

A Guide To Spiritual Healing



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What is Spiritual Healing?

With the advent of new theories and medical practices, the face of traditional medicine

continues to change in today's world. In addition to standard medical practices, many people are discovering that there can be distinct health advantages in spiritual healing practices. But just what is spiritual healing? And how can it help you to take a most holistic approach to overall health care and well-being?

Spiritual healing is, by definition, the use of non-physical means to treat illness or affliction. Sometimes referred to as "faith healing," spiritual healing is a type of treatment generally considered to be classified as "alternative" or non-traditional. Yet the roots of spiritual healing go back for centuries, and some form of this treatment have been shown to exist in almost every culture known to history.

At its core, spiritual healing involves channeling a type of energy from one person, the "healer," to another. Practitioners claim that this energy can help to heal or alleviate physical, mental or spiritual ailments. The healer is generally thought to be a medium for the healing powers that are coming from a higher power, or spirit.

Other forms of spiritual healing include prayer or meditation healing, in which there is not a healer, but the energy comes directly to the person asking for the healing.

What makes spiritual healing so unique from modern medicine is that spiritual healing addresses not only issues of the body, but of the mind and spirit as well, treating all three of these human phenomena as one cohesive unit. In fact, spiritual healing is based on the premise that no one can be truly healthy unless their mind, body and psyche are indeed operating in one sympathetic unit. It is not enough to alleviate physical symptoms of illness or injury; to be completely healed one must also address the mental and spiritual symptoms as well. And, conversely, spiritual healers also believe that many physical problems are actually manifestations of illness or disorders within the mind or the spirit. Curing one without addressing the other will be futile and counter-productive, according to these healers.

Many people claim that spiritual healing is a "New Age" phenomenon, but in reality that is not so. Most organized religions invoke some aspect of spiritual healing, through prayer, meditation or special intentions, and praying for the sick is a widely recognized and respected tradition.

There are myriad methods for carrying out spiritual healing. Some use a laying-on of hands to transfer healing energy; others anoint the sick with special oils; for others, special crystals seem to be the conduit through which healing occurs. There are as many methods as there are religious and spiritual interpretations, all with the ultimate goal of bringing healing and wellness in mind, spirit and body.

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Spiritual healing takes many forms, including a self-healing regime that has been used in many religions for centuries. And it is becoming increasingly popular outside of organized religion, too. In addition to prayer, many people are turning to meditation, journaling, and other forms of introspection to connect with a higher spiritual power. This connection, they say, enables them to absorb the healing power, become aware of things they can do to help improve their own condition, and ultimately take charge of their own well-being.

In addition to traditional religious healing, there are several other recognized types of healing including Reiki (a type of massage), cranio-sacral therapy, healing touch, and a range of other healing programs. The topic is a popular one for scientific study, and more and more doctors and scientists are beginning to validate that spiritual healing in many of its forms can be an effective tool in creating a healthy and whole human being.

Free Spiritual Healing

Are you interested in spiritual healing but can't afford to pay for a professional healer or spiritual counselor? You'll be happy to learn that there are many options out there for free spiritual healing, in many forms. By taking advantage of these free sources you can help begin to heal your mind, your body and your spirit into a cohesive and healthy unit.

The most easily accessible free spiritual healing can be found in religious organizations in every town and city. Most organized religions do include some sort of spiritual healing, either through prayer, anointing, laying-on of hands, or other means. Religious ceremonies are generally free and open to the public, although some organizations do ask for free-will donations. Some also have membership restrictions.

The most common of this type of spiritual healing is prayer. Mainstream religions often offer special prayers for the sick, both for their members and for non-members. Visit a local religious facility and ask about their healing policies.

Prayer can also be used as an aid to spiritual healing on an individual level. There are many books and resources available on the subject of prayer and healing. Start by visiting your local public library and reading up on the various types of prayer and meditation healing. Many people report significant, if not nearly miraculous, results from prayer, and many health care providers are also becoming increasingly aware of the power of prayer and meditative reflection to improve healing.

In addition to organized religion and private prayer, there are a number of spiritual healers who offer their services for free. Many professional spiritual counselors have websites that offer a wealth of information on spiritual healing, what it is, how it works, and how to get started. Some even offer a free personal consultation, designed to determine exactly what you need to begin the healing process.

A good percentage of spiritual healers feel that their power to heal is a direct gift from the divine, and refuse to take payments for what they do. You might be able to locate a healer nearby by talking to your friends and acquaintances in various religious groups and societies.

The Internet has allowed many spiritual healers to heal remotely, a service they call "distance healing" or "distant healing." You can find a number of websites that offer this service. You simply input your information in the fields provided, and you'll receive instructions on when the healing session will take place and how you should prepare. Some of these healing sites request little more than an email address; others ask for more information. The amount of information you provide is up to you; if you do not feel comfortable giving out your personal information, you will likely be able to find another site that does not request this information. Many also ask if you'd like to be on their email list; be sure to check the appropriate boxes depending on your preference.

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Some spiritual counselors also offer their services over the phone, in a one-on-one personal phone call, or in conference-style calls. If you can't find someone in your local calling area, you may want to try one with a toll-free number. The sessions can last anywhere from ten minutes to half an hour, so remember to keep the phone charges in mind when you dial.

If you are truly interested in spiritual healing, it does not have to be a drain on your finances. With all the options available for free healing, counseling and spiritual support, there are several ways to find the help you need at no cost. But do keep in mind that almost all spiritual healers will accept a donation so they can continue their ministry. There is no recommended amount; just give what you can afford so they can continue their healing work.

Spiritual Counseling

Many people today are searching for answers to life's important questions, and the answers can often be found in spiritual counseling. Through various types of spiritual counseling, people can achieve both physical and emotional healing to illness and affliction, as well as peace of mind and a greater understanding of the world around them.

So what exactly is spiritual counseling? Some describe it in informal terms, as a way to learn about the world around you, and how you relate to it. Others lean toward a more formal definition; a form of counseling that includes a good deal of exploration and support regarding a person's religious and values beliefs. Most counselors will agree, however, that the aim of spiritual counseling is to increase awareness of the spiritual nature of life, and use that awareness to improve one's situation in life. This improvement is often seen in health and well-being issues including recovery from illness or affliction.

People turn to spiritual counseling for any number of reasons. Some are looking for philosophical answers, while others are seeking relief from the plagues of our society, including stress, anxiety, depression, addiction and other bodily ills. The common thread through the counseling stresses that the mind, the spirit and the body all work in tandem to create a healthy person, and any treatment that neglects one or more of these three things is not a complete therapy. Take, for example, the mental issue of depression. Widely thought to be caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain, depression can also manifest in physical aches and pains, as well as seriously emotional and spiritual issues like hopelessness and unbearable sadness. Treating just the physical symptoms alone may offer some relieve, but ultimately will not offer a complete holistic treatment.

A spiritual counselor can often help patients dealing with serious physical problems, like depression or serious illnesses like cancer. One of the ways a spiritual counselor can help is by teaching you skills to manage your stress and anxiety about the illness. Not only will you feel better mentally, but the effects of lowered stress on blood pressure, digestion and other bodily functions can be quite dramatic.

Spiritual counselors may hold many titles, including hypnotherapist, imagery counselor, pastoral counselor or Reiki master. There are a number of different types of spiritual counseling; the one that works for you depends on your values system, your comfort level, and how well you relate to the counselor on a personal level.

Ultimately, the core of any spiritual counseling seeks to attain knowledge and guidance to help you understand your life and your role in society. It seeks to help you use your inner strength, combined with divine guidance, to help you make your way through this challenging and at times difficult journey on earth.

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While most religions have an aspect of spirituality, most spiritual counselors are not affiliated with any particular religion. Their services are generally non-denominational and available regardless of your religious background. There are exceptions, of course; many churches and other religious organizations offer pastoral counseling, which is another form of spiritual counseling.

To find a spiritual counselor, you might want to check with your local religious organizations, and local business directory. You can also find a large number of spiritual counselors online. Many of these counselors are willing to work remotely, either via email or by phone. You can also check several organizations dedicated to spiritual counselors and healers to help you find someone you can work with. To get the most out of your counseling session, it's important that the person you choose is personable and makes you feel comfortable.

Free Spiritual Counseling

For people looking to more fully understand themselves and their place in the world, spiritual counseling might be an attractive alternative. A spiritual counselor can help provide support, encouragement and advice regarding human nature and how humans relate to the greater world around them. Generally this type of counseling will delve deeper than more traditional counseling, and is based more on emotions than a psychological or analytical approach to counseling.

Many people might want to take advantage of the services of a spiritual counselor, but don't have much money to spare. Fortunately, it is fairly easy to find a spiritual counselor who does not charge a fee.

There is a wide range of topics that spirit counseling covers and most counselors specialize in a particular area. So before you choose a counselor, consider what it is that you are interested in learning. Some will work with you on personal growth or relationship issues. Others may offer their expertise in modern or classical philosophy or psychotherapy. Still others can offer insight into meditation, visualization and energy therapies. Most counselors will be happy to provide information on their area of expertise before you begin the counseling sessions.

To find a spiritual counselor who is willing to work for free, start by asking around your local community. Many religious organizations have loose networks of spiritual counselors, and some even offer this service as part of their own pastoral counseling. Ask friends for recommendations, and check the local business directories too.

You will also be likely to find a spiritual counselor offers free services by doing an online search. Many counselors have local offices, and will offer personal, face-to-face consultations. Still others offer "distance counseling," working with people either via email or phone. The Internet has opened up a whole new way of networking, and spiritual counselors have a significant presence on the Web.

Spiritual counseling can be useful in a wide variety of areas in a person's life. A good spiritual counselor can help you understand the things that are going on around you in an often confusing world. By utilizing spiritual counseling, you may find yourself able to make better choices in life, and they can help you realize your full potential by encouraging personal growth. Some people use spiritual counseling to help chart their path for the future, by envisioning themselves as they wish to be.

The uses for spiritual counseling are vast indeed. And so is the background, education and philosophy of the huge numbers of spiritual counselors available. It's important that you find a counselor to whom you can relate, honestly and openly, as this is a requirement for a positive counseling session.

Some spiritual counselors will list specific skills, including clairvoyance, clairaudience, and other psychic abilities. But these traits are not necessarily the crux of a spiritual counseling session.

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There are a number of good resources available to help you find a free spiritual counselor. In addition to private websites, there are also forums, message boards, national organizations and a host of other resources out there. You might also search for this type of counseling under similar terms like "pastoral counseling," "self-help," "humanistic guidance," "personal counseling," and other similar phrases.

Many spiritual counselors do believe that their gift for healing and counseling comes from a divine source, and they are therefore uncomfortable charging for their services. Others will charge a small fee, and still others make a good living by providing this service. Whatever level you are comfortable with, remember that the ultimate goal is to know and understand yourself, so be sure you are getting what you need out of the experience.

Spiritual and Medical Healing

In recent years, many formerly traditional medical doctors have come to embrace spiritual healing as an important part of physical well-being. There is a new breed of holistic health care providers who view the spiritual and emotional health of a patient as having the ability to dramatically affect a person's physical state. So much so, in fact, that the standard views of treating just the body seem outdated and even naïve.

Many health care professionals, including doctors, nurses and others, are welcoming the inclusion of a spiritual component into their patients' wellness plans. And some are even practicing it themselves, gaining a deeper understanding of how the mind, the spirit and the body work in tandem to heal.

Interestingly, some of these practitioners have turned to so-called "complementary" therapies when traditional medicine failed for themselves or their patients. By incorporating the healing arts into the medical arts, physicians can often find root spiritual or emotional causes for their patients' distress, and can work with them to help them heal.

Many Christian denominations profess a firm belief in the healing power of the spirit to cure illness and injury. In fact, in the most literal translation of biblical texts, Jesus himself was a spiritual healer, laying-on hands to cause the blind to see, the lame to walk and even the dead to rise and awaken. Through prayer, meditation, anointing and other methods, many contemporary Christian preachers seem to elicit astonishing responses when asked to heal others.

Of course, as with anything, there is some fraud in this field, as some recent media reports have exposed. Still, the faithful continue to believe that a gifted spiritual healer can channel the power needed to restore health.

In recent years, there have been a number of scientific studies aimed at determining if spiritual healing can indeed bring out physical health. In Dr. Daniel J. Benor's book "Spiritual healing: Scientific Validation of a Healing Revolution," the author claims to have begun his investigation as skeptical as many of us. The book takes a close look at a number of different methodologies for healing, including Reiki, healing touch, Bowen method, and others. The results of his research made a believer out of him, and the 100-plus studies cited in the book offer verifiable proof that many of these spiritual healing therapies do have a restorative and recuperative effect on health and well-being.

Many spiritual healers are quick to acknowledge that traditional medicine does have its place, and that spiritual healing should be used in tandem with more traditional medical therapies. But these same practitioners will likely tell you that physical cures alone are insufficient for lasting well-being. It's important to consider the mind, the spirit and the body as one comprehensive whole when attempting any healing therapy. Ignoring one in favor of the other will result in incomplete healing at best, and liken the chances for a worse outcome for the patient.

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If you are considering adding a spiritual component to your current medical treatment, be sure to discuss your plans with your doctor. While you may run into some resistance, most doctors are at least somewhat aware of many of these spiritual healing methods, and will generally support your desire to improve your emotional and spiritual well-being. But they will likely urge you to continue with your prescribed course of medical treatment as well. If you find that your doctor refuses to consider that spiritual healing might be a good addition to your overall treatment plan, it may be time to shop around for a health care provider with more modern sensibilities.

Medical evidence for spiritual healing

Historically, it has been difficult to find reliable medical evidence to prove that spiritual healing methods work. Part of the blame for this might lie within the medical community's general unwillingness to see some of these methods as worthy of research.

There have been many, many studies done on the effectiveness of prayer. These studies have proven that prayer can have a positive effect on someone with a medical problem even if that person didn't know he or she was being prayed for. In one study, hospital patients who were prayed for were significantly less likely to need antibiotics than the others, less likely to develop pulmonary edema, less likely to need a breathing tube and less likely to die.

It was also found that prayer had no barriers – people who prayed inside a lead-lined, locked room in one study still found results significantly higher than the control group. In another study, it was discovered that prayer worked on non-human objects, as it caused crab grass to grow more quickly than grass that was not prayed for.

It was found that prayer could be done miles away from its subject and still be effective.

But prayer is a relatively non-controversial form of healing. So what about one of the more questioned methods?

Reiki, a healing technique created in early 20th Century Japan by Mikao Usui, involves a practitioner using his or her hands to direct chi, or "life force," through the body of the client. Reiki has been known to be somewhat controversial within the medical community but in recent years has begun to show up as a service offered by hospitals, hospices and other medical facilities.

Positive outcomes of Reiki have been recorded in some alternative medical journals, claiming that its proven benefits included reduced heart rate, pain, depression and anxiety; increased relaxation and immunity and improved blood pressure. Critics argue that any of these could be a result of a placebo effect.

A 2002 study of Reiki on the effects of depression yielded that the Reiki-treated patients were less depressed than the placebo group. When re-checked a year later, the result stayed the same.

In two separate studies (conducted in the United States and Japan), the energy waves that passed through Reiki practitioners' hands were tested. It was found that the hands emitted a biomagnetic field which pulsated with the same frequencies as brain waves. This, many believe, causes healing throughout the body.

If nothing else, spiritual healing serves to offer hope to many people who otherwise might have nothing to hold on to. Does it work? Maybe. And if so, is it only really a placebo effect? Maybe. But to the ill, it represents another option in a world in which options are sometimes limited.

It should be noted that over half of the medical schools in the United States now offer at least one course on spiritual healing and alternative medicines.

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If you are considering adding a spiritual component to your current medical treatment, be sure to discuss your plans with your doctor. While you may run into some resistance, most doctors are at least somewhat aware of many of these spiritual healing methods, and will generally support your desire to improve your emotional and spiritual well-being. But they will likely urge you to continue with your prescribed course of medical treatment as well. If you find that your doctor refuses to consider that spiritual healing might be a good addition to your overall treatment plan, it may be time to shop around for a health care provider with more modern sensibilities.

Spiritual Recovery

Spiritual Recovery is a type of spiritual healing that can be useful in helping those addicted to certain behaviors or substances come to terms with and overcome their addictions. The methodology involves using a spiritual component of therapy to deal with dependency, co-dependency and the myriad issues that go along with these dysfunctions.

At the core of the spiritual recovery concept is the belief that recovery depends first on having a peaceful relationship with one's self, as well as open and caring relationships with friends and family. Without this important sense of peace, trying to recover and stay away from drug, alcohol or other abused substances can be a nearly impossible task.

Scientific studies bear this out; a 2003 study showed that those patients who attended spiritual recovery sessions while in recovery showed improved success in their sobriety attempts.

Not surprisingly, the medical field is just starting to realize how important the spiritual aspect can be to an addict's recovery. Many in-patient rehabilitation programs incorporate a spiritual component into their treatment plans, and out-patient support groups are doing the same. The most effective programs seem to combine solid medical practice with intensive counseling and spiritual healing, to change the way the body and the mind reacts to the world around it.

