

# Health and Disease

A presentation and discussion from a collation of WQJ articles on Wednesday 19th July 2017. Diseases are Karmic manifestations showing themselves on their way out so that one may be purified.

Extracts from WQJ article “OF “METAPHYSICAL HEALING”

“A number of fallacies have to be noticed in these systems [METAPHYSICAL HEALING, mind cures and Chistian Science and the likes]. Using the word “thought,” they say that our diseases are the product of our thought, but they ignore the fact that young children of the tenderest age often have very violent diseases when no one will say they have had time or power to think. Babies have been found to have Bright’s disease and other troubles. This is a fact that looms up before the arguments of the mental healer and that never will down. But regarding it from the theosophical side, we know that the thoughts of the preceding life are the causes for the troubles and the joys of this, and therefore those troubles are now being exhausted here by the proper channel, the body, and are on the way down and out. Their exit ought not to be stopped. But by the attempt to cure in the way of the healer they are stopped often and are sent back to the place they came from, and thus once more are planted in the mind as unexpended causes sure at some other time to come out again, whether in this or in another life. This is one of the greatest of dangers. It will in many instances lead to insanity.”

Extracts from WQJ article “THE CURE OF DISEASES”

“Turning now to medicine, we find the Italian Count Mattei promulgating a system of cure by the homoeopathic use of subtle vegetable essences which may well give pause to those who would make universal the curing by faith or mind alone. Some of his liquids will instantly stop violent pain, restore sight, give back hearings and dissipate abnormal growths. His globules will make a drunken man sober, and, given to the nurse who suckles a babe, will cure the child who takes the milk. The drunkard and the child do not think about or have faith in the remedies, yet they cure. Is it not better to restore health by physical means and leave the high teachings of the healers, all taken from well known sources, for the benefit of our moral nature?”

Extracts from WQJ article “Replanting diseases for future use”

“The mind is manas of the Hindus. It is a part of the immortal man. The “spiritual body” is not immortal. It is compounded of astral body with the passions and desires. Mind is the container of the efficient causes of our circumstances, our inherent character and the seeds that sprout again and again as physical diseases as well as those purely mental. It is the mover who is either voluntary in his motion, free if it will, or moved hither and tither by every object and influence and colored by every idea. From life to life it occupies body after body, using a new brain instrument in each incarnation. As Patanjali put it ages ago, in mind lie planted all seeds with self reproductive power inherent in them, only waiting for time and circumstances to sprout again. Here are the causes for our diseases. Product of thought truly, but thought long finished and now transformed into cause beyond our present thought. Lying like tigers by the edge of the jungle’s pool ready to spring when the hour arrives, they may come forward accompanied by counteractions due to other causes, or they may come alone. When these seeds sprout and liberate their forces they show themselves in diseases in the body, where they exhaust themselves. To attack them with the forces belonging to the plane of mind is to force them again to their hiding place, to inhibit their development, to stop their exhaustion and transfer to the grosser levels of life. They are forcibly dragged back, only to lie waiting once more for their natural expression in some other life. That natural expression is through a body, or rather through the lowest vehicle in use in any

evolutionary period. This is a great wheel that ever revolves, and no man can stop it. To imagine we can escape from any cause connected with us is to suppose that law and order desert the manifested universe. No such divorce is possible. We must work everything out to the last item. The moment we evolve a thought and thus a cause, it must go on producing its effects, all becoming in turn causes for other effects and sweeping down the great evolutionary current in order to rise again. To suppose we can stop this ebb and flow is chimerical in the extreme. Hence the great sages have always said we have to let the Karmic effects roll on while we set new and better causes in motion, and that even the perfect sage has to endure in his bodily frame that which belongs to it through Karma. The inner anatomical structure should also be known. The ethereal body has its own currents—nerves, for want of a better word, changes and method of growth and action, just as the gross body has. It is, in fact, the real body, for it seldom alters throughout life, while the physical counterpart changes every moment, its atoms going and coming upon the matrix or model furnished by the ethereal body. The inner currents emanate from their own centers and are constantly in motion. They are affected by thoughts and the reflection of the body in its physiological changes. They each act upon the other incessantly, (every center of the inner body has its appropriate correspondent in the physical one, which it affects and through which it is in turn acted upon). It is by means of these subtle currents— called vital airs when translated from the Sanscrit—that impressions are conveyed to the mind above, and through them also are the extraordinary feats of the seance room and the Indian Yogi accomplished. And just as one may injure his body by ignorantly using drugs or physical practices, so can the finer currents and nerves of the inner man be thrown out of adjustment if one in pride or ignorance attempts, uninstructed, to deal with them. The seeds of disease being located primarily in the mind, they begin to exhaust themselves through the agency of the inner currents that carry the appropriate vibrations down upon the physical plane. If left to themselves—aside from palliations and aids in throwing off— they pass out into the great crucible of nature and one is free from them forever. Therefore pain is said to be a kind friend who relieves the real man of a load of sin. (...) The world could get along with what disease there is, if it only turned attention to high ethics and altruistic endeavor. For after a few centuries of right living the nations would have purged themselves and built up a right moral building well founded on the rocks of true philosophy, charity, and love.”

