



Harvard Medical School's

SPIRITUALITY & HEALING IN MEDICINE - II

Spiritual Healing in the Islamic Tradition

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Renewed interest in spiritual healing methods will only help to further the state of modern medicine as we benefit from the experiences and knowledge of our predecessors in this noble field of healing. Unfortunately, this topic has too often been ignored and dismissed by many contemporary physicians although these remedies have been practiced successfully for thousands of years.

A scientific mind unclouded by preconceived notions is able to discern the validity and utility of a comprehensive approach to health which includes spiritual healing. Professor John Taylor of King's College, London asserted: "A scientific investigation can only look into that which is physical. The non-physical realm--be it mental, spiritual, ethereal, eternal or any other so far--has defied scientific analysis.

"There are certainly ways of obtaining knowledge about the non-physical aspect of experience which provides helpful insights of their nature, but the results so obtained are difficult to describe and relate to the general corpus of knowledge....Indeed, nowadays a scientist must take care to avoid being so biased in the other direction that he becomes over skeptical. He may well refuse to believe what is staring him in the face because it cannot be fitted into his materialistic view of the universe....Science has so much evolved since a century ago. It should be able to give a satisfactory answer. If not, the scientific method truly will have been found wanting and could well suffer a blow from which it might never recover."

John Taylor, *Superminds* pp. 55-56

Science And Spiritual Healing

All spiritual healers are true scientists and they have come to the conclusion that behind every creation--be it an atom, cell, or cosmos--a Creating Genius is at work. Therefore, they assert that their patients can be healed by turning to that Creating Genius through devotion, contemplation, and recollection of His Name.

Many modern scientists realized that if a science does not educate, inspire, or lead to the conclusion and realization that the beginning and end, the outward and inward of all, whatever is between the heavens and earth is throbbing with life-giving energy of this Creating Genius, then this science cannot be qualified as normal.

Dr. Robert G. White, a renowned neurosurgeon, is one of many scientists and physicians who, through their research, came to the conclusion that human beings did not just come together, but are the handiwork of an All-Knowing Creative Genius.

He writes, "I am convinced that the brain is the repository of the human spirit, the soul...for me, the practice of medicine and religious faith are inextricably interwoven. I pray a great deal, especially before and after surgery. I find prayer satisfying. I feel there are immense resources behind me, resources I need and want....

"Yet the notion that human life is nothing more than a chance confluence of complex molecular biology and electrical activity strikes me as a deviance of logic....I have to believe all this had an intelligent beginning, that Someone made it happen. I cannot accept the proposition that, at random points in time, such substantial entities as intelligence, personality, memory, and the human body just sort of fell together.

"I also find it unreasonable to suppose that, at brain death, those powerful entities of intelligence, personality, and memory simply cease to exist. Far more reasonable [is] to believe that the essence of us escapes from a container, the brain, which no longer is capable of supporting us, and finds support in a new dimension.

"As to what becomes of the essence of us at brain death, I cannot presume even to speculate. I can only say that logic leads me inescapably to faith--faith that the uniqueness, the individuality, of the human being lives on in this concept we call the soul."

R.G. White, M.D. Thoughts of a Brain Surgeon

Readers Digest October, 1978

The Science Of Spiritual Healing

The science of spiritual healing has traditionally been taught and passed from one healer to another by individualized private instruction. These techniques have been used for centuries by wise philosophers and healers in various regions of the world including Japan, China, North Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Indian Subcontinent. These were the pioneers of spiritual healing who invented and practiced techniques which many scientists are unaware of even today. In the second half of the 20th century, this spiritual knowledge began to be spread and was taught en masse to those interested in using spiritual healing techniques to alleviate pain and to cure disease.

The spiritual healing process rejuvenates the body's life force and strengthens it through several focal points throughout the body. The spiritual technique produces a neuro-psychological effect which leads the central nervous system to produce a carefully orchestrated endocrine response which relieves pain, heals the disease of the affected areas, and balances the entire body.