With the increased popularity of spiritual recovery comes new ways to celebrate one's journey to sobriety. There are a number of websites and stores offering a wide range of gifts, including crystal bracelets, gemstones, necklaces and earrings. Some of these even feature birthstones, designed to signify the month in which the wearer entered recovery. There are also a number of books on the topics, and calendars, inspirational art and other gift items that demonstrate your recovery.

The basis of the Alcoholics Anonymous program, their 12-Step recovery program, is in essence a spiritual recovery plan, with its emphasis on forgiveness, understanding, and acceptance. Many spiritual healers preach the same ideas, with the notion that recovery involves the entire person, not just the physical realm. It is this idea that forms the basis for spiritual recovery programs like AA.

Those embarking on a journey of spiritual recovery will find that there are a number of resources available. In addition to Alcoholics Anonymous, with its meetings in every town on almost any given night, there are also support groups, online forums, message boards, and entire websites devoted to providing a safe place to continue the spiritual journey. And you can find a number of online spiritual counselors who can help you in your recovery process.

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For those who are looking for more one-on-one help, a spiritual adviser with a background in drug or alcohol issues might be a good choice. Many rehabilitation centers offer out-patient or community support programs, and this can be a good way to start on your journey to spiritual wellness and freedom from your addictions. It's important to remember that, if you do have an addiction, you need to treat the physical issues as well, so be sure that whatever program you are in is based on sound medical as well as spiritual principles. Your health care provider can probably assist you in finding a supportive spiritual recovery counselor, and some health care insurance plans will even cover the cost.

If spiritual recovery sounds like a good path for you, congratulations on taking that first step. Remember that there are no easy fixes; recovery is a life-long process. But by starting on your journey with a desire to return to spiritual health, you can find your way on the path to spiritual, emotional and physical recovery.

Kofutu Healing

In order to promote self-discovery and personal healing, many people are turning to Kofutu healing. The Kofutu method is based on a series of particular symbols that provide a way for individuals to delve into their inner persona and discover a source for personal growth and healing.

Kofutu healing is not new, at least not in its traditional form. Indeed ancient Egyptians recorded some of the secrets of this healing procedure, but those documents were lost to history. Some practitioners claim that the original concept, along with the Kofutu symbols that are said to provide a gateway to a body's energy channels, was originally practiced in Atlantis. The practice was said to be lost during the cataclysmic events that caused the destruction of that mythical society. In contemporary times, the subject was re-invigorated by Frank Homan, a Minnesota man who claimed to be a recipient of this Kofutu knowledge, received through several channeling episodes over a two-year time frame. His influence has helped to spread the Kofutu methodology, and it is becoming increasingly popular in the United States.

At its core, Kofutu aims to restore a person's karma balance; when this occurs, spiritual growth can lead to physical healing. Ultimately, the goal is to allow a person to break free of the karmic process, and live a more integrated and balanced life.

Kofutu is typically divided into three separate methods; touch healing; formula healing; and picture healing. In Kofutu touch healing, the healer must be in physical contact with the person being healed. Kofutu symbols are used to help the person being healed to get in touch with their own personal healing energies, and expand their spiritual awareness. This type of healing helps to rid the body of harmful energies, and restore a balance between body and spirit.

Kofutu touch healing typically involves three separate healing symbols. One symbol puts the healer in touch with the healing energies in the person being healed. The second helps to access the helpful energies in the recipient. The final symbol breaks the connection between the healer and the person being healed. The touch healing system is reported to bring relief from many types of both bodily and emotional pain.

If you are interested in becoming a Kofutu healer or instructor, there are many resources available for you. Many practitioners offer training classes and courses, and there are several books on the subject. The journey to become a Kofutu practitioner is an on-going process, as students progress through the 13 distinct levels of the Kofutu method. Not every practitioner will progress through all 13 levels, and healing can be done at the lower levels of Kofutu energy. Some practitioners even offer their instructions via email or remote learning classes, making it easy to fit this in to your schedule.

The practice of Kofutu is becoming so popular that some day spas even offer the service along with Reiki massage and other holistic and complementary therapies. Sessions average \$50 - \$75 for an hour, and the therapy is said to foster a deep sense of well being and a feeling of calm and peace. During the session, the customer lays on a standard massage table, while the Kofutu healer connects with the person by placing their hands in the recipient to connect with the person's energy channels. The symbols are used to facilitate making this connection.

In addition to the Kofutu touch healing, some practitioners offer distance healing, in which the person asking for the healing does not have to be physically present. Check the Internet for Kofutu distance healers; you'll find a number of choices to help you begin your journey.

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National Federation of Spiritual Healers

With the increasing popularity of spiritual healing in the United Kingdom, the National Federation of Spiritual Healers has seen a recent upswing in members and general interest, especially via the Internet. Founded in the mid-1950s, the National Federation of Spiritual Healers, or NFSH, is a non-profit organization that currently has more than 5,000 registered members.

The NFSH offers a range of services to its members, including a training program that is offered by locally in the UK, as well as overseas in Australia, Poland, Japan, New Zealand, Germany, the United States, Switzerland and Canada. The website, at www.nfsh.org.uk, offers links to help you find a training session in your area and your language.

The Healer Training program offered by the NFSH is open to anyone who is interested in becoming a spiritual healer. There are four separate parts to the Foundation Course, which is held on private estate in Camberely, Surrey. The facilities include a dining hall and residence, where students can relax and enjoy the wooded surroundings while they learn about the healing arts.

If you can't attend the Surrey residential course, the website offers links to a number of spiritual healers that offer private instruction or seminars, in several regions of the UK and throughout other countries. All of their tutors are certified and licensed, so you are assured that the training will be of the highest standard.

In addition to its training courses, the National Federation of Spiritual Healers also operates more than 50 volunteer-staffed healing centers. The website also includes searchable database of spiritual healers in the UK and throughout the world.

There are several levels of membership in the National Federation of Spiritual Healers. The Friend level is for people with an interest in the healing arts, but who are not necessarily practitioner. An Associate membership is available for health care practitioners who are interested in exploring complementary healing therapies. A Probationer membership is the appropriate level for a practitioner who is still in training. Healer membership is reserved for those spiritual healers who have fulfilled the necessary requirements to be certified to NFSH's standards or practice. For those who live outside the UK, a Global membership is also offered.

Membership prices range from £20.00 - £46.00, depending on the level requested. Membership packets are available by contacting the number on their website.

If you are interested in finding gifts, supplies and resource materials related to spiritual healing, the NFSH gift shop might be of interest. The shop offers subscriptions to "Healing Today" magazine, which is available for delivery in the UK and abroad. There is also a selection of musical CDs, and a new line of gifts is expected to be available soon.

While the site offers links to help you find a healer in your area, distant healing is also possible through the National Federation of Spiritual Healers. Each week, a number of NFSH member healers join forces to help heal people who have registered for that week's session. There is an easy form on the site that makes it simple to sign up for this process, and there is no limitation on how far away you are. While there is no charge for this service, the organization does glad accept donations to help defray costs and maintain their level of services.

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The NFSH also offers a referral service for medical offices and hospitals that are looking to hire a healer to work on their staff. This growing trend in adding a spiritual component to the health care facility is seen as a positive thing by many doctors and health care providers, and the National Federation of Spiritual Healers helps make these connections possible. Visit the NFSH website of for a comprehensive overview of how spiritual healing can become a viable career choice for you.

HMOs and Spiritual Healing

A somewhat surprising trend in recent years has been the growing number of partnerships between spiritual healers and health maintenance organizations. Long considered bastions of "traditional" medical practice, HMOs are making room in their facilities for a host of complementary therapies. This trend comes in tandem with a growing sensibility that the best outcomes for illness or injury generally come about when the treatment involves a holistic approach to health care, encompassing the mind, the body and the spirit as one cohesive unit.

Spiritual healing is, by definition, the use of non-physical means to treat illness or affliction. Sometimes referred to as "faith healing," spiritual healing is a type of treatment generally considered to be classified as "alternative" or non-traditional. Yet the roots of spiritual healing go back for centuries, and some form of this treatment have been shown to exist in almost every culture known to history.

At its core, spiritual healing involves channeling a type of energy from one person, the "healer," to another. Practitioners claim that this energy can help to heal or alleviate physical, mental or spiritual ailments. The healer is generally thought to be a medium for the healing powers that are coming from a higher power, or spirit.

Other forms of spiritual healing include prayer or meditation healing, in which there is not channeler, or healer, but the energy comes directly to the person asking for the healing.

In recent years, there have been a number of scientific studies aimed at determining if spiritual healing can indeed bring out physical health. In Dr. Daniel J. Benor's book "Spiritual healing: Scientific Validation of a Healing Revolution," the author claims to have begun his investigation as skeptical as many of us. The book takes a close look at a number of different methodologies for healing, including Reiki, healing touch, Bowen method, and others. The results of his research made a believer out of him, and the 100-plus studies cited in the book offer verifiable proof that many of these spiritual healing therapies do have a restorative and recuperative effect on health and well-being.

Many spiritual healers are quick to acknowledge that traditional medicine does have its place, and that spiritual healing should be used in tandem with more traditional medical therapies. But these same practitioners will likely tell you that physical cures alone are insufficient for lasting well-being. It's important to consider the mind, the spirit and the body as one comprehensive whole when attempting any healing therapy. Ignoring one in favor of the other will result in incomplete healing at best, and liken the chances for a worse outcome for the patient.

And health maintenance organizations, or HMOs, are taking note. In a 1995 article in the New York Times, Philip Hilts cited a conference during which the president of Harvard Medical School reported a growing number of inquiries from HMOs that were looking to expand their use of such non-traditional treatments as relaxation and other non-traditional methods. Those original handful of calls are now numbering in the thousands, as health care organizations seek the most effective ways to treat their patients as complete human beings.

More and more physicians now agree with the trend, and many general practices now offer some kind of non-physical, or spiritual, treatment options. Anxiety, stress, depression, anger issues, addictive behaviors; it is widely thought by spiritual healers that all of these can be successfully addressed through spiritual healing.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

If you are interested in adding a spiritual component to your health care options, talk to your doctor. Some HMOs are allowing these costs to be covered under their insurance plans, and many will offer participating healers or practitioners.

Spiritual Healing Facilitators

With the growing popularity of complementary and holistic approaches to health care, the term “spiritual healer” or “spiritual healing facilitator” is becoming more widely recognized. But just what is a spiritual healing facilitator?

A spiritual healing facilitator is a person who has been trained in the spiritual healing arts. This is a rather broad and undefined field, as there are many types of spiritual healing. Spiritual healing can be used to help create a more healthy balance between body and mind, and to help alleviate harmful energies that can drain a person’s health and sense of well-being.

Spiritual healing facilitators work in a variety of ways. Some offer a direct hands-on service, during which the practitioner will lay on their hands at various energy channels on the body, with the goal of redirecting or eliminating harmful energies while encouraging positive energy balance. There are several types of this kind of healing, including Reiki massage and Kofutu healing.

Spiritual healing can also occur at a distance, and many spiritual healing facilitators offer remote healing sessions. There are a number of websites available that allow a person to post a request for healing, and the practitioner will use various types of energy channeling to heal remotely. Phone consultations are also popular, and many practitioners offer special toll-free numbers or other easy means to get in contact.

Rates for these services vary widely; some don’t charge a set fee, but ask for a free-will donation to help cover their costs. Others have set fees listed by the hour or by the type of session requests.

Are you interested in becoming a spiritual healing facilitator? There are a number of ways you can find the training and instruction you need to get started. The type of licensing or certification you achieve will depend on where you take your training. At this time there is no formal licensing system in the United States, so it’s up to the practitioner to develop their own sets of guidelines.

Most training programs require that students have a sincere desire to help others through spiritual growth and discovery, and ask that their students demonstrate good ethics and moral fiber. But this is open to interpretation by the organization doing the training.

The training itself is offered in a variety of ways. Some spiritual training centers have on-site residential programs that are highly structured and include specific training on various components of the field. Students may study chakras, massage, healing touch, use of crystals, Kofutu, or any of a number of other disciplines. The course is generally combined with hands-on workshops to apply what you’ve learned.

Other training programs can be completed at the student’s own pace, either via email or long distance learning. The program specifies certain books or resources to study, and may either offer tests or essays to verify that the student has a good comprehension of the course materials.

Most training programs also include some degree of help in setting up a spiritual healing practice. Courses may include an overview of attracting clients, setting up a website, setting rates and payment policies, and other useful advice. Some offer licensing or other spiritual facilitator credentials, too, depending who is providing the training.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

Most of these spiritual facilitator training sessions do cost money, so be sure to know what you are getting before you sign up. Some are more reasonable than others, but might not contain the same amount of useful information or advice. Just like any other educational item, it's important to do your homework and understand the background of the people offering the training to be sure it's right for you.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

Spiritual Healing Workshops

Interested in learning more about spiritual healing? Consider attending one of a number of workshops available. These short, usually inexpensive sessions can offer a good introduction to the spiritual healing arts, without the commitment of a lengthy training session or longer certification program.

One program in particular is aimed at helping war veterans and their families. Offered by the International Conference of War Veteran Ministers (ICWVM), the workshops help combat veterans come to terms with the experiences in terms of their faith and spiritual beliefs.

These weekend sessions are designed for those who have served in combat missions in the armed forces, along with their spouses. The workshops are held in major cities throughout the US, and there are usually several workshops available during any given month. The weekend offers a chance for participants to talk about their war experiences in a caring and supportive atmosphere, and explore how their experiences have had an impact on their belief system and religious practices. For more information, visit their website at www.vietnamveteranministers.org.

The Spiritual Awakening Network also offers a large number of workshops, and lists more than 200 sessions. Topics include Reiki, soul fusion, chakra, crystals, Atlantean methodologies, and a huge number of other practices. The site, at www.powerattunements.com, has an extensive listing of available workshops, along with details and pricing information.

A number of workshops are also available online, including the spiritual healing workshops offered by The Psychics & Mediums Network at www.psychics.co.uk. Their healing workshops are offered in locations in Paris, Sydney and London. Topics include psychic abilities, contacting the spiritual realm, and the power of positive visualization. Less serious topics are also on the menu, and include a fun quiz club. It's easy to join in remotely for these classes; check their website for details on times.

Specializing in crystal healing, the Natural Health and Lifestyle Directory, at www.usenature.com, offers a series of workshops at their center in Australia. If you can't attend, they also offer a good selection of reading materials so you can learn on your own.

At Heart and Soul Connections, (www.heartandsoulconnections.net) spiritual facilitators Rev. Paul Taylor and Rev Joan Marois offer a comprehensive listing of available workshops, and will work with you to create a session that is right for your needs.

Many spiritual healing facilitators also offer workshops for either groups or one-on-one. You can probably find a number of them just by doing a quick search on the spiritual topic of your choice.

To find a workshop near you, contact a local spiritual healer, or ask for a referral at your local library or community education center. Before paying the fee, do a little homework on the person giving the instructor. In the United States, the field of spiritual healing is not strictly regulated, so it's important that you understand the background and training of the person providing the workshops.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

Workshops can be an excellent way to help you discover a new way of connecting with your inner energies. By developing an awareness of the body's natural energies, you can learn to control them and fix imbalances that can cause physical problems. Once you've mastered these techniques, you can often turn that into a service to others, and offer yourself for training.

With the increasing amount of attention being received by spiritual healing topics, you may be able to find a lecture near you on the topic. Many universities and colleges offer talks on various spiritual topics including the healing arts, and community groups also sponsor these kinds of lectures. Check with your local library or continuing education center to find one near you, or search online for local lecture series.

Energy Healing

If you have been reading up on alternative therapies and complementary medicines, chances are you've run across the term "energy healing." You may be wondering what exactly the term means, and how it applies in the field of spiritual healing. There is so much out there, it's sometimes hard to make sense of it all.

First, a little bit of science. Everything in our universe, whether it's a tree, a stone, a stream, or a human being, is made up of different forms of energy. Energy exists in everything we see, feel, touch, hear and experience as we go about our lives. Our internal energies bombarded with external energies constantly, and this can sometimes set up conflicts.

According to spiritual healers, each human has at its core specific energy combinations called "chakras." Everything we've seen and experienced in the course of lifetime, whether good or bad, can lead to certain patterns of energy that are contained in our chakra. We may not be consciously aware that this is happening, but we often "store up" negative energies in the form of our fears, our anxieties, and even our repressed memories from traumatic events.

Over time, these negative energies will throw our original energy patterns, or chakras, out of balance. When this happens, spiritual healers believe that our bodies, minds and spirits will manifest these bad energies in destructive ways.

Energy healing attempts to correct these energy imbalances through a variety of approaches. Some of the more common methods are Reiki massage, touch therapy, spiritual counseling and even acupuncture. Healers often combine these methods with homeopathic medicine and dietary changes, with the ultimate goal being the restoration of a balanced energy structure.

