

# New Thought and Esoteric Healing: Towards a Healthier Tomorrow

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## Abstract

Through the action of right thinking, New Thought focuses the power of the Universal Mind towards the revelation of inner health. Esoteric healing, through focused meditation, invokes the power of the Universal Soul to ameliorate disease. Each of these non-orthodox disciplines shares the belief that individuals possess a spiritual and physical nature and that, through the focused power of the mind, spiritual energy may be brought to bear upon specific conditions of disease. This article explores the philosophical foundations and therapeutic merits of each of these healing disciplines.

## The Context of Spiritual Healing

In 1953, Alice Bailey wrote, “At present there is little coherent and integrated work being done *in unison* by the four groups:

1. Physicians and surgeons—orthodox and academic.
2. Psychologists, neurologists, and psychiatrists.
3. Mental healers and New Thought workers, plus Unity thinkers and Christian Scientists.
4. Trained disciples and those who work with human souls.”<sup>1</sup>

It is as true today as it was in 1953 that much is known about the work of orthodox and academic medicine, as well as the work of psychologists, neurologists, and psychiatrists. Fifty-five years ago, however, little was known about mental healers and even less was known about those who work with human souls. In the intervening years, the New Thought movement and the practice of esoteric healing have grown and matured. In future years, after these new disciplines have been researched and carefully characterized, New Thought and esoteric healing will take their place along side of orthodox medicine and, from

a position of professional acceptance, actively participate in modern health care.

## An Overview of the New Thought Approach

### A Practical Example

A man is diagnosed with high blood pressure, and his doctor counsels him to make lifestyle changes and begin a course of medication to manage his hypertension. Later, upon hearing his story, an acquaintance recommends that his friend see a New Thought practitioner for help with his medical condition. Out of high regard for their friendship, and with quite a bit of skepticism, the man accepts his friend’s advice and schedules an appointment for an initial interview.

The man shows up for the appointment and is pleasantly surprised to find himself in a comfortable, professional office environment. He is greeted by the New Thought practitioner who is dressed conservatively and, to the man’s surprise, rather ordinary in appearance. They sit down together and begin to interview each other. The New Thought practitioner describes his education and qualifications, offers a list of references, summarizes his professional achievements, and profiles his membership in an association of fellow practitioners, physicians, psychiatrists, healers, and pastors who are receptive

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## About the Author

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to the proven fact of the Universal Presence of Life and Its innate desire to express Its qualities through the health and affairs of everyday people. The practitioner explains that lasting health and healing is an application of a mental science and that what he offers is neither faith healing nor wishful thinking. He describes his craft as a profession and tells the man that a practitioner's duty is to his patient's well-being as well as to making a meaningful contribution to the greater medical community, for which he expresses great respect.

The man listens closely and concludes that he is being taken seriously; he expresses his desire to learn more. The practitioner acknowledges the man's sincerity, accepts him as a patient, and immediately begins the session.

In a clear voice he declares, "The Universe is a Unity of being, changeless and perfect; it is without parts or flaws. Its qualities of omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence are extended into creation and to all that live within it. The Universal One expresses Itself through an inner act of will, for there is nothing outside of Spirit from which to act. This inner act is creative and sets itself in motion without effort, for there is nothing to oppose the movement of Spirit. Man is a drop of water in the ocean of Universal Being and, while only a small part of the whole, partakes of the qualities of the whole. Man has within himself the same ability as Universal Spirit—the ability, through an inner act, to set forces in motion to manifest the conditions of his life. This act is called thinking. The Universe is conditioned to manifest the thoughts that are cast into it, whether from the Universal One or from any thinking creative being within the whole. What a man thinks about, he manifests at the level of his thinking. Thoughts of poverty manifest as conditions of poverty, and thoughts of health manifest as health. If a man plants cucumber seeds in his garden, the soil will return cucumbers; so it is with the seeds of his thoughts that he chooses to plant into the soil of his soul. The Universal One, being perfect and all knowing, sees Its creation as perfect—It could not see Itself otherwise without entertaining thoughts of imperfection. Perfection and imperfection imply that something perfect has something imperfect with which to compare it-