Health as Related to Physical Fitness and Activity

The human body requires food and drink, however not all such matters are digestible and they do not all become part of the human body. Instead precipitates of unconverted nutrients may settle as sediment and since the body cannot dispose of them naturally, with time, their accumulations can cause various illnesses. Initially, such accumulations may manifest as localized accumulations before they affect the blood and are transported through the blood stream to accessible parts of the body.

Though initially one's condition may manifest in the form of bowel problems, with time, any greater buildup of such sediment becomes more dangerous and manifests as localized illnesses that may spread in the body at later stage. Hence comes the importance of studying the pathology of disease and the history of its development.

Acknowledging physical malaise causing bowel problems, one may accustom oneself to strong purgative resulting in further complications. In fact, most of such drugs are toxic and can interfere with and eliminate both the good and bad. Addictions to such drugs can further complicate one's condition because they are hot and interactive and they can weaken the immune system, predispose patients to arrhythmias, affect the kidney and develop various disorders and deficiencies. Appropriate physical exercise is necessary to refresh the organs, ease the flow of food and nutrients, enhance digestion, and prevent such accumulations.

Furthermore, natural and methodical control of movements and muscular actions lightens the spirit, refreshes the mind, rejuvenates the body organs, improves one's self, strengthens muscular tone, prevents callousness of the joints, strengthens the tendons and ligaments, lessens the possibility of somatic disorders, and abates most illnesses. This also depends on the level of physical exercise, their balance, moderation, or intensity.

In general, routines dedicated to any particular limb strengthen it just like dedicating one's thoughts to a specific subject strengthens one's memory. Hence, each part of the body requires specific routines. The lungs require reading exercise and their levels began from reading silently, and advancing gradually in intensity and loudness. Hearing exercise require careful responsive attention by stimulating the auditory nerves and ears, and it develops to the point where sound either increases in volume or decreases by distance or by intensity of one's wavelength. Speaking exercise increases oral command; and besides helping recognition by physical and mental vision, eye exercises enhance one's vision, strengthens the ocular muscles and in some cases can help correct nearsightedness and farsightedness. Thus, hiking, swimming, normal walking exercise at moderate pace, riding on horseback, archery, and similar sports, are most healthy for the entire body. Adopting such programs of physical exercise even can cure chronic illnesses such as anemia, infectious diseases, ulcers, and colic, among others.

Origins of Islamic Spiritual Healing

Spiritual healers inherited the methods that God's messengers were using, and from one generation to another have practiced these methods up to the present time. In the Islamic tradition, healers utilize both medicinal remedies and spiritual means. The spiritual techniques follow scientific principles which utilize the patient's latent energy and the power contained in the devotions and supplications and meditation of the prophets, messengers, and "wise men" of God.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was once in a session where he was curing people through spiritual methods when he was asked whether or not remedies should be sought from medicines. He said, "Yes, you must seek remedy from medicine, because whatever disease God has created in this world, He has also created its remedy as well. But there is one disease for which He has not created any remedy, which is old age."

Each and every prescribed Quranic verse has its unique healing property which differs from those of other verses. The following are some examples of verses used in spiritual healing.

Six Verses Of Healing: "Ayat Al-Shifa"

"And [God] shall heal the breast of the believers."

Tauba 9:14

"Mankind there has come to you a guidance from your Lord and a healing for (the diseases) in your hearts, and for those who believe a guidance and a mercy."

Yunus 10:57

"There issues from within the bodies of the bee a drink of varying colors wherein is healing for mankind."

Nahl 16:69

"And We sent down in the Quran such things that have healing and mercy for the believers."

Bani Israel 17:82

"And when I am ill, it is [God] who cures me."

A supplication of Prophet Abraham *Shuara 26:80*

"And declare (O Muhammad) that [the Quran] is a guidance and healing for the believers."

About Energy And How Spiritual Healing Works

Spiritual healing is not at all a mysterious process but is in fact very straight forward, albeit oftentimes quite complex. The spiritual healing technique involves the energy field that exists around each of us. Everyone has an energy field or an aura that surrounds and interpenetrates the physical body. This field is intimately associated with the health of the human being.