Some of the more unusual energy healing practices include sound energy healing, an ancient Tibetan practice that aims to restore balance and calm the spirit through vibrations. The therapy is said to reduce stress and bring about a restorative feeling of inner peace, and may help relieve chronic pain.

There is a wealth of information available to people who are interested in this fascinating field. Websites abound that offer information and advice. To learn more about energy healing, you might want to visit one of these organizations:

American Polarity Therapy Association (www.polaritytherapy.org) – They offer a comprehensive list of FAQs about the topic of polarity therapy, and include links on how to find a practitioner near you. They also sponsor a series of training sessions if you are interested in becoming a polarity therapist.

Healing Touch International (www.healingtouch.net) – This international organizations offers information, membership options, classes, research and a database of events and practitioners.

International Association of Crystal Healing Therapists (www.iacht.co.uk) – Based in the United Kingdom, this organization offers professional training in the art of healing with crystals, a method gaining increasing popularity and support throughout the world.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

Zero Balancing Health Association (www.zerobalancing.com) – Founded in 1991, this organization's mission is to help promote the use of touch to offer healing that help to balance the body's energy with the body's structure. In addition to a list of practitioners, they also offer study groups, products and a newsletter.

Most energy healers stress that this form of healing can be enormously useful, but should be in tandem with traditional medical care. Afflictions of the body are often caused by an underlying problem in the energy core, and simply treating the physical symptoms make offer some relief, but won't alleviate the ongoing problem. Likewise, healing the energy alone will not be effective in mending a physical problem like a broken bone or a pulled muscle. It is through an integrated and holistic approach to healing that these energy-centered therapies work best.

Energy Field Therapy

Often referred to as “energy healing,” energy field therapy involves using the healing approaches to restore the proper balance of a person’s energy core or “chakra. Chances are, if you’ve done any reading on this topic, you’ve run across a variety of different methods and approaches for the complementary approach to wellness. And sometimes it’s hard to grasp what the therapy really involves, with so much information out there.

Let’s look at this from a scientific point of view first. Each and every thing in our world, whether it’s a plant, a bush, a flower or a human being, is created from different forms of energy. Each and every experience, no matter what we see, hear, feel, touch or taste, leaves an energy imprint on us. Sometimes these experiences are full of positive energy – like being with friends, laughing, singing, walking on a pretty fall day. Other experiences leave darker energies – stressful situations, trauma, anger and violence, for example. This constant bombardment of our beings with conflicting energies can cause both physical, emotional and spiritual problems.

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After time, our negative experiences will cause our chakras to become unbalances. This can result in a number of problems that manifest themselves in the physical body, as well as in the emotional realm.

Energy field therapy works to correct these energy imbalances through a variety of approaches. Some of the more common methods are Reiki massage, touch therapy, spiritual counseling and even acupressure. Healers often combine these methods with homeopathic medicine and dietary changes, with the ultimate goal being the restoration of a balanced energy structure.

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What Problems Can Spiritual Healing Help?

Spiritual healing, while having its roots in ancient traditions, is becoming increasingly popular today. Many practitioners and their patients report significant healing has come about through spiritual healing. So what types of ailments respond well to spiritual healing? The answers as varied as the number of methods for practicing this art. But there has been a good deal of documented research that supports the assertion that spiritual healing and prayer can have significant physical benefits.

Many programs that help people overcome substance abuse, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, are based on spiritual healing principles. By working through the spiritual effects of past events, unhappy memories, childhood abuse, trauma and other factors that can cause substance abuse, the program offers people a way to not only kick their physical habit, but also heal the underlying issues that may be leading to that abusive behavior in the first place. By focusing on forgiveness, acceptance and understanding, these spiritual recovery programs offer some impressive statistics for success. In fact, many studies have shown that recovery programs that include some sort of a spiritual aspect are more effective than programs that deal strictly with the physical realities of addiction.

Stress and anxiety have also been shown to respond well to spiritual healing methods. When a person is under stress, chemicals build up their bodies and cause a host of problems, including sleeplessness, short temper, loss of appetite, digestive ills, memory loss, and many others. Spiritual healing can address the root issues that are causing stress in a person's life, and offer strategies to alleviate the stresses, or, at least, provide helpful coping mechanisms. By learning how to handle their stress on a spiritual level, many people find relief from the all-too-common problems caused by excess stress in their lives.

Many people suffer from the affliction of high blood pressure, and often need to resort to prescription medication to keep the problem under control. Spiritual healers often report success in these patients, and some remarkable results have been documented. The same is often seen with other cardio-vascular problems. A strong spiritual aspect has even been shown to help improve a person's chances of surviving a heart attack or stroke.

Depression is another condition that can have a debilitating effect on a person's life. Spiritual healing, including prayer, has been shown to correlate to a lower incidence of depression. In fact, in a study in Michigan, the results showed the African American men who placed a high priority on their personal spiritual journey were less likely to suffer from depression than those who did not pray. Likewise, a study in South Carolina demonstrated that new moms, and their babies, were less likely to suffer from common medical complications than non-religious moms.

Even in devastating diseases like cancer, spiritual healing and prayer has been shown to be of enormous benefit. A group of researchers in Texas demonstrated that a strong religious faith and belief in the power of prayer to heal generally predicted a better outcome for surviving cancer. Patients who had an active spiritual life were more likely to recover and suffer fewer complications.

Most reputable spiritual healers will advise you to continue to work with your health care provider to address physical problems, as well as adding a spiritual element to your therapy. It is important to keep your physician informed of any new therapies you are adding, and find a health care provider who will work with you to find a good balance of medical and spiritual help. By combining the benefits of modern medicine with the powerful capabilities of spiritual healing and prayer, amazing results can be achieved.

The Spiritual Healing Movement

The history of spiritual healing traces its roots back to ancient times. Evidence of healing exists in nearly every culture at some point, and healers have often been given positions of respect and even authority in various cultures. The term "healing" itself traditionally refers to healing of the mind, body and spirit, rather than the modern interpretation of physical healing. Ancient cultures generally recognized little difference between the body and the spirit, so healing necessarily involved more than just a physical approach.

Ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Greece and the Far East all recorded variations of a spiritual healing practice, and many of their ancient symbols are still used today. Native Americans also had a strong belief in the power of spiritual healing, and shamans held a sacred position in the life of the Native American tribe. Judaism as well placed a heavy emphasis on the power of a supreme being to offer healing benefits.

As people became more educated and the influence of science spread, the focus on healing gradually shifted toward the physical, as this was the part of the human being that could be seen and more readily understood. The medical practitioners used their new-found knowledge and understanding of the body to develop a more pragmatic and "earthly" approach to taking care of the sick and understanding human systems.

Another blow to the spiritual aspect of healing came when spiritual healing was deemed to be the sole right of the Christian church. Non-religious practitioners were routinely prosecuted and even executed, and non-physical healing became more of a religious rite than a practical, everyday occurrence. In the Middle Ages, healing became largely the realm of the physician, and not the spiritualists.

As a result, modern medicine came to develop as strictly a function of the body. Absent any focus on the mind or the spirit, much of the intuitive healing knowledge of our ancestors was relegated to the realm of "alternative" or "fringe" methodologies, and respectable physicians gave it little credence.

The tide began to turn in the late 1800s, when Mary Baker Eddy founded the Christian Scientists, a sect that believed that all illness was a product of the mind and could therefore be healed without physical intervention.

In the early part of the 20th century, a Japanese spiritualist named Mikao Usui defined the Reiki healing method, which sought to channel the vast spiritual energy that exists and can be harnessed for healing. His method is still popular today, and continues to gain support.

Since the mid-20th century, a growing resurgence of the importance of spiritual healing has caused many in the health care industry to rethink their traditional view. Harry Edwards, a modern pioneer in the field of spiritual healing, helped to organize the practice by creating the National Federation of Spiritual Healers (NFSH). The organization helped bring legitimacy and wider acceptance to the various methods being practiced.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

Since then, the field continues to grow, with more and more people becoming aware of the power of various spiritual components in their healing regime. With the advent of the Internet, even more information is available, and people are exploring alternative therapies as never before. Studies and anecdotal information underscores the advantage of adding a spiritual component to traditional healthcare, and many enlightened physicians support their patients as they explore this complementary therapy option. Training is available for any number of specialized methods, and some healers even offer their services via email or online support groups. The field continues to flourish, and many people are finding healing relief in the traditions of our oldest customs and societies.

Books on Spiritual Healing

Are you interested in learning about the fascinating topic of spiritual healing? There are a number of books available on the topic, from general overviews of spiritual to books on specific methodologies. Listed below are several choices to get your started.

For a rich and insightful look at the relationship between healing and Christ, consider [The Art of Spiritual Healing](#). Written by Joel S. Goldsmith, the book examines the relationship between God and healing, and the importance of being centered in Christ to bring about truly beneficial healing. Other books by the same author include [Practicing the Presence](#), [The Art of Meditation](#), [The Infinite Way](#), and [The Foundation of Mysticism: Spiritual Healing Principles](#). Recognized as an expert and an authority in the field, Goldsmith offers his personal insight and his research over years of being involved in the art and science of spiritual healing.

For a medical perspective, consider reading [Spiritual Healing: Scientific Validation of a healing Revolution](#) by Daniel J. Benor MD. Originally quite skeptical as to the actual effectiveness of spiritual healing, Dr. Benor became convinced, through scientific study and anecdotal review, that there is merit to the various methodologies, and substantial benefit to the patient when spiritual healing is combined with more traditional medical care.

If you are looking for a good introductory text, try [Energy Healing for Beginners: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Basics of Spiritual Healing](#) by Ruth White. The book offers beginners a close look at the methodology of spiritual healing, and covers such topics as basic guidelines, how to get started in the field, and step by step guidelines to healing. Ms. White has written a number of books on this topic, including [Using Your Chakras: A New Approach to Healing Your Life](#) and [Working With Your Chakras: A Physical, Emotional, & Spiritual Approach](#). A trained psychotherapist, Ms. White offers training sessions throughout the UK.

[The Healing Energy of Your Hands](#) by Michael Bradford begins by relating the story of how Bradford, formerly a high-powered businessman, undertook a personal journey toward his new life as a spiritual healer. Written in a matter-of-fact tone, Bradford creates an ultimately believable scenario of this transition, and offers guidance for those who may be considering a similar path. Another book by the same author is [Hands-on Spiritual Healing](#).

Offering a hands-on approach to learning the basics of energy healing, Jack Angelo and Jan Angelo have written [Spiritual Healing: A Practical Guide to Hands-On Healing](#). The book contains a number of specific exercises that will put you in touch with the human energy patterns, and help you learn how to heal and comfort the ill and the injured. The book also includes some guidance on increasing your personal healing powers, and bringing healing and positive energy to all aspects of your home and work life. Jack Angelo has also written [Hands-on Healing: A Practical Guide to Channeling Your Healing Energies](#). The two together make an excellent introductory course to the healing arts.

Told in the easy-to-read and slightly irreverent style of the popular "Idiots" series, [The Complete Idiot's Guide to Spiritual Healing](#) was written by Dr. Susan Gregg. The book explores complementary medicine and methods like acupuncture, shamanism and massage for therapy. Dr. Gregg includes extensive discussions on using the power of your mind to strengthen the connections between your body and your mind, and use those connections to improve your life in all areas. Other books by Dr. Gregg include [Dance of Power: A Shamanic Journey](#), [The Toltec Way: A Guide to Personal Transformation](#), [Finding the Sacred Self](#), and [Mastering the Toltec Way: A Daily Guide to Happiness, Freedom, and Joy](#).

Courses on Spiritual Healing

If you are interested in learning more about spiritual healing, you may want to consider taking a course from a recognized expert in the field. There are a number of ways to access training in spiritual healing. There are local schools near most mid- to large-size cities, as well as spiritual centers. And with the Internet, it is even possible to learn long-distance. Courses range from introductory sessions for people who are interested in just learning a bit about the field, to intensive training workshops designed to offer professional certification in the field. Take a look at some of the alternatives available for training in spiritual healing.

If you are looking for an advanced degree, consider the University of Metaphysical Sciences in Arcata, California. Graduates can study for their Bachelor or Masters degree at their own pace, via mail or online. Candidates for a Ph.D or Doctor of Divinity degree work with instructors and the University of Metaphysical Sciences in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The UMS is a non-profit organization, and offers several program options depending on your career goals and your spiritual aspirations. Courses include Communication and Problem Solving, Hypnosis, Aura Viewing, Native American Traditions, Trauma and Recovery, Reiki, Yoga and many other topics, and students have a number of elective courses available to them as well.

For a self-paced educational experience, consider Self-Healing Expressions. The company offers a number of choices as you being our journey as a healer. Each course can be purchased separately, and the training is delivered via audio tape and/or e-mail. Each course is priced at \$34.95. Topics include healing through Reiki massage; an overview of the mysticism of Jesus and his healing works; using dreams for healing; and learning how to handle the stress of everyday life. There are special offers available if you sign up with a friend, and the company also offers discounts and other special offers from time to time. Visit their website at www.selfhealingexpressions.com.

Modern technology has made it possible to learn from afar, and the instructors at New Spirit Services take full advantage of this to reach out to their students. The company offers a series of five weekend sessions, with a focus on alternative and complementary therapies like identity therapy, recall therapy, clearing therapy, intermediate spiritual healing, and a certification level course in healing. You can find more information at their website, www.newspiritservices.com.

Interested in learning about chakras and aura healing? The College of Light offers two separate courses that can be combined to offer a comprehensive look at the use of aura viewing and chakra energy to effect spiritual healing. The workshops are held at the College of Light in London, UK, and are held over a half-day session. Other workshops available include medium and channeling methods, tarot, and psychic readings. While they do not offer an online learning option, The College of Light makes an interesting destination for anyone who wants to learn while visiting London.

You can find healing courses nearly anywhere in the world, including a number of courses based in Australia. Before registering for any course, be sure to research the instructor and the organization holding the training, to be sure that they have the requisite background and certification to provide a thorough and useful training. Certification and licensing requirements vary widely, and the requirements change depending on the country in which the training is offered. Most legitimate instructors will be happy to provide references, and many even offer testimonials on their websites. Do a little homework, to be sure that your educational experience is everything that it should be.

Become Spiritual Healer

You may be aware of the growing popularity of the spiritual healing movement, both in the United States and around the world. An increasing number of people are turning to spiritual healing not just as a form of healing for themselves and their loved ones, but as a valid career option. But before you can launch out on your own as a spiritual healer, you should make sure you are trained in the specific methods you will choose to practice.

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Finding a Spiritual Healer

Are you interested in spiritual healing but need to find a person you can trust to help? You'll be happy to learn that there are many options out there for spiritual healing, in many forms. By taking advantage of these sources you can help begin to heal your mind, your body and your spirit into a cohesive and healthy unit.

The easiest and most accessible place to start is by looking at religious organizations in your town or city. Most organized religions do include some sort of spiritual healing, either through prayer, anointing, laying-on of hands, or other means. Religious ceremonies are generally free and open to the public, although some organizations do ask for free-will donations. Some also have membership restrictions.

The Christian tradition has a strong focus on spiritual healing, based on the teachings of Jesus and his healing works. The most common of this type of spiritual healing is prayer. Mainstream religions often offer special prayers for the sick, both for their members and for non-members. Visit a local religious facility and ask about their healing policies.

Prayer can also be used as an aid to spiritual healing on an individual level. There are many books and resources available on the subject of prayer and healing. Start by visiting your local public library and reading up on the various types of prayer and meditation healing. Many people report significant, if not nearly miraculous, results from prayer, and many health care providers are also becoming increasingly aware of the power of prayer and meditative reflection to improve healing.

In addition to organized religion and private prayer, there are a number of spiritual healers who offer their services for reasonable fees. Many professional spiritual counselors have websites that offer a wealth of information on spiritual healing, what it is, how it works, and how to get started. Some even offer a free personal consultation, designed to determine exactly what you need to begin the healing process.

The Web has allowed many spiritual healers to heal without having the patient present, a service they call "distance healing" or "distant healing." You can find a number of websites that offer this service. You simply input your information in the fields provided, and you'll be sent instructions on when the healing session will take place and how to prepare for it. The amount of information you provide is up to you; if you do not feel comfortable giving out your personal information, you will likely be able to find another site that does not request this information. Many also ask if you'd like to be on their email list; be sure to check the appropriate boxes depending on your preference. Just use common sense, and make sure you trust the site before you give out any credit card information or other secure identification information.

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Don't want to meet face to face? Some spiritual counselors also offer their services over the phone, in a one-on-one personal phone call, or in conference-style calls. The sessions can last anywhere from ten minutes to half an hour, so remember to keep the phone charges in mind when you dial. And be sure you are not dialing a "pay by the minute" type of phone number. There are some unethical people out there that may take advantage of your desire to speak to a true healer.

Keep your budget in mind when you decide on a spiritual healer. With all the options available for healing, counseling and spiritual support, there are several ways to find the help you need at a reasonable cost. But do keep in mind that many spiritual healers provide this service as their living, so be prepared to pay for the services you request. You may find some that provide their service free of charge; in that case, a donation to help them carry on their ministry would be most welcome.

