

The Real Road to Health

by William Esser

Editor's note: We are pleased to once again feature the powerful wisdom of Dr. William Esser, one of the founders of our Association, who for over 50 years operated the world famous "Esser's Health Ranch" in Lake Worth, Florida. This article rings just as true today as it did nearly five decades ago and exemplifies how far ahead of their time the leaders of our movement were.



Not many are ready to believe that a perfectly normal human being is immune from disease. From the beginning of time we have been taught to believe that health is an uncertainty; that the next morning might find one subject to a "virus infection," if indeed one has the good luck to awaken the next morning at all.

Most people have a fear complex, and they have been educated into it by the professions in general. Much of the clergy has preached that disease and death results from the wrath of God; the medical profession has taught the uncertainty of health and life; the legal profession has woven a web of law that is hard to escape except by those with influence. The natural result of these teachings is the building of a fear complex which reduces the general average resistance, helps to lower the average health standard, and is one of the prominent reasons why most other nations point to America as being a country of invalids. It must sadly be acknowledged that there is much truth to this belief, and that the average American has developed a pet sick habit. Seeking cures and curers is the hobby of millions. Cures are as elusive as mirages, but the palliation and consequent impairment of vital organs and the unnecessary surgical mutilation are very real and lasting.

The time is overdue for a thorough renovation. The fear-complex must go. Man has nothing to fear excepting himself and his disease-building and life-shortening habits. Years ago, when the microscope enlarged tiny organisms to a size which made them look ferocious and dangerous, a wave of fear swept the land. It was decided that these were the cause of most of our troubles, and as a consequence a sterile existence was assiduously sought after by all who wished to be scientific. This proved to be a dark age for the goddess of love because holding hands, much more a kiss, were considered particularly fraught with danger. Today, the fear of germs is mostly a thing of the past, but another phobia, a little more mysterious and less tangible, in the form of "virus" has taken over to "explain" the presence of disease.

Man has no enemies excepting those he makes. Illness results from his own violations and indiscretions, his own sins against himself. When he ceases to make himself sick, he becomes immune, and disease no longer exists. John H. Tilden, M.D., once said, "All the cures which have ever been invented by man are boomerangs that have returned to do him evil."

Man has his own freedom of will. It is about time that he becomes aware that his destiny is of his own choosing. The knowledge of health and its maintenance is not an exclusive with a small chosen group of people. Nor is the knowledge too technical for the average mind to grasp. Man's willingness to allow someone else to think for him has caused him almost to lose his self-protection.

The animal kingdom has its claws, teeth, beaks, and other defense organs which are controlled by instinct in protecting itself and securing food for itself and its young. But man has a mind which gives him dominion over everything on and in the earth. He has opened many doors and unlocked many mysteries with this mind, but at the same time he unfortunately knows more


about everything on earth than he does of himself or of self-control. The results of this ignorance and lack of self-control are sickness, pain, and premature death. All the collateral sequences such as crime, perversity, war, and a decaying society are the by-products of this ignorance. Unless man learns to know himself, he will destroy himself.

Sickness is unnecessary. Those who possess good health should know why they are well. If they cannot give a reason other than that they have always enjoyed good health and that their ancestors were good specimens of longevity, they have no reliable knowledge with which to keep the good health they possess. In fact, they are probably frittering away the good potential with which they have been endowed. The fact that ancestors lived to a ripe old age gives one a fine feeling of security but can be very much like an athlete resting on his laurels. Unless he continues to train and strive for greater achievements, he will soon find his records toppling to a more eager champion. The asset of long-lived forbears can be offset very easily by the rush and worry of modern business, or by a frantic social pace which outdistances that of our fathers by at least five to one. There are a good many advantages of today over previous decades, but all of them are offset by the extra nerve-energy required to meet them. The machine age, with its telephone and radio, enable men to accomplish ten times the business that could be done over a hundred years ago; but these advantages are putting lungs, digestion, brain, and heart out of business. In order to keep up with the demands of competition, tobacco, coffee, and other drugs are relied upon to stimulate flagging nerves and functions.

Wise indeed is the man, and fortunate too, who can withdraw himself from the whirling madness of modern, graceless living for some somber contemplation about true and eternal values.

Natural laws are unchanging. They govern each of us. If we push ourselves beyond individual requirements in working and eating and sex and pleasures, and do not allow enough restorative rest to replace what has been lost, we shall die much earlier, with far greater suffering, than we ought.

Common-sense care of one's body is all that is necessary—not some peculiar kind of food or vitamin preparation nor a disagreeable asceticism. There is no need for any fanaticism; just live rationally and sensibly, in keeping with Natural law; learn moderation and poise of mind and body—in any climate, at any altitude, and in any occupation in which one can maintain one's self-respect.

Learning to live in accordance with Natural Hygienic principles is not difficult. The difficulty lies in disentangling oneself from the web of convention and synthetic living. Once we have broken from its enslavement, how beautiful life can be! 

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