

The Light of Unity



A NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Vol. 1 Issue 4

"So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth." — Bahá'u'lláh

The Body Is The 'Temple of the Soul'

A Healthy Body Enhances The Human Spirit

The Bahá'í teachings offer guidance for maintaining health and spirit, and solace and hope for those who are ill. Human beings are in essence spiritual beings. Although in our earthly lifetime we exist in physical bodies, the essential identity of each person is defined by an invisible, rational, and everlasting soul. The Bahá'í Writings state that the physical body is the temple of the human soul and should be respected and cared for.

Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet of the Bahá'í Faith, also made it clear that there is no correlation between the worth and condition of the soul and the physical body of the individual: "Know thou that the soul of man is exalted above, and is independent of all infirmities of body or mind ... the soul itself remaineth unaffected by any bodily ailments. Consider the light of the lamp. Though an external object may interfere with its radiance, the light itself continueth to shine with undiminished power."

(Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, pp. 153-154)

We can help to maintain our health with adequate rest, relaxation, a moderate lifestyle, and good nutrition. The Baha'i teachings encourage someone who is spiritually ill to consult (pray and meditate) with the Divine Physician, and one who is physically ill to go to a competent and wise physician.

(see **A Healthy Body**, Page 2)

"The Power of Prayer,"
a video program
available for viewing
on national cable
broadcasts, or available
from your local Bahá'í
community, shows
how members of the
Bahá'í Faith utilize
prayer to enrich their
daily lives.



Build Your Inner Spiritual Joy Through Good Health And Happiness

True happiness comes from expressing our passion and goals. When we're really in touch with our passion or goals, we begin living our purpose. Passion is that activity that we love to do, that we do with such pleasure or enthusiasm because we find it so deeply satisfying.

The Bahá'í writings teach us that, "You must be happy always. You must be counted among the people of joy and happiness and must be adorned with divine morals. In a large measure happiness keeps our health, while depression of spirit begets diseases. The substance of eternal happiness is spirituality and divine morality, which has no sorrow to follow it."

(Abdu'l-Bahá's Journey in America, p. 94)

(see **Build Your Inner Spiritual Joy**, Page 3)

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The Bahá'í World Center in Haifa, Israel.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: A WOMAN'S JOURNAL

Anna Cameron tried something new. She always kept a journal which she checked periodically to review the growth and struggles of her life. This year she decided to try an experiment when she received a new journal from her niece.

On a visit to the Bahá'í World Center in Haifa, Israel, she learned from a member of the Universal House of Justice, the Bahá'í world governing body, that our soul does not carry our negative qualities with it when our bodies die, but only positive attributes.

"The soul carries with it divine attributes and spiritual qualities to the next world, but cannot take with it bad qualities for badness has no existence of its own; it is only the lack of goodness."

(Adib Tahirzadih, *The Human Soul*, p. 13)

Anna had always considered bringing herself to account each day in prayer was to reflect both the positive and negative aspects of the day. She felt that she was very good at seeing the negative aspects of herself.

Following her conversation in Haifa, she thought she would attempt to only write about the positive aspects of bringing herself to account. At first she felt very doubtful, and decided to give this experiment one year to try it out.

Two months later, she reflected that each time she reviewed the journal, it uplifted her soul. She perceived how it simplified and purified her attitude when she looked back on past events and how encouraging it was to her spiritual journey.

Focusing on her inner and outer accomplishments now serves as a basis to give her strength to do her service and to validate her own value. Anna is putting into practice the virtue of looking at the positive qualities of her true self, which in turn is making a difference in her life.

A Healthy Body (con't from Page 1)

"Resort ye, in times of sickness, to competent physicians." (*The Kitab-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, paragraph 113, p. 60*) and, "It is incumbent upon everyone to seek medical treatment and to follow the doctor's instructions, for this is in compliance with the divine ordinance, but, in reality, He Who gives healing is God." (*Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 156*)

The Bahá'í Writings encourage us to explore the many forms of treatments. "Every day medical science is progressing, and it is quite possible that some new form of treatment or some new doctor may be able to get you on your feet. He will certainly pray that this may be so." (*Health and Healing, p. 43*)

The Bahá'í attitude is not that the doctor is alone responsible for our health. This quotation shows that we do have a great deal of responsibility for guarding our own health: "...You should not neglect your health, but consider it the means which enables you to serve. It - the body - ...carries the personality and spirit, and as such should be well cared for so it can do its work! You should certainly safeguard your nerves, and force yourself to take time, and not only for prayer and meditation, but for real rest and relaxation." (*Health and Healing, p.40*)



Young adults from across the country meet at the Green Acre Bahá'í School in Maine for the filming of "Speaking of Gender," a video about the equality of men and women. Contact your local Bahá'í Community to see this example of Faith in action.

"God is the great compassionate Physician who alone has the power to give true healing."

(Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 19)

Build Your Inner Spiritual Joy (con't from Page 1)

Here are some suggested ways to find your own inner joy:

* Take fifteen minutes a day to be alone. If you are not used to this, you can start gradually with one or two days a week and build up. This will help you learn to be still to discover your true self, an inner joy and what is important to you. Bahá'u'lláh says, "True loss is for him whose days have been spent in utter ignorance of his true self." (*Words of Wisdom,* Tablets of Baha'u'llah, p. 156)

* Write a purpose statement, a mission statement for your life. This can be very simple with just a few sentences, but write it down. Once you know what you are passionate about, or what your purpose in life is, you can look for ways to bring more into your everyday life. The Bahá'í writings encourages us, "To thank Him for this, make ye a mighty effort, and choose for yourselves a noble goal."