Extracts from WQJ article “Theosophic diet”

“What, then, is the true theosophic diet? It is that which best agrees with you, taken in moderation, neither too much nor too little. If your constitution and temperament will permit vegetarianism, then that will give less heat to the blood; and, if it is practiced from the sincere conviction that it is not true brotherhood to destroy living creatures so highly organized as animals, then so much the better. But if you refrain from meat in order to develop your psychic powers and senses, and continue the same sort of thoughts you have always had, neither cultivating nor practicing the highest altruism, the vegetarianism is in vain. The inner nature has a diet out of our thoughts and motives. If those are low or gross or selfish, it is equivalent to feeding that nature upon gross food. True theosophic diet is therefore not of either meat or wine; it is unselfish thoughts and deeds, untiring devotion to the welfare of “the great orphan Humanity,” absolute abnegation of self, unutterable aspiration to the Divine—the Supreme Soul. This only is what we can grow upon. And vain are the hopes of those who pin their faith on any other doctrine.”

Extracts from WQJ's “Forum Answers”

“The editor has pointed out that a well-balanced and centered mind will conduce to health, as has been held for ages; even savages know this and act accordingly. And if one finds from actual experience that the fact of his or her being of a cheerful, happy, contented, charitable, loving, faithful, sunny disposition will always have the effect of giving health to those about in the family or elsewhere, then there can surely be nothing wrong or inexpedient in such a state. And that, in my opinion, is the right limit for the practice of metaphysical healing. For if one goes beyond that, and, following the rules of these schools, proceeds to send his thoughts out to another with the object of taking hold of that other’s mind, then there is the greatest danger and also Black Magic. For no one has the right to take the mind of another,

for any purpose, into his possession. if such be done, then the other ceases to be a free agent. And this is true as much in the case of one's child as that of any other person. Moral wrong attaches here because one is acting on another. But in the event of acting on oneself there can only be a question of expediency, and that is a very wide and important one, since momentous consequences may flow to us and to others from the tendencies we set up in ourselves. Bodily ailments may be roughly divided for the purposes of the present into two classes, one being those that are acute or due to the imagination or the reaction of the imagination on the processes in the bodily economy; the other being those due to strong physical Karma showing out in diseases in the mortal envelope, and being entirely beyond the reach of the imagination and not due to reactions from the mind of the sufferer. These last are of the greater number; we see them in small children as well as in adults, and also in savages and the semi-savages of our own civilization who compose what some people call a lower element in the social body. In the first class the physical troubles from reaction will of course disappear so soon as the person trains himself to look at life cheerfully and to grow into a more independent frame of mind. The cures are not due to the causes assumed in the schools we refer to. They come about as a natural result of the new state of mind withdrawing from the nerves and fluids of the body the old strain and oppression. When those are removed the actual state of health at the bottom comes to the surface. And the result would be the same in the instance of the most degraded savage who might be induced by accident or by the words of his medicine man to fix his mind in another direction. Obviously there it would not be due to a system of philosophy. And additional proof of this is to be had in the very schools we speak of.

In those we see widely different systems; one requires faith in the Bible and in Jesus, and the other does not, and yet each makes equal claim to success. H. P. Blavatsky says: "This is all the secret. Half, if not two-thirds, of all our ailings and diseases are the fruit of our imagination and fears. Destroy the latter and *give another bent to the former, and nature will do the rest.*" (Lucifer, Vol. 7.)

