

Analects of A. T. Still

Nature Quotes

Andrew Taylor Still's vision of the union of Osteopathy and Nature

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I have compiled a list of my favorite quotations that refer to Nature from the four books written by A. T. Still. This list is not an exhaustive source. It represents my personal collection of quotations that I utilize when writing Osteopathic articles. I consider Dr. Still's "unbounded faith" in Nature, and the natural world within a human body, to be one of the essential principles of Osteopathy. Personally, I am unable to practice Osteopathy unless I trust Nature to do the work of healing. I hope these selected quotes will provide, for those who are ready to hear, an avenue for deeper exploration into the depths of Osteopathy.

Thus we have unbounded faith that Nature's chemistry is the doctor and the only one on whom we can depend for relief. Nature abounds with remedies necessary for her use in all conditions.

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page 229

Has not nature's God been thoughtful enough to place in man all the elements and principles that the word "remedy" means?

Autobiography of A. T. Still, page 328

The Osteopath who succeeds best does so because he looks to Nature for knowledge and obeys her teachings, then he gets good results. He is often amazed to see how faithfully Nature sticks to system. A few years spent in the school of Nature teaches the Osteopath that principles govern the universe, and he must obey all order or fail to cure his patient.

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page 13

Nature has no apology to offer. It does the work . . ."

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page 14

Health is Nature.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 22

. . . disease is only too much dirt in the wheels of life [and] we must see that Nature takes this method [Osteopathy] to work out the dirt.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 69

. . . Nature prepares and bridges each step . . .

Autobiography of A. T. Still, page 209

Does Nature have a finer matter that is invisible and that moves all that is visible to us? Life surely is a very finely prepared substance, which is the all-moving force of Nature, or that force that moves all nature from worlds to atoms. It seems to be a substance that contains all the principles of construction and motion, with the power to endow that which it constructs with the attributes necessary to the objects it has formulated from matter and sent forth as a living being.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 256

When we take up the principles, we get down to Nature. It is ever willing, self-caring, self-feeding and self-protecting.

Autobiography of A. T. Still, page 234

Once in the operating-rooms you are in a place where printed books are known no more forever. Your own native ability, with nature's book, are all that command respect in this field of labor. Here you lay aside the long words, and use your mind in deep and silent earnestness; drink deep from the eternal fountain of reason, penetrate the forest of that law whose beauties are life and death. To know all of a bone in its entirety would close both ends of an eternity.

Autobiography of A. T. Still, page 152

Osteopaths are the champions of natural law . . .

Autobiography of A. T. Still, page 161

All of which, you diplomats of Osteopathy know full well how to do, and give Nature the ascendancy.

Autobiography of A. T. Still, page 230

You should ever remember that Osteopathy is confined to the immutable laws of nature, and an unerring Deity who is its Author.

Autobiography of A. T. Still, page 295

We can do no more than to deed and trust the laws of life as Nature gives them to man.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 53

I am simply trying to teach you what you are; to get you to realize your right to health, and when you see the cures wrought here, after all other means have failed, you can but know that the foundation of my work is laid on nature's rock.

Autobiography of A. T. Still, page 234

Osteopathy is to me a very sacred science. It is sacred because it is a healing power through all nature.

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page 7

We have learned to know that Nature does no imperfect work, but, on the other hand, does work to perfection, and perfection is its watchword in all its parts and functions.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 22

Does Nature do its work to a finish? If so, we have a lasting foundation on which to stand. Then we must work to acquaint ourselves with the process by which it proceeds to do its work in the physical man.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 163

Nature makes machinery that can produce just what is necessary, and, when united, produces what the wisest minds would exact.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 66

Osteopathy is based upon the perfection of Nature's work.

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page xxiii

The Osteopathic mechanic must remember that Nature is a living critic and the answer must be yes or not. A normal image of the form and function of all parts of the body must be seen by the mind's eye or our work will condemn us.

