

THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

Manly P. Hall, President and Founder

Patricia C. Ervin, Vice President

CONTRIBUTORS' BULLETIN

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DIET AND DISPOSITION

Dear Friends,



lmost every day, or at least once a week, a new and extraordinary nutritional regimen is brought to my attention. Sometimes the glad tidings are accompanied by free samples or a letter from a kindly friend who has been miraculously restored to health by the ultimate health formula. In the old days when Adele Davis was the high priestess of nutrition, there was very little competition in the field. We are invited to review a variety of pamphlets, brochures, and free literature, more serious softbound volumes which are increasingly numerous, and hardbacks which are readily available but more expensive. Nutritional support becomes more costly with every new brand. To take advantage of all available opportunities may prove to be a heavy burden on the pocketbook, especially for those elderly persons on pensions or social security.

Reducing diets are keeping up with the food supplements. Most of the programs are complicated and costly, and only the most intrepid subscribers complete the course. The Hong Kong Diet was difficult and another which originated in merry England was virtually impossible. If the Food and Drug Administration is reluctant to approve of a reducing product, many people believe that the American Medical Association is unreasonable and unfair. It has been estimated that nearly a hundred million Americans are supporting various laboratories that have sprung into existence in the last few years. We still feel it advisable that those contemplating supplementary nutrition should consult a professional nutritionist who is not associated with the producers of these formulas.

Most persons seeking to improve their chances for longevity approach the problem materialistically. It is assumed that if we can preserve the body the spirit and soul will take care of themselves. It is about time to realize that disposition can undermine the constitution as rapidly as junk foods. Jesus had something to say about this. To quote from Matthew 15:16-20, "And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man."



One of the penalties of wealth is unhealthful eating. The more expensive the meal, the more likely it is to offend the stomach. An area of research which has received comparatively little attention is the effect of food on disposition. There is some truth in the old saying that a man is what he eats. In the United States, the peer group eats entirely too much meat. It is also regarded as appropriate for weight reducing diets. The fact that man has been a carnivore for thousands of years may be at least partly responsible for international conflicts and domestic squabbles. In the animal kingdom, the largest and most powerful mammals are vegetarians. If you eat red meat every day and are not especially happy or healthy, you might find it advantageous to cut down your intake to once or twice a week. Many religious groups are completely vegetarian, but they run into another difficulty--that is, the danger of inadequate nutrition.

While it is perfectly possible to develop an extraordinary fondness for the so-called junk foods, eliminating them from the diet may not always contribute to an improvement in health. More attention should be paid to junk thoughts and the limitation of emotional starches and carbohydrates. It is usually much more difficult to control thoughts than to regulate food intake. Unpleasant memories, criticism of friends and neighbors, the careful nursing of grudges, and a variety of intolerances, suspicions, jealousies, and self-pities either reduce life expectancy or make longevity an unpleasant burden on the spirit. Individuals who are sorry for themselves most of their lives gain very little from additional years. Emotions also are extremely troublesome and are very difficult to rationalize. If we do not have a quick and happy reaction to children, have not maintained a harmonious home, and have become a crotchety neighbor, it is not likely that even the best nutritional program will protect us from psychic ulcers.

For those dedicated to an exercise regime, it should be pointed out that jogging has little if any effect upon temperament. Europeans make annual pilgrimages to health spas such as Baden-Baden, but many of them return home without noticeable improvement. Mud baths may purify the flesh, but they cannot cleanse the mind of its conspiracies and resentments. Nature rewards most generously those who practice common sense in daily living. Moderation is the key to success on all levels of the corporeal constitution. The complete addiction to physical pleasures--including carbohydrates, alcoholic beverages, and habit-forming drugs--will ultimately bring to a tragic end the habitudes of modern fashions.

