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## Book Reviews

We are what we eat. Nutrition is an aspect of health care that is vastly neglected in medical training, and greatly appreciated in wholistic healing.

**Ron and Ina Denburg, *The Diamond Diet: A Multifaceted Path to Weight Loss, Health, and Wellness - 7 Weeks That Will Change Your Life*.** Published by 4U Bayou, Montclair, NJ: 2001.

When I first saw the title of this book, I thought it had something to do with Harvey and Marilyn Diamond, authors of *Fit for Life*. However, that is not the case. The program offered by the Denburgs is called "The Diamond Diet" because diamonds are one of nature's "most magnificent creations," because it is "a multi-faceted program," because it intends to combine opposed sides synergistically to form a whole more powerful than the sum of its parts, and because it "reminds all of us of our possibility for transformation," i.e., coal into diamond. My personal impression is that diamonds are hard, and not food, so I have trouble with the imagery.

That said, let me also point out that it is actually not a "diet," because the seven week program offers extensive information, suggestions, and encouragement for attending to mindfulness in eating, as well as breathing, exercise, and setting up a generally healthy lifestyle. As such, this is a fairly comprehensive program for renewing and transforming one's life starting with really basic activities.

The Denburgs look at the Plant School approach (vegetarian, low fat, high carbohydrate such as Ornish, McDougall, macrobiotics) and the Animal School approach (low carbohydrate, high protein such as Atkins, Eades), and takes the best of each. It's a sensible approach. There is some decent information on the macronutrients (protein, carbs, and fats), offering charts and activities to help the reader become familiar with his or her particular needs.

The recipes are useable, some appear very good, although I personally am not keen on frozen and canned vegetables or beans, Bragg's Liquid Aminos (I could never figure out what they are), or bouillon cubes. In general, the suggested meals give many possible choices for both vegetarians and omnivores.

On the whole, this is a friendly and interactive book that gives people many practical things *to do*, and so can be an excellent resource for those who are ready to make changes in their diet and need some handholding in order to proceed.

Reviewed by Annemarie Colbin, CHES

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**Sacred Space: The international journal of spirituality and health, ISSN 1467-9078**

This quarterly, peer-reviewed journal discusses spiritual issues in health care. It is a lovely parallel with the *IJHC*. £30.00/US \$60 for individuals, single copy £15.00/\$60

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**Michael Lerner, *Choices in Healing*, Walsch Books/Hampton Roads Publishing 2000, \$22.95.**

As a physician who regularly counsels and treats patients with cancer, I'm always on the lookout for helpful resources to share with my patients. The result of over 10 years of research, *Choices in Healing* by Michael Lerner, Ph.D., is one such resource. Written for both the lay person and physician, this wonderful book is replete with useful information cancer patients and their physicians should know.

For example, in *Choices in Healing*, Lerner explains the difference between healing and curing. A cure, he explains, is a successful medical treatment--the complete absence of disease which allows a person who previously had cancer to live as long as he or she would have lived without cancer. A cure is what a doctor hopes to bring to a patient. Healing, on the other hand, is an inner process through which a person becomes whole. Healing takes place on a physical, emotional, mental and spiritual level. Although healing and curing are different, they are deeply entwined. Healing is a necessary part of curing. For any cure to work, the physical healing power must be sufficient to enable recovery to take place. Yet healing also takes place on deeper levels whether or not physical recovery occurs. Healing is actually attainment of peace of mind and can occur even when a cure is ultimately proven to be impossible.

Hope, according to Lerner, is another important ingredient needed for healing to occur. Patients who lose hope will not fight for their lives. Lerner states that cancer patients often experience themselves as losing all control of their lives, becoming passive objects of all kinds of decisions and treatments by their medical teams. According to his research, that they *can* participate in the fight for life with cancer--by working to enhance their own healing and recuperative resources--offers patients hope and is often a profoundly important discovery. Although this fight may not always result in life extension, Lerner points out that patients engaged in personal healing work can make a transformative difference in the quality of their lives. And hope, he believes, is a fundamental catalyst for this healing process to occur.

