

Heal Arthritis

Physically—Mentally—Spiritually
The Edgar Cayce Approach

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How Do We Understand Arthritis— The Energies Involved?



In understanding arthritis with the aid of medical textbooks, we can say nearly all cases of arthritis fall into one of two general classifications which are relatively easily differentiated, although poorly understood.

Atrophic arthritis, more commonly called rheumatoid, has also been given the name of proliferative arthritis or arthritis deformans. This type of disease process is characterized by inflammatory changes in the synovial membranes of the joints, in the structures surrounding the joints, and by a wasting away and decreasing density of the bones because of the absorption of mineral substances.

In the early stages there is a swelling that migrates from one joint to another; and stiffness of the joints oc-

curs with a rather typical fusiform swelling of the interphalangeal joints (of the fingers) closest to the hands. Later on there is a malformation and fixation of the joints, and frequently an ulnar deviation of the fingers as a sign of this disease. Subcutaneous nodules are frequent and usually the disease is found beginning in young people, more commonly the male than the female.

The patient experiences anemia, chronic weight loss, loss of calcium in the bone structures, and is often rather severely and chronically ill. Juvenile rheumatoid arthritis has its onset prior to age of sixteen and sometimes goes through a complete remission over the period of several years. When it does not clear up, however, it continues to be a severe, chronic problem involving the entire body.

Hypertrophic arthritis gives an entirely different picture. This has been more commonly called osteoarthritis and is known also as degenerative arthritis, found more commonly in the older person. Yet, like many conditions afflicting the human frame, it can also be found in younger people. In this disease process there is generally no inflammation and no spreading or migratory type of joint involvement. Rather than a loss of calcium, there is a calcium buildup. An example of this is the so-called Heberden's nodes—a swelling and buildup of calcium about the base of the terminal bones of the fingers of both hands.

In osteoarthritis, there are calcific spurs and deformity of the joints, but never ankylosis (immobility and fixation of a joint), and rarely, if ever, the ulnar deviation of the fingers such as is found in atrophic arthritis.

There are, of course, other types of arthritis not quite so common. The arthritis associated with rheumatic fever, and those found with various inflammatory dis-

eases, constitute the majority of this group. Gout might be listed in a separate classification. There is also a type of arthritis associated with trauma, which can be as difficult to correct as some of the others.

Concepts of Function

Physiological factors in the cause of rheumatoid arthritis are certainly different from those which bring about the condition we know as osteoarthritis. Thus it would not be surprising to find such a differentiation in the Cayce readings. The severity of atrophic arthritis, along with its poorer prognosis, leads one to suspect that the abnormal physiology is of a much deeper origin with much more profound ramifications.

There are certain basic causative factors, however, common to both conditions, as seen in the Cayce material. Poor eliminations and the associated condition, inadequate assimilations, seem to be part of the picture in nearly every condition of arthritis, no matter what type it may be. Apparently other abnormal functions within the body contribute to improper eliminations and direct the body down a course which brings either a mild or a serious condition which must be met.

In those cases which Cayce describes, treatment is seldom a simple procedure even when the person is not seriously ill. For instance, [4199] was told her problem originated from tautness of the muscles of the back and the nerves through the autonomic nervous system of the spine, which in turn produced lack of elimination through the skin or through the liver and kidneys. This then produced an autointoxication through substances which were picked up in the hepatic circulation. This condition of the blood supply created what is described as a "blood force" to the capillaries supplying the bursae

and joint spaces of the lower extremities, thus causing a contraction in the lymphatic system of these sacs and hampering the action of the limbs themselves.

Cayce gave a reading for a man [1978] who was developing a tendency toward arthritis. There was a lack of liver activity as it is related to the function of the gall bladder, producing what Cayce called “solvents” for assisting in the assimilation of foods for the body. Perhaps his solvents are what we know as enzymes. This condition then apparently produced an inflammatory reaction which was carried through the blood, creating an inflammatory reaction in the extremities. Chemical imbalances in the body, lack of iodine in the bloodstream—these are mentioned as etiologic factors. One individual was told there was a crystallization of most of the foods that had certain elements or salts in them. His body was unable to deal with this and the crystallization then brought about the condition we call arthritis.

