

Optional Study and Practice for the Spiritual Healing Study Program

Part 2: The Principles and Their Role in Healing

Session 4: The Nature of Error, continued

Recording 264B: “Living the Principles of Mysticism and Healing by Knowing the Truth, continued”

Review of Previous Sessions

Part 1: Introduction

Session 1: Introduction and Overview (Recording 477B)

Joel gave a broad overview of spiritual healing in The Infinite Way, emphasizing that it is not a technique or system to be learned. Healing is the fruitage, or the natural manifestation, of the realized consciousness of the major principles of The Infinite Way: the nature of God, the nature of individual being, the nature of error, and the nature of prayer. The realized consciousness is the state in which the truth of these principles is *real* to us; it is our lived reality. In The Infinite Way, spiritual healing is never about manipulating or changing conditions. Healing is *revealing*—the revealing of the truth that already IS. To review the key points in this recording, [click/tap here](#).

Part 2: The Principles and Their Role in Healing

Session 1: The Nature of God (Recording 261A)

There are no special healing principles in The Infinite Way. While Joel does speak of the “healing” principles, they are the same as the foundational principles of The Infinite Way—the nature of God, the nature of individual being, the nature of error, and the nature of prayer. With this recording, we began our detailed review of these four principles, starting with the nature of God and its relationship to spiritual healing. To review the key points in this recording, [click/tap here](#).

Part 2: The Principles and Their Role in Healing

Session 2: The Nature of Individual Being (Recording 120B)

The nature of individual being stems from the nature of God as Omnipresence. If God is Omnipresence, there can be no other presence. Therefore, if we are “present”—if we exist—our being must be wholly within that Omnipresence and share its qualities. We are infinite, eternal, and unique expressions of spiritual being. As Joel reminds us, God alone **is**, and because God **is**, all individual being is God expressing **as**. Discords come from the belief that we are separate from God, outside of Omnipresence. To have a healing consciousness is to recognize that, because every individual is one with that Presence, each is a perfect spiritual being. So, rather than attempting to change or overcome any appearance of discord, we *rise into the consciousness* of the true spiritual nature of individual being as one with God. To review the key points in this recording, [click/tap here](#).

Part 2: The Principles and Their Role in Healing

Session 3: The Nature of Error (Recording 645AB)

Joel begins this class by reviewing the divine nature of individual being and then asks the obvious question: “But I have pain, there’s a war, there is injustice, the world is cracking up, there are earthquakes, floods, famine, disaster. How can that be after what we have just learned about God *as*, and God *is*, and I *am*? Where would there be room in the whole of this world for a single error if our basic premise were true? If it is true that God is infinite, and beside God there is nothing else, where then is there an error?” This question leads to a marvelous lesson about the nature of error and its role in healing work. To review the key points, [click/tap here](#).

Current Session: The Nature of Error, continued (Recording 264B)

In 1959, Joel conducted a series of twenty classes in which he reintroduced the foundational principles of The Infinite Way and their role in healing work. Recording 264B is one of those classes. It is the basis for Chapter 14, “Overcoming Mesmeric Sense,” in *The Foundation of Mysticism*. In fact, that chapter is essentially a complete transcript of the recording.

You can also [purchase the transcript](#) from The Infinite Way Office. If you subscribe to the transcript option for the [Joel Goldsmith Streaming Service](#), you can read the transcript there as well.

In this class, Joel emphasizes the nature of error as a universal mesmeric sense, a universal hypnotism coming from an impersonal entity called devil, mortal mind, or carnal mind. He teaches that the evils of this world are mental images in thought without power, substance, cause, reality, or law, and that they are not God-created, God-ordained, God-maintained, or God-sustained. In other words, they are nothingness.

Anchoring the Lesson

Depending on your preferred way of studying, you may want to create a summary of the class, listen to the recording again, or do both. Each approach helps you “catch the spirit” of the teaching, anchor it in your consciousness, and see more clearly how to live these principles in your daily life.

Option 1: Summarize the Major Points in the Recording

You may want to refer to Chapter 14 in *The Foundation of Mysticism* or the transcript for Recording 264B to help create your own summary of the key points in the lesson. Joel described this process of identifying key points in a lesson as “picking out the pearls.” If you feel that you need help creating a summary, we have provided a brief list of some key points to help you get started.

Why do we encourage you to create your own summary of a class? Because Joel continually reminds us that realization comes through *practice*—through living the principles, not merely hearing them or reading them. We may be uplifted, inspired, or moved by the beauty of a class or chapter, but that alone does not bring spiritual realization. We must take what we have received and apply it in our daily lives. In order to do this, we must first be clear about *what* we are applying and practicing. Identifying and summarizing the key points helps solidify the principles in our consciousness, allowing us to work with them throughout the day.

