

Optional Study and Practice for the Spiritual Healing Study Program

Part 2: The Principles and Their Role in Healing

Session 5: The Nature of Prayer

Recording 171B: “Spiritual Healing and Treatment”

Review of Previous Sessions

Part 1: Introduction

Session 1: Introduction and Overview (Recording 477B, “Infinite Way Healing Principles”)

Joel introduced spiritual healing as the natural outcome of a consciousness that has realized the core principles of The Infinite Way—the nature of God, the nature of individual being, the nature of error, and the nature of prayer. He presented healing not as a technique to learn, but as the fruit of realization. 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, “Nature of God”)

There are no special healing principles in The Infinite Way. 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. This session focused on 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, “Christ Realized Is the Harmony of Being”)

Because God is Omnipresence, every individual must be within that Omnipresence and share its qualities. Each individual is an infinite, eternal, unique, spiritual expression of God, and discord arises only from the false belief that we are separate from God, outside Omnipresence. The healing consciousness is one that realizes that every individual is one with God and already complete and perfect. 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)

People often ask how there can be evil in the world if God is manifesting as individual being. If God is infinite, and beside God there is nothing else, where is error?” This question led to a focused lesson on the nature of error and the role of that principle in healing work. To review the key points, [click/tap here](#).

Part 2: The Principles and Their Role in Healing

Session 4: The Nature of Error, continued (Recording 264B)

Joel emphasized that the nature of error is a *universal* mesmeric sense, a *universal* hypnotism coming from an impersonal entity called “devil,” “mortal mind,” or “carnal mind.” The evils of this

world are mental images in thought without power, substance, cause, reality, or law. They are not created, ordained, maintained, or sustained by God. In other words, they are nothingness. To review the key points, [click/tap here](#).

Current Session: The Nature of Prayer (Recording 171B)

The central theme of this class is that our healing work is **prayer**—not the prayer of petition, but the prayer that is conscious communion with God. We do not accept a material or mental cause for a disease or discord, and we never try to change an appearance. Our principle is that the infinite, omnipresent, omnipotent nature of God shows us that **there is no reality to disease and discord**. We recognize that God constitutes individual being, and nothing can defile it. Then we turn to **prayer**, and in that conscious communion with the divine, appearances, discords, and inharmonies can disappear.

Major Points from the Recording

Our study recording for this session is 171B, from the 1956 Portland Closed Class titled, “Spiritual Healing and Treatment.”

Reminder: As we learned in the meditation study program, “treatment” in Infinite Way healing refers to a contemplative meditation on the letter of truth, done in response to a request for help. A treatment is not the healing work, and it is not given “to” the patient. It is for the purpose of lifting the practitioner into a meditative state of silence, where the healing work is done.

You may want to refer to Chapter 3, “The Practice of Spiritual Healing,” in [The Heart of Mysticism, Volume 5: 1958 Infinite Way Letters](#) or the transcript for Recording 171B to create your own summary of the key points in the lesson. You are also welcome to use the one given below.

Infinite Way spiritual healing differs from other traditions.

Joel begins this class by clarifying that spiritual healing in The Infinite Way differs from spiritual healing in metaphysical traditions, such as Christian Science, Unity, or New Thought. He emphasizes that if you have studied or practiced healing in one of those, you cannot simply add the Infinite Way principles to what you already know because there are significant differences. Joel suggests that if you have found harmony and healing in one of those traditions, The Infinite Way message is not necessary for you.

The disciples of Jesus struggled to mix Judaism with Christianity and eventually realized that it was futile. Just as the shift to Christianity was not a condemnation of Judaism or the Hebrew faith, but a branching out into a new revelation, so The Infinite Way is not a condemnation of Christian Science or any other metaphysical tradition. It is simply a new way of life that differs from those teachings. So, to be successful with Infinite Way spiritual healing, you must “come out and be separate.” For example, in Infinite Way healing, we do not accept either a mental cause or a material cause for a physical disease; any such belief must be discarded.

Spiritual healing is based on the premise that there is no reality to disease or discord.

In The Infinite Way, the principle of the nature of God gives us our premise that **there is no reality to disease**. The Master Jesus never assigned a mental or material cause to a physical disease. Instead, he said, “Pick up your bed and walk,” “Open your eyes,” and “Lazarus, come forth.” He gave no indication that anyone was suffering from anything but the belief that they were sick, or that their sickness had a cause, or that God created disease. Spiritual healing must not be based on the belief that there is something to get rid of; that you must find a cause and get rid of it, and then get rid of its effect. The premise that there is something to get rid of is incorrect. The true premise is that God constitutes individual being, and nothing can defile it. No form of sin or disease exists as a reality with a cause.

