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The Creation Of Health

Caroline Myss And C. Norman Shealy M.D.

The Creation of Health

*The Emotional, Psychological,
and Spiritual Responses That
Promote Health and Healing*

Caroline Myss, Ph.D.
C. Norman Shealy, M.D., Ph.D.



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ANATOMY OF THE SPIRIT
WHY PEOPLE DON'T HEAL AND HOW THEY CAN

and published by Bantam Books

ACCLAIM FOR CAROLINE MYSS

ANATOMY OF THE SPIRIT

‘Essential reading’
Health & Fitness

‘This book will remind you what wise healers have always known: spiritual energy and health are inseparable. Healers often cannot teach, and teachers cannot heal. Myss can do both. She is a blessing to the human race because she shows us what we all may yet be’ Larry Dossey, author of *Healing Words*

‘Caroline Myss is a rare genius and one of the most remarkable women on the planet today. Her fascinating work represents a quantum leap in human understanding that pushes the envelope of psychology and medicine’ Joan Borysenko, Ph.D., author of *Minding the Body, Mending the Mind*

WHY PEOPLE DON'T HEAL AND HOW THEY CAN

‘A practical approach to healing, which will help readers to overcome the mental and emotional blocks to becoming well ... She makes you think more about yourself and the importance of caring for your body, mind and spirit’
Daily Mail

‘A welcome trailblazer in the thicket of often interchangeable self-help publications ... This is a book without a single dull moment’
Light

'There are many true-life and personal experiences ... An
inspiring read'
Here's Health

www.booksattransworld.co.uk

Foreword

The concepts presented in *The Creation of Health* are very appropriate to healing in our time. We are now faced with the threats of nuclear warfare and AIDS, which have no simple, intellectual solutions. A rebirth of the techniques of healing or perhaps a relearning of what our ancestors already knew is required. If there is to be a twenty-first century, it will need to reflect a new level of spiritual wisdom and intuitive insight.

There may be a vocabulary in this book that seems strange to some, but remember, all healing is 'scientific.' We are just beginning to explore areas of mind-body interactions and measure what emotional states (such as depression or love) do to the body.

We have struggled endlessly to gain acceptance of the fact that the health of the psyche and spirit are manifested on a cellular level, as physical health or disease. We are the soil in which the disease can take root. We are not simply attacked by 'nice' or 'nasty' diseases. We have a lot to say about our health and healing. *The Creation of Health* helps one look at this total picture to help one successfully live one's life.

I am still a surgeon, despite what I know about healing ... and Norm started as a neurosurgeon. We are grounded people but we also have seen the true nature of healing.

Every day, I see what love and peace of mind do to help people heal. I also know the resistance to learning what is not taught in medical school.

One of my subversive acts was to post on the bulletin board of the Doctor's Lounge at Yale-New Haven Hospital a double-blind study of the effectiveness of prayer in avoiding post-myocardial infarction complications. In twenty-four hours, someone had written 'bullshit' across it. One cannot change the closed-minded with statistics. Beliefs are a matter of faith, not logic. As the Quakers say, 'Speak truth to power.'

My wife Bobbie and I, originally skeptics, have both personally experienced healings of physical problems. These healings were viewed by physicians who were also altered by what they 'saw'.

I know I use my intuition as I evaluate patients. I 'know' when people are 'sick.' They give off a different feeling, vibration, aura ... call it what you will; it is obvious to me. I don't give up my diagnostic tools but combine intuition, symbolism and medicine in treating people.

The issue isn't to cure all illnesses. Everyone dies, someday. The issue is to love and live an authentic life and to understand that healing and curing may be two different entities. A quadriplegic painter, who holds a brush in his mouth, loves and beautifies the world and is closer to his wholeness than many of us who are without physical limitations.

What is our responsibility to ourselves and the cosmos? I believe it is all related to the role of love. Self-love and self-esteem are required. We must start with self-love and self-healing in order to be able to extend it to others. Free will is the key ingredient to making it meaningful.