It should be noted, however, that Cayce did not limit his description of how a disease comes about by the ways in which the body’s physiological functions are disturbed. In other cases, perhaps where the individual was able to deal with underlying causes more adequately, he explained that emotions which are chosen in interpersonal relationships have a major impact on how the body functions.

Rheumatoid arthritis, as mentioned earlier, is a different event in the human body. A fifty-seven-year-old man, [3363], was told he was experiencing rheumatoid arthritis as a “meeting of self.” In the concept of karma, or “meeting oneself,” the universal law states that what we are currently experiencing in our lives and in our bodies results from what we have done in times past, either during this incarnation or an earlier one in the earth. It’s another way of saying what Paul said, “What-

soever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7)

This invariably involves one in his or her interpersonal relationships, for, as we pointed out earlier, it is not exactly what we have done as a life pursuit here as much as it is how we have performed in our relationships with others. Did we act in a kind, understanding, forgiving manner as a manifestation of the Love that God would have us live, or was it a self-serving attitude that said "This is what I want!"

Often rheumatoid arthritis is marked by the appearance of subcutaneous nodules. This man, [3363], was told the knots or cysts under the skin came about as a result of a "lack of proper distribution of energies that have been used in the body. Not wholly toxic conditions, but producing toxic conditions by their lack of proper elimination." This man, Cayce indicated, was suffering from lack of proper eliminations throughout his body, which brought about a crystallization of hormones in the circulation of the lymphatics. This created an incoordination between the lymph or superficial circulation and the deeper circulation. All the sympathetic nerves were under stress and strain so that in movements of the body, "these cry out for relief, as it were." There was a lack of proper assimilation as a part of the nerve disorder and disturbance.

In understanding the physiology in more everyday terms, we might see the development of some of these conditions described above as having their beginning in emotions that have been "stuffed" deep in the unconscious, but still acting through the autonomic nervous system to bring about derangement of the endocrine glands and their functions and an incoordination of the removal of the products of metabolism from the body, thus an intoxication or a "toxicity."

In a fifty-three-year-old woman, [5144], whose arthri-

tis had progressed to the point of ankylosis, an unbalanced condition of the body as a whole weakened the resistance in the lymphatics and the emunctory (excretory) circulation through the extremities, especially in the bursae of the body. (Cayce described the bursae as those areas where lymph pockets are gathered in the regular functioning of the body.) *Dorland's Medical Dictionary* describes bursae as sacs filled with viscid fluid located in tissue where there would otherwise be friction. Thus Cayce's bursae would encompass the joint spaces, where most of the pathology in arthritis seems to be present.

Among persons with atrophic arthritis, assimilation was proposed as causing a glandular malfunction, as in [5150]. This brought about, in a secondary fashion, an infection, creating the arthritis. In another case, there was a lack of the glandular system's ability to reproduce itself. And in still another, the activity of the glands was given as the faulty mechanism and described as a karmic reaction. The glandular disturbance between the liver and the kidneys produced a suppression of elimination and an accumulation in the extremities, which is described as an arthritis tendency in still another case.

Memories of past lives are to be found in the endocrine glands of the body, somewhat expectedly, since our difficulties in life are nearly always emotional and traumatic. And the emotions have their origin and their dwelling place in these same glands. Cayce refers to the glands and the circulation, the eliminations, lymphatics and the nervous system as the areas where arthritis has its beginning.

The endocrine glands, you see, are closely related to the cardiovascular system through the hormones they supply to the bloodstream. Each of these glands, too, is a neurohormonal transducer, which means they are

deeply involved in both the hormones distributed to the rest of the body and the nervous system as a whole. This will be elaborated on later in another chapter, but it helps to explain why the emotions, which live in the glands, have deep relationships with the mind and the body—each cell of the body

Hindered nerve reflexes, depression of the ganglia coming about from poor assimilations and causing improper lymph function, and incoordination of the activity between the liver and the kidneys—all of these were also pointed out as elements in the etiology of arthritis.