As you review these key points, expand each one with ideas that stood out to you or that arose from within. Add any additional points that resonated with you personally. If there is anything

you do not yet fully understand, make a note of it, and take it into contemplation then or at a later time.

1. There is no evil because God is infinite, omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient, and it is impossible for there to be an infinite God *and* an evil power. God is perfection itself. All that God made is good, and anything God did not make was not made. God never made sin, disease, death, storms, or any other discordant appearance.
2. The truth is that “I and the Father are one,” but there is a deep SENSE of separation between God and man, which causes man to see himself as sick, sinning, dying, aging, decrepit, lacking, and limited. He has been mesmerized by a belief in good and evil, in two powers—a belief that there is God *and* something other than God.
3. This is an immortal, eternal universe, and we are eternal, immortal beings. What we behold as a limited, finite world, or as sin, or as evil in any form—disease, lack, limitation, war, depression, storms—is the product of universal mesmeric sense, a universal hypnotism coming from an impersonal entity that has been called devil, mortal mind, or carnal mind.
4. The evils of this world are nothing but pictures in the mind, mental images in thought, without power, substance, cause, reality, or law. They are not God-created, God-ordained, God-maintained, or God-sustained. They are nothingness, so we do not have to fear them or fight them. They begin to dissolve when you know the nature of error.
5. Healing is possible because God is perfect, and God already constitutes your being. The healing agency is your realization that since God’s universe is intact, you are intact; that all that God is, you are, and all that the Father hath is yours.
6. Healing is not accomplished by praying to God for something. God knows nothing of disease and therefore has no way of healing it. God is not withholding anything, so it is futile to ask for anything. Healing is accomplished by realizing that any picture confronting us is a mesmeric picture, an illusion, a nothingness, trying to convince you that God is not your life and being; that there is something other than God. When faced with any discord, do not go to God to overcome it. Be still, quiet, and calm, and recognize that God IS, and all that God is and has *is* flowing now.
7. People are not evil. If you see them as evil, to you, they will be evil. But if you see them as they truly are, you can realize that the evil you see is not an evil person, but a mesmeric influence being accepted as reality.
8. In proportion as you become dehypnotized, you do not experience birth or death. You experience an evolutionary experience that takes you out of this human scene and brings you into your next higher unfoldment.
9. Jesus never “healed” the crippled man; he asked, “What did hinder you?” He did not “heal” the blind man; he said, “Open your eyes.” Jesus did not pray to God to heal anyone. His prayer was going into his inner sanctuary and communing with the Father within, but not for any purpose or any benefit from God.
10. When contemplative meditation, which is contemplating some aspect of truth, is done in response to a request for help, we call it “treatment.” Contemplative meditation can lead

to higher forms of meditation—communion with God, and ultimately, conscious union with God.

Option 2: Listen to the Recording Again

Often, you have heard Joel tell students to listen to class recordings a second or third time, because understanding and insight grow deeper with repeated exposure to a lesson. You have probably experienced listening to a recording for the second, third, or fourth time and discovering something new each time. Sometimes, you will hear some part of a recording and swear that you have never heard it, even though you have listened to the recording several times.

It is said that you can never step into a river at the same place twice. Likewise, you can never listen to a recording from the same state of consciousness twice. Consciousness is constantly evolving and changing, which accounts for why we notice different things each time we listen or even hear things we do not believe we heard before.

Depending on your preferred study methods, you may simply listen attentively and consciously to the entire recording, just allowing it to sink in. Or you might follow the method we suggested for the previous session:

- Begin your listening period with a short contemplation to quiet the mind and invite a receptive state. Pray for spiritual light, guidance, direction, and understanding, followed by a few moments of silence.
- Listen attentively to the recording in an atmosphere of receptivity.
- When a particular statement stands out for you, stop the recording. Write the statement down or paraphrase it. You might want to note the time mark for future reference.
- With the statement in your awareness, as Joel said, “Ponder it, repeat it, think upon it, because this passage is a seed of truth which is now being planted within you. After you have ceased thinking about it, that seed begins to germinate and eventually takes root, later bearing spiritual fruitage.”
- When you feel complete with that contemplation, resume listening to the recording until something else stands out. Again, stop the recording, write down the statement or paraphrase it, and then contemplate it.
- Continue in this way for as long as you are led. Do not feel that you must cover the entire class in one session. Take your time.
- Conclude your listening period with a moment of gratitude for the lesson.

You may have an entirely different method for listening to a recording. Still, the goal remains the same: to understand the message of the class, be receptive to new insights or revelations, and determine how you can apply the lesson in your daily life.