What, despite all my scientific training, keeps me open to the seemingly mystical and unconscious awareness? Life! To me it is mystical how a wound 'knows' how to heal. How a fertilized egg carries all the knowledge to grow up to be a human being is mystical. Where in the DNA is the

blueprint for our quadrants ... psychological, intellectual, physical and spiritual? All the information for us to be whole individuals is there. If we listen to our four quadrants, we will stay on our path. Illness is a reset button ... a redirector of one's life. It says 'change your life pattern.' It is not a matter of blame or guilt but the courage to grow and change. Is it scientific? Yes! Teach type-A post-myocardial infarct patients to love and you halve the reinfarction rate. Psychotherapy can reduce the psychological and physical side effects of radiation and chemotherapy. DNA repair mechanisms are enhanced in stable individuals. This is all scientific, all measurable.

The greatest reason to live the message is that it feels good. No one will live forever ... the longer one lives, the more loss one experiences. It is what you choose to do with the pain that is the choice.

Love is a difficult problem for many of us. As discussed in *The Creation of Health*, the sexual or romantic and spiritual love have been separated. This separation leads to difficulties on all planes. At this point in our development, we must see the need for achieving spiritual, unconditional love as a means of healing ourselves and our fellow travelers on this planet.

The Creation of Health carries within it the seeds to help us grow and bloom, to utilize our innate abilities and take on the challenge of life. The process is the product.

Open your eyes and mind to see, and you will believe. Do not let others tell you what you can see and believe. They will create defects in your visual fields that will lead you to deny what your collective unconscious has always known.

Listen to that inner voice and be born again and healed in the only true sense of the word. Let the creation of health begin in you.

Bernard S. Siegel, M.D., FACS
Author, *Love, Medicine & Miracles*

Preface

The question most asked when we receive a diagnosis of an illness is 'Why? Why did I develop this disease?' We are terrified of the unexplainable, particularly when the unexplainable is located within our bodies. Where once we turned to religion for answers to the mysteries of our lives, we now refer our questions to science. Western science and medicine are rooted in the belief that scientific research can and will eventually discover the reasons for all that occurs, both within us and surrounding us.

Until recently, most research has been and continues to be devoted to the study of physical cause and effect. When a physical body becomes ill, the search for the source of the illness begins: How did the virus enter the body? When? What caused the heart to become dysfunctional? Too much salt? Not enough exercise? What? And then there is the study of what triggers cancer: smoking, too much computer work, poor nutritional habits, genetic predisposition. Always, the search for the source of illness begins with physical causes.

The explanations for the development of disease that science provides are essential, but they are insufficient. We live now in a society deeply alive psychologically, in which millions of individuals are putting serious effort into understanding their inner selves. Our attempts to understand our inner selves do not by any means make scientific medicine obsolete, as has been suggested by extreme proponents of the holistic health movement. They do, however, make sole physical explanations for illness inadequate. And even Western medicine is finally

recognizing that more factors have to be involved in the development of disease than just the physical ones. The medical world is not, however, yet ready to make 'official' the relationship between emotional dysfunction and its natural consequence to the physical body.

This book introduces readers to a new way of understanding their human physiology. Because our work is a collaboration between a physician and a medical intuitive, it is a beginning at making 'official' the fundamental connection between emotional dysfunction and physical illness. In this book, the human body is described in terms of the 'human energy system,' a well-ordered technical structure of emotional responses that exists within us. Our emotional anatomy is as real and as organized as our physical anatomy. Those who are suffering from depression and chronic illness can, by using their intuition to deal with the unfinished business of their past, accelerate and enhance the healing process. We hope that the material in this book will assist people in understanding a fuller view of the way illness develops in the human body and why it develops. While science continues to advance our understanding of the chemical and physiological components to life, science remains inadequate at addressing the impact heartache, grief, rage, or love has on the physical body. Yet we do not believe anyone, physicians included, would deny the fact that these emotional states, as well as many others, influence our bodies tremendously.

Future research in the field of health will be directed toward studying the ways we affect our physical human chemistry through our emotional chemistry and our mental attitudes. The research in this book is a step toward offering the reader a means through which to answer the most fundamental of questions, 'Why did I become ill?' And this book may assist many others in avoiding ever having to ask that question.

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C. Norman Shealy, M.D., Ph.D.