From the various functions which are seen to be abnormal, one begins to piece together part of the causative mechanisms seen in these psychic readings. Disturbed elimination from any cause, certainly, seems to be the primary abnormality of function. When there are glandular disturbances, it seems more likely that a rheumatoid condition should result, since glandular activity is so closely related to overall organ balance and function, and in the Cayce readings the glands are seen as the mediator of that balancing force which we know as karma. Improper assimilation often comes about before or after the eliminations are disturbed, and the nerve function from the ganglia of the autonomic nervous system is involved in the abnormal physiology.

The readings would likely imply that the development of arthritis is an attempt on the part of the ligaments and the joints themselves to meet the needs of the system poisoned by drosses present in the bloodstream. The lymphatics, then, and the lymphocytes, with all their resources, are unable—in conjunction with the hormones—to bring about (what Cayce calls) a full coagulation or a building up of tissue from energy, a reconstruction, in a sense, of the cells of the body.

Thus, the type of arthritis is determined to a great ex-

tent by the derangement of function prior to the onset of improper eliminations. It is probably more closely associated with the hormonal disturbance in rheumatoid arthritis, while in osteoarthritis the body is better balanced in most of its activities and not subject to such functional imbalances as comes about in the atrophic manifestation of the disease.

From Another Viewpoint

Arthritis is probably the most common ailment of the human body, aside from the common cold, but it is probably less understood than most. And its name is poorly chosen. The dictionary defines arthritis as inflammation of a joint. But medically, we know arthritis often starts with a tenosynovitis. What does this mean? An inflammation or abnormal state of the tendon and/or its synovial sheath. Generally speaking, arthritis can act as an umbrella for a variety of conditions called bursitis, myositis, tendonitis, etc. Thus the bursa of a joint can be involved with inflammation, or a muscle or a tendon—or, in reality, any part of the body closely associated with a joint in its action. Strange, isn't it?

Physiologically, the basic malfunction in any of these structural areas comes about through the introduction of an irritation we call inflammation. It would seem rational, would it not, if we could eliminate the inflammation at any stage of the process and subsequently introduce a regeneration activity, the tissues would be returned to normal?

Some years ago, I did a study of rheumatoid arthritis with a number of patients, using several of the concepts in the Cayce readings intended to bring about some of these changes I just mentioned. The study did not bring about any significant information or full resolution of

the problem in these patients, although there were some improvements noted, but in my research of the literature I found a report indicating I was indeed on the right track.

In this report, a woman who had severe and painful arthritis of the lower extremities was operated on. The doctors (Kammerer and Hoen) performed a lumbar sympathectomy on her as part of a research study. This procedure destroys the sympathetic nerve supply to the hip joint. Four years later, she was readmitted to the hospital for a synovectomy (removal of a synovial cyst) of the right elbow. A repeat X-ray was done on her right hip, and they found a "startling improvement" in the radiographic appearance of the hip, consisting of remodeling of the joint, improvement in the texture of the bone and an increase in the joint space.

These structural changes can only be called regeneration of tissues. The woman no longer had any pain in the joint, and it can be concluded the inflammation present in the hip joint prior to the surgery was eradicated by the procedure which cut out the sympathetic nerve supply to that area. Thus, the imbalance between the sympathetic and the parasympathetic portions of the autonomic nerve supply was corrected in a way that allowed regeneration to take place. Interestingly, the parasympathetic system is the portion of the autonomic which rebuilds the body during sleep. The sympathetic input was markedly decreased in its action through the surgery, making the parasympathetic dominant in that area.

We don't know, of course, what sort of diet the woman followed. Nor do we know how much she believed the therapy would heal her body. And we won't know whether she was a woman dedicated to prayer and meditation, and whether or not she had others praying for her. These are factors Cayce talked about in the healing of any dis-

turbance. What we do know, however, is that the surgery created a different environment within the woman's body: the inflammation stopped, and regeneration of the tissues took over and returned the ailing portion of the body back toward normal.