Most older persons must live out the mistakes of their youths. In many cases nutritional supplements can be definitely helpful. The moment a person feels better however, he must develop new interests and activities to occupy the mind and satisfy the natural yearnings of the heart. To take in handfuls of pills and capsules and then spend most of the time watching television is fruitful of nothing except boredom. There are causes that can be served, social projects that need implementing, and religious activities that bring help to the handicapped and underprivileged. There is good reading to be done and, if the vitality has been obviously improved, there may be opportunities for travel or a revival of educational interests. There are hobbies which create new outlooks and justify the expenditure for health pills. The normal person has some worries which he has learned to control, a number of affections which he is ready to share with loved ones, and planned physical activities such as putting around the house or putting up the storm blinds in winter. If we are tired all the time, the atmosphere becomes heavy and soggy. This usually means that the diet is improper, the digestion sluggish, and the elimination poor. In our psychological

diet, we are not accepting enough good news or mingling with cheerful people. If the digestion is faulty, we are remembering too many memories of the past and, if elimination is a problem, we are holding on too firmly to our griefs and grievances.

If there is a tendency to be fussy or dogmatic in our attitudes toward food, there may be trouble in the family. Many of the meals we serve consist of foods which can be prepared quickly with minimum of effort. In many families, pride in the preparation of food has gone with the wind. Minor changes however will not cause too many difficulties if they are not accompanied with a lengthy sermon on proper eating habits. The Chinese have always believed that food, to be digestible, must be presented attractively. To them the preparation of a good meal must result in a pleasant smell, an agreeable taste, and an inviting appearance. Colors must be appropriately blended, and haste is desecration. No one bolts his food so that he can waste his time elsewhere. Conversation during meals must be sprightly, optimistic, informative, and equally pleasing to all the diners. If something is said which offends the stomach, ties up the nerves, or impels an argument, it has no place at the dinner table.

If a person is living alone, he must still dine in good style. The table should be properly set, the dishes of good quality, perhaps a candle in an appropriate holder, and the food on proper serving dishes. It has been said that we are never less alone than when alone, and who knows when some unseen guest will share our repast? By maintaining gracious habits and protecting oneself from the tendency to a careless preparation and serving of food we support the higher parts of our own nature. My esteemed Grandmother believed this implicitly and practiced it without fault or blemish to the end of her life.

Most sincerely yours,

Manly P. Hall
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RECOMMENDED READING:

Coil, Henry Wilson	Freemasonry through Six Centuries	(C)	\$20.00
Cousins, Norman	Anatomy of an Illness	(P)	5.95
Fell, Barry	Bronze Age America	(C)	17.95
Fischer, Louis	Gandhi: His Life and Message for the World	(P)	2.95
Frith, Henry	Graphology: The Science of Character in Handwriting	(P)	5.00
Gawain, Shakti	Creative Visualization	(P)	3.50
Heline, Corinne	Bible and the Tarot	(P)	6.95
Heline, Corinne	Healing and Regeneration through Color/Music	(P)	3.95
Horne, Alex	Sources of Masonic Symbolism	(C)	10.95
Jensen, Bernard	Iridology Simplified	(P)	3.50
Jensen, Bernard	New Lifestyle for Health and Happiness	(P)	3.50
Lingerman, Hal A.	The Healing Energies of Music	(P)	6.50
McKay, Davis & Fanning	Thoughts and Feelings: The Art of Cognitive Stress Intervention	(P)	11.50
Siu, R. G. H.	Ch'i: Neo-Taoist Approach to Life	(P)	8.95
Thurston, Mark A.	How to Interpret Your Dreams	(P)	6.95
Wang, Robert	Qabalistic Tarot	(C)	22.50
Wulffing, Sulamith	Angels, Great and Small	(C)	6.50

All of the above books are available at the Arts of the World Gift Shop at PRS or order by mail by adding 6% of the total cost of the order (\$.75 minimum) for shipping and handling for 4th class book rate. Orders may be shipped by UPS, the fastest way, by adding 10% of the total cost of the order (\$1.50 minimum). California residents, please add appropriate sales tax. All prices subject to change without notice. Checks or money orders should be made payable to:

THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY, INC.
3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Dept. C.
Los Angeles, CA 90027