

Healing and Our Relationship to the Environment - Part 6

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Finally, I would like to touch briefly on the topic of healing and our relationship with our environment. Our environment is a "mixed bag" when it comes to our health. It was mentioned above the many toxins which exist in our environment, which have a deleterious effect on our health. There is not really much that we can do about such poisons except to try as much as possible to avoid them, and to strengthen our immune systems as a means of protection against them. These toxins are not natural; they are all man-made. On the other hand, much has been written also about the various herbs and medicinal plants, and other sources of healing elements which exist in our environment. (94) There are people who advocate gardening as good for our health. Among those who encourage working in or with a garden is Kevin Trudeau, who says:

Being in the physical universe, working with living things and creating things with our hands is incredibly beneficial. Working in a garden provides an outdoor environment, exercise, stress reduction, and many more mental, emotional and physical benefits. (95)

Unfortunately, it is our modern technology that has introduced the many environmental toxins which afflict us; they are usually artificially-made substances, not naturally occurring in nature. Andrew Weil points out the dangers of being exposed to the many toxins which exist around us, and the importance of guarding ourselves against "toxic injury." (96) He devotes an entire chapter of his book to "Protecting Yourself from Toxins." (97) He states: "Your body's ability to eliminate unwanted substances depends on the healthy functioning of four system: the urinary system, the gastrointestinal system, the respiratory system, and the skin; it can discharge wastes through urine, feces, exhaled air, and sweat." (98) He adds that you can ensure that these systems are in "good working order" by drinking enough pure water to help the kidneys maintain a good output of urine, by eating enough fiber to ensure regular bowel function, by exercising your respiratory system regularly, and by periodically increasing output of sweat through aerobic exercise or exposure to heat (as by taking saunas or steam baths). (99)

In this same chapter, he talks about air pollution, contaminated water, toxins in food, drugs, cosmetics, and other sources of toxins, as well as toxic forms of energy. (100) Again, one of the best ways to guard against toxic injury is by optimizing the power of the "healing system." Moreover, as if all of this were not bad enough, yet even worse than the various kinds of physical environmental pollution which surrounds us (chemicals, radiation, etc.) is the spiritual pollution which surrounds us. This is the invisible pollution which affects our mind and spirit. As we are told in a Chung Pyung booklet:

In the last phase of the twentieth century, all mankind seriously suffered from pollution...there is another enormous pollution yet unknown to [the] humanity, and this is the spiritual pollution. Few people know that the invisible spiritual pollution is more dangerous than visible pollution. (101)

Fortunately, on the other hand, "spiritual" healing is also possible, and there are gifted individuals who are able to effect such healing. This topic will be addressed more at length later in this book, when I offer some observations about the phenomenon of Chung Pyung works.

All of the new perspectives described above are adding considerable insight to our understanding about health and healing. In many ways, each of us is his or her own physician. Not only will this give us a much greater sense of control over our lives, but it will reduce medical costs, which are a burden to many people.