In the second class of diseases it is quite true, as has been often said by the metaphysical healer, that the disease comes from thought, but the error is in supposing it to be present thought had in this body. The thoughts are those of a past life, and have passed altogether from the mind plane into the realm of causes for dynamic disturbance, or of the tendency, that are quite beyond the reach of the present imagining power, but sure to result in the course of time in visible difficulty suddenly appearing, or resulting from our going into situations that bring to us the germs of disease. For Karma acts on us not only in inherited troubles but also in accord with the tendencies we have set up in ourselves in a previous life. Those latter impel us to go to places or to mix with such people as that the inevitable result will be to cause effects on our mind or body that otherwise would not be felt. As in the case of one who set up in a previous life a tendency to consort with good and cultured people; this will come out and lead to a similar line of action with very different results from the case of one whose tendencies were in the opposite direction.

These causes for disease then being in the mind plane from the last life, and having become mechanical causes in this, are now on their way out of the system in the proper channel, and that channel is a physical, mechanical one. They are leaving us by the way of the body, are on the way down, and should not be stopped and sent back to the mind plane again. They should be treated by the ordinary methods of hygiene, of medicine, of surgery, of food.

Hygiene and food furnish the right conditions for adjustment, and make no new present cause for trouble; medicine helps nature in her mechanical acts of purging and alteration; and surgery replaces dislocations, removes dead tissues, or puts bones that are broken into position for proper joining. No one would be so foolish as to say that thinking will remove from the brain the pressure of a fractured bone that is making the patient mad, or that imagination will set a dislocated shoulder. And if rotting food in the stomach is affecting the head and the whole system, it is certainly wiser to get rid of the offending substance as quickly as possible, supplying the body with good food in its place, than to let the evil stay to be absorbed as evil into the tissues while one busies himself by calling on the higher powers of mind to make him think he is not disturbed while nature is going on with her cure. In many cases this latter is all that happens, for any strong-minded person can resolve to endure great pain during the process of rectification of internal trouble by ordinary change of tissue and fluids.

So a disciple of the schools in question [METAPHYSICAL HEALING, mind cures and Chistian Science and the likes] may be so full of the notion that mind, or God, or Christ is curing him that he

endures until the *vis medicatrix naturæ* ["the healing power of nature"] has done its work.

Granting that these causes are on their way down and out, the effect of calling with a powerful will on the same plane of power is that the cause may be sent back to the inner mind and disappear from the body. But this is no cure: it is something like one's cutting off his hair because the flies walk in it, it is planting once more in our deathless body disease that will surely come out again in another life as disease, or as madness in that one or presently in this. And in the life of many a practitioner nowadays this has happened. For wherever one is very sensitive the practices enjoined create abnormal states that have resulted in dementia.

But a still more pressing danger lies in the half-truth of the practices. They are, divested of all pretension to systematic and right philosophy, partially correct yoga practices.

As soon as they are begun they set up in the astral currents in the practitioner definite changes that at once begin to react on the humors and fluids in the body and are strong enough to bring about definite alteration in the physical envelope. This has been known for ages and has been treated of by the older Hindus. But they have always been careful to say that they ought not to be gone on with in the absence of a guide who is competent to know every symptom, to note every effect, and to give the right corrective.

These correctives were not purely mental either, for many of them have to be physical, since the rapidity of the changes and the effects of the practices far outrun any application of mental correction in many instances. And this knowledge did not mean a mere following of a definite rule, but included an ability to see the peculiarities of each person as he proceeded. For as such is under a different set of laws peculiar to himself, the strict following of a general rule would lead to the greatest danger.

But what do the "metaphysical healers" know of this?

Nothing but the vague rule of the doctors that one must watch the patient and know, if possible, something of his medical record. Outside of that they are at sea with no pilot. They are inviting the explosion of forces they know nothing about, and when the difficulty arises they are powerless. From actual experiment I know the facts to be as stated. The pulse may be lowered or increased, or the first symptoms of paralysis produced, or fainting brought on, ringing in the ears and mist before the eyes made to show themselves; but where is the corrective? Unknown, for the simple reason that when we are dealing with such forces as these we are out of the realm of general rules for correction and must be able to at once see the exact inner state of the person and to select unerringly out of the vast range of possible cures the right one so that it shall work without any mistake.

