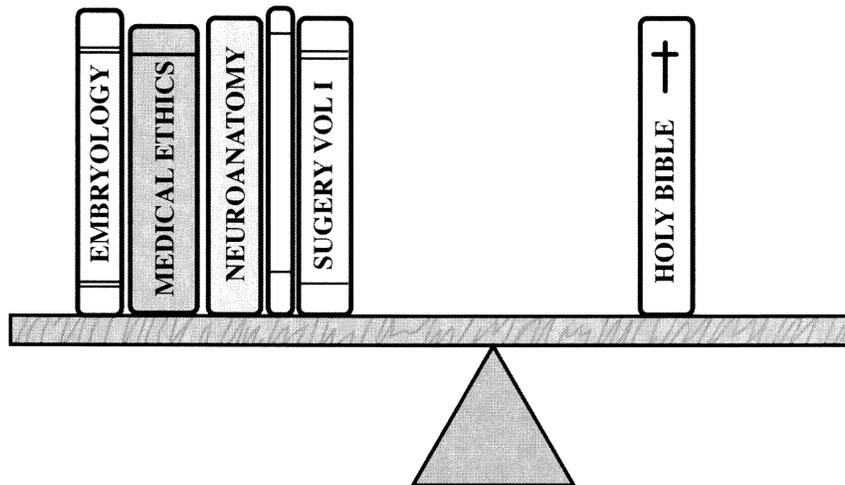


# 4

## *FAITH & MEDICINE THE ROLE OF FAITH IN HEALING*

***Science***

***Faith***



*The science of healing is perfected through the power of faith.*

My experience as a physician has taught me that faith plays an important role in healing, whatever the illness or condition. I have found that people who used to die from their injuries or conditions, patients who did poorly after brain or spinal surgery, now do well. They are smiling, and going back to their normal lives. For

many medical care providers, this is the result of the **invisible hand of God**. I believe this is how you see the hand of God and the effects of spirituality. A quote from a famous battlefield surgeon in the Napoleonic time named Ambroise Paré, **“I dressed his wounds, and God healed them.”**

There has been much interest recently in spiritual healing. Many studies have been done which document the beneficial effects of prayer and religion. Studies have shown that people who have faith, who practice a religion, recover more rapidly and more completely. Other studies have shown that people who are remembered in prayer also heal more quickly and completely, whether or not the patient themselves were involved in the prayer.



***Dr. Ghaly in surgery***

*The Spirit of the Lord guides Dr. Ghaly in surgery. Every move counts and extreme concentration is needed. Dr. Ghaly prays and fasts and the operating room reminds him of the Holy Temple. “When I look at the nervous system, I look at God’s universe. It is so special.” He uses optic loops and microscopes during surgery to be able to see every little detail, along with multiple light sources.*

I believe faith makes the inner person rejuvenate and regain strength. The person who retains high spiritual energy is better able to fight illness or avoid it altogether. I have found religious fasting promotes good control of human instincts

and allows the body to listen to the soul. Examples would be the strength regained by vegetarians or the results of yoga and meditation.

Internal turmoil worries and doubts create an inner war in a person which makes inner peace impossible and can contribute to some illnesses. Studies have shown people who have lost a spouse, gotten divorced, lost a child, or other major life crisis are much more liable to contract a major illness, such as cancer.

Many think such turmoil can contribute to contracting **diabetes, coronary spasms, peptic ulcer and indigestion, asthma, hypertensive brain hemorrhage, and fatigue and hormonal imbalances**. Negative emotions have been proven to increase the incidence of strokes, heart attacks and hypertension. Psychiatric illnesses increase in patients with a disturbed personality or unresolved conflicts.

**Stress** stimulates the sympathetic system via the Locus Ceruleus and hypothalamus and release catecholamines from the adrenal glands. This system is usually activated by dangerous conditions for protection, but it is also activated under stress. Stress has been shown to induce depression and psychosocial stress predisposes the person to infectious diseases.

Social isolation increases emotional stress and adversely affects immune functioning. Lack of family support can lower natural killer cell activity.