To begin their healing journey, as suggested by Larry Leshan, Ph.D. in his book *Cancer as a Turning Point*, Lerner suggests that cancer patients ask themselves the following three questions:

- If I could do (or be) absolutely anything in the world that I wanted for the rest of my life, what would I truly want to do (or be)?
- Since I have been diagnosed with cancer, what do I find has become important to me and what that previously seemed important do I discover I am ready to let go?
- Within the circumstances of the cancer diagnosis, what would I optimally choose in every area of my current life? What kind of mainstream and complementary therapies should I undertake? What kind of relationships? What kind of work? What forms of relaxation or meditation? What forms of exercise or recreation? What kind of diet? What rhythms of daily life? What studies or activities? What kinds of support and response do I want from family and friends? What are some of the unique things--very personal to me--that would give me special delight and healthy pleasure each day?

Lerner also characterizes how certain behaviors can positively affect healing and survival. For example, research has shown that cancer survivors:

- don't take 'no' for an answer
- actively search for help
- seek out others who have been healed from their type of cancer
- form constructive partnerships with health professionals
- don't hesitate to make radical life changes
- regard illness as a gift, as a turning point in their lives
- find a purpose in life
- cultivate self-acceptance
- avoid constant thoughts about undesirable developments
- cultivate a balanced optimism.

Patients confronted with cancer require and deserve more from their doctors than just surgery, chemotherapy or radiation. Patients require the type of information contained in the book *Choices in Healing*. I believe that it should be required reading for any physician treating patients with cancer and useful reading for the same patient population

Reviewed by Mark McClure, MD

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Much has been written in the past few years about research confirming that prayers are effective and potent interventions in helping people with cardiovascular problems and AIDS. Here are two books that bring prayer closer to home, helping us appreciate the many ways in which prayers can be helpful to ourselves and to therapists who work with people who may benefit from prayers.

**Cay Randall-May, PhD, *Pray Together Now: How to Form a Prayer Group*, Boston, MA: Element 1999.** 193pp, 25pp of resources \$16.95

Prayer is the most widespread form of healing. This excellent book offers suggestions on setting up and running prayer groups, suitable for both non-denominational and denominational preferences.

Of interest – discussion of the electronic media and prayer groups; an annotated list of prayer groups; good cross-referencing by group name and geographical location, but would be improved with an index.

**Sam Menahem, PhD, *When Therapy Isn't Enough: The Healing Power of Prayer & Psychotherapy*, Winfield, IL: Relaxed Books 1995.** 229pp About 70 refs \$14.95

Sam Menahem, a clinical psychologist in Northern New Jersey, proposes the development of a spiritual psychotherapy. After a broad discussion on early development, he brings us thoughtful discussions on a variety of issues around introducing spiritual awareness, particularly through prayer, in psychotherapy, illustrated with his own experience. He reviews ways in which early psychological development can shape our ways of being in the world, including our spiritual development. Various problems are discussed and cases presented to illustrate how spirituality facilitated the therapy – including relationships, addictions, anxiety and depression.

**Sam Menahem, PhD, *All Your Prayers are Answered*, iUniverse.com Inc. [www.iuniverse.com](http://www.iuniverse.com) 2000** 181pp 8 pp refs

Have you ever been upset when you prayed fervently over a problem and received no apparent response? This book suggests a variety of ways we can introduce prayers in our lives, with a full belief that they are heard and that the responses we receive (no response is also a response!) are helpful. In the author's own words:

This book is a synthesis of developmental psychology, cognitive psychology, self psychology, transpersonal psychology, metaphysics, mysticism, kabbalistic Judaism, esoteric Christianity, New Thought philosophy, Buddhism, Vedantic Hinduism and more. I will be explaining, in plain language, why all prayers are answered and what to do to get your life to be more of a meaningful growth process and less of a pointless suffering process. Life is a struggle. *It is supposed to be this way,*

*until we wake up to basic spiritual truth, all minds are joined in God and the nature of God is love.*  
This insight will change our lives.

As grandiose as this might sound, Menahem delivers on his promises, and adds self-hypnotic healing suggestions as well.