self with. However, there is only one Unity, with nothing to compare Itself with; therefore, all It sees is perfection. As a perfect creation within the whole, this man is seen by the Universe as a perfect and healthy being without parts or limitations. Perfect health is a given; it is a gift from the Universal Spirit and awaits the only the mental acceptance of it to manifest in this man's life. High blood pressure is a fact in this patient's life. This is a proven condition; however, it is not a necessary condition. There is no truth behind this condition; there is no law that supports this condition. If the Universe sees this patient as perfect, what force in the world can stand against the full expression of his health? This man is whole and healthy, not because we say that he is, but because we reveal the truth about him in our minds. What we think about him is planted into the soil of his Soul and manifests for his best life. His condition melts away, like ice on a warm day, from the heat and light of the truth that radiates from his true inner being."<sup>2</sup>

The patient cannot grasp all that is said and is overwhelmed by the force of Unity that has been invoked on his behalf. The practitioner explains that he himself will continue the treatments every other day, in twenty minute sessions, and asks only that he be allowed to call on the man weekly for updates. The man agrees and returns home. The treatments continue, and several weeks later the man returns to the practitioner with laboratory test results showing that his condition has reversed itself. He is thrilled to be healthy again, and thrilled that his health crisis has become a journey of self discovery.

### **The Development of New Thought**

**N**ew Thought is a loose organization of faith-based and metaphysical groups that share the common belief that all men and women are spiritual beings living human existences and that, by the power of right thinking, we can create new and better lives for ourselves. Regarding health and healing, New Thought asserts that the innate spiritual being within each of us is healthy, whole, and accessible. Through right thinking, our innate spiritual qualities reveal themselves through the mentality of our thought—and then manifest peace, health, and abundance in our lives, automatically, through the agency of universal thought.

With its beginnings dating back over 100 years, New Thought is no longer new. In the late nineteenth century, novel new philosophies like Transcendentalism (a major forerunner to New Thought) were challenging the long established boundaries between Victorian faith and reason. While modern science was blurring the lines between “living” and “dead” matter, enlightened faith no longer provided satisfactory answers to the eternal questions of “Who are we?” and “Why are we here?” Pioneering thinkers like Ralph Waldo Emerson even began questioning the need for an intellectual approach to life at all, suggesting that behind all that we believe to be real is subjective life, a unified World Soul that speaks to us through our intuition. A lesser known philosopher, Thomas Troward, captured the mood of the times like this:

We are accustomed to judge only by external appearances and by certain limited significances that we attach to words; but, when we begin to enquire into the real meaning of our words and to analyze the causes that give rise to appearances, we find our old notions gradually falling off from us, until at last we wake up to the fact that we are living in an entirely different world to that we formally recognized. The old limited mode of thought has imperceptibly slipped away, and we discover that we have stepped out into a new order of things where all is liberty and life.<sup>3</sup>

Troward’s thinking led the way for New Thought leaders (like Mary Baker Eddy, Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, Charles Filmore, and Ernest Holmes) to create New Thought organizations that exist to this day as Christian Science, Unity Church, Religious Science, Church of Divine Science, and many others. For decades these groups have tested the limits of thought and thinking, and collected their experiences into a knowledge base that they freely share with all. Starting from humble beginnings, these organizations have kept to their simple consistent messages, published voluminously, and grown into the mature institutions they are today.

**New Thought asserts that the innate spiritual being within each of us is healthy, whole, and accessible.**

## How Does New Thought Work?

New Thought challenges us to conceive of Life as Universal Spirit, a Unity of intelligent force and principle that is changeless and perfect. The conclusions that follow from this thesis of Unity are what make New Thought such a powerful world view. New Thought is built on several key foundational ideas:<sup>4</sup>

- Infinite Intelligence, or God, is omnipotent and omnipresent.
- Spirit is the ultimate reality.
- True human Self-hood is Divine. There are many names for this principle, such as Christ consciousness, Buddha nature, etc.
- Divinely attuned thought is a positive force for good.
- All disease is mental in origin.
- Right thinking has a healing effect.