I knew, of course, that every person who was treated with a lumbar sympathectomy did not respond as this woman did. But in her case, why did the procedure work? The major factor was relief from the sympathetic input. So we need to explore the meaning of the sympathetic nervous system activity.

Answers might be found in many of the textbooks of neurology or neuroanatomy. The star performers in the sympathetic nervous system are the coeliac (solar) plexus and the adrenal glands. The adrenals are called the fight/flight glands and prepare the body for a threat of any kind, no matter what one understands to be a stress, an invasion or a danger. What the body sees as a risk, a peril, a menace, anything which puts the body as a whole into jeopardy activates the sympathetic nervous system immediately and creates a whole system of changes. One major alteration comes in the blood supply, which directs the major portion of the blood flow away from the organs of assimilation and elimination and orders the blood flow toward the muscles, tendons, and joints of locomotion or movement. Why this? To get the body either moving immediately away from the threat or preparing to fight.

When neither flight nor fight comes about after this correction of the blood flow, the joints and tendons and muscles are overloaded with blood and hormones (coming from the adrenals) which were not used. And the result is a relatively toxic condition. If the stress is sustained (as in a job situation, for instance) then destruction sooner or later comes into play, since the body cannot

take the toxins away fast enough without physical action, and the elimination and the assimilation are both hampered. Trouble arises and one of the results is called arthritis.

There are, of course, more factors involved here than can be easily and comprehensively brought into focus. Some individuals handle stress as an adventure, which they like, and the result of the internal changes are not associated with fear, but rather worked through, and the individual balances the “forces” of the body so that health comes about, instead of disease or dis-ease. Most of us, however, are not able to deal with difficulties that constructively, and this may be why probably half of the population of the United States or more show some signs of this physiological series of events which end up with the tag “arthritis.”

The Body Often Responds to Simple Measures

Because of my work with the Edgar Cayce concepts of healing, a woman named Lily wrote me a letter telling me about her experiences with simple healing procedures. Her brother-in-law had been scheduled for surgery on his arthritic right middle finger “to scrape off” the crystals formed there which were giving him much pain. Before the date of the surgery arrived, he followed his sister-in-law’s advice and rubbed castor oil on his finger every day. Two weeks later, when he went to see his surgeon before being operated on, his arthritis and the pain were gone and no surgery was needed. Lily was happy about this incident, but had a more important story to tell me:

“I have a neighbor/friend who is in her eighties. She called me about the two middle fingers of her hand which were locked and unable to be moved—and had

been that way for years. Her thumb at that time was twice its regular size and the little and index finger were giving her so much pain that she was unable to move them. And she was often crying with the pain. I didn't think it would be possible to unlock the fingers or correct the thumb because they were so bad, but I knew castor oil was very helpful.

"In order to get her hands active, we got her a container for a foot bath and used a pound of Epsom salts which we dissolved in hot water. Then we had her bathing her feet for a half hour each evening, all the time pressing, rubbing or massaging her feet. Then she was to wrap her hands in cloth saturated with castor oil, and apply a castor oil pack (with a heating pad on top) to her abdomen. She called a couple of days later saying the hands were no longer hurting her, and she was continuing the treatment. I wanted to document the progress, so went over to her place two weeks later with my camera.

"To my immense surprise, those two fingers were unlocked and she was making quilts. She said she used the foot bath with water as hot as she could stand it for the time I stressed, then put the castor oil pack on her stomach with a heating pad and wrapped her hands with cloths soaked in castor oil and put on rubber work gloves.

"Today the fingers are still unlocked and she is still making quilts. However, sometimes the fingers ache so she just gives them another treatment, and she is happy again."

Healing Comes in Strange Ways

Some years ago, a letter came across my desk reporting on a healing experience which seems to be one of a kind. This is Ralph's story:

"In 1957, I was found to have arthritis in both knees, which became very painful and was accompanied by much calcification in the joints. X-rays were taken, which confirmed the diagnosis. My doctor told me he could remove the calcium, but could not replace my kneecaps. I vetoed the surgical idea, but was told then that I would have to live with the pain, which I did until 1968.