On the other hand, **positive emotions** have been shown to correlate with increased immunity. Body defense mechanisms increase with patients with positive attitudes. Patients with honest self identity have realistic expectations and do best during illness. Joy, love and hope promote healing.

I have seen the healing power of faith in many of **patients**. I see it when the clinical results of a treatment plan are beyond what I expected. A patient is back to her normal life after her skull was crushed by a blow from a horse's hooves; a man returns to his grandchild after a brain tumor is removed; a woman walks after spinal fusion surgery at 75 years of age when her medical condition was declared poor for surgery. A person with massive brain hemorrhage where every minute counts be guided to the right place, right surgeon, right timing, perfect and smooth systematic organization with no single minute of delay. The result is survival and back to his family and work as if nothing had happened. Many more case examples can be found in chapter of case examples in this book.

Healing power is also seen when a patient recovers after all other medical professionals have given up. A patient who was told he had brain atrophy and fluid in the brain and he will die is misdiagnosed at another medical center. He comes to a neurosurgeon and Divine guidance arranged help in another facility and found he had a broken neck which was repaired with surgery.

The healing power can **guide physicians to the ideal treatment for each individual patient**. A patient was told to have surgery after a stroke, but a guided neurosurgeon's opinion was no surgery was needed. Two major medical centers recommended surgery. He is currently enjoying his full time job as a CEO of a major medical health system while another patient given the same treatment has major deficits after the surgery.

The healing power can guide the surgeon's hand. It always makes me humble when I pray to God during surgery **to guide my hands**. A patient recently had brain surgery and was able to celebrate Christmas with her family only a few weeks later. She and her family are joyous. It was the work of God.

The healing power gives me **intuition** as to what is right, and what will ultimately help the patient. Faith brings people together. Without a team together I can not do it. Over the years, from no where to a group of caring and faithful nurses and health care providers came working together.

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The reader is encouraged to read the published news articles, the last chapter of this book; "In the Master's Hands" in the Joliet *Herald News*, Sunday, March 25, 2001. and "Rare and Deadly" in the Joliet *Herald News*, Sunday, January 17, 2003.

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The power can also help to **uncover abusers and dishonest** people who malingering or work claims for more insurance money. There is no place for the healing power and money. It will immediately leave if the wrong things are done. There is no link between the healing power of the Divine and unethical practice. This power of healing looks at each person as a temple of God and has all respect from Him.

I have found religion **guards against bad behaviors** and their consequences. Religion advises against perversion, and so protects the person. Religion results in state of well-being, hope, and optimism. It provides a meaning and purpose to life. It gives rise to successful coping with adversity, low rates of depression, and greater social support. It produces a healthier lifestyle, with documented less use of health services. Recent data indicates longer survival rates in religious people. They show an almost 25 percent reduction in injury and death, after health behaviors and other factors are calculated. It has been shown religious practices affect the levels of the beneficial substances interleukin, salivary IGA, and other biological substances.

Scientific studies have demonstrated that, contrary to disbelief, belief in God, faith, produces better mental and physical health and greater social support, though the mechanism for this benefit is poorly understood. The patho-physiology with spiritual effect on the healing process may include: neurochemical pro-

cess beyond the scope of science and neuroendocrine through hormonal regulation, psychoneuroimmunology. The healing power works through the brain and the entire body.

For some patients **the experience of illness and healing will deepen the relationship of the person with God.** It gives the person a realistic view of themselves—as nothing without their Creator—and they gain spiritual growth; renew their spirituality while the flesh is weak. Spiritual power tends to appear when the body is subdued. Published scientific data has indicated that spirituality is effective in patients with substance abuse, chronic pain, cancer, and other incurable diseases.

Since the beginning of time, there have been correlations between sins and physical illness. Leprosy was considered an illness of the sinful and seizures were thought to be caused by evil spirits inside the body. Modern science has shown other causes for these conditions, but a spiritual connection with the spiritual world is still thought to exist. In sickness, let us be hopeful, thankful to God grace, and watchful for His mercy. Job said, *“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”* (Job 1:21) God’s grace brings miracles and the impossible to mankind.