(*Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha,* p. 35)

* Start a gratitude journal to change the way you think about your life. Take those 15 minutes with yourself and write down five things in your life that you are grateful for from that day. Bahá'u'lláh states that it is essential to, "Bring thyself to account ere each day thou art summoned to a reckoning; for death, unheralded, shall come upon thee and thou shalt be called to give account for thy deeds." (*Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words, Arabic #32*)

* Make a list of all the things you wish to explore but are afraid to do. Then try them out and notice what happens afterwards. If it is helpful, write down what your inner voice is saying and of any shifts in your feelings, your body, your energy, and your behaviour. As Bahá'u'lláh says, "...I have willed to entrust your souls, ye would, of a truth, rid yourselves of attachment to all created things, and would gain a true knowledge of your own selves... Ye would find yourself independent of all else but Me, and would perceive, with your inner and outer eye, and as manifest as the revelation of My effulgent Name, the seas of My loving-kindness and bounty moving within you." (*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh,* p. 326-27)

Featured Devotions from the Bahá'í Scriptures

In each issue of *The Light of Unity*, select prayers and devotional passages from the Bahá'í Scriptures are presented. The focus of this issue is the impact of Health on the soul.

"Thy name is my healing, O my God, and remembrance of Thee is my remedy. Nearness to Thee is my hope, and love for Thee is my companion. Thy mercy to me is my healing and my succor in both this world and the world to come. Thou, verily, art the All-Bountiful, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise." (*Bahá'í Prayers*)



"All true healing comes from God! There are two causes for sickness, one is material, the other spiritual. If the sickness is of the body, a material remedy is needed, if of the soul, a spiritual remedy.

If the heavenly benediction be upon us while we are being healed then only can we be made whole, for medicine is but the outward and visible means through which we obtain the heavenly healing.

Unless the spirit be healed, the cure of the body is worth nothing. All is in the hands of God, and without Him there can be no health in us!"

(*'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks,* p. 19)



"The powers of the sympathetic nerve are neither entirely physical nor spiritual, but are between the two. The nerve is connected with both. Its phenomena shall be perfect when its spiritual and physical relation are normal. When the material world and the divine world are well correlated, when the heart becomes heavenly and the aspirations become pure and divine, perfect connection shall take place. Then shall this power produce a perfect manifestation. Physical and spiritual diseases will then receive absolute healing." (*Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá,* p. 309)

Featured Devotions (con't from Page 3)

“There are two ways of healing sickness, material means and spiritual means. The first is by the treatment of physicians; the second consisteth in prayers offered by the spiritual ones to God and in turning to Him. Both means should be used and practised.

Illnesses which occur by reason of physical causes should be treated by doctors with medical remedies; those which are due to spiritual causes, disappear through spiritual means. Thus an illness caused by affliction, fear, nervous impressions, will be healed more effectively by spiritual rather than by physical treatment. Hence, both kinds of treatment should be followed; they are not contradictory. Therefore thou shouldst also accept physical remedies inasmuch as these too have come from the mercy and favour of God, Who hath revealed and made manifest medical science so that His servants may profit from this kind of treatment also. Thou shouldst give equal attention to spiritual treatments, for they produce marvelous effects.

Now, if thou wishest to know the true remedy which will heal man from all sickness and will give him the health of the divine kingdom, know that it is the precepts and teachings of God. Focus thine attention upon them.”

(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 151-52)



“Disease is of two kinds: material and spiritual. Take for instance, a cut hand; if you pray for the cut to be healed and do not stop its bleeding, you will not do much good; a material remedy is needed.

Sometimes if the nervous system is paralysed through fear, a spiritual remedy is necessary. Madness, incurable otherwise, can be cured through prayer. It often happens that sorrow makes one ill, this can be cured by spiritual means.”

(‘Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 65)



“O thou distinguished physician!... Praise be to God that thou hast two powers: one to undertake physical healing and the other spiritual healing. Matters related to man's spirit have a great effect on his bodily condition. For instance, thou shouldst impart gladness to thy patient, give him comfort and joy, and bring him to ecstasy and exultation. How often hath it occurred that this hath caused early recovery. Therefore, treat thou the sick with both powers. Spiritual feelings have a surprising effect on healing nervous ailments.”

(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, pp. 150-151)



“At whatever time highly-skilled physicians shall have developed the healing of illnesses by means of foods, and shall make provision for simple foods, and shall prohibit humankind from living as slaves to their lustful appetites, it is certain that the incidence of chronic and diversified illnesses will abate, and the general health of all mankind will be much improved. This is destined to come about. In the same way, in the character, the conduct and the manners of men, universal modifications will be made.”

(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 152-156)



***The Light of Unity* is a monthly newsletter that discusses the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith. It is offered free to those who would like to learn about the Bahá'í Faith. There is no obligation. Those wishing to receive a free subscription should ask their local Bahá'í community or email NTC@usbnc.org**