New Thought has the highest respect for the power of clear thinking and the power that is tapped through right thinking. The following train of conclusions is from one of New Thought’s leading thinkers and is highly instructive:

Humanity’s first discovery of its ability to think was taken as a matter of fact. Humans had always been able to think. It was proof that they existed; it gave them the ability to know their needs and to supply them. It appeared to be an automatic thing; it came with a person and would doubtless die when that person died. The brain seemed to be the organ of thought, and, of course, when death stilled the brain, it would no longer operate.

However, a day came when some wise person claimed that it is not the brain that does the thinking for, if the brain could think, it would keep on thinking when removed from the body. Yet, without a brain persons could not think, *which proved that something behind the brain used it as an instrument*. Persons do think, so behind the brain there must be a thinker. But where is the thinker? We do not see the thinker. Have we a right to say there is a thinker, when we have never seen that thinker? Yes, for the proof of this

reality is the evidence of the thought. Back of the organism is the thinker and the doer—the Mind. *This was the greatest discovery of all time, for it meant that the body without the thinker could not function.* At first, people did not perceive this and thought only of their body as self-operating; but, when they discovered this was not the case, they found that they could consciously think and decide, and *that something happened to their thoughts after they thought them; they went somewhere and returned as memory.*

Pondering on this, people came to the conclusion that memory was an active thing; and they reasoned after this fashion: “Memory must be the storehouse of all ideas that have passed through my mind. Memory is active, for my thoughts come back to me. My thought is conscious of my body; my body is operated upon by my thought. And it must be operated on by my memory since memory is active; but, since memory is the result of conscious thought, *memory of itself is an unconscious operation of what was once a conscious thought.*” THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCLUSIONS THAT THE HUMAN MIND HAS EVER MADE. By changing their thoughts, they could re-mold their affairs; and by right thinking, they could bring new conditions into their life! Tremendous!<sup>5</sup>

Through an attitude of trained faith, the New Thought Practitioner creates powerful thought-forms, called treatments, that demonstrate measurable effects in the lives of their patients. New Thought explains the agency of thought and the nature of potent thoughtforms as follows:

It has been proved that, by thinking correctly and by a conscious mental use of the law of Mind, we can cause It to do definite things for us, through us. By conscious thinking, we give conscious direction to It; and It, consciously or unconsciously, responds to our advance along the line of our conscious, or subjective, direction.

It must and will respond to everyone because It is Law and law is no respecter of persons. We are surrounded by an intelligent force and substance, from which all things

come—the ultimate Essence, in the invisible and subjective world, of all visible and objective forms and conditions. It is around us in its original state, ready and willing to take form through the impulse of our creative belief. *It works for us by flowing through us.* This law we did not create; this law we cannot change. We can use It correctly only as we understand and use It according to Its nature.<sup>6</sup>

A treatment is a spiritual entity in the mental world and is equipped with power and volition—as much power and volition as there is faith in it, given to it by the mind of the one using it—and, operating through the Law, It knows exactly how to work and what methods to use and just how to use them. *We do not put the power* into this word, but we do let the power of the Law flow through it, and the one who most completely believes in this power will produce the best results.<sup>7</sup>

Based on the given fundamentals, the conclusions of New Thought are clear and compelling: “Life says for you what you say about yourself,” and “It is done unto you as you believe.”<sup>8</sup>

## An Overview of Esoteric Healing

### A Practical Example

A woman, experiencing conditions of persistent destructive emotions, is referred to an esoteric healer by her endocrinologist. Her symptoms are well characterized, and the causes of her distress seem to be well defined; however, her condition has shown remarkable resistance to allopathic medical treatment, nutritional changes, psychological treatment, and homeopathic treatment.

