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Meaning & Medicine: A Doctor's Tales of Breakthrough and Healing. Larry Dossey, M.D. New York: Bantam Books, 1991, 290 pages, \$21.50 hard.

Reviewed by Bernie Siegel, M.D.

Larry Dossey has always been brilliant at expressing the "new" medicine of the mind. In the past I wished his style had been less intellectual and more personal or anecdotal.

In *Meaning & Medicine* he does an outstanding job of bringing the individual story, both his and his patients, into the picture. We can now feel along with the individual patient, as well as see the consequences of his or her story and its meaning. Dossey's fine intellect and understanding also are demonstrated.

Norman Cousins often said, "belief becomes biology." For me the simple understanding of feelings as being chemical was apparent in the care of the patient. Larry Dossey has put together a wonderful collection of stories, and then clarified through their meaning, how they become a part of medicine, patient care and science.

You have to understand that this review is written by someone who agrees with Dossey and, therefore, read the book from that perspective. It is reinforcing for my beliefs; but I think even a sceptic can read it and learn how the patient's perspective affects the course of healing and even life and death. Some material, that I choose to call a mystery, is presented; mysterious because we cannot explain it, but it is still scientific, and in need of study and future understanding.

This is a book written by a practical, intellectual, practicing physician but one who is open-minded enough to be scientific. Closed minds do not explore the mysteries that can lead to scientific progress.

I recommend this book to all who are dealing with illness—as individuals or as care-givers. The first quote opening the book is from physicist David Bohm who said, "meaning is being." This book helps us understand the meaning of the disease process and the process of healing.