Menahem's has a gift for presenting psychological issues and spiritual truths in easily readable and readily understandable language, brought to life with many examples from his own and others' clinical experiences. For example, from Chapter 7, *How to Forgive Your Enemies*:

Forgiveness is a way of life. It is an attitude that conflicts violently with what is taught in our society. Although we may pay lip service to the idea of forgiving others, when it comes right down to it, we frequently want revenge and justice when we are hurt. The issue of revenge vs. forgiveness comes up in virtually every patient's psychotherapy. All of us have been hurt in one way or another in life. Thus, we must decide how to deal with it. Frequently, we try to avoid the issue by repressing our anger or not thinking about it. Then, it comes out in some back-handed way like panic attacks or physical illness. . . To most of my patients, the idea of forgiving others seems to have no connection to their symptoms. Forgiveness is not seen as a path to peace, but it is.

Some people are aware of their anger and resentment at others, but are completely unwilling to forgive them. Their attitude is, "Why should I let him get away with it?" they want the other person to suffer as they have suffered, preferably even more than they suffered. At the very least, they want the other person to acknowledge their hurtful actions and apologize. The object of revenge isn't to get even, it is to win.

Still other times, people come in all too willing to forgive. At the first session they state that they know their parents did the best they could. So, they have forgiven them. This is premature confession. They are avoiding the real pain of their childhood traumas by pretending to forgive. True forgiveness involves several steps; admitting the hurts, feeling the pain, understanding where the other people were coming from, then gaining strength and self confidence, seeing the problem from another perspective (re-framing), finally forgiving the other and forgiving yourself.

Menahem's books are warmly recommended, for anyone wanting to bring more prayer and spirituality into their life in general, and in clinical practice in particular.

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**Neil Donald Walsch, *Conversations with God*, Book 2, Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads 1997**  
263pp \$19.95

Marvelously engaging discussions on wide-ranging topics, cutting to the core issues and processes - from spirituality to conflicts and (yes) even sex. Here is a sample:

*All conflict arises from misplaced desire.*

The only peace in all the world that is sustaining is internal Peace. . .

. . . "Not needing" . . . frees you, first, from fear: fear that there is something you won't have; fear that there is something you have that you will lose; and fear that without a certain thing, you won't be happy.

Secondly, "not needing" frees you from anger. *Anger is fear announced.* When you have nothing to fear, you have nothing over which to be angry. . .

You are not angry when you see others doing what you don't want them to do, because you don't need them to do or not do any particular thing. Hence, no anger.

You are not angry when someone is unkind, because you have no need for them to be kind. You have no anger when someone is unloving, because you have no need for them to love you. You

have no anger when someone is cruel, or hurtful, or seeks to damage you, for you have no need for them to behave any other way, and you are clear that you cannot be damaged.

You do not even have anger should someone seek to take your life, because you do not fear death.

When fear is taken from you, all else can be taken from you and you will not be angry. . .

This one simple change – seeking and finding peace within – could, were it undertaken by everyone, end all wars, eliminate conflict, prevent injustice, and bring the world to everlasting peace.

There is no other formula necessary, or possible. World peace is a personal thing!

What is needed is not a change in circumstances, but a change of consciousness.

Although some of the discussions, such as the above, seem unrealistically idealistic, there are great gems of wisdom here.

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**Rachel Naomi Remen, MD, *My Grandfather's Blessings: Stories of Strength, Refuge, and Belonging*, New York, Riverhead/Penguin/Putnam 2000 \$14.00**

This is a wonderful collection of lovely, -warm, thought-provoking stories from a pioneer in addressing the wholistic needs of people with cancer. Dr. Remen has suffered from severe bowel disease herself, so she comes from the place of the wounded healer, appreciating healing through her own life journey. This is a chicken soup for the person with challenging life situations and for caregivers.

For example, Dr. Remen shares:

A woman with metastatic cancer once told me that through the experience of her illness she had discovered a basic truth. There are only two kinds of people in this world – those who are alive and those who are alive and those who are afraid. She had smiled at me and said that many of the people she had met who were afraid were doctors.

Perhaps such fear is a natural outcome of the wish to be in control. A patient whose physician told him several years ago that he had three months to live told me in bewilderment that the doctor had seemed “satisfied” as he made this heart-stopping statement, “He seemed sorry to be telling me this but he seemed pleased that he had the information to give me, almost as pleased as if he had told me that he had the right drug to eradicate my cancer. He told me of my death with an air of authority as if it were he who had decided when it would be and in doing so had somehow gained mastery over it. As if when he could not control my cancer, he could at least control the time of my death. I was angry for a long time, but I now think he was as out of control and vulnerable as I was. Too bad we could not have talked man to man on that level instead of reaching for a false certainty.”