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We extend love and gratitude for the support of our friends and family whose encouragement in our work and in our lives has never ceased to warm our hearts: Marjorie P. Allen, Sally Ember, Jean Kennedy, Nina Lynn, Karol Fenner. Special thanks to the colleagues who stimulated our thinking: Talmage L. Peele, M.D.; Eugene A. Stead, Jr., M.D.; Carl A. Moyer, M.D.; Genevieve Haller, D.C.; Jeffrey Furst; the Reverend Mr. Henry Rucker; Robert Leichtman, M.D.; Elmer Green, Ph.D.; Roger K. Cady, M.D.; Robert G. Wilkie, M.D.; and Jody Trotter.

I



*Understanding the Nature of
Energy in Creating Health*

Shifting Our Thinking About the Cause of Illness

CAROLINE MYSS

The time has come to assert one primal fact: The human spirit is real. Beyond the chemical, physical and physiological study of disease, there comes a point, as we search for the cause of illness, when we are led directly to the core of a person's soul. This is a bold notion with which to begin a book on health. It is not, however, original. In recent decades, numerous health professionals have suggested that the cause of illness is ultimately connected to inner stresses present in a person's life.

The language used to describe this connection between illness and stress varies from source to source. Some use psychological terms, others use the language of stress. Still others emphasize the body-mind-spirit connection. In combining the significance of all of this research, it becomes apparent that something of great value is being universally introduced into our world. Our 'spirits' are longing to be recognized as legitimate, meaning they are every bit as real as our physical selves. Beyond the religious and poetic acceptance of the human spirit, our spiritual natures are breaking through the barriers of our psychological and emotional language, demanding to be identified as the underlying force of life from which all else flows.

Were this book to be written twenty-five or perhaps even fifteen years from now, we would undoubtedly begin by

listing the causes of illness in language that describes the basic crises of the spirit: loss of meaning in one's life, grief, guilt, an unforgiving heart, contamination through hatred, loss of self-esteem and personal dignity, and all forms of fear. Once these crises were identified, the physical dysfunction being manifested by the body would be understood as a reflection of these deeper spiritual issues.

Most of us are not yet ready to accept fully this analysis of illness. We are all products of a complex technological society in which we have grown up to think of ourselves in technological terms. In order even to consider the human experience in spiritual language, much less recognize disease as a spiritual crisis, we have to bring a reverence for Life into the forefront of what it means to be a human being.

For all of the many explanations considered as to why Life exists, few people have on the tips of their tongues the notion that Life might be, in and of itself, sacred. Indeed, for many people, the notion of 'holiness' is not present in their understanding of what it means to be human, alive and a part of the vast continuum of life that exists on this planet and beyond. Our system for appreciating life is essentially an economic one in which the value we ascribe to people and to other life forms is based upon earning capabilities and the acquisition of earthly power. This value system is transculturally applied to individuals, nations and to the earth itself, and serves as strong evidence that the human society finds it difficult to honor Life for Life's sake.

Thus, as a result of what our value system has done to the quality of life, we have in our midst a wide variety of epidemics many of which are virus-associated. The other 'epidemics,' such as drug and alcohol addiction, are purely emotional and spiritual in nature. The human experience, except for occasional pockets of enlightenment, is diminished in dignity. People in countless numbers are lost

within the very fabric of their lives. Whether financially, politically or socially persecuted, millions and millions of people's lives have been reduced to little or no value because of the economic scale upon which we measure the worth of life.

We now face an epidemic of the fragmentation of the human spiritual condition. Out of this epidemic, physical disease arises in the form of AIDS, cancer, depression, anxiety, nervous breakdowns, alcoholism and drug addiction as well as environmental toxic poisoning and pollution. If this book were being written in the year 2000, we would be writing a purely spiritual text on how to heal these illnesses. But our world is now only slightly open to considering the possibility that the human spirit needs serious attention, much less genuine healing. It is appropriate, therefore, that this book represent the traditional medical model of health and disease alongside the emerging voice of the human spirit.

We have a substantial journey ahead of us. This book represents one step, hopefully a major one, in that direction.

Forming Our Partnership

Norm Shealy and I have worked together since 1985 in a partnership that combines our perceptions and training to help people understand why they have become ill. He is a physician, neurosurgeon and expert on pain and stress management.

