosis, epilepsy, paralysis, Bright’s disease, diabetes or certain mental derangements, the regular physician shows only derision and contempt. He will not even condescend to examine any evidence in support of our claims.

Since, then, Nature Cure offers to the so-called incurable the only hope and the only possible means of regaining health, why not give him a chance? Many times apparently hopeless cases have responded most readily to our treatment, while more promising ones offered the most stubborn resistance. Even with the best possible methods of diagnosis, it is hard to determine just how far the destruction of vital organs has progressed, or how deeply they have been impregnated with drug poisons.

Therefore, it is often an impossibility to predict with certainty just what the outcome will be. This can be determined only by a fair trial. In the past we have treated many a case that, according to the rules and precedents of orthodox science, should be dead and buried long ago; yet these individuals are today alive and in the best of health.

Every now and then incidents like the following renew our enthusiasm and our faith in Nature Cure: Recently, we had three new cases, sent by three former patients who had been under treatment several years ago. These three had been among the worst cases ever treated in our institution. When they came to us, one was supposed to be dying with cancer, the second was in the advanced

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stages of tertiary syphilis and the third, a lady, had survived several operations for the removal of the appendix and the ovaries. At the time she took up our treatment she had been advised to undergo another operation for the removal of the uterus.

These incurables had been exceedingly trying. More than once one or another had quit, discouraged and disgusted, only to return, knowing that, after all, Nature Cure was their only hope. After they left us, we lost track of them and often wondered how they were getting on. Imagine our pleasant surprise when all three were reported by the newcomers as being in good health. What if it did take months or even years to produce the desired results? What would have been the fate of these three patients if it had not been for slow Nature Cure?

Discouraged patients frequently ask: "Why do others recover so quickly when I show so little improvement? This cure seems to be all right for some diseases, but evidently it does not fit my case."

This is defective reasoning. True Nature Cure fits every case because it includes everything good in natural healing methods. **In stubborn cases Nature Cure is not to blame for the slow and unsatisfactory results: the difficulty lies in the character and advanced stage of the disease.**