In different cultures, energy is known by different names. The word "energy" is referred to as:

Ki in Japanese

Chi in Chinese

Prana in Hindi

Qudra in Arabic

Energy is the life breath transmitted to us from the Existing, Everlasting Superpower that overlooks human beings and all creation. Energy regulates our thought patterns and emotions, is the source of our life force and is the animating factor in all living beings. It circulates through our bodies and can be harnessed for healing. It is the source of all movement in the universe. When the human body loses its life breath the original energy (or life force) leaves it, allowing the body to decompose. The body goes back to its earthen origins and the spirit returns to its angelic origin of spiritual energy. This energy is never lost and exists without the secret of its nature being understood by science and modern medicine.

This unknown spiritual energy is behind the life of every drop of blood in animate beings, the motion behind every living cell, and the driving force of constellations and galaxies. It carries unlimited perfect and complete powers which are real, active and continuous. The action of this force is genuine because nothing can grow or live in the entire universe without its influence.

This is especially applicable on earth where no trees, grass, vegetation and indeed no life can exist without the intervention of this unknown, unseen energy. It is with this energy that a tiny plant pushes through the middle of a huge desert boulder. This energetic spiritual life force holds the organs, blood vessels, and all body parts in place. When the body's life force diminishes, the anatomic relations of the body's organs are altered and disrupted, which leads to pain, organ dysfunction and an overall deterioration of health.

The spiritual energetic life force creates an energy field around itself like a highly charged magnet or electrode. This force reflects its energy throughout the human body and *becomes the driving life force* behind all of its activities and processes. The life force not only energizes the body but also gives it its identity. As an atom is defined by its constituent electrons, protons, and neutrons--which are also its energy components--so too does the spiritual life force give energy and identity to the physical body.

The healing spiritual energy is analogous to a waterfall. If a waterfall is channeled in the right way, it can be harnessed to produce energy and give light. Similarly, if our blood flow is properly channeled through a balanced, equilibrated system, the driving force of that energy will augment the energy of the weak organs.

In those organs where the life force has been weakened and dissipated, spiritual healing will increase and activate these vital forces. The spiritual healing technique allows the life energies to be exponentially expanded to activate the ill member and heal it.

A similar phenomenon is seen in an atomic reaction, where tremendous power is released from the internal energy of the atom. The energy produced increases geometrically as the activated, energized atom spreads its energy to its neighbors, propagating a chain reaction of energy release.

The same principle of the atomic reaction is used by spiritual healers to harness and activate the life force within the patient. Much in the same way that contemporary physicians direct lasers to heal affected areas of the body, spiritual healers access a similar chain reaction of the body's existing energy, channeling it to the affected areas

to heal pain and suffering. When one organ begins to heal, the other organs use the released energy to activate and release their own inherent energy, which in turn promotes physiological equilibrium and relief from pain.

The Three Phases Of Spiritual Healing

Universal force--or cosmic energy--includes the energies of the planets, stars and galaxies, and whatever is around us of propagating energy fields. This vast, all-pervading force nourishes the soul, the spirit and the energy within each individual and in every living creature. Through the meditative process of spiritual healing, one can access this driving energy which exists in every living cell in the body.

The energy is channeled to the cerebral cortex, which is the processing center of our thoughts. From there it will be intensely focused and channeled in the nuclei of the brain stem, which are activated and stimulated by this focused life force. In turn impulses are sent to the autonomic nervous system, regulating the body's functions, keeping it in equilibrium and free of pain. The concentration of energy in the brain comprises the first phase of spiritual healing.

This process in turn stimulates the vagus nerve to send electrical impulses down the heart's conduction system to the sinoatrial node, through the internodal tracts, through the atrioventricular node, down the Bundles of His, out the Purkinje fibers and into the myocardial wall to begin systole. This migration of energy which fills the heart is the second phase of spiritual healing. Conditions such as angina, congestive heart failure, cardiomyopathy and hypertension, in addition to many other related cardiac diseases, are healed and the patient can then find health and relief from pain.