Spiritual Counseling

Many people today are searching for answers to life's important questions, and the answers can often be found in spiritual counseling. Through various types of spiritual counseling, people can achieve both physical and emotional healing to illness and affliction, as well as peace of mind and a greater understanding of the world around them.

So what exactly is spiritual counseling? Some describe it in informal terms, as a way to learn about the world around you, and how you relate to it. Others lean toward a more formal definition; a form of counseling that includes a good deal of exploration and support regarding a person's religious and values beliefs. Most counselors will agree, however, that the aim of spiritual counseling is to increase awareness of the spiritual nature of life, and use that awareness to improve one's situation in life. This improvement is often seen in health and well-being issues including recovery from illness or affliction.

People turn to spiritual counseling for any number of reasons. Some are looking for philosophical answers, while others are seeking relief from the plagues of our society, including stress, anxiety, depression, addiction and other bodily ills. The common thread through the counseling stresses that the mind, the spirit and the body all work in tandem to create a healthy person, and any treatment that neglects one or more of these three things is not a complete therapy. Take, for example, the mental issue of depression. Widely thought to be caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain, depression can also manifest in physical aches and pains, as well as seriously emotional and spiritual issues like hopelessness and unbearable sadness. Treating just the physical symptoms alone may offer some relieve, but ultimately will not offer a complete holistic treatment.

A spiritual counselor can often help patients dealing with serious physical problems, like depression or serious illnesses like cancer. One of the ways a spiritual counselor can help is by teaching you skills to manage your stress and anxiety about the illness. Not only will you feel better mentally, but the effects of lowered stress on blood pressure, digestion and other bodily functions can be quite dramatic.

Spiritual counselors may hold many titles, including hypnotherapist, imagery counselor, pastoral counselor or Reiki master. There are a number of different types of spiritual counseling; the one that works for you depends on your values system, your comfort level, and how well you relate to the counselor on a personal level.

Ultimately, the core of any spiritual counseling seeks to attain knowledge and guidance to help you understand your life and your role in society. It seeks to help you use your inner strength, combined with divine guidance, to help you make your way through this challenging and at times difficult journey on earth.

While most religions have an aspect of spirituality, most spiritual counselors are not affiliated with any particular religion. Their services are generally non-denominational and available regardless of your religious background. There are exceptions, of course; many churches and other religious organizations offer pastoral counseling, which is another form of spiritual counseling.

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To find a spiritual counselor, you might want to check with your local religious organizations, and local business directory. You can also find a large number of spiritual counselors online. Many of these counselors are willing to work remotely, either via email or by phone. You can also check several organizations dedicated to spiritual counselors and healers to help you find someone you can work with. To get the most out of your counseling session, it's important that the person you choose is personable and makes you feel comfortable.

Finding a Spiritual Counselor

Are you looking to more fully understand yourself and your place in the world? Spiritual counseling might be an attractive alternative. A spiritual counselor can help provide support, encouragement and advice regarding human nature and how humans relate to the greater world around them. Generally this type of counseling will delve deeper than more traditional counseling, and is based more on emotions than a psychological or analytical approach to counseling.

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You will also be likely to find a spiritual counselor by doing an online search. Many counselors have local offices, and will offer personal, face-to-face consultations. Still others offer "distance counseling," working with people either via email or phone. The Internet has opened up a whole new way of networking, and spiritual counselors have a significant presence on the Web.

There are a number of good resources available to help you find a spiritual counselor. In addition to private websites, there are also forums, message boards, national organizations and a host of other resources out there. You might also search for this type of counseling under similar terms like "pastoral counseling," "self-help," "humanistic guidance," "personal counseling," and other similar phrases.

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Some spiritual counselors will list specific skills, including clairvoyance, clairaudience, and other psychic abilities. But these traits are not necessarily the crux of a spiritual counseling session.

Many spiritual counselors do believe that their gift for healing and counseling comes from a divine source, and they are therefore uncomfortable charging for their services. Others will charge a small fee, and still others make a good living by providing this service. Whatever level you are comfortable with, remember that the ultimate goal is to know and understand yourself, so be sure you are getting what you need out of the experience.

Biblical References for Spiritual Healing

Many people have the impression that spiritual healing is a “new age” phenomenon, something that is trendy and modern. But they couldn’t be further from the truth. In fact, spiritual healing is an ancient practice, and was seen in many cultures around the world in some form. From ancient Egypt, Greece, Native America, Asia and South American, methods of spiritual healing have been practices for hundreds and thousands of years.

Religious experts also recognize the importance of spiritual healing to ancient religions, and there are a number of references to spiritual healing in the Bible. Both the Hebrew Scriptures (also known as the Old Testament) and the New Testament, or Christian scriptures, contain a number of references to both physical and spiritual healing. While some of these passages are a bit ambiguous as to their specific meaning, it is clear that the writers of these works had a strong belief, and perhaps even direct experience in, some for a healing of a religious or spiritual nature.

In Exodus 15:26 of the King James Version, the Lord promises to the Israelites that if they keep his commandments, and do what it right, he will keep them free from a number of diseases. Second Kings 20:5 talks of healing of a more personal nature, in which God promises to heal Hezekiah of his affliction after hearing his prayers. And Psalms 34:17-19 speaks of Lord’s ability to heal a variety of afflictions of the righteous. Psalms 103 invokes a blessing from the Lord, and asserts that he can heal illness and forgive iniquities. More specific references to healing in the Hebrew Scriptures can be found in Isaiah 57:18-21, Jeremiah 30:17, and Hosea 6:1.

The New Testament is likewise filled with references to healing, especially granted to those who pray for help. Matthew 7:7-11 speaks of the promise of asking for help in any way, and the power of God to grant the request. Also in Matthew (21:22), it is stated that whatever is requested in prayer by a true believer, will be granted.

The gospel of Mark speaks specifically of laying on of hands to heal the sick (16:18), while John (15:7) reiterates that anyone asking of God shall receive what they need. James 5:14-15 continues the theme of spiritual healing, this time speaking of anointing with sacred oils in combination with prayer to heal those who are ill. In fact James even appeals to the crowd, encouraging any who are sick to ask the Lord for healing, in much the same way that healing preachers today prompt their congregations to come forward for healing.

The bible does offer some caveats, however, citing specific incidences during which healing was not successful. In the story of Lazarus, Jesus was not able to prevent the death of his friend, although he later did raise him from the dead. And in Paul’s letters, (1 Corinthians 15:42-53) he writes that the human suffering caused by illness and death is unavoidable, and a part of the human condition. Paul himself suffered from a flesh wound that remained unhealed, and caused him much discomfort. Paul’s attempts at healing others were not entirely successful either, as cited by Timothy in 1 Timothy 5:23 (Timothy himself) and 2 Timothy 4:20 (Miletus).

For a deeper discussion of the presence of spiritual healing in the Bible, there are several books available. [Healing Oils of the Bible](#), written by David Stewart, Ph.D., cites over one thousand instances in which oils are mentioned in the Bible in relation to healing. [The Heart of Pastoral Counseling](#) by Richard Dayringer is a short book that includes information on the religious aspect of healing from a biblical perspective. And [Life Understood from a Scientific and Religious Point of View](#) cites specific references to spiritual healing in the Old and New Testaments.

Spiritual Healing and Human Aura

For some individuals, it is possible to see a person's aura, or colored mass of energy, emanating from and encircling each person. At any given time there will be several colors swirling about in varying degrees. Understanding what these colors mean, and how they relate, can offer guidance to an aural healer in knowing where to target the healing process.

To understand healing as it relates to aura, let's start with a brief discussion of the meaning of the general colors of the aura.

Red – this is the color that indicates the physical life force. If an aura contains a lot of red, it indicates a very personal, earthy and vitalized human. However, it can also mean significant anger, repressed emotions and an overly competitive nature.

Orange – generally thought to denote the creative portion of a personality. In fact, some healers believe that someone with a strong orange presence could themselves be a potential healer. On the negative side, however, it can indicate a propensity toward laziness and destructive tendencies.

Yellow – this is the color of the intellect, and the way the yellow relates to other colors around it can tell much about how a person uses his or her mental faculties. For example, yellow tinged with black or brown is thought to be a negative expression of intellect, and may indicate a person who uses their intellect in less than positive ways. Yellow that shows a tinge of red can distinguish someone who uses the power of their mind to solve earthy and practical problems.

Green – indicates the level of balance in a person's overall energy field. If the green is somewhat muddied or murky, it can indicate a possessive nature (think "green with envy"). Green that is influenced by the more positive colors can show a person with a balanced personality, one who shows compassion toward others.

Blue – representing the power of the spirit, blue comes in many shades and can indicate both positive traits (loyalty, psychic abilities and strong mental faculties) and negative (sadness, depression, or self-imposed difficulties).

Indigo – a strong indigo presence in the aura tends to indicate a positive amount of spirituality in relation to others. This would tend to mark a person who is actively seeking a greater spiritual understanding and awareness, and willingness and desire to use it for good. Lack of indigo in a person's aura can indicate a distinct lack of spirituality and a diminished desire to seek greater understanding.

Violet – a mix of the blues and pinkish reds, violet is present in an individual who has reached a high plane in his or her spiritual development. True violet is rare, and is generally seen only in those who are seriously committed to a higher level of consciousness.

Brown – this is an influencing color, mixing with other colors in the aura, generally in a negative way. Its presence indicates that the person has some negativity associated with one of the other colors.

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Black – a strong presence of black in an aura indicates an absence, or a blocking, of some sort. In its purest form, it can indicate the presence of evil intention. Mixed with other colors, it can indicate that the positive aspect of that color is being used with bad intent.

White – in scientific terms, white is the balanced presence of all colors in the spectrum. Its presence in an aura represents a state of spiritual perfection and ultimate balance.

Healers who work with the aura spectrum understand the subtleties implied by various combinations and shades within a person's aura. They can then use their healing energies to correct imbalances, uncover blockages, and help bring about a more balance energy field.

Distant Healing

The Internet has allowed many spiritual healers to heal remotely, a service they call "distance healing" or "distant healing." You can find a number of websites that offer this service. You simply input your information in the fields provided, and you'll receive instructions on when the healing session will take place and how you should prepare. Some of these healing sites request little more than an email address; others ask for more information. The amount of information you provide is up to you; if you do not feel comfortable giving out your personal information, you will likely be able to find another site that does not request this information. Many also ask if you'd like to be on their email list; be sure to check the appropriate boxes depending on your preference.

Some spiritual counselors also offer their services over the phone, in a one-on-one personal phone call, or in conference-style calls. If you can't find someone in your local calling area, you may want to try one with a toll-free number. The sessions can last anywhere from ten minutes to half an hour, so remember to keep the phone charges in mind when you dial.

One type of healing that is particularly suited for distant healing is Qigong. You may also see it referred to as Chi Gong or Chi Kung. This is a form of energy healing that can be applied to individuals, groups, and even pets. There are some websites that offer a monthly subscription, and you become a regular client of the healer. The healing principles are based on the ancient Far Eastern traditions that aim to alter imbalances in your energy field or life force. In addition to healing injuries and afflictions, this method is also thought to be useful as a preventative measure, helping recipients stay healthy and avoid some of the typical obstacles to long and healthy living.

According to spiritual healers, each human has at its core specific energy combinations called "chakras." Everything we've seen and experienced in the course of lifetime, whether good or bad, can lead to certain patterns of energy that are contained in our chakra. We may not be consciously aware that this is happening, but we often "store up" negative energies in the form of our fears, our anxieties, and even our repressed memories from traumatic events.

Over time, these negative energies will throw our original energy patterns, or chakras, out of balance. When this happens, spiritual healers believe that our bodies, minds and spirits will manifest these bad energies in destructive ways.

Because healers are directing their healing at energy fields, they do not necessarily have to be present to have a powerful impact. An energy healer can transmit the necessary vibrations to help the person being healed become conscious of their own energy field. By doing so, they in essence help the person to raise their body's vibration level and use that additional energy to heal themselves. The healer is known as a conductor of energy, and becomes the channel for the healing to work.

One of the most common types of distant healing is prayer. Many believers are convinced that prayer not only helps to alleviate symptoms on injury, it can also bring about a healing cure. Medical studies support the idea that prayer, in combination with traditional medicine, has been shown to have a significant impact on the recovery rate and prognosis for patients suffering from major illnesses include cardiac surgery, depression, cancer and host of others.

A number of websites even offer prayer chains or remote sessions, during which the person seeking healing simply inputs their request, and the healing community offers their prayers and intercessions. A widely-held tradition in many of the more mainstream religions, distant healing through prayer is a common practice in Western civilization.

Healing Books

Would you like to learn more about healing, and the various forms it takes? The increasing popularity of spiritual and other forms of healing have resulted in a good variety of contemporary books on the subject. Some of the more successful recent publications are listed below.

The Art of Spiritual Healing offers a rich and insightful look at the relationship between healing and Christ. Written by Joel S. Goldsmith, the book examines the relationship between God and healing, and the importance of being centered in Christ to bring about truly beneficial healing. Other books by the same author include Practicing the Presence, The Art of Meditation, The Infinite Way, and The Foundation of Mysticism: Spiritual Healing Principles. Goldsmith is a recognized expert and an authority in the field, and offers his own insight as well as his research over years of being involved in the art and science of spiritual healing.

Offering a look at the topic from a medical point of view, Spiritual Healing: Scientific Validation of a Healing Revolution is written by Daniel J. Benor MD. Originally a skeptic as to the actual effectiveness of spiritual healing, Dr. Benor is now fully convinced, through scientific study and anecdotal review, that there is significant merit to the various methodologies. He is convinced that patients see significant benefits when spiritual healing is combined with more traditional medical care.

If you are looking for a good introductory text, try Energy Healing for Beginners: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Basics of Spiritual Healing by Ruth White. The book offers beginners a close look at the methodology of spiritual healing, and covers such topics as basic guidelines, how to get started in the field, and step by step guidelines to healing. Ms. White has written a number of books on this topic, including Using Your Chakras: A New Approach to Healing Your Life and Working With Your Chakras: A Physical, Emotional, & Spiritual Approach. A trained psychotherapist, Ms. White offers training sessions throughout the UK.

The Healing Energy of Your Hands by Michael Bradford relates the story of how Bradford, formerly a high level executive, began a personal journey toward his new life as a spiritual healer. Written in a practical and down-to-earth tone, Bradford creates an ultimately believable scenario of this transition, and offers guidance for those who may be considering a similar path. Another book by the same author is Hands-on Spiritual Healing.

Discussing a hands-on approach to learning the basics of energy healing, Jack Angelo and Jan Angelo have written Spiritual Healing: A Practical Guide to Hands-On Healing. The book contains a number of specific exercises that will put you in touch with the human energy patterns, and help you learn how to heal and comfort the ill and the injured. The book also includes some guidance on increasing your personal healing powers, and bringing healing and positive energy to all aspects of your home and work life. Jack Angelo has also written Hands-on Healing: A Practical Guide to Channeling Your Healing Energies. The two together make an excellent introductory course to the healing arts.

Told in the easy-to-read and slightly irreverent style of the popular "Idiots" series, The Complete Idiot's Guide to Spiritual Healing was written by Dr. Susan Gregg. The book delves into complementary medicine and methods like acupuncture, shamanism and massage for therapy. Dr. Gregg includes extensive discussions on using the power of your mind to strengthen the connections between your body and your mind, and use those connections to improve your life in all areas. Other books by Dr. Gregg include Dance of Power: A Shamanic Journey, The Toltec Way: A Guide to Personal Transformation, Finding the Sacred Self, and Mastering the Toltec Way: A Daily Guide to Happiness, Freedom, and Joy.

Healing Music

For many, music can have a healing effect on both the body and the spirit. In fact, the old adage “music soothes the savage beast” can be applied to the human condition as well. The appropriate music tends to have a relaxing and soothing effect on a person, and is often used in combination with massage therapy, oil therapy, fragrance, and other forms of complementary healing.

It is easy to find a wide assortment of healing music. Simply searching on the Internet brings a multitude of websites that offer music in a variety of forms. Many of these titles feature sounds of nature, including thunderstorms, crashing surf, rain, forest sounds, trickling streams and other sounds of nature. These are often combined with soft classical music to create a naturally soothing way to relax and unwind.

To soothe an overactive mind and induce sleep, there are also musical selections designed specifically to lull you into sleep. These often include natural sounds, soft music and sometimes even employ various levels of white noise. These pieces are designed to help you block out the ambient sounds that may be keeping you awake, while inducing a relaxed state.

To aid in the effectiveness of massage, many artists have produced collections ideal for meditation and the healing arts. This music is generally soft, harmonious, and full of gently vibrating tones that serve to induce relaxation and a state of consciousness that is more receptive to healing.

With the recent surge in popularity of spas and wellness centers, a new genre of music called “spa music” has emerged. The music is available to practitioners as well as private individuals, and can help you recreate the spa experience in your own home. Full of beautifully arranged instrumentals, soothing vocalizations and gentle rhythms, spa music can help to create the perfect ambience for massage, meditation and other forms of spiritual centeredness.

