

## CORRESPONDENCE

### TAPE EXERCISES

Sir,

As an assiduous, if not very instructed, reader of the *Journal*, may I say how delighted I was to see the contribution in July from Dr Ian Martin on *Differential Relaxation*. The question that immediately crossed my mind was to wonder why this very simple but efficacious method of helping patients to help themselves should be limited to psychiatric casualties?

Could it not become a very valuable form of re-education for people living under pressure, and thus avert many failures and breakdowns? And a further question: why should it so often be assumed that the practice of yoga (however good in itself) is the only form of religious exercise that promotes peace of mind and health of body? There are many forms of meditation in daily use by members of our churches which clergy associated with this Council will be glad to talk over with their medical friends.

There is scope for experiment here. If Dr Martin or any member of the College would care to do a series of tapes suitable for small groups at a local church, some of us would be only too glad to co-operate and reinforce these with suggestions on meditation, based on the same underlying principles. Many victims of 'stress' have very little idea how to handle their problems and this would meet a very big need.

G. C. HARDING  
Director

*Churches' Council for Health and Healing*

### REFERENCE

Martin, I. C. A. (1973). *Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners*, 23, 485-494.

*After obtaining The Reverend Harding's permission we showed this letter to the Medical Recording Service Foundation who replied as follows.—Ed.*

Sir,

The Reverend Harding may like to know that Dr Martin's relaxation tapes are available for loan or sale through the College's tape library (the Medical Recording Service Foundation, Kitts Croft, Writtle, Chelmsford CMI 3EH) and so they are available to any individual or group wishing to use them. Other tapes on topics common to doctors and clergy include *Care of the Bereaved*, *Widows in Society*, *Work of the Samaritans*, and the *Homeless Alcoholic*. There is a long series on *Family Psychiatry* which could give an understanding of family behavioural dynamics to a discussion group. Our catalogue gives a detailed list of all the tapes available.

We have made some tapes in co-operation with, for instance, the Institute of Religion and Medicine, and should be very happy to work with The

Reverend Harding on tapes on meditation and allied subjects, if he would like to get in touch with us.

JOHN and VALERIE GRAVES  
Directors

*Medical Recording Service Foundation  
Royal College of General Practitioners*

Kitts Croft,  
Writtle,  
Chelmsford, CM1 3EH.

### URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS

Sir,

With reference to your editorial (August *Journal*) and the surveys of urinary tract infection in general practice I thought that some recent observations of mine might be of some interest and value.

Recently, whenever I have come across urinary infection in females I have made the point of carefully questioning the patient or the mother, in the case of a child, on the method of cleansing the perianal region after defaecation. In all cases I found that the patient was in the habit of drawing the toilet tissue from the perianal area forward across the labia. In almost all cases the patient was "prone to cystitis". On my advice the method of cleansing was corrected and in no case has there been a recurrence of symptoms of urinary tract infection.

It would seem that a high proportion of women cleanse the perianal area by introducing the tissue between their legs while still sitting. The natural movement then is to draw the tissue forward with the obvious risk of carrying infection with it to the area around the urethral meatus. This practice could well explain the preponderance of organisms of colonic origin found in urinary tract infection and its higher incidence in women.

Being a psychiatrist my experience in this field is very limited and one could not draw very definite conclusions from my findings. However, they do appear to raise the question as to whether urinary infection in women is due to faulty hygiene.

M. N. MCGUINNESS  
Acting Medical Superintendent

Eastern Health Board,  
St. Ita's Hospital,  
Portrane, Donabate,  
Co. Dublin.

### REFERENCE

*Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners* (1973). Editorial, 23, 529-30.

### MANIPULATION

Sir,

I sympathise with the burden of Dr Moor's comments on fringe medicine (August *Journal*).

Whilst I feel that the tenets of osteopathy probably count little among medical men, I am sure that manipulation, including osteopathic