Excellent for a slow, bedside read, and for inspiring careseekers to find hope and inspiration in dealing with their health and life challenges.

**Faass, Nancy (ed), *Integrating Complementary Medicine into Health Systems*, Gaithersburg, MD 2001 763pp**

Selected topical refs after each section Index 33pp \$125

This is an outstanding resource for anyone considering ways to develop integrative care. It is extremely practical, with a wealth of helpful recommendations. Strategies are discussed in great detail for introducing CAM in medical settings.

A broad series of discussions cover an enormous spectrum of topics, including trends in CAM, markets, reimbursements, state initiatives in CAM, credentialing and staffing, regulations, malpractice, informed consent, assessments and research, networks, hospital based programs, the University of Arizona

Integrative Medicine program (and others), architectural design and service delivery, wellness programs for employees, cost savings, continuing education, and more.

Clinical focus is on acupuncture, Chinese medicine, chiropractic, massage, nutrition, and herbal medicine. Disappointingly, only the briefest of passing mentions are made of healing (as in Reiki, Therapeutic Touch).

As expensive as this book is, it is well worth the price - for anyone considering developing integrative care programs - in thoughtful suggestions that should save efforts and money in the end.

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**William A. Tiller, Walter E. Dibble, Michael J. Kohane, *Conscious Acts of Creation: The emergence of a New Physics***, Walnut Creek, CA: Pavior 2001. 418pp

Tiller, the senior author, for decades has been exploring wholistic dimensions from the vantage of a physicist who is not afraid to explore mind-matter interactions, as well as to speculate on spiritual dimensions that may explain many aspects of reality. Conversely, Tiller is able to propose theories based on quantum physics that explain aspects of our connections and interactions with spiritual reality.

Tiller has demonstrated that electronic circuitry can be imprinted with an experimenter's intents which can then influence physical matter. For instance, such intents can be to raise or lower the acidity of water. The imprinted devices were inserted in water by other experimenters who were blind to the intents imprinted in the circuitry. Highly significant effects were produced.

This is a book for the scientifically sophisticated reader.

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**Elmer Green, PhD, *The Ozawkie Book of the Dead: Alzheimer's isn't what you think it is!*** Los Angeles: Philosophical Research Society 2001, Parts 1, 2, 3 = 1600pp \$49.95 + shipping [www.prs.org](http://www.prs.org). 800/548-4062

Written by Elmer Green, an eminent scientist, one of the originators of biofeedback, this remarkable book details the story of his wife, Alyce's, journey through Alzheimer's Disease. In the last few months of her life, when she was physically totally incapacitated, she would channel her own spirit, describing to Elmer her journey through spirit realms and the lessons she was learning. Elmer shares these teachings and details his understanding of the afterworld and our relationship to it.

Elmer read to Alyce about the bardo and about the *SOUL*. In this way he drew her attention back to the physical world after she had deteriorated into an Alz state where she could no longer speak coherently.

. . . as a *SOUL* she was able to manipulate the etheric-energy structure of her physical body and make it speak with perfect diction and syntax, supposedly without the mediation of the brain and nervous system. . . (p.4)

. . . this book is not about religion or philosophy, or psychology, metaphysics, or scientific speculation – even though it bears on all of them. It is rather, from my point of view, an experientially-based description of *body* and *soul* and *bardo*, and *SOUL* and *Heaven*. And I can assure you, knowledge of bardo and Heaven always comes to those who make an effort to find out through reading, meditating, or theta brainwave training WHEN – and this is a crucial condition – one's approach to the *SOUL* is coupled with invocation.

Invocation, as here used, means asking the *SOUL* to help the personality "become conscious" by implementing both experience and understanding in our life. Experience PLUS understanding lead to *knowing*, which is considerably different from emotion-based hoping, believing, or having faith . . . and far more satisfying than mental-based hypothesizing, as pounded into the head of graduate-school students. (p. xvii)

. . . Alzpers [persons with Alzheimer's] have a huge advantage over average dying people. The Alzper goes out so slowly, often taking many years, like Alyce, that they can become conscious of the Light of the *SOUL* – and merge with it before the body dies. (p. 4)

Elmer presents 17 propositions to explain what life is about: An incarnation of *soul*, an aspect of the eternal *SOUL* into the physical world for various lessons. These lessons are continued in the bardo, an intermediate place between heaven and earth. Ultimately, the soul reunites with *SOUL*/Creator.