A more specific type of healing music is called “trance” music, in which the listener progresses into a trance-like state to connect to a deeper spirituality. The music is often infused with the rhythms and instrumentations of ancient cultures, including South American, Native American and Middle Eastern. Often full of energy and drumbeats, the music can help to clear the mind from the modern day chaos and bring about an awareness of the universality of man through a shared experience in music.

Ambient music is another category that can be very helpful in creating the right mood for spiritual healing. The music is used for relaxation and meditation, and often does not contain the lyrical component people generally expect from music, but rather a soft and sensual combination of sounds that create an experience outside the realm of everyday existence. This “other-worldly” effect can help to create an experience in which the cares and stresses of the day-to-day world are replaced with a true sense of relaxation and inner connectedness.

For yoga enthusiasts, there are a number of audio collections available. Many of these draw on Far and Middle Eastern music for their inspiration, and may include harp, Indian santoor and sitar, Celtic guitar, and other forms of instrumentation. Unlike the ambient music, yoga music is traditionally melodic, helping to create a peaceful sensation while counting and holding the various yoga poses. Along these same lines, there are musical collections that can be helpful at home when trying to balance the energy forces through Feng Shui. The music incorporates the energy vibrations of the auditory experience with the powerful forces of earth, water, fire, wood and metal so important to a balanced environment in any home or other building.

Find a Spiritual Healing Center

Oftentimes, we find ourselves in need of a greater kind of healing that is available through traditional medicine. Maybe we find ourselves unable to kick a bad habit, or afflicted with an illness of mind or body that is not responding well to the mainstream “cures.” Or, maybe we are searching for a more balanced existence as we go about our daily lives. If you are looking for an alternative therapy, you may want to consider spiritual healing.

Spiritual healing is, by definition, the use of non-physical means to treat illness or affliction. Sometimes referred to as “faith healing,” spiritual healing is a type of treatment generally considered to be classified as “alternative” or non-traditional. Yet the roots of spiritual healing go back for centuries, and some form of this treatment have been shown to exist in almost every culture known to history.

Spiritual healing is actually a very broad term that covers a wide range of methodologies and beliefs. At its most basic, spiritual healing is brought about by connecting with the energies that exist both inside ourselves and out, to bring about balance, healing and peace. There are many forms of spiritual healing, including prayer, laying on of hands, massage therapy, energy therapy, aura healing, and others. A good many of these hark back to ancient times. Most cultures have had some type of spiritual healing as a component in their society.

If you are looking to learn about spiritual healing, you may want to start with a local spiritual healing center. Perhaps the easiest way to find one near you is to look in the phone book under “complementary medicine,” “holistic medicine,” or “healing.” Even in a small city or large town, you are likely to find at least a few centers from which to choose. Ask your family and friends for references as well; often a personal referral can tell you much more than simply choosing a center at random.

Another way to find a center near you is to look online. Simply do a search for “spiritual healing center” and your city, and you will probably find several choices.

Many healers also offer distance healing, and do not require that you be present for the healing. They can perform their healing ministries over the phone, or remotely. There are a number of websites online that offer spiritual healing in the virtual realm. You simply input your information and your healing request online.

What can you expect to find at a spiritual healing center? The answer will vary as widely as the types of therapies available. Some healing centers are strictly prayer based, with a focus on connecting with your spiritual creator to help bring healing. Religious-based healing organizations are often prayer based, and some offer weekend retreats, weekly study groups, support groups and other events in addition to personal healing consultations.

Holistic or complementary therapy centers may also offer a spiritual healing component. Practitioners may be available for Reiki massage, energy therapy, chakra balancing and a host of other forms of alternative medicines. The level of service will depend largely on the practitioner and the licensing required of that field.

Many traditional medical facilities are now beginning to incorporate spiritual healing into their list of services. At some larger health care facilities, you may find access to alternative and complementary practitioners. Some HMOs are also beginning to realize the significant benefits that can be obtained through spiritual healing, and many insurance plans even offer coverage for some or all of the costs associated with this treatment. You may want to talk to your doctor about ways to incorporate spiritual healing into your health care routine.

Who can become a healer?

So, you have been touched by the power of spiritual healing in some way, and you would like to become a practitioner. But can you? And if you can, then how should you go about it? Would you be any good at it?

Spiritual healing is, by definition, the use of non-physical means to treat illness or affliction. Sometimes referred to as “faith healing,” spiritual healing is a type of treatment generally considered to be classified as “alternative” or non-traditional. Yet the roots of spiritual healing go back for centuries, and some form of this treatment have been shown to exist in almost every culture known to history.

At its core, spiritual healing involves channeling a type of energy from one person, the “healer,” to another. Practitioners claim that this energy can help to heal or alleviate physical, mental or spiritual ailments. The healer is generally thought to be a medium for the healing powers that are coming from a higher power, or spirit.

The First Spiritual Temple, an independent church that embraces many traditional and modern belief systems, maintains that anyone can become a healer, so long as their intent is to follow God’s wishes. Their belief is that all healing comes from God, and people are merely His channels.

There is also the common view that prayer works as one of the best methods of healing, and in that regard, anyone who can pray can become a spiritual healer.

So it appears anyone can become a spiritual healer, as long as you are open to the belief that your healing will be effective. The decision then becomes about how much training you want to undertake, and what type of healing you would like to administer. Some of the options include Reiki, Healing Touch, Therapeutic Touch, Chios (energy field healing), Polarity Therapy and Qi Gong, to name a few.

A simple internet search reveals countless training programs for would-be spiritual healers. Most of them claim that anyone can take the courses, although some imply that psychic abilities would be helpful. Keep in mind that some courses are more lengthy and involved than others, and some carry hefty fees.

For instance, there are many brief, weekend-type Reiki classes available, but don’t expect to become a Reiki Master in two days. Traditional training, taught in three levels, can take up to four years, and students must be initiated or “attuned” by a Reiki Master to become qualified. Training can cost up to and beyond \$10,000. Others in the Reiki community believe that there are certain people who are gifted with the talent to perform Reiki without training – but in order to become official, they too, must be attuned by a master.

There are also classes taught by hospitals, spas, churches and dedicated spiritual healing institutions. Doctors, nurses and massage therapists are among those professionals who have sought training and certification in spiritual healing.

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Those who are considering going into the field of spiritual healing must not underestimate the power of those whom they are treating. It is often held within the spiritual healing community that the recipient of the therapy must be open to the treatment for it to work. From that standpoint, there seems to be an implication that, in some cases, that effectiveness of the treatment relies as much, if not more, upon the patient than the practitioner. To begin this journey, find a teacher you can respect and trust, and listen to your own inner voices to guide you along the path. Don't rely on quick answers, but do a thorough job of learning the methods and practices of spiritual healing.

Prayer and spiritual healing

Prayer is very complex, diverse and personal. It can be verbal or silent, done solo or with a group. One thing most would agree is that it can be a powerful tool when used to heal. Throughout the ages, prayer has been used to appeal to a higher being. And among the appeals are frequently requests for healing of the mind, body and spirit.

Myriad studies have been done to document the effectiveness of prayer. Most concluded that prayer did in fact assist in healing, but a surprising double-blind study administered by cardiologist Randolph Byrd at San Francisco General Hospital found that prayer helped in the recovery of patients who didn't even know they were being prayed for.

Perhaps even more unbelievably, studies have shown that prayer can assist nonhumans as well – in one study, it was found that rye grass grew faster when prayed for.

The studies are convincing, but most who engage in prayer don't need data to tell them how calming and soothing it can be.

So, how can prayer be combined with other types of spiritual healing for a more effective outcome?

In Mark Dahle's book, "How to Pray for Healing (And What to Do if Nothing Happens)", he suggests that as you pray for someone, you should ask if you can touch them on the head or shoulders, mimicking the way Jesus and his disciples healed by touch. Even if the subject of your prayer does not want to be touched, he asserts, God's spirit can flow through them and heal them.

This theory is very similar to many of the spiritual techniques that are used to heal ailments of the body and mind. Prayer can also be used as an aid to spiritual healing on an individual level. There are many books and resources available on the subject of prayer and healing. Start by visiting your local public library and reading up on the various types of prayer and meditation healing. Many people report significant, if not nearly miraculous, results from prayer, and many health care providers are also becoming increasingly aware of the power of prayer and meditative reflection to improve healing.

For example, the traditional Reiki method uses a person as a healer to conduct energy through the body of another by using his hands. That energy flows through the body and finds the areas in the body that need healing.

Another is Therapeutic Touch therapy, which similarly uses energy that flows through the hands into the body, but without physical touch.

Healing Touch therapy uses a light touch to regulate the body's energies. This method has found its way into various hospitals around the United States, used in conjunction with conventional medicine. Many healthcare facilities now have practitioners available; you may want to ask your health care provider if healing touch therapy may be appropriate for you.

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Some spiritual healing methods, in fact, involve sending healing energies from the practitioner's consciousness over long distances to their recipient. In this way, it may be argued that spiritual healing and prayer are one in the same. In fact, in the United Kingdom and some surrounding areas, the term "spiritual healing" is used to describe prayer and other means of healing, both in secular and non-secular contexts. Prayer is also sometimes used as a synonym for meditation.

The goal of most methods of spiritual healing therapies is to ensure that the body, mind and soul are working together to promote health and wellbeing. Therefore it follows that if prayer encourages the health of the soul, it can only help further the cause of other methods of healing.

Healing Energy

By simple definition, energy is a positive force that flows through the body. Advocates of spiritual healing contend that this energy can be utilized in the healing of mind, body and spirit.

We all have an aura, a field of energy that surrounds our bodies. Historically, the aura has been depicted in artwork as a halo or a light surrounding the head. It is believed that some people have the ability to see the aura with the naked eye. For those without this special ability, science has made it possible to view the aura by using special photography, in which the electromagnetic field around the body appears as a multi-colored configuration surrounding the body. The colors can then be analyzed to help diagnose specific deficits in the general well-being of the body and mind.

Within the body, there are various terms to describe energies and their conductors.

Chi (sometimes called Qi), or life force, is thought to be an energy that exists in everything in creation. Prana, which sometimes translates to "air," refers to the body's vital energies.

The chakras are believed to be seven or eight (depending on the school of thought) points along the body that conduct and house chi and prana, making sure that all of the energies of the body are in harmony.

Many illnesses, both physical and emotional, are attributed to the misalignment of these energies. Those who practice spiritual healing believe that the mind, body and spirit must all be working together at full capacity in order to achieve health.

Reiki, a healing method developed by Mikao Usui in early 20th Century Japan, employs a practitioner who uses his hands to conduct energy through the patient's body, helping it to heal itself. The energy that flows through the body is considered to be a "smart energy" of sorts, zeroing in on those areas which need healing. The patient must be completely open to the treatment in order to absorb all of the positive energy and get rid of the negative. Although scientists don't have much evidence to go on, believers claim that Reiki has been shown to lower heart rate and diastolic blood pressure.

The ironically-named therapeutic touch therapy involves manipulating the aura of the patient without touching the body. The objective is to direct chi to the affected area. This treatment was made popular in the early 1970s by Dolores Krieger.

Polarity therapy brings together ancient traditions and modern medicine, working on the Human Energy Field by means of diet, self-awareness and exercise. Creator Randolph Stone concluded that the energy field is affected by everything that comes into contact with it, both physically and emotionally. The general goal of this therapy is to maintain energy flow; blockage causes illness.

Healers are, in a sense, mechanics of the mind, body and spirit. Their responsibilities to their patients include cleansing, fine-tuning, balancing and charging the energies within.

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There is a wealth of information available to people who are interested in this fascinating field. Websites abound that offer information and advice.

Most energy healers stress that this form of healing can be enormously useful, but should be in tandem with traditional medical care. Afflictions of the body are often caused by an underlying problem in the energy core, and simply treating the physical symptoms make offer some relief, but won't alleviate the ongoing problem. Likewise, healing the energy alone will not be effective in mending a physical problem like a broken bone or a pulled muscle. It is through an integrated and holistic approach to healing that these energy-centered therapies work best.

Benefits of spiritual healing

Spiritual healing is, by definition, the use of non-physical means to treat illness or affliction. Sometimes referred to as “faith healing,” spiritual healing is a type of treatment generally considered to be classified as “alternative” or non-traditional. Yet the roots of spiritual healing go back for centuries, and some form of this treatment have been shown to exist in almost every culture known to history.

Edward Bourne, who authored “The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook,” lists some of the benefits of spiritual healing as a feeling of security and safety, peace of mind, self-confidence and the capacity to give and receive unconditional love.

Many types of spiritual healing involve energy, both inside and outside of the body. The objective of most methods is to cleanse and clear the body's life force of negative obstructions, so that the mind, body and soul can harmonize. Many spiritual health practitioners see this as the only true path to whole health.

It is commonly believed by spiritual healing enthusiasts that any ailment, be it physical, mental or emotional, begins in the mind, at least in some part. So when mind, body and spirit work together, the ailment can begin to heal.

Many modern healthcare practitioners are beginning to realize the benefits of incorporating a spiritual aspect into a patient's care, and in fact some HMOs and medical facilities are offering these services. The medical evidence does suggest that spiritual healing, in complement with traditional medical care, can increase positive outcomes for patients with a range of conditions. Specific studies suggest benefits in cancer patients, new moms, people suffering from depressive disorders, and cardiac patients, among others.

Obviously, “healing” is a general term. So let's look more closely at some of the benefits that have been documented as a result of a few of the different variations of spiritual healing.

Reiki, a well-known and much practiced method developed in the early 20th Century, channels energy through the hands of a practitioner through the body of the patient. Positive results have been recorded in the form of reduced heart rate and reduced diastolic blood pressure. Relief from depression and anxiety has also been attributed to Reiki therapy.

Polarity Therapy has been around since the mid-20th Century. It offers treatment using the body's energy as well as a combination of diet, exercise, self-awareness and other factors. The body's ailments are diagnosed through verbal means as well as touch. This therapy is thought to aid stress reduction, relief of migraine headaches, allergies, digestive disorders, PMS symptoms, body pain and fatigue. It has also reportedly helped with pregnancy and post-natal care.

Qi Gong (sometimes spelled Chi Kung), a Chinese method of healing that has been practiced for over 2,000 years, is a combination of exercise and the cultivation of qi (life force) energies. Discipline of the body plays a key role, and there are exercises to help regulate the body (posture), mind (through relaxation) and the breath. There are moving and still variations. Besides curing illness, its benefits are believed to include a stronger body including the diaphragm and cardiovascular system, a regulated central nervous system and cerebral cortex, greater synchronization of the brain waves, increased lung capacity and a more effective immune system.

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And then, there's good old-fashioned prayer. Prayer can be done in a group or by oneself. It can be practiced even when the person being prayed for has no knowledge of such. Many studies have been done to validate the effectiveness of prayer. It can help with the health and well-being of the person being prayed for – but it also brings a sense of peace to the person doing the praying.

Does spiritual healing work with other forms of healing?

Although some forms of spiritual healing have been around much longer than the conventional medicine of today, they can – and often do -- work very well together. In fact, it is not recommended that any method of spiritual or complementary healing be used alone to treat medical conditions, although many of the methods can stand alone when used to tackle issues such as stress relief.

Spiritual healing in general endeavors to align the functions of the mind, body and spirit. It is believed that if those three things are working together, the body can perform to its full capacity. That includes experiencing more efficient healing after surgery, chemotherapy and serious illness.

There have been reported cases where, although it didn't prevent or cure disease, spiritual healing therapy has been said to make the lives of cancer and other patients more bearable while they underwent conventional treatments.

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) includes energy therapies in its list of complementary treatments. NCCAM does concede that these therapies are among the most controversial, because the energy in the body has never been instrumentally measured. But NCCAM says that these treatments, most of them Eastern in origin, are gaining popularity in America and are starting to get attention from medical research facilities.

Reiki, the directing of energy through the body by a practitioner, has gathered a following in the medical field. It is offered at many hospitals, clinics and hospice care facilities. It's said to help patients with pain management and healing, as well as with appetite and ability to get quality sleep. It is sometimes used to help patients recover from chemotherapy treatments. Many medical facilities also offer Reiki training.

Reflexology, another therapy that has become very popular, uses pressure points on the hands and feet to break up stress patterns in the body. These pressure points correlate with other areas in the body, resulting in a relaxation response from the entire body. Proponents of this type of therapy believe that this allows the body to begin to repair itself. Reflexology has also found its way into hospitals and other care facilities, and has been taken up by various medical care professionals.

CranioSacral therapy uses a soft touch to get rid of obstructions in the craniosacral system (membranes and fluid that protect and surround the brain and spinal cord), which helps the central nervous system to function more freely. This therapy has been attributed to helping relieve migraine headaches, autism, colic, scoliosis, learning disabilities, post-traumatic stress disorder, orthopedic problems and post-surgical dysfunction, among other things.

