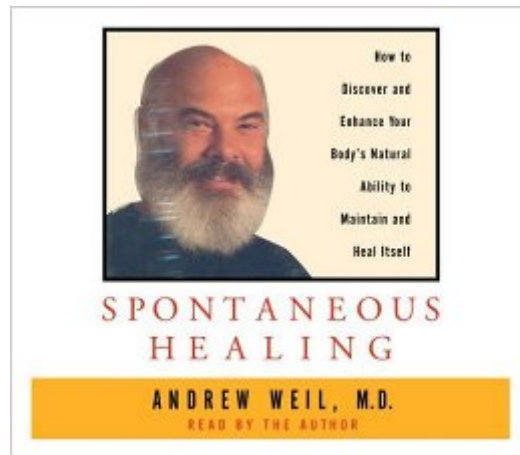


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# Spontaneous Healing



## Synopsis

The body can heal itself. Spontaneous healing is not a miracle but a fact of biology--the result of the natural healing system that each one of us is born with. Drawing on fascinating case histories as well as medical techniques from around the world, Dr. Andrew Weil shows how spontaneous healing has worked to resolve life-threatening diseases, severe trauma, and chronic pain. Weil then outlines an eight-week program in which you'll discover:- The truth about spontaneous healing and how it interacts with the mind- The foods, vitamins, supplements, and tonic herbs that will help you enhance your innate healing powers- Advice on how to avoid environmental toxins and reduce stress- The strengths and weaknesses of conventional and alternative treatments- Natural methods to ameliorate common kinds of illnessesAnd much more!From the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Andrew Weil, who is a graduate of the Harvard Medical School and the author of a number of best-selling books on medicine, consciousness, health and diet, is one of those rare men who have managed to acquire a prestigious conventional education and then build on that with unconventional experiences in other parts of the world. He has studied botany and medicine in the jungle and elsewhere, and alternative medicine in the far east before establishing his practice in the United States. This book, first published in 1995, is the result of what Weil has learned over the years. There is nothing spectacularly new here, but there is a carefully presented, enormously compelling argument for the power of our bodies to heal themselves if only we would give them the opportunity. Problem number one is a medical establishment that sees its interventions as the cause

of healing, when it occurs, and the failure of the body, when it does not. Every physician should humbly realize that it is the healing mechanisms of the body that defeat disease, not the treatment. Weil makes this point even in the case of antibiotics: "Antibiotics reduce numbers of invading germs to a point where the immune system can take over and finish the job. The real cause of the cure is the immune system, which may be unable to end an infection because it is overwhelmed by sheer numbers of bacteria and" their toxic products (p. 110). I would add that even in the case of setting a bone or removing a bullet, it is the body that does the healing. Properly understood, Weil advises, the function of the physician is to aid the defenses of the body. This is how medicine is understood in cultures of ancient lineage around the world, particularly in the time-honored Chinese and Ayurvedic systems.

Dr. Andrew Weil is a graduate of Harvard Medical School and was for 15 years a research Associate in Ethnopharmacology at the Harvard Botanical Museum. He is founder and Director of the Program of Integrative Medicine at the U. of Arizona. His educational background, medical formation and years of professional experience are formidable and, I feel, give him the authority sufficient to write a book of this caliber. For the last 7 months I have been receiving his monthly newsletter which discusses natural remedies to health problems and maintenance. They are wonderful. Over the Christmas holidays I purchased three of his books. By the time I finished reading *Spontaneous Healing* I had already sent a copy of the book to my mother, an LPN under treatment for Leukemia, and a friend of mine with Rheumatoid Arthritis. With another friend, who suffers from chronic eczema, I've shared my copy. In this book Dr. Weil covers a number of case studies and explains how traditionally non-conventional medicine (herbal treatments, Traditional Chinese Medicine, hypnotherapy, creative imagery, etc.) has alleviated or cured sicknesses or health problems for which conventional medicine offered little to no relief. However, that is not to say he is an opponent of conventional medicine. He names instances in which he feels it is best to turn to it. One of the case studies which made me reflect deeply on "alternative" medicine was of a 70 yr. old woman who had suffered her entire adult life with Rheumatoid Arthritis. After a series of dietary changes he recommended to her, her symptoms (i.e. her pain) decreased significantly.

The idea that your body possesses natural ability to heal and maintain itself is usually not within the realm of believability for many. But this Harvard M.D. presents evidence and explains body mechanisms that can overcome life-threatening illness and pain. A "how to" book, on the one hand, Dr. Weil also points out shortcomings of our medical system. He calls it "medical pessimism"

because the end result is that often nothing more can be done. This comes about, he contends, because modern medical practice is based on the view that human beings are an assemblage of structures that can be neatly programmed. Western medicine, the Chinese, for example, believe the human organism has defensive spheres such as tonsils, adenoids and appendix, which can be stimulated and are components of an immune system. Modern medicine, he believes, also writes off the importance of the mind, looking instead for physical causes of changes in health or illness. A realist, Dr. Weil concedes that life is uncertain and while we don't have control over life and death, we have the ability to understand how the human organism can heal itself and this is reason enough for doctors and patients to be optimistic. "My purpose in writing this book," he states, "is to convince more people to rely on our innate potential for maintaining health and overcoming illness but, he goes on to say, "I cannot easily give you a picture of this system (1) because there is a lack of organized research (2) the human organism is complex and (3) the ability of the body to repair itself is a complex function." The DNA healing system: Is always on call and works continuously; it diagnoses damage; removes damaged structures and replaces them; acts to neutralize injury and make corrections.

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