

Self-care -- a spiritual approach

Live online chat with Beverly Goldsmith, a practitioner and teacher of Christian Science, on spirituality.com June 28, 2002

An event in the *Spirituality Live Series*

Event Preview Introduction:

A woman underwent a surgical operation that sadly went wrong. It left her with a physical condition that required her to wear a heavy surgical corset and to take medicine everyday. Many years went by and she was no better. Then one day the woman was given a book on spiritual self-care and healing. She started reading it. Very soon she was completely healed. She no longer needed to wear the surgical corset or to take the medicine. The woman was so thrilled with her healing that she decided to give the book to her married daughter.

This married daughter suffered with 2 chronic ailments – a painful neck and a throat condition. She read the book and was completely healed of these 2 chronic ailments. Well the married daughter was so thrilled with her healing that she decided to give the book to her young teenager. This girl read the book and was permanently healed of severe migraine headaches and multiple warts on her fingers.

Three family members, three generations, each healed of chronic ailments by reading the same book on spiritual self-care and healing. It's quite a story. And it's a true one. I know, because the three women in that true-life experience were my grandmother, my mother, and ...? Yes, me. And the book that brought each of us healing? It's *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* written by Mary Baker Eddy.



In this book the three of us discovered a spiritual approach to self-care and healing – an approach that I've been practicing successfully for over 40 years for myself and others. That's why I constantly refer to *Science and Health*. It's been my reference book for self-care and healing ever since I first read it and was healed.

Mary Baker Eddy spent many years searching for health and healing. She was often ill. She wanted to be well and she also wanted to help others be well. At first she tried various remedies and investigated several systems of treatment. Some gave her relief but none cured her permanently. Then she had a serious accident. Three days after the accident when it became apparent that neither medicine nor surgery could help her recover from her injuries she turned to the Bible and was healed. Wanting to know how she'd been healed, she continued to explore the connection between mind, body, spirituality and healing. This finally led her to discover a purely spiritual system of self-care and healing – a system which she wrote down and published in her book, *Science and Health*.

Reading this book has improved my health, given me peace of mind, enriched my life through spiritual growth and taught me how to heal myself and others spiritually. This book has done the same for others. It can do the same for you.

Event Transcript of Q&A:

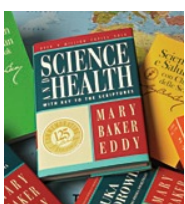
Beverly's comments came during a live spirituality.com Online Event on June 28, 2002. She was responding to questions from the audience. Following is a transcript of the discussion:

SPIRITUALITY.COM HOST: *Well, hello to those joining us with Beverly Goldsmith. Beverly, any opening thoughts to get us started?*

BEVERLY: Yes I have and I'm glad you could join me for this discussion on self-care—a spiritual approach.

How do we take care of our health and well being? Do we have to rely on drugs, certain foods, diet, or exercise to do this for us? Can we employ a spiritual approach to self-care? And does a spiritual approach actually work?

In my opening remarks for our discussion, I mentioned that I've been practicing a spiritual approach to self-care that's explained in Mary Baker Eddy's best-selling book *Science and Health*. I've been doing this now for over 40 years. The result is that I've never had to visit a doctor, have medical treatment, or take medicine of any kind during this time. That doesn't mean that I haven't needed healing. But whenever I've been unwell, fatigued, or in an accident, I've chosen to employ a spiritual approach to self-care and healing. I've practiced the spiritual ideas in *Science and Health*. This has enabled me to take care of my health and well being. Here's an example.



All through my childhood I suffered from severe migraine headaches. I also had many warts on my fingers. My parents had me try all kinds of remedies. Nothing worked. Then I started reading *Science and Health*. I found spiritual ideas in the book. These spiritual ideas changed the way I thought about myself. And this change of thought had a healing effect.

You see, I used to think of myself as a chronic headache sufferer. And I used to admit into my thinking the conclusion that I would never get rid of the headaches or the warts. I thought that I couldn't be healed of these ailments. That I would be stuck with them for life! This kind of thinking wasn't helping me. It just made me feel hopeless and helpless.

But then I started admitting spiritual conclusions into my thinking. I admitted that there is a loving, divine, infinite power that heals. That divine, infinite Love could heal me. That my true identity was spiritual, perfectly healthy and well. That divine, infinite Spirit, had made me that way. It was my divine right to live a healthy life, free from illness.

Now spiritual conclusions are more than just positive thinking. Spiritual conclusions connect us to a higher healing power. "I am well" is positive thinking. "I am well because divine, infinite Love made me this way" is a spiritual conclusion. It connects us with divine Love's healing power.

I continued to read *Science and Health*. And the more I accepted the idea of my pure, spiritual identity, the better I felt. My health improved. Then one day I realized that I couldn't remember the last time I'd had a headache. And when I looked at my hands all 22 warts had gone.