There are many other complementary therapies to choose from, including Visceral Manipulation, Mechanical Link, Lymph Drainage therapy, Healing Touch therapy, and Polarity Therapy.

Prayer has been proven to be a powerful tool for healing as well, and it is, of course, compatible with any other line of treatment that one might seek.

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The impact of spiritual healing, when combined with traditional medical therapies, has been proven through medical and scientific studies. And, based on these studies as well as anecdotal evidence, many healthcare practitioners are now open to the idea of adding a spiritual component to a patient's overall health plan.

As this trend increases, we can expect to see more medical facilities offering access to spiritual healing therapies. We also are beginning to see some HMOs accept these a legitimate therapies, and insurance plans are starting to cover some of these expenses.

If you are currently under a doctor's care, and want to add a spiritual healing component, be sure to talk to your doctor first and get his or her support.

Spiritual healing for medical conditions

When thinking about medical conditions and spiritual healing, you might first think about faith healing. Usually the term "faith healer" connotes negative images of money-hungry frauds, but in reality, most spiritual healing methods are, at least in some way, faith-based. This is not to say that spiritual healing doesn't have its critics. But even if all that is offered is a placebo effect, the many healing methods that fall under this category have a large following.

"Spiritual healing" has long been used as a general term to describe the methods for aiding in conditions including wound healing, depression, diabetes, tumors, epilepsy, fibromyalgia, heart disease, breast cancer and other cancers, pain management and more.

Spiritual healing is, by definition, the use of non-physical means to treat illness or affliction. Sometimes referred to as "faith healing," spiritual healing is a type of treatment generally considered to be classified as "alternative" or non-traditional. Yet the roots of spiritual healing go back for centuries, and some form of this treatment have been shown to exist in almost every culture known to history. Some people claim that spiritual healing is a "New Age" phenomenon, but in reality that is not so. Most organized religions invoke some aspect of spiritual healing, through prayer, meditation or special intentions, and praying for the sick is a widely recognized and respected tradition.

Prayer has long been used to heal medical conditions. In one study, prayer was documented to cause patients to require fewer antibiotics, it helped to prevent edema (the lungs fill with fluid when the heart can't operate properly), it made insertion of a breathing tube less likely and it was believed to have made death less likely for the patients involved.

Prayer can be used as a healing device even if the person getting prayed for is miles away, and even if that person isn't aware he or she is being prayed for.

By combining exercise, posture and breathing patterns, Qi Gong (sometimes called Chi Kung) helps to strengthen the body and the immune system, which not only helps to cure illness, but can help to prevent it as well.

Polarity Therapy, which blends Eastern and Western ideas by combining bodywork, self-awareness, diet and exercise, has been said to help with symptoms of PMS, migraine headaches and digestive disorders including irritable bowel syndrome.

Acupuncture, a treatment that has seemingly gained respect in the medical community in recent years, uses needles (painlessly) in various "pressure points" along the body to ease the flow of the body's chi (energy) through the proper channels (meridians) of the body. It has been used to treat arthritis, fibromyalgia, allergies, insomnia and skin conditions, as well as conditions linked to anxiety. It has also been effective in disguising the effect of wrinkles and under-eye bags.

Reiki channels energy through the hands of a practitioner into the relaxed body of the client, reducing stress and recharging the body's chi (life force). It is used in hospitals to decrease pain, to help patients recover after chemotherapy, to improve appetite and ability to sleep and to reduce stress.

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Using spiritual healing methods to treat medical conditions at the expense of seeking conventional medical help is not recommended. But when used to complement conventional medicine, many people have found these treatments to be very effective. At the very least, they might offer some hope to someone who desperately needs some.

And when thinking about what "spiritual healing" is – the mind, body and spirit working together as one – it's obvious that spiritual healing and conventional medicine are not mutually exclusive.

Spiritual Healing and Meditation

Much of our internal angst is caused by our external perceptions. The habitual perception of negative circumstances often prevents personal growth. With the stunting of that growth comes a sense of defeat and depression for many people.

For people struggling with these negative energies, spiritual healing may offer some welcome relief.

Spiritual healing can serve as a major catalyst to personal growth. To access those deeper levels of spiritual healing, some believers engage in meditation. Meditation serves as a method of focusing energy on the positive aspects of a surrounding environment, rather than the negative. It aids in the healing process of an injured mind. It promises to rejuvenate, revitalize, and renew.

Most forms of meditation focus on breathing and relaxation techniques. These are used to reprogram the mind to lean towards the positive, rather than the negative. Meditation is usually done in a quiet, non-distracting atmosphere, though it could technically be practiced anywhere. Participants are often asked to imagine specific images or to recite a phrase or sound. These "chants" help to center a person's energy and bring a sense of calmness to the mind.

One of the most common forms of spiritual meditation is Tibetan Healing Meditation. In this type of meditation, the chant that is often said is similar to a prayer in the Western tradition. The chant asks the Green Tara, a Tibetan Goddess, for her blessings and approval.

Spiritual healing in the Tibetan tradition can also include raising prayer flags, constructing prayer wheels, and embarking upon spiritual pilgrimages. These are all meant to heal an individual physically and spiritually.

Tibetan culture has always been steadfast in their spiritual and practical beliefs. They are careful to balance the two worlds to keep both psychological and physiological systems in sync. Meditation is an important element in this difficult balancing act.

The Tibetan form of healing meditation is especially effective for those ailing from stress-related illnesses. Stress is often caused by the imbalance of the spiritual and practical worlds. Meditation helps to balance these thought processes to put the person at ease both spiritually and physically.

Meditation and stress release foster personal health and longevity. It helps a person take responsibility for your own mental state of being. It shows that we are not controlled by the actions of those around us, but by the way we perceive those actions and internalize them. Meditation increases our awareness of both ourselves and others as well as helping us figure out how to deal with everyday problems. Anyone who practices meditation has the potential to reap considerable benefits that will last long after the meditative state has been achieved.

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If you have existing health conditions, using spiritual healing methods to treat medical conditions at the expense of seeking conventional medical help is not recommended. But when used to complement conventional medicine, many people have found these treatments to be very effective. At the very least, they might offer some hope to someone who desperately needs some.

Although some forms of spiritual healing have been around much longer than the conventional medicine of today, they can – and often do -- work very well together. In fact, it is not recommended that any method of spiritual or complementary healing be used alone to treat medical conditions, although many of the methods can stand alone when used to tackle issues such as stress relief.

And when thinking about what “spiritual healing” is – the mind, body and spirit working together as one – it’s obvious that spiritual healing and conventional medicine are not mutually exclusive.

Where Can I Study Spiritual Healing?

Some spiritual healers identify their inborn talent for healing at an early age. Others discover an interest in spiritual healing later in life, oftentimes after a positive personal experience with spiritual healing. This is especially true for those from the West, where spiritual healing remains somewhat on the outskirts of traditional medical practices. Regardless, training is necessary for aspiring spiritual healers, even for those with natural spiritual abilities.

Currently there is no official spiritual healing licensure available. There are, however, a great number of programs that offer training and special certification. Some programs offer one-time workshops that simply outline the practice of spiritual healing. These workshops cater to those interested in spiritual healing who are unsure of what kind of commitment they want to make. These programs also offer more comprehensive classes and serious training.

If you decide to pursue spiritual healing, it is important to educate yourself before entering a program. Spiritual healing is meant to help people relax, balance, and feel whole. Healers will be ineffective without achieving this tranquil state themselves. It is wise for someone who plans on entering training for spiritual healing to first visit a spiritual healer in order to better identify with their patients. It is also vital that the healer continue to engage in personal meditation and other forms of spiritual healing. This requires a great commitment, but it will also yield a higher success rate with patients. If the practitioner is physically, emotionally, and spiritually centered, they are in a better position to help others.

Upon entering a program for spiritual healing, students will learn a myriad of holistic approaches to healing. Most programs offer courses in therapeutic touch, prayer, supernatural healing sources, counseling, and metaphysical healing. Much of spiritual healing focuses on healing without the use of verbal communication. It is based upon meditative practices and nonverbal, channeled communication.

Once certification is earned, a practitioner has a variety of choices in regards to a practicing environment. Spiritual healers are found in hospitals, healing centers, hospice programs, and homes. Some spiritual healing is even done over the Internet. While this limits the methods a spiritual healer can use, the healing can still be effective without the physical presence of the patient. Some seek this type of healing because of its extreme convenience.

There are a number of ways to access training in spiritual healing. There are local schools near most mid- to large-size cities, as well as spiritual centers. And with the Internet, it is even possible to learn long-distance. Courses range from introductory sessions for people who are interested in just learning a bit about the field, to intensive training workshops designed to offer professional certification in the field. Take a look at some of the alternatives available for training in spiritual healing.

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To earn an advanced degree in metaphysics, consider the online study programs from the University of Metaphysical Sciences in Arcata, California. Graduates can study for their Bachelor or Masters degree at their own pace, via mail or online. Candidates for a Ph.D or Doctor of Divinity degree work with instructors and the University of Metaphysical Sciences in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The UMS is a non-profit organization, and offers several program options depending on your career goals and your spiritual aspirations. Courses include Communication and Problem Solving, Hypnosis, Aura Viewing, Native American Traditions, Trauma and Recovery, Reiki, Yoga and many other topics, and students have a number of elective courses available to them as well.

Spiritual healing has made great strides in gaining acceptance from the Western world. With the increasing interest in spiritual healing, it is likely that more certification programs will be established to offer a greater number of people training and accreditation.

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Schools for spiritual healing

Many cultures have believed for centuries in the power of spiritual therapies to align the function of the body, spirit and mind for optimum health.

So how do you learn to become of practitioner of such spiritual healing modalities as Reiki, Qi Gong, Healing Touch therapy, Polarity Therapy and other complementary and alternative medicines?

Many medical schools around the United States now offer courses in spiritual healing. Some of these include Everglades University in Florida, the University of Florida, the University of Minnesota and the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA).

But if you are looking for a school that is dedicated to these alternative and complementary forms of healing, you're in luck. There are several of those, too.

The website www.naturalhealers.com has a list of schools in 25 states and Canada, with information about each school. Some of the listings link directly to the website of the school. Some of these listings include the Southwest Institute of Healing Arts in Arizona, the Lionheat West Institute of Transpersonal Energy Healing in Los Angeles, the WakePoint School of Energy Healing in Colorado and the Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre in Michigan

You can also do a search of various modalities including acupuncture, Ayurveda, chiropractic, herbal medicine, homeopathy, massage therapy, naturopathic medicine, and more.

The Holistic Health Network, www.holisticnetwork.org, lists schools in the United States and Canada that offer training in spiritual healing. Some of these include the Meridian Institute School in Los Angeles, California College of Ayurveda in California, Sarvaga Institute in Illinois and Reiki Center of Greater Washington in Maryland.

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, www.nccam.nih.gov, offers links that are broken up into categories. Training and Career Development Opportunities offers classes to undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral trainees, newly independent investigators and mid-career and senior investigators. The Continuing Education Series offers online courses for health care professionals and the public.

The online school Higher Communications Academy of Alternative Therapies, www.newspiritservices.com/Class.html, offers classes in Identity Therapy and New Balance Clearing Therapy (both created by the school's founder, Whitneay T. Vanwells), in addition to other spiritual healing methods, through "live, weekend video webinars". These techniques, says the website, can be applied in person, over the phone or over great distances.

The Inner Focus Directed Advanced Energy Healing School, www.innerfocus.org, offers classes to lay people and medial professionals (with continuing education units available). Founder and director AlixSandra Parness is quoted in the site: "I dedicated my heart and soul to becoming masterful in the art of healing, and finding ways to empower others to believe in themselves."

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Keep in mind that these courses have varying degrees of required time commitment and tuition – for instance, to be trained as a master in the art of Reiki, one can expect to spend four years in training and pay up to, and in excess of \$10,000, depending on the instructor. Be sure to check requirements, as well as the qualifications of the instructors, before you sign up.

Spiritual Healing and Psychotherapy

Both spiritual healing and psychotherapy can lead a person to making significant steps in the personal development process. The pairing of these two methods of healing is a fairly new practice. Medical experts from the Western tradition have long viewed spiritual healing with great skepticism. They have been known to attribute the apparent success achieved by spiritual healing to coincidence, rather than verifiable positive results.

Some doctors have begun to change their view of spiritual healers, however. Psychotherapists are leading this newfound interest in spiritual healing. These practitioners are most interested in the potential effects that spiritual healing may have on people with emotional and psychosomatic problems. They have found that the high level of relaxation that many patients reach through spiritual healing relieves physical and mental ailments. Oftentimes these results are instantaneous and are undeniably effective according to many psychotherapists.

This has led to a crossover between the Eastern spiritual beliefs and Western medical beliefs of healing the human body and mind. Doctors have begun to see that Western science cannot explain every medical occurrence. Physicians from such backgrounds have begun to turn to spiritual healing as a potential place for treating patients whose symptoms don't fit into conventional paradigms.

Much research has been done to legitimize the effectiveness of spiritual healing. Many of these studies have focused on the issues of anxiety and pain. This has been especially interesting in regards to cardiovascular patients that are experiencing physical problems as a result of mental anxiety. This is of particular interest to psychotherapists. If they can control the mental ailments, physical complications will be avoided.

We all have anxiety in our lives as a result of various emotional trauma. Spiritual healing has been shown to shorten the time necessary for a person to reach an optimal level of emotional awareness, which in turn causes a release of anxiety. It assists people in channeling their energy to rid their minds of negative mental issues, as well as focusing on positive occurrences.

Psychotherapy coupled with spiritual healing appears to offer more positive results than either method alone could produce. As these two forms of healing continue to be used together, additional studies will track the effectiveness of the healing. Both spiritual healing and psychotherapy have been shown to be extremely effective for a wide variety of patients. It is an important step for those from both the Eastern and Western traditions to work together to create the best results possible.

To read more on the subject, you may want to consider one of these books on the topic:

"Integrating Traditional Healing Practices Into Counseling and Psychotherapy," written by Roy Moodley, is a textbook-style book offering a comprehensive overview of the topic. For a quicker read, consider "Sacred Healing: Integrating Spirituality with Psychotherapy," by Ronald L. Mann, Ph.D. This is a more accessible book designed for people with less of a medical or psychotherapeutic approach.

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Offering a look at the topic from a medical point of view, Spiritual Healing: Scientific Validation of a Healing Revolution is written by Daniel J. Benor MD. Originally a skeptic as to the actual effectiveness of spiritual healing, Dr. Benor is now fully convinced, through scientific study and anecdotal review, that there is significant merit to the various methodologies. He is convinced that patients see significant benefits when spiritual healing is combined with more traditional medical care.

Told in the easy-to-read and slightly irreverent style of the popular "Idiots" series, The Complete Idiot's Guide to Spiritual Healing was written by Dr. Susan Gregg. The book delves into complementary medicine and methods like acupuncture, shamanism and massage for therapy. Dr. Gregg includes extensive discussions on using the power of your mind to strengthen the connections between your body and your mind, and use those connections to improve your life in all areas.

Spiritual Healing for Chronic Pain

People turn to spiritual healing for a variety of reasons. Some simply are looking to more effectively balance their lives and become “whole.” Spiritual healers assist these patients in personal development and growth. This process often centers on helping the patient focus positive energies toward productive endeavors, rather than the negative aspects of their surrounding environment.

Besides such emotional and mental benefits, spiritual healing is also used to treat chronic physical pain. To do this a spiritual healer uses his senses to detect biological energies that surround the patient’s body. There are two main ways that spiritual healers detect these energies. One is through “scanning” the patient’s body. This process involves the healer assessing the patient’s entire body looking for inconsistent changes in energy. These changes are usually perceived through a feeling of heat or tingling, which signifies a potential part of the body that is in need of healing.

Another way to detect these energies is through a person’s ‘aura.’ Advanced healers claim to see a colored aura around each individual they treat. Changes in the color suggest a need for healing.

Meditation is another common method used by spiritual healers to treat chronic pain. In order for the meditative state to be effective, the patient must first acknowledge the particular pain. The belief is that if the pain is fully realized and experienced, the patient is in a better position to let it go. Another important step to this process is for the patient to come to the realization that she is not the only one in the world experiencing pain. This is meant to help the patient put the pain in perspective.

During the meditative process the patient is instructed by the spiritual healer to follow a specific breathing pattern. While the breathing should be natural, the patient should be conscious of each inhale and exhale. The patient is instructed to visualize breathing in their pain and breathing out relief. This entire process is meant to neutralize and calm the mind. Meditation has been shown to reduce mental and emotional anxieties that often lead to physical pains. This is especially true for chronic pain that is often caused by depression or anxiety.

Many patients are especially interested in spiritual healing for the treatment of chronic pain because it offers an alternative to pharmaceutical dependence. It offers the potential of a permanent elimination of the pain without the use of traditional Western medicines.

To learn more about the field, consider reading a book, or taking a course from a practitioner.