She meets with the esoteric healer in his home, and they retire to his private office to begin the interview process. The healer explains that he is a leader of a large and active transmission meditation group, he teaches classes on meditation and on esoteric anatomy and physiology at a local university, and he sees people on an individual basis for consultation and healing during the rest of the week. He explains that his practice focuses on the Soul: what It is, how It works, and how It reveals Its will through his client’s affairs. The woman shares that she

works in a high profile governmental regulatory agency that is responsible for the health and safety of millions of citizens. She explains that she is responsible for a staff of thousands of people and is totally devoted to her work and the well-being of her group. As they talk, the esoteric healer uses his intuition to ascertain her ray structure, the state of her etheric centers, her approximate point of evolution, and her mental/astral polarity. She further explains that her emotional difficulties originated in her childhood and, as an adult, she has come to terms with difficult experiences that she endured in her youth; however, while she can intellectually cope with the events of her past, she cannot bring closure to them and continues to suffer. As she speaks, the esoteric healer becomes aware of the quality and scope of her Soul energy radiating through her aura. He also observes a cleavage in her awareness, an energetic phenomena preventing free flow of Soul energy through her mind and into her brain. The esoteric healer concludes that her Soul is seeking to manifest Its will through her public service and that she is experiencing the growing pains of Soul appropriation. The memories and pain of her past are not the cause of her distress, but are amplified by deeper phenomena with which the esoteric healer is prepared to engage.

The esoteric healer recommends to his client that they work together to make possible a radiative healing. He asks her to prepare for a deep meditation, sitting comfortably, focusing her attention in the center between her eyebrows, and observing dispassionately the images and feelings that may arise during the session. The esoteric healer enters into his own meditative state, shifts his attention to Soul awareness, and observes the light of his Higher Self circulating through his system. Next, with conscious Soul awareness, he reaches out to her Soul energetically and establishes an active rapport between them. As the bond between their Souls strengthens, the esoteric healer extends his aura to include and mingle with hers; the Soul energy pouring through his aura stabilizes her aura and allows her own Soul to extend Its power into her without blockage. He holds the energy pattern intact while the work of healing takes place between his client and her Soul.

His client experiences a very personal and insightful psychological shift as tremendous healing energy passes through her system. As time passes and the energies subside, she awakens to a profound presence of peace. She tells him that something has changed; her past is still there, but it is now bound inextricably to her present. She says that she cannot put her finger on exactly what she has just experienced, but she has gained a higher perspective and a glimpse of what is to come. From this perspective, the events in her life have meaning and contribute to the important work that is set out before her. She feels whole again.

### The Tenets of Esoteric Healing

At its core, esoteric healing is the scientific application of Love directed to the affairs of health and healing. Within each of us, the body of Love is the Soul, and the works of the Soul are pure quality. By way of a musical analogy, this metaphysical explanation gives way to a clearer understanding. Reflecting upon the music of a flute, a listener's ear is impressed by two distinct phenomena disguised as one: the sound *of* the flute, and the melody *from* the flute. The sound of the flute is a mechanical event aptly described by the mechanics of vibrating air molecules conditioned by the shape of the flute and the muscular effort of the musician. The melody of the flute, be it of high quality or low, defies simple explanation. It is not found in the mechanism of the flute, or as a pattern of electrical impulses in the brain of the musician. Melody is always hidden from scrutiny. Nevertheless, while remaining difficult to define, melody is easily grasped by the intuitive understanding of young and old alike, regardless of musical literacy. Carrying this analogy forward, for the esoteric healer, Soul is to melody as sound is to the body.

Esoteric healing differs significantly in its approach to health and healing as compared with modern medicine, psychiatry, and mental healing. The esoteric healer sees within the patient a Soul and a physical body—and, between the two, a complicated system of energy and awareness that synthetically relates all the parts into a coherent living being. The role of the esoteric healer becomes that of facilitating Soul expression in incarnation. With a novel interpretation

of anatomy and physiology, the esoteric healer encourages and facilitates the Soul's participation in the patient's everyday life.