I am a publisher of books, a former journalist and I earned a Master's Degree in Religious Studies, specializing in the Psychological Dimensions of Spirituality. During the years I spent studying spirituality, I realized that the skill of intuition is a natural attribute of the human spirit that can be developed and disciplined to benefit one's life. I

specifically focused the development of my intuition on learning to do intuitive diagnosis.

This skill enables me to perceive a person's energy, or life force, to such an exact degree that I can intuitively identify and locate the presence of a physical disease within a person's body. More importantly, however, I am able to recognize and identify the patterns of emotional, psychological and spiritual stress within a person's life. This information provides Norm and his patients, as well as me and my clients, with a perspective more inclusive of the total stress-related circumstances of a patient's life.

In addition to the physical data that is determined through a physician's medical examination and laboratory tests, the information acquired through an intuitive reading uncovers the fears, emotional stresses, deeply rooted insecurities and personal traumas that exist as a very real part of each person's life. When all of this data is compiled, a comprehensive profile of a patient's life emerges. Then it is possible to understand how a person, consciously or unconsciously, participated in the creation of disease.

Through the years of our work together, Norm and I have dealt with hundreds of patients. We work together with people who have cancer, arthritis, chronic pain, accidental injury, brain injuries, coma, AIDS, heart problems, strokes and many other diseases. We have consistently noted that illness tends to follow certain patterns of stress or trauma that emerge organically out of the day-to-day business of living. How well our inner resources serve us in terms of helping us to cope with the ordinary events of life, such as disappointment or frustration over our personal or professional relationships, the experience of loss, financial traumas, to name just a few, is intimately linked with one's quality of health.

The Stress Factor

In recent years, we have, as a society, turned our attention toward studying the effects of stress upon health. There is general agreement between both the medical community and the public that stress is indeed a major contributor to diseases such as heart attacks, high blood pressure, ulcers and nervous disorders.

The medical trend of looking seriously at the varied influences of stress marks a major turning point in the diagnosis and understanding of disease because it introduces the factor that emotional tension is, in fact, disruptive to the physical body. Even though the influence of stress is still viewed as only a partial contributor to physical dysfunction, nevertheless this recognition that human emotions do indeed affect physical health has brought the traditional medical world face to face with *the fundamental principle of holistic health*: The majority of physical illnesses result from an overload of emotional, psychological and spiritual crises.

Because the study of stress continues to produce hard evidence that emotions influence health, it is now inevitable that the findings of traditional medical research in this area will eventually merge with the principles of holistic health because both fields are discovering the same reality: Emotions exert the controlling influence upon the physical body. Even though the traditional medical community takes a more cautious approach in forming conclusions on this matter, the door, nevertheless, has been opened.

The use of the term 'stress' itself contributes to this merger of the two medical worlds because it is a bridge term - a safe word that describes what traditional physicians are nervous about describing. Without having officially to recognize emotional, psychological or spiritual

crises, the use of the word 'stress' provides a legitimate and non-threatening term to describe what holistically minded physicians and health care practitioners are comfortable discussing in detail, namely, the human response to the difficulties of life.

The work that Norm and I do together serves much the same function as does the general term 'stress' - it's bridge work. Our research with people includes the study of their 'disease' and extends into the study of who they are, what they believe and how well they provide for their emotional needs within the environment of their lives.

Significant Stress Patterns

In general, we have learned that people who become ill identify consistently with one or more of the following eight dysfunctional patterns.

The first pattern involves the presence of *unresolved or deeply consuming* emotional, psychological or spiritual stress within a person's life. This stress may be either a long-running pattern reaching as far back as childhood, such as a feeling of rejection or inadequacy, or it may be the result of some recent event within his or her life, such as the death of a spouse. Whatever the type of stress, it need not be dramatic or even obvious to be real. Inevitably, however, unresolved or consuming inner stress is present in larger measure in a person who becomes ill.

The second consistent pattern relates to the degree of control that negative belief patterns have upon a person's reality. Each of us is a complex system of positive and negative beliefs, attitudes and experiences.