Infinite Way healing work has nothing to do with the body or its discords, and we do not take them into consideration. In The Infinite Way, spiritual healing relies on the acknowledgment that God is the infinite being of every individual, and that anything unlike God that presents itself to us is a state of mesmerism, a suggestion coming to us for acceptance or rejection. It makes no difference whether the suggestion comes in the form of sin, disease, unemployment, or lack. The treatment is the same—the recognition that we are not dealing with physical conditions; we are dealing purely with a state of hypnotism.

Infinite Way spiritual healing work is based on true prayer.

Our spiritual healing work is prayer. Spiritual healing has nothing to do with the body, or unemployed, poor, homeless, or friendless people. **It has to do with prayer**, and prayer is our **conscious communion with God**. Prayer is being receptive and responsive to the still small voice, or the spiritual impulse within, or the Christ. In true prayer, appearances, discords, and inharmonies naturally disappear.

If you are focusing on body, or pocketbook, or any material appearance, you will not break the mesmerism and have your freedom. When you try to treat the body, or try to find a cause for sin, disease, or lack, you are in the very dream that you are trying to break. It's like dreaming that you're drowning and calling out for someone to drain the ocean so you can walk ashore. That could not be done, and it isn't necessary. To be saved from drowning, you only have to awaken from the dream and realize that you are not in the water. Likewise, in spiritual healing, it is only necessary for the patient to awaken from the mesmeric dream of human existence.

When you need help, or when you are called upon to help another, instantly realize, “No. I cannot accept this cause or effect. This is a temptation of the world, and I will not accept it.” The Master never tried to find a cause for any discord. He overcame the world for himself by learning the nature of that which seemed to be appearing.

We are not dealing with persons or conditions, but with mesmerism.

In The Infinite Way, we are not dealing with sick, sinful, or poor people, nor are we trying to improve them. Our job is to realize the dream nature of all discords and wake up from the dream or awaken others from it. We wake up by recognizing that the appearance before us is not a condition or a person, but a state of mesmerism. Then we turn away from the appearance, **go within**, and ponder the nature of God. We realize God as individual being and as the only power, and we recognize that error is not a condition or a person, but the dream, the universal hypnotism. Then we become quiet and experience an inner feeling of God's presence.

At that point, eighty percent of the claim is handled. The remaining twenty percent is in the patient's hands. They must bring themselves into accord with spiritual living because they cannot receive spiritual grace if they are violating spiritual life and spiritual law. If they persist in a material way of life, part of the material nature of existence will cling to them. For the full spiritual heritage to manifest, it is necessary to surrender the material sense of life.

When spiritual healing is not effective, it is often because the patient is not willing to yield whatever is binding them to the material appearance. When the patient yields and releases material attachments, the healing can be complete. However, as a practitioner, you must remember that healing has nothing to do with a person or condition; that appearances are forms of world mesmerism, and nothing else. With that, you stop and do not allow your thought to go back to the person or condition.

If more help is needed, go through the same routine again: "This is not person or condition. This is a temptation to hypnotize me into seeing error in a world of God's creating, and I refuse to acknowledge error in a world of God's creating." Then return to contemplation, ponder the nature of God, the nature of individual being, and the nature of error, and wait for the inner stillness and peace, enabling the spiritual impulse to flow out from you. You may have to do this again and again before whatever is unyielding yields, but **this is the way**.

Never blame anyone for a lack of healing.

Never blame yourself or your patient for a lack of healing. Do not put the responsibility on their shoulders. If someone wants to cling to their material life with alcohol, or drugs, or another means of escape, it is not your business to try to change their way of life or to judge them. You are simply to know that they are reaching out, and you do your best to help them.

If you were doing work for an animal, you would simply go into prayer and attain your inner communion with God. You would not try to make the animal a better animal. You would know that there is nothing in God's plan to make an animal sick. Be that fair with your human patients.

The Infinite Way healing ministry is a prayer ministry.

Watch carefully that you do not judge, criticize, or condemn those who turn to you for help. Do not tell them, "If you did this," or "If you did that," or "You must do this," or "You must do that." **The Infinite Way ministry is a prayer ministry**, not a psychological healing method. We have nothing to do with finding the error in a patient's thought. We have nothing to do with why a condition arose or what caused it. **We have to do with prayer**, and prayer, in its true form, is an actual, concrete feeling or realization of God's presence. When we have that, regardless of the name or nature of the claim, it must begin to evaporate. Sometimes it just disappears instantaneously. At other times, it seems to drag on. But that makes no difference. We are in no hurry because we are not dealing with actual sin, or actual disease, or actual death. We are dealing with mesmeric beliefs.

If you have studied or have been using a different method for spiritual healing, you may experience some inner discord or turmoil if you begin to use The Infinite Way approach, until you have practiced it sufficiently to come into the rhythm of it. But after a while, you will find that you can quickly say, "This appearance is not a person and not a condition. This is just a world belief," and then have a period of quiet meditation until you have the inner assurance. That is the way healing work is conducted in the message of The Infinite Way.