Esoteric healing is very old. As a subset of the Ageless Wisdom, it has been practiced in the remote monasteries of the world for thousands of years by an isolated few in search of wisdom and balance. The energies and forces of the Soul, once accessible by these select few, are for the first time in human history now available to the many. In anticipation of the impact of Soul force on humanity, the fundamental tenets of esoteric healing were introduced as postulates through a collection of ten laws and six rules publishing in 1935 in *Esoteric Healing*; the following examples capture the essence of this unique science:

Law I: *All disease is the result of inhibited Soul life, and that is true of all forms in all kingdoms. The art of the healer consists in releasing the Soul so that Its life can flow through the aggregate of organisms that constitute any particular form.*<sup>9</sup>

Law VIII (Rule 5): Healers must seek to link their Soul, their heart, their brain, and their hands. Thus can they pour the vital healing force upon the patient. *This is magnetic work.* It cures disease or increases the evil state, according to the knowledge of the healer.

Healers must seek to link their Soul, their brain, their heart, and auric emanation. Thus can their presence feed the Soul life of their patient. *This is the work of radiation.* The hands are not needed. The Soul displays its power. The patient's Soul responds through the response of the patient's aura to the radiation of the healer's aura, flooded with Soul energy.<sup>10</sup>

Unstated in the above examples, yet central to esoteric philosophy, is the understanding that life does not begin at conception and continue through to the expiration of the physical body. Life always *is*; it existed for each of us before we took a body and will continue to exist long after we discard it. We have lived many times and will continue to live many more times. Behind the cyclic phenomena of living and passing lies the deeper life of the Soul—the core of who

we are. To appreciate esoteric healing, we must first understand the nature of the Soul, the purpose and meaning behind reincarnation, and the process of the Soul's appropriation of a physical body when in incarnation.

### What Is the Soul?

The single most difficult concept for the esoteric healer to describe is that of the Soul. So many definitions and so many different institutions claim primacy regarding the definition of the Soul. What can we add that will not spread more confusion? While difficult to explain, the Soul is not out of understanding's reach. The Ageless Wisdom has a very long history with this topic and is adept at sharing knowledge of inner life and living. To begin with, for ease of understanding, the esoteric healer distinguishes among the different aspects of the Soul with a precise spelling convention. The Immortal Soul (also known as the Solar Angel, the Higher Self, and the Ego) is spelled with capitalized first letters. The human soul (also known as the incarnating soul, the personality, the "light under the bushel," or the lesser soul) is spelled in lower case letters.

The human body is a plurality of forms; and the esoteric healer gives these different forms names such as the physical body, the etheric body, the astral body, and the mental body. All of these bodies, seen and unseen, are the vehicles of the Soul. The bridge between knowledge of the bodies, or forms of the Soul, and the Soul Itself, is quality. The esoteric healer, for example, sees Love as a quality. Is Love real? Did humanity invent Love or discover it within itself? These are questions generated by the mind to understand a concept that cannot be answered satisfactorily on the mind's own terms. It is enough to know that Love exists because it passes the litmus test of "Can we imagine a different world than the one we live in now, a hypothetical world without Love?" Of course, we can. As real as Love is in our hearts, though, to the mundane mind Love is a nominalization that cannot be poured into a wheelbarrow and driven around the garden. But to the Soul, Love is very real, more real to it than the bodies that the Soul assembles and casts off in periodic intervals. Love—the quality—creates, heals, restores, and redeems all that It touches. And as amazing as

Love is, it is only one of the qualities of the Soul. So, what then is the Soul?

The Soul is our highest self. It exists outside of the realm of thinking and feeling, yet supports these human attributes with the warmth of Its being. The Soul is the intelligent power within us that sets the cycle of birth and rebirth into motion through the agency of Its will. It defines us, sets the patterns of our life into motion, teaches, loves, knows, and sustains us. The Soul *is* us; however, we have grown into the habit of talking about It as if It were different from us. The Soul is different in that It is a member of the Kingdom of Souls and, in this regard, is very far away. However, the Soul is also the most human thing about us, without which we would be no different than all the lives within the subhuman kingdoms. When we say “I,” we are saying in a small way, “I am the Soul,” for the “I” within each of us is an extended piece of the Soul—separated from our human perspective by merely a gap in consciousness. This gap defines us completely; and it is the bridging of this gap that occupies the esoteric healer. The bridge between the Soul and the incarnating soul is built in thought and, when completed, is called the *An-tahkarana*; its creation is a joint effort between our two aspects of Soul and soul.