This is a very personal sharing of a lifetime of studies. It includes fascinating, intimate reports of Elmer's dreams and visions that were guideposts and lessons along his path of learning and understanding. Highly recommended to anyone interested in deeper understanding of Alzheimer's, of life, and of *SOUL*.

So what's "Ozawkie?" you might ask. . . Ozawkie is where Elmer lives.

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John MacEnulty, *Finding the Love, Volume I: Emanations from the Still Point*, P.O. Box 1925, St. Louis, MO 63118 Emanations 2001 [www.geocities.com/eman8tions](http://www.geocities.com/eman8tions) 154pp \$17.95

This is a lovely collection of John MacEnulty's daily meditations that have been circulated through email over a period of several years. They include generous measures of common sense, heart, astute psychological perceptions, and spiritual awareness. It was difficult to choose a favorite to illustrate MacEnulty's style from amongst the many I like.

### **The Desire to Smash Obstacles**

The path to peace and love is often blocked by anger.

Anger is an uncontrollable desire to set things right, usually by destroying or hurting someone. It is a desire to smash obstacles.

Anger, per se, doesn't usually solve anything in the long run. It may appear so. It may galvanize people to respond with fear and alacrity. But in the long run it creates resentments and resistance.

Anger's highest function is to alert us that something is wrong in the psyche.

In the lower mind there is a fight or flight response. But we can go to a higher reaction than anger. Anger can be the trigger to stop and take inventory, add everything up and see what's really wrong.

Anger is a resistance to the next awareness which may be insulting to the ego. Often we don't accept the obvious solution, and we boil in frustration and fear.

Everything is a part of the spiritual path. So to be disturbed is not a lack of spirituality. It may be the recognition of the next level of growth. Our fear and resistance make it unpleasant. But it is necessary to reveal that which is our next emerging awareness.

Anger is one of my signals to meditate, to go into the silence, to go into my room and not come out until I am ready to be with people again.



**Lolette Kuby, *Faith and the Placebo Effect: An Argument for Self-healing***, Novato, CA: Origin Press 2001, 322 pp. 34pp notes and refs. \$23 23pp notes and refs

This is an excellent, broad introduction for beginners who are interested in learning about the spectrum of suggestion effects that can bring about self-healing. It is engagingly written, with many wise and helpful observations.

Lolette Kuby started on her journey of self-exploration when challenged by a lump in her breast that was discovered during surgery for breast augmentation. After reading books on "New Thought" (religious teachings that promote self-healing) she experienced spiritual revelations in which she felt she was transformed. She knew her cancer was cured, and indeed survived with no growth or spread of the cancer.

A wealth of variations on the theme of placebo effects is presented. Good examples are offered for therapists' suggestions that bring about healing effects. For instance, women suffering from nausea in pregnancy can be given medicine that regularly makes people vomit, with cures of their nausea because they are told that this medicine is a potent treatment for nausea.

With observations such as the following, however, I find much that is over-stated::

*. . . Very few health practitioners recognize that their effectiveness depends upon the belief of their patients. Whether they are medical doctors, crystal healers, or acupuncturists, they believe that the healing power lies in themselves – or in the crystal or in putting the needle into the right spot or in the blood pressure medication. Ironically, their own faith in themselves and their techniques actually does increase their effectiveness: The faith of the physician stimulates the faith of the patient – a classical Freudian transference phenomenon. But the question that underlies this entire book remains the same: Why is it that acupuncture and surgery and a sugar pill can cure the same ailment? The answer points to the one constant factor among all the variables – the placebo effect. (p242)*

Much of the material is presented as gospel, without considering that suggestion often accounts for only part of the effects of any treatment. Prayer, for instance, is dismissed as useless, wishful thinking – outside of its benefits in offering hope and self-suggestion.

More details at <http://www.originpress.com/placeboeffect>

Reviews are by Daniel J Benor, MD, IJHC editor unless otherwise indicated

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