If you are looking for a good introductory text, try [Energy Healing for Beginners: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Basics of Spiritual Healing](#) by Ruth White. The book offers beginners a close look at the methodology of spiritual healing, and covers such topics as basic guidelines, how to get started in the field, and step by step guidelines to healing. Ms. White has written a number of books on this topic, including [Using Your Chakras: A New Approach to Healing Your Life](#) and [Working With Your Chakras: A Physical, Emotional, & Spiritual Approach](#). A trained psychotherapist, Ms. White offers training sessions throughout the UK.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

The Healing Energy of Your Hands by Michael Bradford relates the story of how Bradford, formerly a high-level executive, began a personal journey toward his new life as a spiritual healer. Written in a practical and down-to-earth tone, Bradford creates an ultimately believable scenario of this transition, and offers guidance for those who may be considering a similar path. Another book by the same author is Hands-on Spiritual Healing.

Spiritual Healing for Pain Management

Research has shown the numerous positive effects spiritual healing can have on the body, mind, and soul. In fact, more and more medical professionals from Western medical traditions have begun to embrace spiritual healing as an effective way to manage and eliminate chronic pain.

Most pain relief from spiritual healing is a result of initial mental and emotional healing. When the ailments of the mind and soul are addressed and eliminated, physical pain is often avoided. Depression, stress, and anxiety can all materialize in physical aches and pains. Spiritual healing focuses on relaxing, revitalizing, and renewing the patient. This helps a patient eliminate or avoid emotional stress altogether.

Perhaps most interesting are the studies that follow anxiety-related cardiovascular patients. It was shown that spiritual healing helped to ease the anxiety related to being hospitalized and thus allowed for a quicker recovery time.

Therapeutic touch is one common form of spiritual healing used on patients with physical ailments. In this method, the spiritual healer holds his hands over the part of the body that is in need of healing. The patient and the healer often feel heat and tingling in this exchange. This is attributed to the transfer of energy that is occurring between the healer's hands and the patient's body.

Spiritual healers will also "scan" a person's body, attempting to sense areas that may be in need of treatment. It has even been suggested that the most sensitive healers have the ability to actually see an "aura" or color around a person. These healers base their treatments on the types of colors they see and where they are seen. Along with that, they note changes in the aura from session to session to determine what aspects of the healing have been effective.

Perhaps one of the greatest contributions the practice of spiritual healing has made is its exposure of the deep and meaningful connection between the body, mind, and spirit. When one is injured, the other parts suffer. Spiritual healing generally starts with the inner healing of a person, which in turn, leads to physical healing. While many skeptics remain, the success of spiritual healing is undeniable. Spiritual healers continue to point towards the many patients who claim to have greatly benefited from spiritual healing. This is especially common in patients who have experienced a drastic reduction in physical pain as a result of spiritual healing.

There are a number of books on the market that deal with spiritual healing to address physical ailments. Many of them are written for beginners, and offer good insights into the field.

[The Art of Spiritual Healing](#) offers a rich and insightful look at the relationship between healing and Christ. Written by Joel S. Goldsmith, the book examines the relationship between God and healing, and the importance of being centered in Christ to bring about truly beneficial healing. Other books by the same author include [Practicing the Presence](#), [The Art of Meditation](#), [The Infinite Way](#), and [The Foundation of Mysticism: Spiritual Healing Principles](#). Goldsmith is a recognized expert and an authority in the field, and offers his own insight as well as his research over years of being involved in the art and science of spiritual healing.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

The Healing Energy of Your Hands by Michael Bradford relates the story of how Bradford, formerly a high level executive, began a personal journey toward his new life as a spiritual healer. Written in a practical and down-to-earth tone, Bradford creates an ultimately believable scenario of this transition, and offers guidance for those who may be considering a similar path. Another book by the same author is Hands-on Spiritual Healing.

Certification in Spiritual Healing

Spiritual healers work in a variety of settings, including hospitals, private practices, hospice programs, and other various healing centers. While there is no official licensure necessary for spiritual healers, there are programs that offer special certifications in holistic care. The therapies that are taught at these schools include therapeutic touch, prayer, counseling, supernatural healing sources, and metaphysical healing.

Although spiritual healing certification is not associated with any official medical programs, the practice has gained much legitimacy in recent years. Spiritual healing focuses on balancing the body and mind to achieve a more complete and peaceful state of being.

Many spiritual healers are born with an intrinsic gift for healing. Some, however, have worked hard to hone the skills that may not come to them as naturally as those with that gift. Regardless of the methods of acquiring those skills, spiritual healers are able to see, think, and feel in a unique way. Much of their healing abilities deal with instincts and emotions, rather than hard science. Spiritual healers use a variety of healing methods. These include everything from skills related to sensing, cleansing, repairing, and balancing. These techniques are all meant to cater to the patient's body, mind, and spirit.

For spiritual healing to truly work, the patient must remain committed to the healing process. It would be counterproductive for a patient to see a healer and then return to the negative behavior that caused the healing to be necessary in the first place. Spiritual healers help the patient not only heal from existing wounds, but also trains the patient in better personal care, which leads to greater individual growth and happiness.

Some spiritual healers have begun to use other forms of healing in conjunction with traditional spiritual methods. One arena this is being done in is psychotherapy. In fact, some psychotherapists have found so much legitimacy in the practice of spiritual healing that they themselves have pursued personal certification in spiritual healing. This has been shown to provide a more all-encompassing healing experience.

As spiritual healing continues to gain more recognition and respect in the mainstream, it is likely that more certification programs will be established. Along with this will come more consistent standards and perhaps official licensure. The type of certification, however, is of little concern to those who have benefited from spiritual healing. A healthier body, mind, and soul is enough proof for them in regards to the effectiveness of spiritual healing.

Many medical schools around the United States now offer courses in spiritual healing. Some of these include Everglades University in Florida, the University of Florida, the University of Minnesota and the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA).

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

But if you are looking for a school that is dedicated to these alternative and complementary forms of healing, you're in luck. There are several of those, too.

The website www.naturalhealers.com has a list of schools in 25 states and Canada, with information about each school. Some of the listings link directly to the website of the school. Some of these listings include the Southwest Institute of Healing Arts in Arizona, the Lionheat West Institute of Transpersonal Energy Healing in Los Angeles, the WakePoint School of Energy Healing in Colorado and the Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre in Michigan.

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, www.nccam.nih.gov, offers links that are broken up into categories. Training and Career Development Opportunities offers classes to undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral trainees, newly independent investigators and mid-career and senior investigators. The Continuing Education Series offers online courses for health care professionals and the public.

You can also do a search of various modalities including acupuncture, Ayurveda, chiropractic, herbal medicine, homeopathy, massage therapy, naturopathic medicine, and more.

The science of spiritual healing

Critics maintain that there is no science involved in spiritual healing. Experts in the field of Complementary and Alternative Medicine disagree.

Certainly there are popular and, some say, very effective methods such as prayer, which don't involve much science at all. But there are other means of spiritual healing.

Many spiritual healing methods are based on the use of the body's internal and external energies. Most of these therapies, including Reiki, Healing Touch, Qi Gong, Polarity Therapy and others, work along the basic principle that energy must flow freely throughout the body in order for mind, body and spirit to work together. Only then can health be achieved.

We'll break it down a little bit. It is believed that there are energies within the body called prana or chi (which means "life force"), etheric energy, doshas – there are many names for these energies, as they have been discussed for centuries by various cultures.

The energy field that surrounds the body is called the aura. Some claim to be able to see the aura with the naked eye. In recent years, science has developed the ability to photograph the aura. Some spiritual healers say that they can analyze these photographs to diagnose specific problems in the body.

Scientifically, these energies are called putative energy fields or biofields. These forms of subtle energy within and around the body have never been measured in a way that can be documented.

Chakras are seven or eight (depending on varying philosophies) points along the body, from the base of the spine to the head, that attract and house these energies. If the passages are blocked, the mind, body and spirit is inhibited and can not work together to achieve optimum health.

Many spiritual healing therapies including Reiki, Healing Touch Therapy and Therapeutic Touch Therapy work upon the principle that energy, either from the patient or from a greater outside source, can flow through the hands of a practitioner into the body of his or her client. Some of these therapies involve touch, but some are administered by moving the hands along the body, but without touching.

Therapies like Qi Gong and Polarity Therapy work on diet, exercise and self-awareness as well as spiritual means to make the body healthy. These therapies, as they involve more conventional methods of health attainment, might be more easily accepted by skeptics.

Proponents of all of these therapies say that using them together with conventional medicine can only benefit the patient. Some believe that all illness, whether mental, physical or emotional, begins in the brain, at least in some small part. So when all energies are flowing freely, healing can begin. And many healthcare providers, including physicians, are coming to recognize that spiritual healing can have a positive impact on prognosis and recovery in their patients.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) conducts and funds scientific studies of these types of treatments regularly. For information about studies they have done, or to apply for a grant for a study that you would like to do, go to www.nccam.nih.gov.

Spiritual healing takes many forms, including a self-healing regime that has been used in many religions for centuries. And it is becoming increasingly popular outside of organized religion, too. In addition to prayer, many people are turning to meditation, journaling, and other forms of introspection to connect with a higher spiritual power. This connection, they say, enables them to absorb the healing power, become aware of things they can do to help improve their own condition, and ultimately take charge of their own well-being.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) is the ultimate resource for anyone who is looking for information about Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM).

With offices and laboratories in Bethesda, Maryland, NCCAM is a component of the National Institutes of Health, which is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It first opened in 1992, under the title of Office of Alternative Medicine. In November of 1996, it was designated a World Health Organization Collaborating Center in Traditional Medicine.

Among NCCAM's responsibilities is to conduct and sponsor (by offering grants) scientific research of CAM, training of CAM practitioners and distribution of information to health care professionals. They also work to integrate CAM methods into mainstream healthcare.

The website, www.nccam.nih.gov, offers information about CAM including how to find a practitioner and what questions to ask while you are searching for one. They do not offer a referral service, but they do suggest ways to go about locating a practitioner.

For those who are in the CAM research field, NCCAM's website offers information about applying for a grant and who is eligible to receive a grant from them. They provide advice on writing a grant with samples to view. When you're ready to apply, you can do it right from the site. There is further information and advice for their grant holders.

If you're not in the field but would like to be, the website offers information about training and how to get involved in clinical trials.

But you don't need to be a CAM expert to find this website useful. It includes explanations of everything you need to know about CAM, from just what it is to what exactly a clinical trial entails. And there's a medical dictionary, to help with those words that might be new (or you've heard them but never really knew what they meant).

In the "health information" section, there is list of various topics with information about how they each relate to CAM, including acupuncture, various herbs, homeopathy, menopause, dietary supplements, arthritis, depression, chiropractic and cancer.

In the "News and Events" section, you can find information about upcoming meetings and lectures, a staff bibliography, and list of alerts and advisories and other information that is valuable to both the casual reader and the health care professional.

The site includes the history of NCCAM as it has developed and progressed over the years, and also its legislative history.

In the area and looking for an interesting place to visit with your family? You'll find detailed information about locations of all the labs and offices (and the food court!) on the campus of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and rules about security.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

Looking for a new job in the healing field? There are listings for openings at NCCAM as well as the NIH, jobs for students and information about training and education as well. This site offers some great information to help professionals apply for federal jobs, and even offer information on expected pay and salary schedules.

Students may be interested to read about summer educational employment programs, combining school with work. NIH also offers summer internships. The site has useful links to lead you to the right place for more information.

For specific training and career development, the site offers an extensive list of opportunities, for both undergraduate and post-graduate study. And if you are looking for creative ways to finance your ongoing education, the NIH offers loan repayment programs that can help make training opportunities affordable. In addition to loans, there are also training grants available.

Healing Gifts

Looking for a unique and thoughtful gift for a friend or loved one? There are a wonderful array of gifts that are designed to bring joy, harmony and healing benefits to the recipient. Giving one of these gifts will ensure that your gift will be appreciated, and remembered, for years to come.

Buying for tea lover? Consider a gift basket backed with a variety of herbal teas. The ancient Far Eastern cultures have long recognized the healing properties of teas, and there are a wide variety of concoctions available for just about any ailment. Licorice tea offers a pungent taste and a healthful boost, while ginger tea is known to help alleviate digestive ailments and sinus congestion. Green tea is helpful in boosting energy and metabolism, and Echinacea tea has been shown to boost the immune system and fight off colds.

For a truly unique gift, consider a set of singing bowls. Long used in the Far East to induce a meditative state, the bowls are created to provide harmonic tones and are said to help reach a state of enlightenment. Aside from their spiritual powers, most sets of these bowls are beautifully made and will make a lovely addition to any home.

Aromatherapy can create a relaxing ambience and is an important part of many massage and relaxation routines. Many websites offers a variety of essential oils and aroma essences, which can be mixed and matched to create a custom-made gift that is truly one-of-a-kind. Depending on who is receiving the gift, you can tailor it to their exact needs. For example, lavender essences can help induce restful sleep, while lemon verbena and other citrus essences help to energize. A romantic mood can be set with sandalwood and other musky scents, and sage and other herbs help to cleanse the air and add a soothing and peaceful element to the room.

To soothe an overactive mind and induce sleep, there are also musical selections designed specifically to lull you into sleep. These selections make wonderful gifts, especially in combination with a soothing scented gift or candle. This music often include natural sounds, soft music and sometimes even employ various levels of white noise. These pieces are designed to help you block out the ambient sounds that may be keeping you awake, while inducing a relaxed state.

With the recent surge in popularity of spas and wellness centers, a new genre of music called "spa music" has emerged. The music is available to practitioners as well as private individuals, and can help you recreate the spa experience in your own home. Full of beautifully arrangement instrumentals, soothing vocalizations and gentle rhythms, spa music can help to create the perfect ambience for massage, mediation and other forms of spiritual centeredness.

You may want to consider a book as a gift. There are a number of books on various spiritual healing topics. Imagine what a lovely gift you can create with a book, a CD, and some scented oils or other aromatherapy treats! Told in the easy-to-read and slightly irreverent style of the popular "Idiots" series, [The Complete Idiot's Guide to Spiritual Healing](#) was written by Dr. Susan Gregg. The book explores complementary medicine and methods like acupuncture, shamanism and massage for therapy. Dr. Gregg includes extensive discussions on using the power of your mind to strengthen the connections between your body and your mind, and use those connections to improve your life in all areas. Other books by Dr. Gregg include [Dance of Power: A Shamanic Journey](#), [The Toltec Way: A Guide to Personal Transformation](#), [Finding the Sacred Self](#), and [Mastering the Toltec Way: A Daily Guide to Happiness, Freedom, and Joy](#).

Where to Buy Healing Crystals

Crystals have long been thought to have certain healing and energizing properties, and have been used for centuries in healing rituals. Recently experience resurgence in popularity, crystals are now a thorough modern commodity, with roots in ancient methodologies. Legend even refers to crystal healing in the ancient world of Atlantis.

Among the healing crystals are a variety of colors, all with specific healing properties.

Amethyst – helpful in alleviating headaches, blood sugar disorders, anger management and controlling nightmares.

Aquamarine – used to alleviate symptoms of the heat, lymph nodes and other internal systems. Helps to manage fear and anxiety as well, and bring about a soothing state of mind.

Carnelian – improves the circulatory system, and can help to aid reproductive systems and the pancreas. Thought to have a positive effect on confidence levels and ambition, which may result in increased success and drive.

Citrine – useful when treating patients with food allergies and digestion problems. Also good for problem-solving and depression. Helps to diffuse negative energy.

Coral – strong crystal that has a positive impact on the blood and heart. Also good for tissue healing. Not recommended for people with high blood pressure.

Diamond – boosts feelings of love, generosity and spirituality, as well as mental clarity and confidence.

Emerald – in addition to helping balance blood sugars, these stones can also help with childbirth, eye troubles and lymphatic systems. Can help to ease insomnia and depression.

Jade – known to have a powerful effect on the kidneys and immune system, jade also helps to boost courage, compassion and mental balance.

Lapis – eases symptoms of anxiety and nervousness, and can ease insomnia too. Helps to soothe the mind and encourage organized thought.

Malachite – good for stomach and kidney troubles, the stone can also help with inflammation and anger issues.

Rose quartz – prized for its beauty, rose quartz also helps to instill emotional balance and boost self-esteem. Can also help to bring about alignment of the physical and emotional states.

Ruby – good for fighting infections and dealing with blood issues, rubies also stimulate the pituitary gland. Thought to make all emotions more vibrant and intense.

Sapphire – useful for reducing fevers, stemming nosebleeds and helping with hearing problems. Also good for treating depression, and may help bring about a calming sensation.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

To find crystals, do a quick search on the Internet. You will discover a number of websites devoted to selling crystals and other healing items. Some even offer a free consultation, to make sure you find the right crystal for your particular need.

Mountain Gems and Healing Crystals offers a toll-free number and a free consultation session. In addition to individual crystals, they offer kits with an assortment of seven healing stones. They also stock beautiful crystal pendants to wear on a chain.