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page 21

Notwithstanding that all nature is a well-prepared engine, that the plan and specification for ruling and governing the whole universe is and has been right before us, that men, fishes and all vegetables are constant exhibitions of some kind of engine for some purpose, yet, man's mental eyes do not open to behold the perfection of the Architect and Builder. His eyes do not open to see that man when completed is a perfect machine, constructed for a purpose, and that

nourishment and rest are the requirements for its work of construction and motion, both of body and mind.

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page 11

I have not only worked to relive and cure the sick, but I have had both eyes open all the time to find a defect in Nature's work, its object, its plan, its specifications, its building and its engineering; so far I have failed to find a variation from perfection.

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page 14

Nature as an Architect

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page 13

I want to emphasize that my vote is now, first, last and all the time, and has been for the last thirty-five years, against the use of anything but Nature's remedies for treating the sick.

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page 5

I have found in all of my practice, and have been surprised to know, that at roll call Nature always answered "present" with her remedies.

Osteopathy Research and Practice, page 118

To obtain good results, we must blend ourselves with and travel in harmony with Nature's truths.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 17

We have learned to know that Nature does no imperfect work, but, on the other hand, does its work to perfection, and perfection is its watchword in all its parts and functions.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 22

Osteopathy is built upon the principle of debtor and creditor. We must willingly credit Nature with having done its work to perfection in all the machinery and functions of animal life, and that the after-results are good or bad according to centers and variations. If we observe any variations from the normal center, our work is never complete nor the reward due us until by adjustment we have reached the normal.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 28

Too much use has been made of the knife, and too little trust placed in Nature. The knife can be seen. Nature is known only by the power of the gift of reason well applied.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 36

Can a deep philosopher do otherwise than conclude that Nature has placed in man all the qualities for his comfort and longevity?

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 71

Does not Nature, with a knowledge of the machinery, offer a more reliable system of locating cause by adjusting that machinery so that it can remove the cause and change effect?

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 74

One has said, "Life is that calm force sent forth by Deity to vivify all nature." Let us accept and act on it as true, that life is that force sent forth by the Mind of the universe to move all nature, and apply all our energies to keep that living force at peace, by retaining the house of life in good form from foundation to dome. Let us read a few lives in the book of Nature.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 101

As Nature is never satisfied with incompleteness in anything, all interferences, from whatsoever cause, are sufficient for Nature to call a halt and bring the necessary fluids, already prepared in the chemical laboratory, to dissolve and wash away all obstructing deposits, previous to beginning the work of reconstruction and the repair of the injured parts of the machinery disabled by atmospheric changes, poisons, or otherwise.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 231

When Nature renovates, it is never satisfied to leave any obstruction in any part of the body.

Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy, page 231

You as Osteopathic machinists can go no further than to adjust the abnormal condition, in which you find the afflicted. Nature will do the rest.

Philosophy of Osteopathy, page 21

A truth is a complete work of nature . . .

Philosophy of Osteopathy, page 25

The Osteopath must know or learn that no infringement can be tolerated in any part. Nature's demands are surely absolute . . .

Philosophy of Osteopathy, page 100

Reference Legend:

Still, A. T. (1899) *Philosophy of Osteopathy*, Self-Published by A. T. Still, Kirksville, Missouri.
(Reprinted by The American Academy of Osteopathy, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1977).

Still, A. T. (1892) *Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy*, Hudson-Kimberly Publishing Co., Kansas City, Missouri. (Reprinted by Osteopathic Enterprises, Kirksville, Missouri, 1986).

Still, A. T. (1908) *Autobiography of A. T. Still*, Self-Published by A. T. Still, Kirksville, Missouri
(Reprinted by The American Academy of Osteopathy, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1981)

Still, A. T. (1910) *Osteopathy Research and Practice*, Self-Published by A. T. Still, Kirksville, Missouri
(Reprinted and reformatted by Eastland Press, Seattle, 1992)

Doctor A. T. Still in the Living His Concepts and Principles of Health and Disease

I am also including, in this reference list, a collection of quotes from Robert E. Truhlar, DO who edited a self-published book entitled *Doctor A. T. Still in the Living*, in 1950. Unfortunately, Truhlar was not a scholar or a historian and he did not reference his selections. I have located the references of about one third of his collection related to Nature, but the remaining quotes do not yet have a source. Therefore, when referencing A. T. Still via the Truhlar collection we must state: *Attributed to A. T. Still*.