"Later on that year, I experienced a time of what I can only call cosmic enlightenment in which I asked for and received the 'power to love' all of God's creatures. This also took away my desire to judge or condemn any fellow human being, regardless of behavior, creed, color, sex, or any other qualification.

"In February 1969, I discovered (quite by accident) that the grinding noise and pain in my knee joints had disappeared. My arthritis was gone and has never come back."

Ralph's experience reminded me of a comment that I heard attributed to Cayce: that there's as much of God in a teaspoonful of castor oil as there is in a prayer! We need to remember this. With each of us being body, mind, and spirit, we have the opportunity to understand better that meditation, prayer, change of consciousness toward the Christ and the Universal Forces can create healing as well as a medication, the knife, and something as simple as castor oil. We really are one at a deep unconscious level, and it is always well to recall to mind that we are indeed wonderful creations formed in the image of God. When God is at work through us in the healing process, anything good can happen.

The Touch of the Healing Hand

It was many years ago that Dolores Krieger, a Ph.D. in nursing, lectured on what she called "Therapeutic

Touch” at one of the Annual Medical Symposia sponsored by the A.R.E. medical clinic. She had been teaching the nurses at New York University School of Nursing how to use their hands in a loving way to help bring healing to those for whom they were caring. Dr. Krieger’s workshop was so much in demand at the Safari Hotel that we had to hold it outside on the spacious lawn near the swimming pool.

Today it is difficult to find anyone who does not appreciate and understand the value of touch to the ailing or to the healthy human being. Medical schools still have a problem with the use of healing touch because of their worship of what is called medical science. We have not yet, you see, found out exactly how to do double-blind studies of healing energy, which is extremely difficult to measure. And medicine today still needs measurements and proof to believe something good has happened to the physiology of an individual human body. It should be noted, however, that attitudes in medicine as a whole have been changing for the better.

Wynne Christie spoke at the A.R.E. Congress in June 1994 on Therapeutic Touch. She lectured on the findings and assumptions, the effects and the phases of treatment, correlating them with many Edgar Cayce readings that explain how energies emanate from the hands and how we can bring, in that manner, healing to the human body.

Krieger postulated that the healing relationship is based on a transfer of “life energy” present in all living organisms. In health, this energy flows in, through, and out of us in abundance, but in states of disease it is blocked, disturbed, impaired, or depleted. Yet all individuals have an intrinsic ability to heal or to assist other people to heal themselves.

Therapeutic Touch is now practiced by thousands of

professionals and lay people. There are also more than eighty colleges and universities in the United States teaching one form or another of this healing method in graduate and undergraduate nursing programs.

What does it do, this energy? Those who are now professionals in the field have observed that it elicits a strong relaxation response: the breath slows, the blood pressure drops, muscle tension relaxes. As a result, anxiety level is reduced. With the decrease in anxiety, pain levels decrease. Changes occur in the patient's perception of pain, and one's natural healing ability is enhanced. Studies have shown that hemoglobin levels are raised; cell regeneration is speeded up; and the immune system is stimulated to perform more effectively.

Life Energies in the Cayce Readings

Edgar Cayce indicated we influence another person directly with this life energy when we sit or stand next to them. And he had much to say about touching. But his words always seemed to be directed internally; he saw what was going on with the life energy inside the body, and as it was directed outwardly. For instance:

Each atomic force of a physical body is made up of its units of positive and negative forces, that brings it into a *material* plane. These are of the ether, or atomic forces, being electrical in nature as they enter into a material basis, or become *matter* in its ability to take on or throw off. So, as a *group* may raise the atomic vibrations that make for those positive forces as bring divine forces in action into a material plane, those that are destructive are broken down by the raising of that vibration! . . . So does the *entity become* the healer. 281-3

Cayce also noted that:

... this consciousness of [Christ's] presence must be the basis of all healing . . . 281-3

And also:

For all healing, mental or material, is attuning each atom of the body, each reflex of the brain forces, to the awareness of the Divine that lies within each atom, each cell of the body. 3384-2

So it seems the energies coming from the hands of the healer are without question the forces of the Divine flowing through those hands. And the energy then reacts within the recipient in such a manner as to change the vibrations—the attuning of the Divine within the living tissues of a body to Creative Energies—and bring about a divine experience within the cells and the atoms of the body. Cayce speaks about these energies as available to any who wish to be part of the healing process.