It's been forty years since that healing and in that time I've never had another headache. And my hands are still free of warts.

So let's chat. If you have a question for me about spiritual self-care, send it in now.

1. Counting: *Do I have to eat certain foods to keep well?*

BEVERLY: No. When I was a kid my parents made me eat the food they'd been told was good for my health. Today some of those foods are considered to be detrimental. In fact, over the years I've seen some food go off and on the "good for you list" so many times that I've lost track. Not that it matters. As Shakespeare said, "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." That's what I've found too. It comes down to what food you think is good or bad for you.

Didn't Jesus once tell us, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat...?" For me this has been good advice. I've found that my health is not dependent on what kind of food I eat. I know that my health is maintained and sustained by divine Love.

When I was just a new reader of *Science and Health* I suffered from an allergic reaction to a certain food. As I stopped believing in good and bad food, I lost my fear of this particular food. One day I ate it without thinking and had no bad results. That was it. It's now one of my favorite foods.

2. Goldcoast: *How can I introduce my granddaughter to self-care?*

BEVERLY: Well that's a good question. I was only 13 when my grandmother introduced my mother and me to self-care in *Science and Health*. I just loved reading the ideas in this book. And they really helped me as a young teenager to see where my health and healing came from. I found that it was the spiritual ideas that helped me learn how to take care of myself. So you can do the same for your granddaughter. Give her a copy of the book—if she is old enough to read it. No matter how young, the ideas in the book really speak to us all no matter what age we are.

3. Roamer: *How do I take care of health?*

BEVERLY: One way I've found to take care of my health and well-being is to practice admitting spiritual conclusions about myself into my thinking - I am loved and cared for by God. He keeps me healthy and well. This kind of spiritual thinking has certainly helped me to be well and stay well. But I've also learned that it's important to shut out unhealthy thoughts and fears. Let me give you an example.

When I was a child my brother was taken to the hospital in the middle of the night to have his appendix removed. This made a deep mental impression on me and I became fearful that one day this might happen to me. Several years later as a young teenager I became ill with the same symptoms.

By this time, I'd started reading *Science and Health*. I was practicing letting in spiritual conclusions about myself, but I wasn't shutting out the unhealthy thoughts and fears. I kept opening the door of my thinking and saying, "Oh no, not this again! I'm scared it still might happen to me." But then, I practiced shutting out the unhealthy thoughts and fears as Mary Baker Eddy explains to do on page 392 of *Science and Health*. I mentally said 'no' to them. Fear was no part of me. It couldn't occupy my thought. As I practiced letting in spiritual conclusions about myself and shutting out unhealthy thoughts and fears, the symptoms left and never returned.

SPIRITUALITY.COM HOST: *When you say "spiritual ideas," what do you mean?*

BEVERLY: I mean that the ideas in the book that spoke about my spirituality helped me - such as: God made me perfect. I am loved by God. Divine Love cares for me. These are spiritual ideas that connect us to a higher healing power, the power of divine Love. These ideas have a healing effect on our health and well being.

4. Curious: *What do you do about accidents?*

BEVERLY: In *Science and Health* on page 397, Mary Baker Eddy writes about how to deal with accidents. She says, "When an accident happens, you think or exclaim, 'I am hurt!' Your thought is more powerful than your words, more powerful than the accident itself, to make the injury real. Now reverse the process. Declare that you are not hurt and understand the reason why..." This approach to accidents has certainly helped me.

When I was at high school, I played netball. One lunchtime a group of us were practicing shooting for goal. The basketball goal post was an old, heavy, movable, big wooden post with a heavy iron ring attached to it. When the bell sounded we turned away to head into school. All of a sudden there was a loud snapping sound. The goal post fell forwards hitting me on the collarbone then bounced off.

As the goal post hit me, I thought of the idea in *Science and Health* about accidents. I immediately said very firmly to myself, "I am NOT hurt. Because (and here's the reason why) divine Love is taking care of me, keeping me safe and well."

My friends shocked and alarmed rushed me to the Principal's office where the school nurse examined me. Neither of them could find anything broken. My collarbone was intact. They wondered if perhaps the goal post hadn't hit me! My friends protested. They'd seen it happen. I'd been hit. Everyone said it was a miracle. I wasn't injured.

At no time—not even in the days following did I have any pain, bruising, or fractured bones. It was as if nothing had ever happened to me. This showed me as a new reader of *Science and Health* that practicing the spiritual ideas in the book enabled me to take care of my health and well being.

5. Zoggie: *How can you tell the difference between just good human thoughts and spiritual ideas?*

BEVERLY: Spiritual ideas connect us with the divine healing power. A good thought might be "I am well" and we could also call that positive thinking. A spiritual idea is more than this. It would be something like: I am well because God made me this way. Divine Love keeps me safe and well.

