

Change, Not Failure  
By Mary Louise Boelhauf

Over the past several weeks, El Dorado Vista has been undergoing a change in staffing, personnel and procedures. These changes have been the result of consecrated prayer, hours of study (both spiritual and management based), thoughtful debate, caring and compassion. Everyone involved in the decision making process has come from the approach of “what is God knowing, what are the needs of the community we serve, and how can El Dorado Vista operate most effectively.” There is nothing conflicting or contrary in this approach.

What does this have to do with nursing? Everything.

Recently, I was on the phone with one of the staff members who had been greatly impacted by changes at El Dorado Vista. Both her salary and wages were dramatically decreased, and it was clear that working at El Dorado Vista could no longer be her primary employment. Over a few weeks she had tried to combine her work at El Dorado Vista with other employment, but it never quite fit and she was always feeling like she was ignoring one job to attend to another. Finally, she decided (after much prayer and struggle) that she needed to let go of her work with El Dorado Vista. She was concerned about letting go of a cause she both loved and valued, and also looking like a failure. I assured her that she had not lost anything by relinquishing her position as the result of prayer, and was certainly not a failure. Our discussion shifted to the opportunities that had come to her, and how she was using what she had learned in her position at El Dorado Vista in her new endeavors. We also talked about doing what you love, and not seeing work as a series of conflicting events but as an opportunity to shine as God’s reflection. As we talked about the good that had unfolded – both for her and for El Dorado Vista – as a result of her work, she said “I really feel like I have been nursed without having been a patient.” My reply was that that experience was what true Christian Science nursing is all about.

Christian Science is never about fixing matter, whether it is matter-body or a matter-bank account. It is always realizing God’s goodness, power and presence, and man’s inseparability from God and all that he provides. Christian Science nursing demonstrates the practical application of God’s

laws in man's experience. As thought is changed, limitations removed, and expectations spiritualized, we see healing. That is true nursing.

In Christian Science, we often talk about the necessity for change of thought and action. We strive to let go of limitations that would hold us back from progressive steps that are right for us at the moment. And our expectation is always for healing, for a clearer, active demonstration of what we are learning. We do not expect to be complaisant or waiting for something or someone to act. Each of us is responsible for our own salvation, recognizing our oneness with God, seeing as God sees.

So why should we be worried or concerned about changes in our human experience, or changes in operation and management of El Dorado Vista? In Adam Dickey's excellent article, God's Law of Adjustment, he says, "We are at liberty to change our belief of things as often as we get new light. We should not let our vanity compel us to adhere to a proposition simply because we have taken a stand thereon. We should be willing to relinquish our former views and change our thought on any subject as often as wisdom furnishes us enlightenment. Christian Scientists are sometimes accused of being changeable. What if they are, if it is always God that changes them?" Later in the article he says, "A too determined sense of carrying out a preconceived plan is more likely to be the enthronement of erring human will. Christian Scientists are minutemen, armed and equipped to respond to any call of wisdom, always ready and willing to abandon personal views or opinions, and to allow that Mind to be in them 'which was also in Christ Jesus'".

While we respect and are grateful to the past, we are not prisoners of it. El Dorado Vista is dedicated to providing nursing care to those radically relying on Christian Science for healing. It operates in full and complete support of Christian Science nursing. The form and expression of El Dorado Vista's physical location and staffing needs may be changed and adapted to suit the needs of the times. Change does not make El Dorado Vista irrelevant or antiquated. Change does not mean failure.

Christian Science nursing is the care for the spiritual and practical needs of the patient, and no decision or event can separate or deny Christian Science nursing from its place in our community or movement. Each one of us, Board members, staff and management, all support and nurse one another,

no matter our job title designation. All embrace Christian Science nursing as a vital activity.

Mrs. Eddy's poem Mother's Evening Prayer, written at a time of controversy and change for her church, says,

“Beneath the shadow of His mighty wing;  
In that sweet secret of the narrow way,  
Seeking and finding, with the angels sing:  
“Lo I am with you alway,” –  
Watch and pray.

No snare, no fowler, pestilence or pain;  
No night drops down upon the troubled breast,  
When heaven's aftersmile earth's teardrops gain,  
And mother finds her home and heavenly rest.”