What, then, shall the querent do for herself and her children, as she asks? Use her best judgment, follow the best rules for the cure of diseases, train her children to be self-reliant and careful, so that they shall have few accidents, teach them to avoid evil and danger and keep their minds and bodies in right condition, and Karma will take care of the rest. And if they are hurt or really sick, then send for a good physician.

Extract of BG ch14 Introducing the notion of the 3 gunas or qualities

#### CHAPTER XIV DEVOTION BY MEANS OF SEPARATION FROM THE THREE QUALITIES

KRISHNA: I will explain further the sublime spiritual knowledge superior to all others, by knowing which all the sages have attained to supreme perfection on the dissolution of this body. They take sanctuary in this wisdom, and having attained to my state they are not born again even at the new evolution, nor are they disturbed at the time of general destruction. "The great Brahmâ is my womb in which I place the seed; from that, O son of Bharata, is the production of all existing things. This great Brahmâ is the womb for all those various forms which are produced from any womb, and I am the Father who provideth the seed. The three great qualities called sattva, rajas, and tamas—light or truth, passion or desire, and indifference or darkness—are born from nature, and bind the imperishable soul to body, O thou of mighty arms. Of these the sattva quality by reason of its lucidity and peacefulness entwineth the soul to rebirth through attachment to knowledge and that which is pleasant. Know that rajas is of the nature of desire, producing thirst and propensity; it, O son of Kuntî, imprisoneth the Ego through the consequences produced from action. The quality of tamas, the offspring of the indifference in nature, is the deluder of all creatures, O son of Bharata; it imprisoneth the Ego in a body through heedless folly, sleep, and idleness. The sattva quality attaches the soul through happiness and pleasure, the rajas through action, and tamas quality surrounding the power of

judgment with indifference attaches the soul through heedlessness. "When, O son of Bharata, the qualities of tamas and rajas are overcome, then that of sattva prevails; tamas is chiefly acting when sattva and rajas are hidden; and when the sattva and tamas diminish, then rajas prevails. When wisdom, the bright light, shall become evident at every gate of the body, then one may know that the sattva quality is prevalent within. The love of gain, activity in action, and the initiating of works, restlessness and inordinate desire are produced when the quality of rajas is prevalent, whilst the tokens of the predominance of the tamas quality are absence of illumination, the presence of idleness, heedlessness, and delusion, O son of Kuntî. "If the body is dissolved when the sattva quality prevails, the self within proceeds to the spotless spheres of those who are acquainted with the highest place. When the body is dissolved while the quality of rajas is predominant, the soul is born again in a body attached to action; and so also of one who dies while tamas quality is prevalent, the soul is born again in the wombs of those who are deluded. "The fruit of righteous acts is called pure and holy, appertaining to sattva; from rajas is gathered fruit in pain, and the tamas produceth only senselessness, ignorance, and indifference. From sattva wisdom is produced, from rajas desire, from tamas ignorance, delusion and folly. Those in whom the sattva quality is established mount on high, those who are full of rajas remain in the middle sphere, the world of men, while those who are overborne by the gloomy quality, tamas, sink below. But when the wise man perceiveth that the only agents of action are these qualities, and comprehends that which is superior to the qualities, he attains to my state. And when the embodied self surpasseth these three qualities of goodness, action, and indifference—which are coëxistent with the body it is released from rebirth and death, old age and pain, and drinketh of the water of immortality."

ARJUNA: "What are the characteristic marks by which the man may be known, O Master, who hath surpassed the three qualities? What is his course of life, and what are the means by which he overcometh the qualities?"

KRISHNA: "He, O son of Pandu, who doth not hate these qualities—illumination, action, and delusion—when they appear, nor longeth for them when they disappear; who, like one who is of no party, sitteth as one unconcerned about the three qualities and undisturbed by them, who being persuaded that the qualities exist, is moved not by them; who is of equal mind in pain and pleasure, self-centered, to whom a lump of earth, a stone, or gold are as one; who is of equal mind with those who love or dislike, constant, the same whether blamed or praised; equally minded in honor and disgrace, and the same toward friendly or unfriendly side, engaging only in necessary actions, such an one hath surmounted the qualities. And he, my servant, who worships me with exclusive devotion, having completely overcome the qualities, is fitted to be absorbed in Brahmâ the Supreme. I am the embodiment of the Supreme Ruler, and of the incorruptible, of the unmodifying, and of the eternal law, and of endless bliss."