6. Lizzie: *I have to work long hours. How can I stop feeling tired?*

BEVERLY: This is a timely question. In Australia, there's quite a debate about long-haul truck drivers being asked to drive long hours at a time, and the effect this is having on their health, not to mention road safety. Some drivers take drugs to keep themselves awake and this too has had serious consequences. Also in my work as a spiritual healer I have mothers of very young children saying they get tired. Also people who work in stressful jobs. It seems that so often the good things we have to do wear us out.

My brother and I were a singing duo on national television shows, cruise ships, and other places. In 1969 we joined a 6-person performing group to entertain troops during the Vietnam war. It was a hectic tour - 133 shows in just 120 days, traveling all over South Vietnam. Halfway through the 4-month tour, I became ill and exhausted. I had to get better right away or the tour would be cancelled. I was offered medical treatment but I declined preferring to employ the spiritual approach to self-care and healing as explained in *Science and Health*.

I opened the book to page 385. "**Constant toil, deprivations, exposures, and all untoward conditions, if without sin, can be experienced without suffering. Whatever it is your duty to do, you can do without harm to yourself.**"

Right away I knew this idea was applicable to me. I had a duty to carry out—to sing for the troops. I was doing something useful and good. I didn't have to pay a penalty - be exhausted for doing good to others. Divine Love is always active. Divine Love had given me energy and strength. I had spiritual energies and these couldn't wear out. I could do everything that I needed to do. Divine Love was sustaining me.

Then I found this in *Science and Health* on page 387: "...one cannot suffer as the result of any labor of love, but grows stronger because of it." I thought, "That's right! That's the truth. Far from wearing out from doing good, I'm going to be stronger." And I did. As I practiced these ideas, I felt well again. My strength returned right away. I went on to complete all the remaining shows with no ill effects.

You don't have to be worn out by doing what is normal and natural to do. But it also makes good sense to take rest stops when you're driving. In Psalm 23 in the Bible the writer says that the Shepherd makes him "lie down in green pastures". I love this. As little sheep, you and I are allowed to take our foot off the accelerator and rest in divine Love's gentle presence.

7. Glo: *How can we say, "I am not afraid" when we are afraid?*

BEVERLY: I guess when this situation arises we have a choice. We can choose to go along with the thought that we are afraid or we can think from a spiritual standpoint. For example when I feel afraid, I change my thinking and affirm that divine Love is with me, keeping me safe, keeping me well. I don't accept the notion of fear. Now, this isn't just being positive. It's knowing that we are in God's care. He's with us. We can shut out fear. Let me give you an example of what I mean.

It's winter for us here in Australia. When winter arrives so do all the radio and TV commercials for cough drops, syrups and medicines. All of these are designed to encourage us to expect to get sick during the winter months. There is a connection between mind and body, between what we think and what we experience. I know. I once caught the flu over the telephone after listening to a friend describe the symptoms to me! Since then I've learned to take care of my health by practicing this idea on page 392 in *Science and Health*: "**Stand porter at the door of thought.**"

A porter is a doorkeeper. And it's the porter's job to let in the people who are supposed to be there and to keep out those who aren't. So, as a "mental doorkeeper", I watch what kind of thoughts are coming to the door of my thinking. I let in the healthy, loving, positive, spiritual thoughts that benefit me and make me well. I keep out the unhealthy thoughts and fears that lead to sickness. In this way I stay healthy and well year round. This is how I like to deal with fear.

8. Kathy: *How did you catch the flu over the phone? What do you mean?*

BEVERLY: Well what happened was that my friend went on so much about the symptoms of suffering, that I began to really feel for her situation. I got quite upset about it and hoped that I wouldn't get sick. By the time I put the phone down, I found myself having the same symptoms.

Now I hadn't been near her and yet I felt unwell. Why? I'd allowed those thoughts of illness into my thinking. I was experiencing a "mental contagion". So I affirmed that I was spiritual. I could think for myself and not be influenced by such thoughts. Divine Spirit was upholding me, keeping me well. I could be healthy all of the time.

As I did this, the whole condition faded away as quickly as it had started up. I was well and stayed that way.

9. Amelia: *What do you do when you have something important to do and you don't feel well?*

BEVERLY: The first thing I do is make the decision to employ the spiritual approach to self-care and healing that's in *Science and Health*. I've learned to stay away from thoughts about why this has happened to me, what am I going to do. Right away I affirm spiritual conclusions about myself and let these into my thinking.

I remember one time when my brother and I had to sing at an outdoor function at a surfing beach. I woke with laryngitis. We couldn't call anyone to cancel. There were no mobile phones back then! We just had to get in the car and make the 3-hour drive.