Another difficult concept to explain in this world view is the relationship between the human soul, or the incarnating soul, and the forms that it inhabits. All life is a combination of inner life and outer form. The inner life within subhuman forms is a pool from which the Soul collects and assembles the materials of our bodies. It is called elemental, and its makeup is very, very similar to that of the lesser soul. The human soul is of a much higher caliber, though; and, as a piece of our Divine Soul, it is endowed with great qualities and great potential. The challenge for a human soul, the reincarnating spark within, is to recognize that it truly is different from the sea of elemental soul in which it is immersed. It must separate itself from the pull of the form and declare its unity with the source from which it is derived. As an example of elemental essence, the physical life of the body as we know it is made up of an assembly of living cells. For the esoteric healer, each of these material cells en-souls a small piece of elemental life

and completes the duality—life and form. Collectively, the sum of the individual souls of each of the body’s cells is an aggregate being called the physical elemental. The state of awareness of the physical elemental is very limited and is seen in the vegetative state of the brain injury victim whose connection to the incarnating spark of life has been severed. Life persists in the body, but the awareness cannot reconnect to the brain due to the severity of the injury. Likewise, the etheric, astral, and mental bodies of humans are dual—each with a form and an elemental life that completes the duality. All of these elemental essences unite within us and exert their influences upon our “I” as physical appetites, base desires, and uncontrolled thinking.

### What Does the Soul Do?

The life of the Soul is very long. The Soul is, in fact, immortal. At the same time, the Soul incarnates as a human being in periodic intervals called incarnations. The Soul partitions off a small piece of Itself and builds around this small piece the physical, emotional, and mental bodies of a human being, seen and unseen. This small piece of the Soul is the incarnating soul of a human being. Throughout its lengthy career of incarnations, the incarnating soul experiences life and death, pain and pleasure, good and evil, abundance and poverty, success and failure, etc. The incarnating soul is the “I” within each one of us. While incarnated in the world, we live and learn; and when the term of the physical life has expired, we begin a journey of restitution. We survive the passing of the physical bodies, one by one, and then finally re-experience the reunion of the Soul with the incarnating fragment that is the lesser soul.

What is usually overlooked in this familiar narrative is that, during the journey of life, we have accumulated qualities as a result of our experiences with life and death, pain and pleasure, good and evil, abundance and poverty, success and failure, etc. When the cycle comes full circle and the incarnating spark is reunited with the Divine Soul, the qualities that we have developed are assimilated into the life of the Soul and become spiritual assets of our ongoing immortality. This cycle of birth, death, and rebirth continues until the density of the qualities that

are inventoried in the Soul is deemed sufficient to start the next chapter in the life of the Soul—a chapter called the Journey of Appropriation.

### **The Journey of Appropriation**

**R**eincarnation is a cornerstone of the field of Esoteric healing. The mechanics of reincarnation and the disposition of the three bodies that comprise the personality are much discussed topics. Equally important, and less often talked about, is the nature of the relationship between the Soul and the incarnating soul. This relationship is nurtured and developed through the experience of multiple reincarnations for a very specific purpose—and it is this relationship that yields the fruits of the reincarnation experience. From the perspective of the incarnating soul, and over a span of thousands upon thousands of lifetimes, the journey itself may be described as a sequence of events that roughly flow as follows:

- In early lives, the spark of life is completely submerged in the elemental essence of form. The important factors in human awareness are the ones that condition the individual, stemming from the environment and the effects that the environment has on form.
- Slowly humans separate their experiences and become able to differentiate between their form and the environment in which they find themselves.
- While still submerged in the elemental essence of form, individuals see themselves as the self within the form and begin to shape their lives and environment.
- An inner life dawns as individuals begin to feel and to dimly sense the inner experience of quality in the experiences of life. They begin to internalize the experiences of pain and pleasure, and their dream life begins to take shape.
- Many lifetimes pass; and, as the emotional lessons deepen and mature, the first inkling of thought dawns.