So, How Does the Average Person Respond to This Power?

In my own experience, I have always—since discovering the Cayce material—tried to touch the patient while listening to his or her heart or chest, taking the blood pressure, helping the patient to get up on the examining table or to sit down again in the chair. And I invariably give my patient a hug. That could be the medical doctor's approach to use of the healing touch. The osteopath, the chiropractor, and the massage therapist all have an advantage in this field, because they already are using their hands to manipulate the muscles or joints or

adjust the infirmities of the body.

Every person on the planet can touch another and send with it those feelings of love and concern, and both will benefit from the touch. This particularly helps in the instance of arthritis, as hugs soothe the emotions of both individuals, the hugger and the huggee. And the soothing touch renders an acid condition of the body more toward an alkaline state, and better immune function.

Jesus was able to touch a person who was ill and instantaneously the patient was healed. He used His voice when He commanded Lazarus, who was dead, to arise. And he did. Jesus' robe had enough of His energy in it that the woman was healed of "an issue of blood" when she touched the robe. He used mud and spittle to bring sight back to the blind; and the power of faith He recognized in the centurion to heal his servant's son, who lay extremely ill at home.

In fact, all living human beings, the earth itself and those mineral, vegetable, and animal forms which it has brought forth are made up of atoms, nothing but energy brought into material manifestation. Eric Butterworth, a Unity minister, once said, "Materiality is consciousness outforming itself." We are using energy no matter what kind of healing we are considering or using, and consciousness is always the source.

Aching Joints and Muscles

Many of us have never been diagnosed with arthritis, but sprained ankles, dislocated shoulder joints, injuries to the knees or back or various muscular groups, whether brought about by sports activities or simple missteps in the daily living process are often related. How to ease them or give permanent relief becomes the challenge. Massages, manipulations, electrotherapy, or medicines

are our most common remedies, but it is always helpful to recognize that Cayce frequently offers insights which give us a different perspective on what is transpiring when healing occurs. This reading reminds us:

Remember, mechanical (osteopathic) adjustments, like even properties as may be taken of the medicinal nature, are only correctives—and *nature* or the *divine* force, does the healing! 1467-9

Some time ago, an A.R.E. member told me about his bout with aching joints and muscles, brought about by strenuous work when he was not used to it.

“After three years of pushing nothing more demanding than a pencil, five continuous hours of swinging a hatchet and pushing a bow saw against a fallen tree left my right elbow strained and extremely sore. Rubs, heat, and the loving ministrations of friends for over a month didn’t release the jaws that now clamped my arm painfully from wrist to shoulder. I could not stretch my arm to full extension at all, nor raise it over my head. The mere attempt left my hand shaking as if palsied, and my body in a fit of sweating.”

B.J. listened to a friend who worked at a health spa as a masseuse and who introduced him to an oil that in her experience was very helpful. It was one of Cayce’s formulations including coal oil, mineral oil, olive oil, witch hazel, tincture of benzoin, and sassafras oil. (See *An Edgar Cayce Home Medicine Guide*, A.R.E. Press, 1982, p. 85.)

He massaged his arm and shoulder with the oil several times that afternoon and evening. By nightfall, half of the pain was gone. The next morning he could extend his arm almost completely with only a minimum of trembling in his hand and almost no pain. He was able

to raise his arm over his head for the first time in weeks.

Continuing the applications of the oil, he gained complete freedom of movement for his arm with no shaking of his hand. His pain was gone.