Extract of BG ch17 On the 3 gunas or qualities in relation to health and disease

## CHAPTER XVII DEVOTION AS REGARDS THE THREE KINDS OF FAITH

ARJUNA: What is the state of those men who, while they neglect the precepts of the Scriptures, yet worship in faith, O Krishna? Is it of the sattva, the rajas, or the tamas quality?"

KRISHNA: "The faith of mortals is of three kinds, and is born from their own disposition; it is of the quality of truth - sattva, action - rajas, and indifference - tamas; hear now what those are. "The faith of each one, O son of Bharata, proceeds from the sattva quality; the embodied soul being gifted with faith, each man is of the same nature as that ideal on which his faith is fixed. Those who are of the disposition which ariseth from the prevalence of the sattva or good quality worship the gods; those of the quality of rajas worship the celestial powers, the Yakshas and Râkshasas; other men in whom the dark quality of indifference or tamas predominates worship elemental powers and the ghosts of dead men. Those who practice severe self-mortification not enjoined in the Scriptures are full of hypocrisy and pride, longing for what is past and desiring more to come. They, full of delusion, torture the powers and faculties which are in the body, and me also, who am in the recesses of the innermost heart; know that they are of an infernal tendency. **"Know that food which is pleasant to each one, as also sacrifices, mortification, and almsgiving, are of three kinds; hear what their divisions are. The food which increases the length of days, vigor and strength, which keeps one free from sickness, of tranquil mind, and contented, and which is savory, nourishing, of permanent benefit and congenial to the body, is that which is attractive to those in whom the sattva quality prevails. The food which is liked by those of the rajas quality is over bitter, too acid, excessively salt, hot, pungent, dry and burning, and causeth unpleasantness, pain, and disease. Whatever food is such as was dressed the day before, that is tasteless or rotting, that is impure, is that**

**which is preferred by those in whom predominates the quality of tamas or indifference.** "The sacrifice or worship which is directed by Scripture and is performed by those who expect no reward but who are convinced that it is necessary to be done, is of the quality of light, of goodness, of sattva. But know that that worship or sacrifice which is performed with a view to its results, and also for an ostentation of piety, belongs to passion, the quality of rajas, O best of the Bharatas. But that which is not according to the precepts of Holy Writ, without distribution of bread, without sacred hymns, without gifts to brahmins at the conclusion, and without faith, is of the quality of tamas. "Honoring the gods, the brahmins, the teachers, and the wise, purity, rectitude, chastity, and harmlessness are called mortification of the body. Gentle speech which causes no anxiety, which is truthful and friendly, and diligence in the reading of the Scriptures, are said to be austerities of speech. Serenity of mind, mildness of temper, silence, self-restraint, absolute straightforwardness of conduct, are called mortification of the mind. This threefold mortification or austerity practiced with supreme faith and by those who long not for a reward is of the sattva quality. "But that austerity which is practiced with hypocrisy, for the sake of obtaining respect for oneself or for fame or favor, and which is uncertain and belonging wholly to this world, is of the quality of rajas. Those austerities which are practiced merely by wounding oneself or from a false judgment or for the hurting of another are of the quality of tamas. Those gifts which are bestowed at the proper time to the proper person, and by men who are not desirous of a return, are of the sattva quality, good and of the nature of truth. But that gift which is given with the expectation of a return from the beneficiary or with a view to spiritual benefit flowing therefrom or with reluctance, is of the rajas quality, bad and partaketh of untruth. Gifts given out of place and season and to unworthy persons, without proper attention and scornfully, are of the tamas quality, wholly bad and of the nature of darkness. "OM TAT SAT, these are said to be the threefold designation of the Supreme Being. By these in the beginning were sanctified the knowers of Brahmâ, the Vedas, and sacrifices. Therefore the sacrifices, the giving of alms, and the practicing of austerities are always, among those who expound Holy Writ, preceded by the word OM. Among those who long for immortality and who do not consider the reward for their actions, the word TAT precedes their rites of sacrifice, their austerities, and giving of alms. The word SAT is used for qualities that are true and holy, and likewise is applied to laudable actions, O son of Pritha. The state of mental sacrifice when actions are at rest is also called SAT. Whatever is done without faith, whether it be sacrifice, alms-giving, or austerities, is called ASAT, that which is devoid of truth and goodness, O son of Pritha, and is not of any benefit either in this life or after death."