**Of particular interest to the esoteric healer is the stage of growth between the decision of the Soul to engage Itself with the personal life of the individual and the throwing down of the Light of the Soul.**

But what of the Higher Self? What does the Solar Angel experience during these cycles? What is the purpose of the reincarnation experience to the Soul? As discussed earlier, the Soul surrounds Itself with the qualities that have been developed over many lifetimes. During these long lifetimes, and between intervals of birth and death, the Soul is preoccupied instead with the affairs of the Kingdom of Souls, of which It is a part. At first, the Soul is but dimly aware of the goings on of the day-to-day affairs of the incarnating soul. However, as lives unfold and the quality of the incarnating soul matures, the Soul becomes more involved in Its earthly career and prepares Itself and the forms of Its manifestation to fulfill Its contribution to the Divine Plan.<sup>11</sup> When the spiritual density of the forms of quality that the Soul has accumulated and nurtured is sufficient, a decision is made by the Soul to actively overshadow the incarnating

soul and, in a remarkable way, alter the forms in which It dwells to better suit them for the work to come. The acceptance criteria for this decision lie entirely with the Soul and are conditioned by the Soul's desire to participate in the Divine Plan, with the qualities and aptitudes that It has developed over the ages.

Thus begins the Journey of Appropriation. Just as the seed yields to the inner forces of the

shoot when the new growth pushes out and up towards the light, the Soul begins to actively assert Itself deep within the personality in the following stages.<sup>12</sup>

- The decision is made to begin the work of initiating the personality.
- The Soul refocuses Its energies from Soul enterprises in the Spiritual Kingdom and enters into deep meditation.
- Magnetic rapport is set up with the physical, emotional, and mental bodies of an individual's outer form.
- The individual responds and enters into meditation.
- The work proceeds in ordered stages and with cyclic activity.

This point in the inner evolution of the incarnating soul describes the point of attainment of modern humanity. Many who are well educated (either through institutional learning or by life experience), possess high qualities, are concerned for others equally or more so than themselves, are intuitive, and experience occasional flashes of genius are at this stage and await the next step in the process, which is described as: “Spiritual perception grows slowly and surely as the brain becomes capable of illumination from the Soul, via the mind. As intuition develops, the radius of awareness grows and new fields of knowledge unfold.”<sup>13</sup>

The steps which follow, while experienced by all of us at some point in our spiritual evolution, are of special interest to esoteric healers because it is here that healers illumine the way for those who wish to pass through to a more inclusive life. The next steps unfold in the following progression:

- The Light of the Soul is thrown downwards.
- The light of the vital (etheric) body and the physical form is synchronized with that of the head.
- The centers swing into activity.
- The Light of the Soul and the other two lights are so intense that now all life in the three worlds is illuminated.
- Alignment is produced; the work of discipleship and of initiation (i.e., the work of the Soul) becomes possible and proceeds according to the Law of Being.<sup>14</sup>

What then is the work of the Soul? The work of the Soul is to manifest a piece of the Divine Plan. This Plan is the will of God for the development of the Soul of all Life, of which humanity as a whole is a part. The Solar Angel, the Higher Self, is the Christ principle within, as well as a member of the fifth kingdom—the Kingdom of Souls. When the historical Christ proclaimed that “I am the Light of the world,” He was referring to the Light of the Soul within all Life, which is the undivided, collective Light of the Kingdom of Souls. The Light of the Christ is the Light that illuminates the way forward for the Divine Plan; this Light is available to all who

reach out for it and consciously harmonize with the laws of its nature.

What is experienced by individuals in the three worlds as the Journey of Appropriation unfolds within them? Of particular interest to the esoteric healer is the stage of growth between the decision of the Soul to engage Itself with the personal life of the individual and the throwing down of the Light of the Soul—and it is this stage of growth that is the most relevant and difficult stage of all. Between these two stages, the incarnating soul (the individual) is now dimly aware of different spiritual forces moving through awareness that do not lend themselves to easy control. Sometimes the forces lift the individual up to the heights of ecstasy; sometimes they lead the individual down into depression and despair. This experience is called the battle of the pairs of opposites and can be a most distressing period of several lives. The Soul is beginning to exert Itself in the life of the individual while the elemental sea, within which the individual is immersed, revolts against the irritation of the Light.<sup>15</sup> The individual seems caught in the middle of a spiritual tug of war that tests the patience to the n<sup>th</sup> degree.