The energy is then pumped with the blood out of the heart into the vascular system and delivered to the entire body in the third phase of spiritual healing. A major focus of phase three is the aorta, which is the conduit for the healing waves of energy that are carried by the blood.

As the blood flows from the heart, it is first channeled back to the heart via the coronary arteries in a chain reaction that sustains and increases the energy in the heart itself, much in the same way that the sun increases its light through its own nuclear reactions. This cycle produces more and more energy, which pours out into the vascular system with foci in the major arteries, supplying the brain via the carotid arteries. It also travels through the subclavian arteries to the upper extremities, the splanchnic circulation to the abdomen, through the renal arteries to the kidneys, and through the iliac vessels to the lower extremities.

The huge volume of drops of blood are like a waterfall made by a huge river descending over the side of a tall mountain cliff. All vegetation and animals in the water's path are nourished and given life, and every cell in the body is healed when the vital spiritual energy wave reaches it.

A healthy heart will sustain a weak body, but when the heart is weak and diseased--even in a young person--the body will not be healthy or live long. Therefore, maintaining the heart is the first priority for spiritual healers. Furthermore, maintaining the brain is also another important priority to keep the flow of messages functioning properly.

Contemporary Physicians and Spiritual Healers

Physicians and scientists are all acquainted with this unquantifiable life force, but are unable to interact with it directly except through its vehicle, the physical body. For that reason, scientists look intently to the outward existing body and invent procedures and techniques to keep the body in homeostasis, striving to keep the vital life force in the body as much as possible and to keep the body free of pain.

The contemporary physician is concerned primarily with the physical body as well as the psychological aspects of human existence. Therapeutics for illness are largely physical, whether in the forms of medication, surgical intervention, or otherwise.

Spiritual healers, on the other hand, use an inward approach to healing by applying spiritual techniques and methods to utilize the body's own energy. The difference between the spiritual healers and the physician healers is that the former is healing from inside-to-outside while the latter is healing from outside-to-in. Each are doing good for their patients and both meet on the common ground of curing disease and relieving pain and suffering.

High Sense Perception As A Diagnostic Tool

Physicians utilize Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) techniques which use the energy and alignment of the body's atoms to provide images and information about the condition of the body and any potential disease process. The spiritual healer also has advanced diagnostic modalities one of the most important of which is HSP, High Sense Perception.

HSP is a way of perceiving things beyond the normal range of the five senses. With it one can see, hear, smell, taste, and touch things that cannot normally be perceived.

HSP, sometimes referred to as clairvoyance, is not imagination but is a type of seeing in which you perceive a picture in your mind without the use of your normal vision. HSP reveals the dynamic world of the fluid, interacting spiritual energy fields which surround and permeate all living things. This energy supports us, nourishes us, and gives us life. We sense each other with this energy as we are a part of it and it is a part of us.

With HSP, the pathophysiology of pain and disease processes lies right before one's eyes. HSP reveals how most diseases are initiated in the energy field. Distortions in the energy field caused by time and unhealthy living habits are transmitted to the body, becoming a serious illness. Many times the source or initiating cause of this process is associated with psychological and/or physical trauma.

Since HSP reveals how a disease is initiated, it also reveals how to reverse the disease process. Spiritual energies and auras aid healers in formulating their diagnosis. To develop HSP it is necessary to enter into an expanded state of consciousness. There are many means to achieve this but spiritual meditation is fast becoming the most well known.

The *Nasma* and Meditation

In the spiritual terminology, the non-physical body is called *nasma*. *Nasma* exists within each physical body as a subtle vapor or energy breeze created by the chemical output of the physical body. The *nasma* is present in human beings just as rose water is present in the rose or as the fire in glowing coals. Being superior with its connection to the divine energy source, it can taste without using the tongue, can see without using the eyes, and can hear without using the ears.

By using the *nasma*, HSP is made available to the spiritual healer. The *nasma* derives its nourishment from the esoteric energy which is released whenever we act, think, or form a belief or intention. The *nasma* in human beings is capable of leaving the physical body at any time through the universal driving force.