Doctor A. T. Still in the Living His Concepts and Principles of Health and Disease

Edited by, Robert E. Truhlar, DO
Privately Published, Cleveland, Ohio, 1950

What Is Attribution?

Attribution means crediting the source where information or a direct quotation was obtained if it wasn't of firsthand knowledge or does not have a clear direct reference.

Sample footnote for correct attribution:

Attributed to A. T. Still, *Doctor A. T. Still in the Living: His Concepts and Principles of Health and Disease*, Edited by Robert E. Truhlar, Privately Published, Cleveland, Ohio, 1950. Page

- Nature is a school of questions and answers, which seems to be the only school in which man learns anything. Page 97
- Nature never changes. Page 97
- When you have adjusted the physical to its normal demands, Nature universally supplies the remainder. Page 97
- Nature applies to you the switch of pain, when her mandates are disregarded, and when you feel the smarting of the switch, do not pour drugs into your stomachs, but let a skillful engineer adjust your human machine, so that every part works in accordance with Nature's requirements. Page 98
- The most that any physician can do in treating disease is to render operative the natural forces within the patient's body. Page 98
- The osteopathic mechanic must remember that Nature is a living critic and the answer must be yes or no. Page 99
- An osteopath is taught that Nature is to be trusted to the end. Page 99
- Remove all obstructions, and when it is intelligently done Nature will kindly do the rest. Page 99
- Nature can and does successfully compound and combine elements for muscles, blood, teeth and bone. Page 99
- When we take up principles, we get down to Nature. It is ever willing and self-caring, self-feeding and self-protecting. Page 99
- Osteopathic machinists can go no farther than to adjust the abnormal condition, in which you find the afflicted. Nature will do the rest. Page 99
- That Nature makes nothing in vain is an established fact in the minds of all persons whose observation has created in them a desire to reason. That having been my faith for many years, I tried to discover why Nature had made and placed in man's head so much fine machinery just to make a little ear wax. Page 100
- Nature has never done any useless work or made anything in vain. Page 100
- Nature has been thoughtful enough to place in man all that the word 'remedy' means. Page 101

- I have discovered that Nature is never without necessary remedies. I am better prepared today to say that God or Nature is the only doctor whom man should respect. Man should study and use the drugs of His drug store. Page 101
- We adjust the machinery and depend upon Nature's chemical laboratory for all elements necessary to repair, give ease and comfort while Nature's corpuscles do all the work necessary. Page 101
- Anxious Nature stands fully armed, and equipped and more than willing to execute all duties - devolving upon her, knowing at the same time that obedience to these exacting laws is all that is known or accredited to them as success. Page 102
- The living person is the engine, Nature the engineer, and you the master mechanic. Page 102
- Today is our day, Nature is our school and we must go by the pointing's of the compass. Page 102
- Nature never made a philosopher. She made man to learn and act. Man can make of himself a philosopher or a fool. Page 102
- Nature does not jump from the abnormal back to the normal. Step by step she retraces herself, that is why it takes time for the chronic cases to recover. See that your patients understand this. Page 103
- By the speed of man's ability we know and use the comforts that nature holds in store for us until we call for and use them. Page 103-104
- The schools of Nature are open and free to man. He can learn the lessons and become wise if he obeys the teachers; otherwise he leaves little and his knowledge is of little, use all of his days. Page 104
- Nature moves by system in all her works. She succeeds in all because her plans are perfect. Her designs have an object as their day star, and with her eyes fixed on the plan the effect is seen to follow. Page 104-105
- A few years spent in the school of Nature teaches the Osteopath that principles govern the Universe, and he must obey all orders or fail to cure his patients. Page 105