Spiritual healing requires spiritual living.

Without some measure of spiritual living, spiritual healing is a very difficult thing. It is like asking the Spirit of God to act on material conditions while refusing to let go of them. As human beings, we always have something to “get.” The whole of human experience amounts to “What can I add to myself? How can I increase my good? How can I achieve?”

Spiritual living is the reverse of that. **Spiritual living starts with the premise that “I and my Father are one, and all that the Father hath is mine.”** It begins with the realization that we are already infinite; that we already embrace within ourselves all the good that God has to bestow. That immediately removes all desire to get, accomplish, or achieve and raises the question: “How am I to come into the **living experience** of having all that the Father hath?”

The answer is: By giving out that which we already have in infinite abundance. Instead of seeking love, be loving. Find a way to express love. Instead of seeking cooperation, give cooperation. Instead of seeking blessings, seek to be a blessing. Instead of seeking to get, seek to give. It doesn't matter whether you begin with spare change or just a few minutes of service. What truly matters is that we acknowledge: “All that the Father hath is mine, and the place whereon I stand is holy ground. I need nothing. I am now in one of the many mansions of the Father.” Appearances may not yet testify to that, but we are not speaking about appearances. We are speaking about truth.

The Chapter Corresponding to This Recording

Recording 171B is the basis for Chapter 3, “The Practice of Spiritual Healing,” in [The Heart of Mysticism, Volume 5: 1958 Infinite Way Letters](#). This chapter is an edited version of the recording, and it incorporates some additional material on the nature of matter and on the relationship between spiritual living and spiritual healing.

[The Compendium](#) cites only one source for this chapter: Recording 171B. Since there is material in the chapter that does not come from the recording, it is reasonable to assume that Joel and Lorraine added content to the Monthly Letter that constitutes that chapter. You might enjoy reading these additions. [Click/tap here](#) to view or download the material.

Optional Practices for this Lesson

Here are several ideas for practice to support you in working with this lesson. Use any that resonate with you or let them inspire you to create your own practice for some aspect of the lesson.

Practice: Explain the role of the nature of prayer in Infinite Way Healing work.

Imagine that you are teaching a new Infinite Way student about healing work in The Infinite Way. How would you explain the nature of prayer and its role in spiritual healing work?

Practice: Clear out the “old bottles”

Sometimes, without even realizing it, we carry beliefs and teachings from previous traditions into our Infinite Way study. Joel reminds us that to be successful in healing work, we must “come out and be separate,” meaning that we cannot mix old beliefs with the new teaching. However, it is hard to discard old beliefs if we are not aware of them.

- Take some time to reflect on whether you have any lingering beliefs that conflict with the message of The Infinite Way. For example,
 - Are there moments when you think that God really does reward and punish?
 - Do you still sense that disease does have a material or mental cause?
 - Do you fully accept the truth of your spiritual identity and the spiritual identity of every individual?
- One way to find these hidden beliefs is to observe your behavior. Does it always reflect the truth? For example:
 - When you read the news or hear about world events, do you find yourself judging or condemning those involved, rather than recognizing the truth of their identity and praying for them?
 - When you hear that someone “has” a disease, do you speculate as to “how” they might have gotten “it” or how they can get rid of “it,” instead of recognizing that “it” has no reality?
- Without judging yourself, be as honest as you can. Note the residual beliefs or tendencies that come to light.
- Each day, glance over your notes and, without struggling, consciously release those erroneous beliefs and remind yourself of the truth.

Practice: “Not a person, not a condition”

Joel teaches that when anything presents itself to us that is unlike God, we must recognize that we are not dealing with persons or conditions, but with a state of hypnotism. If we focus on the appearance, try to change it, or find a cause for it, we will not break the hypnotism. We must awaken from the dream and realize the truth.

- Bring to awareness some perceived problem—yours or someone else’s.
- Say inwardly: “This is not a person, and this is not a condition. This is world-mesmerism, an impersonal suggestion coming to me for acceptance or rejection. It has no power.”
- Stop right there. Refuse to go back to the problem and rest in that recognition of the nature of error.

Practice: Spiritual Seeing

- Each day, bring one person to mind. It is helpful to choose someone you find difficult in some way.
- Recognize the truth of their being by silently affirming, “This is not a human being. This is the Christ appearing as individual being.” [*Change the wording to suit your preference.*]
- Rest for a few minutes in that recognition.
- Do this several times throughout the day.

Practice: Shift from Getting to Giving

Joel says that in human living, we are always “getting.” In spiritual living, we recognize that we are already infinite and have within ourselves infinite abundance.

- Is there any way in which you are trying to “get” something—healing, supply, love, or something else?
- If so, ask yourself: “How can I **give** this instead of seeking it?”
- In some way, act on what comes to you.