When the flow of spiritual energy is disturbed or insufficient, the health of the patient is adversely affected, leading to pain, disease, distress, and so forth. These are signals that we need to rebalance our energy. A positive energy flow nourishes the *nasma* and maintains its structure and foundation, balancing the human system. This balance leads to increased awareness of the body's sensations which in turn leads to good living, following of proper diet, and enjoyment of exercise. The *nasma* then supports and maintains a healthy physical body, in

which the chemical and physical systems remain balanced and functioning normally, thus perpetuating physical health.

In the healthy system, the energies in each body not only remain balanced but also support and influence the energy balance in other peoples' bodies. The *nasma* can influence others like a magnet bringing the charges of adjacent metal into its alignment. The energy of a healthy system is thus both self-healing and self-propagating in that it maintains the individual health while strengthening the health of those in one's aura. That is, good health attracts and develops more good health.

The *nasma* can not only influence the physical body, but it can also be affected by a sick body and become weak because of the weakness of the organs. For example, in a weak body a weak *nasma* shows its symptoms in the mental and physical aspects of a person. In the mental sphere, any one of the following will occur: neurosis, depression, hysteria, psychosis, seizures, sleep terror, and insomnia. If this state of affairs is allowed to continue without treatment, the *nasma* becomes so weak that it is rendered incapable of defending itself in the weak body. The patient at this stage suffers either from seizures, psychotic fits, or aggressive behavior. The spiritual healer can strengthen the patient's organs and thereby the *nasma* through the universal driving force, creating a high-energy state in which symptoms of sickness disappear.

Meditation And The Focal Point Of Treatment

In spirituality, good health requires intensive striving by the patient and personal change. Personal change to develop patience, contentment, gratitude, cheerfulness, joy, love, sharing, courage, benefaction, recognition of good deeds, forbearance, and courtesy will improve spirituality and energy flow.

Overactivity even in this field and lack of proper supervision and devotion of a concerned and learned parent, or the dedication of qualified teacher also may lay a heavy burden on the person's intellect. Alternatively, an impasse in spiritual progress may hinder one's spiritual growth, and only a qualified guidance can break through such obstacles. Such training must keep advancing until it develops genuine character, positive traits, and healthy energy flow.

Without personal change in the body's energy flow, one will eventually create other problems which leads back to the source that caused the disease in the first place. Thus, dealing with the source of disease is the focal point of treatment. This search stimulates the deeper part of ourselves that is sometimes called the "higher self" or the "spark of divinity" within us. This divinity within us, the deeper part of ourselves, sends us information about what type of sickness needs to be treated and what type of contact points need to be touched through our meditation. Meditation is a tool which gives deep relaxation and to quiet the mind. This helps to alleviate stress, and therefore enable the internal chemical and hormonal system to regain their equilibrium.

Medical tests have shown that there are definite measurable physiological changes in meditating subjects. The brain itself undergoes changes in the type of electrical waves generated. By using an electroencephalogram (EEG) there is an increase in the generation of alpha waves and sometimes also in the number of theta waves. These indicate a shift of consciousness into a tranquil state of awareness quite different from that of sleep. This state is therapeutic and very restful although the patient is both fully conscious and functional.

The body demonstrates the effects of meditation in various ways. The breathing pattern slows, as does the heart rate, and there is a marked decrease in the level of oxygen consumption and carbon dioxide elimination. However, the physical effects of meditation last longer than the meditation period itself. This is demonstrated by the fact that sufferers of hypertension and many other diseases have, through meditation alone, made such clinically-measurable improvements that they have been able to discontinue their medications. This is very well noted and recorded in spiritual healing books and manuscripts.

How Energy Relates To Disease

Spiritual healers symbolize the flowing of the driving life force in the body and in the universe as vortices of energy made up of a number of smaller spiral cones of energy. These are known in Islamic terminology as "*lata'if*", meaning subtle manifestations or layers. The *lata'if* (sing. *lateefa*) are the points of maximum energy intake and are very important focal points of balance within the energy system. Disease and illness occur if a *lateefa* is unbalanced.