Whatever method you use, after listening to the recording, ask yourself, “What are the main things I learned from this class?” Sit quietly and listen within for new impartations, clarifications, revelations, or realizations. You may be surprised at what comes to you.

If you are prompted to revisit a specific part of the recording, do so. If questions arise, contemplate them or jot them down for later contemplation.

Then, ask yourself, “How can I practice the message of this class? How can I bring it into my daily life? This is an essential step because Joel emphasizes that one of the ways we attain realization is through practice. Be sure you take away something that you can apply in your life and practice. Joel’s classes are inspiring and beautiful, but simply basking in inspiration and beauty will not bring us to realization. Practice will.

Other Optional Practices

We offer several other ideas for practices to support you in working with this lesson. Look them over and choose the one—or ones—that resonate with you. Or, let them inspire you to create a new one.

Practice: What is the nature of error?

- The nature of error is one of the four major principles of The Infinite Way and is crucial in healing work. Joel covers this topic in a vast number of recordings and book chapters. While it is helpful to read and hear about the nature of error, once you have a basic understanding of it, you have to “make it your own.”
- Take a few minutes to answer—in your own words—the question “What is the nature of error?” Write what you can without referring to any books or recordings. You may find that as you begin to write, you “prime the pump,” and more than you expected will flow forth.
- Then, be silent and receptive and ask within, “What else do I need to know about the nature of error?” Give the Christ of your being, the Master within, a chance to speak.
- When you have finished, consider your own journey in coming to understand the nature of error, and from that point of view, answer the question “How would I teach the nature of error to a new Infinite Way student?”

Practice: Detaching from Appearances

- Bring to mind one troubling appearance in your life or in the world.
- Ask, “Who or what do I think is responsible for this?” (e.g., another person, a material law such as aging or heredity, a lack or limitation of some kind, an erroneous belief about God or myself, etc.) Notice whether you have been trying to heal, correct, or overcome this appearance.
- Then ask:
 - “Can I accept this as a universal mesmeric suggestion that has no reality in the kingdom of God?”
 - “Can I accept that if it is not of God, it has no substance, no power, and no law to sustain it?”
 - “If I cannot accept this yet, what seems to be stopping me? How might that

barrier be dispelled?"

- If you find this helpful, repeat it with other appearances that might be troubling you.

Practice: New Insights into Bible Quotes

- Consider these Bible quotes in the context of this lesson. Do you understand them any differently than you did before? What is each saying about the nature of error?
 - "My kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36)
 - "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31)
 - "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." (Habakkuk 1:13)
 - "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Ephesians 5:14)
 - "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30)
 - "I can of mine own self do nothing." (John 5:30) "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 14:10)
 - "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)
 - For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." (1 Corinthians 13:12)
 - "Resist not evil. (Matthew 5:39) "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matthew 26:52)
 - "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isaiah 2:22)
 - "And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." (Luke 15:31)
 - "Be still and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10)
- What other Bible verses come to mind that relate to the nature of error?

Practice: Examples of Illusions

- To illustrate the nature of error as illusion, as a false picture in the mind that is never externalized, Joel uses the examples of railroad tracks seeming to come together, the sky seeming to sit on the water or on a mountain, and water seeming to be on a desert road to illustrate an illusion.

- What are some other illusions that could be used to illustrate the nature of error?

Practice: Handling Appearances

- Based on what you have learned about the nature of error in this lesson, how would you handle:
 - An appearance of a severe weather event?
 - An appearance of dementia?
 - An appearance of leukemia?
 - An appearance of poverty or insufficiency?

The Man Who Mistook a Rope for a Snake

This ancient story, which Joel recounts in *The Infinite Way*, serves as a good illustration of the nothingness of evil as Joel presented it in the recording for our study session.

Joel says:

“About 500 B.C., it was written: 'It easily happens that a man, when taking a bath, steps upon a wet rope and imagines that it is a snake. Horror will overcome him, and he will shake from fear, anticipating in his thought all the agonies caused by the serpent's venomous bite. What a relief does this man experience when he sees that the rope is no snake. The cause of his fright lies in his error, his ignorance, his illusion. If the true nature of the rope is recognized, his tranquility of mind will come back to him; he will feel relieved; he will be joyful and happy. This is the state of mind of one who has recognized that there is no personal self; that the cause of all his troubles, cares, and vanities is a mirage, a shadow, a dream.

“So again, illumination reveals that there is no error, that what appears as the snake—sin, disease, discord, death—is reality itself misperceived by finite sense. Then discords are not to be hated, feared, or resented, but reinterpreted until the true nature of the rope—reality—is discerned through spiritual sense. The snake—disease or discord—is merely a state of mind, with no corresponding external reality. It must be understood that no illusion is, or ever can be, externalized.”