What a person believes to be true about life, about God, about other people, about fate or luck, for instance, plays a very powerful role in determining how a person lives. Because what we believe is intimately connected to our

emotions, our beliefs influence our emotional response to life. The empowering belief patterns and positive mental attitudes that we possess are, therefore, essential to creating a healthy body as well as a healthy life.

People who become ill, however, tend to have belief patterns that are disempowering in such an effective way that these patterns override the influence of whatever positive attitudes exist. For example, an individual may be educated and talented and give the appearance of having all things working in his or her favor. And yet, underneath that illusion, that person may have such low self-esteem that he or she feels unworthy of success. That belief most assuredly guarantees failure, and failure guarantees anger and bitterness which, in turn, result in physical distress.

The third consistent pattern that plays a major role in our becoming ill is the inability to give and/or receive love. People's lives revolve around love, and when stressful experiences in relationships exist, the physical body can easily break down in response. A person who lives a life devoid of love or of any degree of human warmth is a prime candidate for disease.

The fourth consistent pattern that is central to creating illness is lack of humor and the inability to distinguish serious concerns from the lesser issues of life. Certainly there are those situations in life that merit a strong emotional response. Many upsets, however, are not earth-shattering; they are simply the day-to-day 'stuff' of life. It is worth learning how to let go of the lesser 'stuff' in order to avoid problems such as high blood pressure, migraines or ulcers. Laughter is extremely healing. Finding humor in our struggles does not mean we do not take them seriously. Rather, it is an indication of the natural transcendent qualities of the human being.

The fifth consistent pattern that influences the quality of health is how effectively one exercises the power of choice

in terms of holding dominion over the movement and activities of their own life. 'Holding dominion over' has a substantially different and far healthier meaning than does the common attitude of thinking of yourself as in control of all the parts and all of the people in your life. A person can maintain control over his or her life and have a heart attack in the process, due to the anxiety and stress that accompany the effort to control the events of the outside world.

'Holding dominion over' refers to our capacity to maintain the controlling influence in terms of the flow of our own lives, even if the flow includes compromise or altering our plans. Holding dominion does not mean always getting one's own way. It means being able to participate in the natural give and take of life, to be flexible, to respond to the needs of others and to reach for what you need from a position of inner strength and confidence. It means being able to have an effective voice in making your own choices.

Every person must feel that he or she has a choice in the matters of his or her own life. When the dynamic of choice is violated or interfered with, a person's emotional response can often lead to the development of disease. This is because the individual's response to a violation of choice will be filled with anger, hostility, fear and rage.

In people who are ill, there is often a history of experiences in which they either have abdicated their power of choice to a more dominant personality or have felt that their choices have not been respected.

The sixth consistent pattern concerns how well a person has attended to the needs of the physical body itself. Nutrition, exercise, the impact of drugs or alcohol, as well as a person's genetic makeup, provide the foundation for the quality of health. How well an individual attends to the emotional, physical and chemical stresses of life is very

strongly connected to the degree of vigor and stamina in the physical body itself.

The seventh consistent pattern relates to the 'existential vacuum' or the suffering that accompanies the absence or loss of meaning in one's life. The lost soul, or wandering person, is very susceptible to illness, primarily because a life devoid of meaning often leads to despair, depression and feelings of worthlessness. The physical body is strongly affected when one's state of mind and emotions are consumed with the suffering that comes from feelings of emptiness. This is a frequent condition reported by people who are ill.

The eighth pattern that is characteristic of people who become ill is the tendency toward denial. Tremendous inner stress is created from the inability to face the challenges of one's life and neither to acknowledge nor consciously recognize what it is that is not working in one's life. Much of this stress is created as a result of *choosing* to block one's own intuition or awareness in order to allow certain situations to continue without addressing the deeper problems that exist.

Situations arise in everyone's life that are difficult to acknowledge - for example, a child on drugs or a marriage that is in great difficulty. Acknowledging the situation, which means discussing it, makes it real in such a way that one can no longer deny the problem. Denying the presence of difficulty by avoiding conversations about it does not make it evaporate. Rather, the stress that is generated through keeping denial alive becomes extremely destructive to the human body.

Many of our patients who are working through an illness have commented that they simply could not face a particular stressful issue in their lives. Once the illness surfaced, however, denial of that particular situation