Lata'if in adults have a protective screen over them. In a healthy system, these *lata'if* spin in synchronized rhythm with the others, drawing energy from the universal energy field into their center for use by the body. Each one of them is tuned to a specific frequency that helps the body to remain healthy. However, in a diseased system these vortices are not synchronized. The energy of the *lata'if* that make up these vortices may be fast or slow, jerky or lopsided. Sometimes breaks in the entire energy pattern can be observed in which a *lateefa* may be fully or partially collapsed or inverted. These disturbances are related to dysfunction or pathology of the physical body in that area.

Healing Through Meditation And Focal Points Of The *Lata'if*

The feeling of pain can be completely cured by meditation wherein the dormant energy of a sick body is activated by a spiritual ignition produced by the meditative process. This spiritual process uses seven different focal points in the seven layers, the *lata'if*.

There are seven focal points of the *lata'if*. These are located above and below the heart, above and below the left breast, above and below the right breast, and one on the forehead. Every *lateefa* has a different energy color, and every energy has a different effect on a specific disease. The two focal points above and below the heart are green. The points above and below the left breast are yellow, the ones above and below the right breast are black, and the one on the forehead is white.

Through meditation these seven focal points of the *lata'if* generate energy. Then, like a magnet, these activated focal points attract more energy from the universal cosmic energy source in the shape of tiny floating spheres of light. The size of these spheres depends on which *lateefa* is activated, as there is a different sized sphere for every different color *lateefa*. Depending on the illness, the healer activates the appropriate *lateefa* needed to cure that sickness. In turn, the *lateefa* produces more of its energy color which itself attracts from the universal energy source more of the same light. The result of this positive feedback loop is a tremendous outpouring of shimmering globes of light which descend from the cosmic energy source onto the person of the healer.

Through this flood of colored energy spheres, the healer is energized to the point where he radiates heat from his body through his hands and projects light from his forehead. As a scientist shoots a laser, the spiritual healer emits the light and energy that he receives from the universal force. The healer massages the affected areas and this combination of heat from the hand and light from the forehead immediately begins the healing process.

The healer also prescribes that the patient sit alone for a few hours each day fully relaxed, repeating several thousand times different holy names of God in a special format for the duration of treatment. These holy names are like energy sparks which ignite more flow from the universal energy source. This ignition also activates the focal points of the *lata'if* causing heat to be generated in the body of the patient. This heat is considerably less than the immense power transmitted by the healer, but it is sufficient to cause the patient to break out into a sweat.

At this time, the patient goes to the healer who transmits more energy as before, advancing the patient's treatment. As the moon reflects the light of the sun onto the earth, so too does the healer reflect the universal energy through his body to the patient. This produces a state of immense heat and spiritual interaction between the healer and the patient. This process is repeated for several days or even weeks until the patient recovers.

As he recovers, the patient begins to experience a psychological effect from the dynamic, synergistic interaction between himself and the healer. This psychological effect of recovery and relief from pain induces the endocrine glands to secrete hormones which balance the whole system and begin to cure the ill organs, raising the patient to higher levels of health and spirituality than would be possible in the former painful, diseased condition.

As the surgical patient is anesthetized, so too is the spiritual patient put in a pain-free state in which the spiritual healer can work on him in the way he finds suitable.

Conclusion

Disease at any station of the energy field will express itself in that particular level of consciousness. Each expression of disease is manifested as some form of pain, be it physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual. It is essential that we probe the deeper meaning of our illnesses. We need to ask, "What does this illness and pain mean to us? What can we learn from this?"

Pain is the driving belt in the body's own self-defense mechanism that alerts us to correct a situation. Pain is like a warning bell in our system which brings our attention to the fact that something is wrong and forces us do something about it. Pain says, "You are not listening to your whole self." Pain teaches us to ask for help and healing and is, therefore, a key to the education of the soul and to the function of the spirit and the body's energy.

A comprehensive approach to pain relief and health in general which includes spiritual healing will greatly help the progress of modern medicine. While volumes can and have been written on Islamic spiritual healing, it is hoped that this brief introduction will help bring this subject to the attention of the medical community and foster greater appreciation and understanding of this rich tradition and science.



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