More Understanding

There are many forms of arthritis. The early manifestations, however, may be simply stiffness of the joints of the body, slowness of walking, sometimes aching in the joints. It may be diagnosed as bursitis or tenosynovitis, a low back problem, difficulty in neck movement, or simply "My body is hurting." Many symptoms, certainly, act as a prelude to what may later develop into osteoarthritis if no preventive measures are brought into play, reversing the condition.

Cayce's view of the inner workings of the body frequently takes in the workings of the lymphatics, the blood supply, the essential organs of the body, the neurological systems, as well as the actual structural portions of the body. And it is different in each individual.

Improvement of the diet, exercise, and improved elimination can often prevent this kind of arthritis. But never discount the potentials of the human being when it comes to healing. Faith, enthusiasm, massage, local treatment, changes in consciousness or in the way one thinks—all of these can turn one from illness to health. And many have done just that.

A man who experienced this kind of benefit—in his own creative manner—was Lawrence Wolitz of Martinsville, Virginia. We corresponded about his problem and he gave me the following "informal update" because his condition had improved so dramatically.

"Background: My right shoulder became painful—could not raise my arm above my shoulder; many sleep-

less nights; could not reach my handkerchief in my back pocket. My physician's diagnosis: bursitis, for which only some painkiller pill or shots were offered. I did neither. I applied castor oil packs for three months to the point of seeming stability of the condition with pain and discomfort greatly reduced.

"Whereupon, I wrote to you, and you suggested peanut oil rubs and infra red heat. Imagine my total surprise when upon one treatment I was able to raise my arm overhead! I keep up the treatment about twice a week. My shoulder may not be totally cured, though I'm hardly aware of the pain.

"Now, please note this: within a week after beginning the oil rubs, I awakened one morning with what seemed to be a severe cramp at the back of my right knee. In the following days the pain and cramped condition caused me to limp heavily. I then realized that it was not your normal cramp. I began to apply peanut oil and heat to it and now it also is under control, and I can walk normally."

Injuries of one sort or another can often predispose to arthritis or those symptoms which are often associated with arthritis. Richard relates a history of back problems stemming from a football injury suffered in 1964:

"I had surgery in 1966 and again in 1980 to remove parts of a crushed disc. In November 1987 I hurt my back again, and went to a chiropractor for an adjustment. I was out of work for several days, showed improvement, and returned to work. I started suffering sciatic pain a few weeks later which radiated down my left leg. For the next month, I visited the chiropractor four more times, had bed rest, electrical stimulation, Motrin®, aspirin, Tylenol®, ice, heat, massage, etc. Nothing seemed to help. In fact, the pain got worse.

"I am a member of the A.R.E., and my wife and I both

enjoy reading the Edgar Cayce material. My wife was reading your book about the castor oil packs the same day I had given up and had gone to a regular doctor. The doctor set up an appointment for me with a neurosurgeon for the next day. The evening before I went to the surgeon, Ellen applied a castor oil pack for one hour to my lower back. I felt some relief, but was still in a lot of pain. At this point I was convinced that surgery was the only course left. The surgeon examined me, set up a myelogram, blood work, and X-rays. My wife continued applying castor oil packs and heat.

“After several days of castor oil packs and a few doses of olive oil by mouth, the pain was completely gone. I cancelled all appointments. After a two-day break, Ellen applied the castor oil packs for three more nights. I have not had any recurrence of back pain or sciatic pain.

“I am convinced that I have experienced a miracle and I am thankful to my higher powers, my wife’s persistence and faith, and the information provided in your book at just the right time.”

I’m sure the effect in Richard’s case was physiological—we do not know enough about miracles to think of them as anything except universal laws bringing about changes whose mechanisms we do not yet understand. Although for Richard it was a miracle. On the other hand our limited research in the readings on the use of castor oil packs showed that relief of pain was described in eighteen cases; reduced inflammation in nine instances; increased relaxation in eight; and reduced swelling in four readings. All of these responses help in the basic relief of the underlying cause of arthritis.