When the Journey of Appropriation is finished, the individual is able to look at the inner subjective world of the Soul as easily as looking out into the world of form. There is an ancient Indian prayer, the Gayatri, that reveals the essence of this Journey:

*O Thou who givest sustenance to the Universe, from whom all things proceed, to whom all things return, unveil to us the face of the true spiritual sun, hidden by a disc of golden light, that we may know the truth and do our whole duty as we journey to Thy sacred feet.*<sup>16</sup>

The “true spiritual sun” is the Soul behind the manifestation of the incarnating soul. The “golden disc of light” is the form of the Soul as perceived by the personality, which for many lifetimes derives force, inspiration, and qualities from the latent and passive heat of the Soul. Later, when the Soul begins to actively express Itself, the nature of the being behind the “disc of golden light” becomes accessible to the individual.

## Summary and Conclusion

What can be said about New Thought and esoteric healing when compared side by side with each other? Both disciplines invoke spiritual force through mental effort; however, upon close examination, they differ in very important ways. One discipline invokes the Universal Mind, while the other invokes the Universal Soul. It is very tempting to engage in the line of thinking that says, “I am a very mental person, I should be using New Thought,” or similarly, “I am a soulful person, I should be using the techniques of esoteric healing.” Engaging the mind to analyze, make comparisons, and consider value judgments between the intellectual assets of these two disciplines or, in a higher sense, between the Universal Mind and the Universal Soul is a fruitful activity; however, it misses the point of this article. New Thought and esoteric healing are not the same; at the same time neither is better than the other, nor are they of equal merit. Rather than maintaining New Thought and esoteric healing as separate disciplines, or seeing them as two sides of the same coin, consider them as two ends of the same ladder. The base of the ladder is firmly rooted in the mind, and the top of the ladder reaches into the realms of spiritual illumination. One spiritual system names the rungs of the ladder as concentration, meditation, contemplation, intuition, and illumination; the other spiritual system names the rungs differently. Both describe necessary steps that bridge the gap between the awareness of the human soul and the awareness of the Divine Soul. To be human is to climb the ladder. The techniques of New Thought help the climber with the lower rungs, and the techniques of esoteric healing help the climber with the higher rungs. Is one rung of the ladder better than another? Are the techniques of New Thought better than the techniques of esoteric healing? These questions have no meaning. The best question—the quality question—to ask is, “What can be seen from the top of the ladder?”

New Thought and esoteric healing are on the edge of social breakthrough. The day will soon come when the power of thought is witnessed and documented as proven scientific fact. That great day will be followed by another where the

existence of the Soul is validated and accepted by the orthodox medical community. When these events come to pass, the four major groups of healers—orthodox medical practitioners, mental health professionals, New Thought healers, and esoteric healers—will work side by side in the same universities and hospitals and together raise the bar of medical and spiritual excellence to profound new levels.

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<sup>1</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1953), 254. Gender neutral terminology has been substituted by the Technical Editor in this quote as well as in the subsequent quotes.

<sup>2</sup> Ernest Holmes, *The Science of Mind* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1938), paraphrase of 106-134. Additional details supplied from the author’s holistic health experiences as a certified Alphabiotic practitioner.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Troward, *The Edinburgh Lectures on Mental Science* (New York: Robert McBride and Co., 1922), 2.

<sup>4</sup> Wikipedia, *New Thought*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Thought](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Thought), (accessed September 27, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> Holmes, *Science of Mind*, 73-74. Gender neutral terminology has been substituted by the Technical Editor in this quote as well as in the subsequent quotes.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>8</sup> New World Bible Translation Committee, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (Brooklyn, New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc, 1961), 1063, Matthew 9:29.

<sup>9</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 5.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 535.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, paraphrase of 510-514.

<sup>12</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1934), 108-109.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>15</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 512-513.

<sup>16</sup> Brewster Ghiselin, *The Creative Process – Reflections on the Invention in the Arts and Sciences* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 34-35.