Peaceful Minds is another website that offers crystals and healing items. Their gift sets are aimed at cleansing your aura, balancing your chakra, and even include crystals to use during massage therapy. Incense, herbs and smudges are also available on their site. To help you learn before you buy, the site offers an extensive dictionary of the various types of crystals and their uses.

Specializing in New Age clothing, gifts and other items, Mandarav has a good inventory of healing crystals. Sold as individual crystals or as jewelry items, their crystals are aimed at balancing the chakra. The site offers a wealth of information on healing crystals, including a free e-book on how to use crystals for healing.

Before you purchase any crystals for healing, be sure to understand each one and what they can help. Some crystals are not appropriate for all people, and if you are unsure, consult a professional healer.

Healing Crystals

Crystals have long been thought to have certain healing and energizing properties, and have been used for centuries in healing rituals. Recently experience resurgence in popularity, crystals are now a thorough modern commodity, with roots in ancient methodologies. Legend even refers to crystal healing in the ancient world of Atlantis.

The first step in using crystals as part of a healing therapy involves the cleansing stage. This is typically accomplished by wearing the crystal, or carrying it close to your body, for at least three weeks. It's important to note that the crystal should be with the person at all times to have the most effect. This cleaning stage is important to begin to unblock energy paths.

During this cleaning and clearing stage, you may begin to note that you are undergoing physical and spiritual changes. This is a sign that the healing process is beginning to do its work.

Next comes the harmonizing stage, during which the crystals help to integrate the recent changes you've seen into the overall energy field. You may notice a significant change in your thought patterns, your emotions and the way you relate to others.

After the harmonizing stage, you'll enter the third and final stage of stability. During this time, all the positive changes you've experienced are being integrated in a more permanent way. This phase will include a gradual diminishing in the amount of time you should wear the crystals.

Depending on your spiritual needs, various crystals will be most appropriate and bring about the most comprehensive healing.

Amethyst – helpful in alleviating headaches, blood sugar disorders, anger management and controlling nightmares.

Aquamarine – used to alleviate symptoms of the heat, lymph nodes and other internal systems. Help to manage fear and anxiety as well.

Carnelian – improves the circulatory system, and can help to aid reproductive systems and the pancreas. Thought to have a positive effect on confidence levels and ambition.

Citrine – useful when treating patients with food allergies and digestion problems. Also good for problem-solving and depression. Helps to diffuse negative energy.

Coral – strong crystal that has a positive impact on the blood and heart. Also good for tissue healing. Not recommended for people with high blood pressure.

Diamond – boosts feelings of love, generosity and spirituality, as well as mental clarity and confidence.

Emerald – in addition to helping balance blood sugars, these stones can also help with childbirth, eye troubles and lymphatic systems. Can help to ease insomnia and depression.

Jade – known to have a powerful effect on the kidneys and immune system, jade also helps to boost courage, compassion and mental balance.

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Lapis – eases symptoms of anxiety and nervousness, and can ease insomnia too. Helps to soothe the mind and encourage organized thought.

Malachite – good for stomach and kidney troubles, the stone can also help with inflammation and anger issues.

Rose quartz – prized for its beauty, rose quartz also helps to instill emotional balance and boost self-esteem. Can also help to bring about alignment of the physical and emotional states.

Ruby – good for fighting infections and dealing with blood issues, rubies also stimulate the pituitary gland. Thought to make all emotions more vibrant and intense.

Sapphire – useful for reducing fevers, stemming nosebleeds and helping with hearing problems. Also good for treating depression, and may help bring about a calming sensation.

Volumes have been written on the various crystals used in healing and their properties. For help in getting started, you should contact a healer trained in the crystal arts. Some websites offer a free consultation when purchasing crystals, assuring that you find exactly what you need for the most positive effect.

Spiritual Healing Events

Interested in learning more about the art and science of spiritual healing? You might want to take advantage of one of the many events in your city or town. Events range from short workshops, to lectures, to instructional classes and even retreats.

One of the best ways to find events is via the Internet. There are a number of sites that offer fairly comprehensive event calendar, including the Holistic Healing Events Calendar at About.com.

In that calendar, you'll find a range of programs: from spirit drum circles to healing with flowers. All the events include dates, times and locations, and include a brief write-up of what to expect, costs, and other details. Their calendar extends out for several months, and organizations are welcome to post their own events onto the calendar as well.

If you are lucky enough to live near a spiritual healing center, you'll likely find several events that are open to the public. Chrysalis Farm, located in the countryside outside of Lawrence, Kansas, offers workshops on energy balancing, animal communication, and traditional sweat lodge ceremonies. The workshops are held on the site of their straw bale building, made using sustainable building techniques. Chrysalis Farm also welcomes outside groups as a unique location for a conference or retreat.

Located in Houston, Texas, Atlantis Health & Wellness holds courses or workshops nearly every week. Their signature event, which recurs frequently, is the Angels of Light fair, dedicated to the holistic, psychic and complementary therapies. Past speakers at Atlantic have included Reiki masters, angel psychics, and crystal healing experts.

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, or NCCAM, hosts a series of events throughout the year. Sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, NCCAM exists to provide research on alternative medical practices. Their events are general of a professional nature, and are generally quite technical in nature. A recent workshop in College Park, Maryland reviewed current studies in the use of probiotics as food and drugs to maintain health and promote healing. Other topics in the past have included an overview of complementary medicine and how it relates to cancer treatments; the use of alternative therapies in pediatric medicine; and the use of mineral supplements to prevent chronic disease.

Located in the Midwest, the Inner Focus healing school offers a calendar of events that are held throughout several states, including Illinois, Wisconsin, and Toronto, Ontario. The week-long sessions are designed to prepare students to become certified as a healer. Additional special events include pastoral retreats, conference, and a reunion. The school has accreditation for adult learning, and offers certification for therapeutic massage.

To find events in your own town, contact your local spiritual healing center. Most small and mid-sized cities have some alternative medicine facility, and they often host events designed to educate the public. Churches, synagogues and other religion facilities are another good place to check. Most religions incorporate some form of spiritual healing into their practice.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

You might also ask your healthcare provider to help you find some events in your town. With the increasing popularity of complementary therapies, physicians and general practitioners are often aware of events in the holistic community, and may be able to suggest an event that would be useful to you. And, of course, don't overlook your local library or community center. Reiki, acupuncture, crystal healing, aura balancing, feng shui and so many other methods are becoming increasingly popular, and most towns of any size will have at least a few workshops or classes planned.

How Does Crystal Healing Work?

Since ancient times, healers have relied on a number of techniques to promote healing and maintain good health. Massage, energy balancing, aura reading and other methods help to keep ancient peoples healthy and well balanced. One of these methods is the use of crystals, whereby specific crystals are worn by the recipient to balance energy and integrate that new balance into their entire being.

But how does it work?

The underlying principle of healing crystals is a focus on the person as a whole. Rather than simply treating the physical manifestation of illness or injury, the crystals work to restore balance between the physical, emotional and spiritual aspects. Crystals have been noted to be effective in a range of ailments, including stress and anxiety disorders, terminal illness, surgical recovery, and other ills.

To start, a crystal healer will determine present balance of the patient's magnetic energy field. Once the determination is made regarding where the field is out of balance, certain crystals are chosen. Each type of crystal has been shown to be effective in different areas, as per the chart below:

Amethyst – helpful in alleviating headaches, blood sugar disorders, anger management and controlling nightmares.

Aquamarine – used to alleviate symptoms of the heat, lymph nodes and other internal systems. Help to manage fear and anxiety as well.

Carnelian – improves the circulatory system, and can help to aid reproductive systems and the pancreas. Thought to have a positive effect on confidence levels and ambition.

Citrine – useful when treating patients with food allergies and digestion problems. Also good for problem-solving and depression. Helps to diffuse negative energy.

Coral – strong crystal that has a positive impact on the blood and heart. Also good for tissue healing. Not recommended for people with high blood pressure.

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Lapis – eases symptoms of anxiety and nervousness, and can ease insomnia too. Helps to soothe the mind and encourage organized thought.

Malachite – good for stomach and kidney troubles, the stone can also help with inflammation and anger issues.

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

Rose quartz – prized for its beauty, rose quartz also helps to instill emotional balance and boost self-esteem. Can also help to bring about alignment of the physical and emotional states.

Ruby – good for fighting infections and dealing with blood issues, rubies also stimulate the pituitary gland. Thought to make all emotions more vibrant and intense.

Sapphire – useful for reducing fevers, stemming nosebleeds and helping with hearing problems. Also good for treating depression, and may help bring about a calming sensation.

Once chosen, the crystals are worn by the patient for a certain period of time. Anecdotal evidence abounds about the effectiveness of various crystals on particular conditions. And now, thanks to scientific studies, it appears that the theory of energy fields and auras can be validated, and crystals have been shown to have an impact on these.

Volumes have been written on the various crystals used in healing and their properties. For help in getting started, you should contact a healer trained in the crystal arts. Some websites offer a free consultation when purchasing crystals, assuring that you find exactly what you need for the most positive effect.

Healing with Flower Essences

An offshoot of aromatherapy, flower essence healing involves the use of natural compounds from flowers to encourage healing and maintain good health. The art of using flower essences is not new. In fact, ancient Chinese and Egyptians all used flowers in their healing rituals. The floral compounds helped to pave the way for modern pharmaceuticals.

Flower essence healing can take many forms. In one type, drops or tinctures made from particular flowers are taken for several days. These are called the Bach Remedies, named after Dr. Edward Bach, an expert in the field. They can offer relief from stress, anxiety, depression, fear, and personality traits like selfishness or low self-esteem. Flower essence is also thought to help encourage positive thought, and therefore positive energy.

So where do flower essences come from? The process is actually fairly simple. It begins by putting certain flowers into water, and using the energy of sun to help the water absorb the energy of the blossoms. When applied to the person, either on the skin or on the tongue, the energies that were absorbed by the water are transferred to the person. The vibrations caused by this energy transfer can have an effect on the person's own energy field.

According to flower essence practitioners, poor health generally results from a lack of balance, either with our own inner spirit, our relationship with others, or the world around us. This lack of balance manifests itself through physical symptoms. We've all had the experience of stress causing a headache, or anxiety causing a stomach ache. This is a physical response to an emotional event.

Flower essence therapy aims to alleviate the physical symptoms by restoring a healthy balance. Dr. Bach discovered 38 specific flower combinations that have been shown to have a subtle, yet significant, effect.

Aspen has been shown to help control anxiety and phobias, and can even help reduce nightmares. Crab apple can help improve endurance, and has been seen to help in facial rashes. The flowers of the Larch tree can help boost confidence, while the olive blossom restores a feeling of peacefulness.

The Flower Essence Society has a wealth of information on the power of flower essences to bring about balance and good health. The organization works to promote the science behind the practice of flower essences. They also offer a program for flower essence professionals, with a training and certification program. International in scope, they offer programs and training courses around the world.

To learn more about flower essences, you may want to consider these books:

"Flowers that Heal" by Patricia Kaminski offers a look at the effects of flower essences with some interesting historical background. She has written other books as well, including "Choosing Flower Essences: An Assessment Guide."

Written by Julian and Martine Barnard, "The Healing Herbs of Edward Bach" give a good overview of Dr. Bach's work, and his 38 essences. Julian Barnard has written other books on the topic, including "Back Flower Remedies: Form & Function."

Courtesy of Royalty Free Coaching Products

If you are truly interested in learning more about flower essences and how they might help you, find a local floral essence practitioner for guidance. If you can't find one in your own town, you might want to check nearby cities for someone who will work with you.

To purchase flower essences on your own, all you have to do is enter a web search on any of the major search engines, and a number of sites will pop up. Be sure that the person you are buying from has a strong background in the science and theory of flower essences, to be sure you are getting your money's worth.

Islam and Spiritual Healing

In recent years, a small number of violent radicals, operating under the umbrella of the Islamic faith, have given the public a distorted view of the Islamic faith. One of the core beliefs of the Islamic faith is the health is a gift, emanating from the God. To those who follow the faith, they believe that next to faith itself, health is the second greatest blessing.

Their belief is firmly centered around an understanding that good health is a state of grace, brought on by the divine. Muslims believe that the concept of one's health should be viewed as a constantly changing and renewing entity, overseen by Allah.

It follows, then, that the Islamic faith would be rich in traditions involving a variety of healing practices. Among these is a strong belief in the power of certain foods to promote well-being and good health. Barley, a staple of traditional Islamic culture, is thought to cure kidney problems as well as relieve a grieving heart. And following an illness, it is thought that eating a bread made from a mix of barley and beet roots would help bring back the patient's strength and vitality.

Dates are another traditional food for Muslims, and in fact most fasts are broken by enjoying dates, or dried grapes if no dates are available. They were thought to be cleansing to the body, a claim which modern science verifies by their high fiber content. And as a traditional source of energy, dates are high in sugar. Thus they make the ideal food with which to break a fast, when the body would be low in blood sugar and crave a good source of energy. And pregnant women of the Islamic tradition often have used dates to help prepare them for childbirth.

Muslims also believe that honey was proscribed by Allah as a tonic for a variety of ills. Traditionally used to help treat sore throats and stomach ailments, modern science shows us that honey also can help stop bacteria from growing in the mouth, can help blood to circulate better, and even used to treat skin irritations and minor burns.

The olive is another food that figures prominently in the Koran. In addition to its usefulness in maintaining good general health, olives are also known for their nutritive value to the skin. And some even claim the olive oil can alleviate hemorrhoids. And once again, modern dieticians extol the virtue of this ancient food. The Mediterranean diet, rich in olive oils, has been shown to help maintain good health and promote a stronger circulatory system.

Throughout history, various religions have relied on certain foods to help maintain their followers' good health. The Islamic faith is rich in these traditions, especially surrounding the fasting month of Ramadan.

Islam also preaches other methods of healing with religious overtones. Among their beliefs is a prohibition against alcohol and mind-altering drugs. This complete ban comes from the understanding that behavior is controlled by the brain. Bad behavior is normally stopped by feelings of shame. Alcohol and drugs lessen or eliminate this shame reaction, causing the person to perform acts they normally would avoid.

To learn more about healing practices as they relate to the Islamic faith, visit your local mosque. Most have community outreach programs, and their programs often include information healthy living as Muslims. If you don't have a mosque near you, you may want to contact your local library or university to help you find local resources. Or, check the Internet; there is a wealth of information available on Islam and the healing arts.

Kabbalah and Spiritual Healing

In recent years a number of high profile celebrities, including Madonna and Britney Spears, have publicly embraced the Kabbalah, the ancient practice of Jewish spirituality. This popular coverage has made it seem to some that Kabbalah is a new invention, or a religious trend. In fact, the roots of Kabbalah go back for thousands of years.

The practice of self-healing through spirituality in the Jewish faith stems from the principles in Kabbalah as well as the Torah. Traditional or mainstream methods for achieving healing have involved prayers, singing and other more widely accepted approaches.

There are also alternative methods, ones that involve a more direct and personal connection to the physical self, as it relates to the spiritual. The Kabbalah promotes a deeply spiritual version of healing that calls upon the power of the human soul to bring about healing and wholeness.

At its core, Jewish healing is centered around a belief that all healing comes from a divine source, as a result of the will of God. And whether you are healed by a physician, medication or another source, it is God's will that caused the healing to occur. This differs quite radically from other types of spiritual healing. In most alternative therapies, the healing comes from whatever source directly brings it about. In Kabbalah, the healing itself comes through a variety of channels, but emanates from one spiritual and divine source.

It is relatively easy to find Kabbalah masters to help you learn the arts of Jewish healing. Several organizations exist to help you connect with a Kabbalah center in your city. And there are programs available online that can help you connect teachers and instructors.

One of these organizations is the Society of Souls. This group promotes the use of a method called Integrated Kabbalah Healing, or IKH. It is based on a combination of ancient Kabbalah understanding and modern-day science. The method aims to provide a practical framework in which to promote healing of one's self and others. This is in accordance with Kabbalah's belief that individual healing helps to bring about healing in others and in world at large, as we are all related on a spiritual level.

The Society of Souls offers a 3-year training program, offered in a series of weekend retreats. The program includes a support system for students, and can be an intensive spiritual journey.

There are other programs available for learning the art and science of Kabbalah and spiritual healing, including self-study guides. One program, call Life First, is available online at the Jewish Healing website. It is a set of 6 CDs, and the program is designed to give you the basic understanding you need to begin to use the techniques of Jewish spiritual healing. The makers of the program are attempting to continue the trend of given ordinary people access to the methods and wisdom of the healing arts. Often reserved as the realm of mystics or Kabbalists, Jewish spiritual healing can now be practiced by anyone with a sincere desire to learn it.

To find out more about the Kabbalah, and its practice of divine spiritual healing, contact your local Kabbalah center. You can find them in most mid- to large-sized cities. If you can't find a Kabbalah center near you, try the local Jewish community organization for help. You may also be able to find a resource near your through the Internet. Or, contact one of the many Kabbalah guides that advertise on line.

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Even though the modern publicity may make it seem like a fad, Kabbalah healing has been practiced for centuries, and is likely to continue to be an integral part of the Jewish faith.