

to become aware of their conflicts rather than supressing them, which in many cases, led to further breakdown.

Looking back on these changes now, I can see that, though revolutionary then, they were in fact only the first step, since therapy remained largely on the verbal level. Understanding among both staff and patients increased but insights and understanding are only half the picture. Mental breakdown was still seen as an illness rather than as a crisis in a continuous process of emotional growth. This was vividly illustrated by a woman of fifty three who entered hospital in a disturbed state. She was sent to me with a note describing her as deteriorating rapidly but wanting something to occupy her mind. She began to paint and, over a long period, developed a striking talent although she had never painted before. She was finally able to leave hospital.

The resolution of early conflicts which is central to personality growth, can only occur where childhood pain and rage are re-experienced in the present over and over again, at the different levels of accumulated experience. The more relaxed atmosphere of the theraputic community enabled the patients to express their feelings verbally thus reducing the intensity of their symptoms and enabling them to return to the outside world but an introduction to the techniques of the Human Potential Movement would have helped the patients to express a deeper level of feeling at the same time as it would have given them some idea of the relationship of their breakdown to the natural tendency towards wholeness. It would aslo have provided them with techniques which they could have used to continue working on their problems after their discharge from hospital.

Reference

Denis V. Martin. *'Adventure in Psychiatry'* Bruno Cassirer, Oxford, 1962.

A Cure for Cancer and a Way of Life

Not to mention curing kidney problems by outlining the ear with a lighted cigarette. Professor Michio Kushi's recent seminars at the Community Health Centre in Old Street may have seemed in some respects way out but taken as a whole, he offers an extremely convincing and extremely relevant body of knowledge for present day living.

The starting point is the Oriental philosophy of the essential polarity of life, of the complementary nature of opposites - hot and cold, black and white, up and down, male and female. This concept they simplify by fusing together all opposites into major polarities - Yang and Yin - using this simple but powerful concept to categorize and deal with the whole of life - elements, chemicals, food, disease, individual personality differences, physical organs and in fact the whole of evolution. It is a philosophy that says that there is nothing in the world but energy. Fifty years ago Western science quite properly laughed it to scorn since they could prove that there were solid unmoving lumps of matter which they had in their cleverness broken down to the basic building blocks - atoms, the smallest possible piece of matter. Nuclear

physics has now convincingly pulled the rug from under their feet and revealed that in fact the wily Orientals were right all along - there is nothing there but energy.

What is really exciting about this idea is that it provides a common link between material existence, our bodies and body functioning, and all elements of the paranormal - ESP, meditation, mystical and religious experience. The idea that God may live within us when we are nothing but lumps of bone and meat is a much harder task of imagination than if we consider ourselves as a multitude of interlocking energy fields both inside and out. However, Michio Kushi is strongly resistant to the idea of a personal god. 'I think it is an amusing idea - especially for young people, or people who eat butter and milk and dairy products.'

The basic regime makes sense, and with a lot of solid evidence to support it. The increase in various diseases such as bowel cancer, colitis, cardio-vascular disease during the last 100 years has been paralleled by the consumption of sugar and refined flour. In some African, grain eating cultures, cancer and heart disease were virtually unknown before the introduction of refined Western foods.

The basic macrobiotic diet consists of some 50% whole grains - either rice, wheat, barley, oats - with something like 25% of vegetables, half of them raw, and the balance as pulses, meat or fish protein and fruit. Speaking from experience, this is a good diet which gives one plenty of energy and no feeling of heaviness or satiety. Alcohol is O.K. in beer or wine taken occasionally. Smoking is really not O.K., but Professor Kushi gives no very clear lines on this - maybe because he is a smoker himself, although not during his lectures.

Apart from diet, the more active part of the healing process consists in the use of acupuncture or Schiatsu massage. Even this is beginning to be accepted by Western medicine and is certainly a lot less damaging to the organism than the heroic surgical approach of cutting out the bits that don't work. Which brings me back to cancer. Professor Kushi claims that cancer is curable by diet. He would never recommend surgical removal of organs or of tumours. And the basic diet is modified according to whether the tumour is in a hollow organ (yin) such as bladder or colon, a slow organ (yang) such as spleen or liver.

What is perhaps more important about Michio Kushi's work is the emphasis on preventive medicine. It is the Western way to wait until something goes wrong with the body and then to attack it. Eastern medicine aims to produce a state of health in which disease does not start. 'Health is a creative and dynamic balance between the individual, society, and the environment. Good health is not established by dependence on medicine or drugs, nor can it be gained through legislation or even research. Good health is a direct result of our own life style, especially the food we eat.' This is one of the beliefs of the Community Health Foundation which was set up to serve as a bridge between the traditional wisdom of the East and the scientific and research orientated medicine of the West. They provide lectures and courses, a health food shop, and a restaurant offering macrobiotic, vegetarian and sea-food dishes.

Vivian Milroy