On the way there, I started thinking "what if I can't sing?", "what will we do?". I was scared. But I practiced shutting out the unhealthy thoughts and fears. I mentally said "no" to those thoughts and affirmed that divine Love was with me. Divine Love was in charge of my health. My singing ability had nothing to do with a throat. It was a mental activity - spiritual.

I also thought about how Mary Baker Eddy had addressed large audiences without a microphone to aid her. Her voice carried effortlessly. She didn't have a "big" voice. But she was heard clearly. She proved to me that voice is the product of mental activity rather than physical activity.

When we arrived I still couldn't speak above a whisper—or sing a note. My brother wanted to cancel. I said we should go on as normal. We stepped out on stage. I opened my mouth. I sang freely. Afterwards I still couldn't speak in a normal voice. People said that I'd damaged myself by singing with laryngitis. But I had no fear. I knew that taking a spiritual approach to self-care would only benefit me—not harm me. And so it proved. On the way home in the car my speaking voice became normal. I never suffered any after-effects. My singing voice was never affected.

10. Glo: *How can we care for our eyesight? How can we get past using eyeglasses?*

BEVERLY: Seeing is a mental faculty. We don't "see" with bits of matter. Seeing is a spiritual quality. I was in a bank one day. The cashier was upset because she had to wear glasses. She was only in her twenties and felt so old. People often think that their ability to see clearly depends on age, genes, or heredity. But that isn't so. God is our divine Parent and we inherit good seeing from Him. Our ability to see well will continue always. We don't have to expect decline or loss. There are many excellent spiritual ideas in *Science and Health* about seeing, eyes, vision, mental faculties. Reading these reminds me where true seeing comes from and that I can't be deprived of this ability. You can do the same. It will help you.

11. Alicat: *I often feel alone and depressed. What can I do to not feel this way?*

BEVERLY: Start by knowing that this isn't your thinking. These are thoughts coming to the door of your thinking. You can let these thoughts in, or keep them out.

When I was in Vietnam, I felt very alone - cut off from everything and everyone that was familiar to me. I felt miserable. This wasn't the answer. God loved me. He was with me. I was not alone. He was guiding and protecting me. I had the right to be happy—even in a war zone. So each time I felt lonely, I shut the door on unhappiness, recalled happy times and those who loved me and were thinking of me back home. This cheered me up. I stopped feeling lonely. I made the choice to think spiritually- to express the happiness that was mine from God. Now if I ever felt lonely, I wouldn't let in that thought. I'd "argue" on the side of happiness - I am happy because this is how God made me. It's my divine right to be happy. I am well, happy, and peaceful right now. This is how I am.

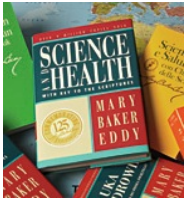
12. Jani: *How does one get over complacency, when he is 3/4 healed and back to his normal work, but yet not totally healed?*

BEVERLY: It's important to keep going until we're fully healed. Why should we quit just short of the winning post! You're entitled to be completely well. And this is entirely possible. Persistence is the key. Spiritual persistence. Imagine getting so close to the finish line and then stopping. I remember a runner who was cheered on to the finish by a big crowd. He just kept going and going until he finished. That was spiritual determination. Such spiritual determination has a blessing. It results in healing. Mary Baker Eddy was such a wonderful example of spiritual persistence and determination under very trying situations. She never gave up and neither should you or me.

SPIRITUALITY.COM HOST: *Well, we are almost out of time Beverly. Any closing thoughts to leave us with?*

BEVERLY: Yes. Employing the spiritual approach to self-care that's explained in *Science and Health* has worked in my life. It's done the same for others. It can do the same for you. So if you're exploring a spiritual approach to self-care for the first time today, let me make some suggestions:

[1] **GET** yourself a copy of *Science and Health*.



[2] **READ** it - slowly. Don't rush. Absorb the ideas. This isn't a Harry Potter book! It's a reference book that shows you how to take care of yourself—how to heal yourself and others.

[3] **LOOK** for the spiritual ideas in the book. Underline, highlight and record ideas that speak to you. Relate an idea to your life. Here's one for you on page 199. **"The devotion of thought to an honest achievement makes the achievement possible."**

[4] **PRACTICE** the ideas. Don't just read words on the page. Put the ideas into practice. Write down an idea on a piece of card and take it with you. Look at it during the day. Think about it. Remember it.

You can take care of yourself. Don't be afraid. You're not alone. Divine Love is with you, taking care of you, keeping you healthy and well. The ideas in *Science and Health* show you how to practice spiritual self-care. You have the divine right to live a happy, healthy life enriched by spiritual growth. Don't delay. Find out now.

SPIRITUALITY.COM HOST: *Thanks so much Beverly, and thanks to all of you for your great questions. Have a great day everyone!*

Passages in this chat:

Science and Health: 397: 12-18 (to,)
387: 23-24 one,
199: 21-22

King James Bible: Ps 23:2 to (to :)