

Review

Spirituality in Medical Acupuncture

Steven K. H. Aung

Clinical Professor, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, Adjunct Professor, Faculties of Extension, Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences and Rehabilitation Medicine and School of Public Health; University of Alberta, Clinic Address: 9904 106 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5K 1C4; E-Mail: draung@aung.com

Academic Editor: Gerhard Litscher

OBM Integrative and Complementary Medicine
2017, Volume 2, Issue 3
doi:10.21926/obm.icm.1703003

Received: May 2, 2017

Accepted: July 4, 2017

Published: July 21, 2017

Abstract

Spirituality may be generally conceptualized as the precious, personal path of our apparently soulful vital energy within the context of the power of our compassionate consciousness. The body, mind and spirit encompasses a constantly inspiring vital energetic field that must be in diligent interaction and harmony in the interest of past, present and future generations. In the clinical application of the healing arts and sciences, as physicians or other dedicated health care providers of whatever nation, race, culture, sex, age, religion, etcetera, we may hope to apply general principles and practical clinical applications with respect to ourselves within the context of compassion, competence and creativity and for the benefit of our dear patients anywhere around the world. Physicians who become healers rather than mere technicians follow the path of cultivating healing spirituality to the best of their physical, mental and spiritual ability in association with their respected masters, mentors, teachers, colleagues, fellow students and with respect to the input of their dear patients.

Keywords

Spirituality; Spirit; Medical Acupuncture; Cultivation; Motivation; Enlightenment



© 2017 by the author. This is an open access article distributed under the conditions of the [Creative Commons by Attribution License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium or format, provided the original work is correctly cited.

Introduction: Concept of Spirituality

What is spirituality? There have been and will continue to be so many differential definitions and explanations regarding this vitally important concept and questions over our present, past and future seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, centuries and millennia and there is no way to fully and finally document these heartfelt endeavors right here and right now as indicated in this present installation.

Spirituality may be generally conceptualized as the precious, personal path of our apparently soulful vital energy within the context of the power of our compassionate consciousness—an empowering and diligent origin and destination, with many divergent, peaceful, harmonious and constructive, different and creative paths, which each of us seem free and potentially empowered to conscientiously and consistently choose to embody and enact according to our karma with the ultimate best of our good intentions toward all sentient beings, within the salience, resilience and radiance of our past, present and future lives and conscious incarnations.

If we want to add more 'c's' to this empowerment spirituality formula, we might also wish to include complementary—creativity with a positive sense of constantly consistently and conscientiously applications of our knowledge and experience (since we always seek to honour and conserve the best efforts of our respected, honoured ancestors who have taught us so much with respect to the positive, merciful karma they have constantly cultivated over so many generations) as well as ordinary everyday constructiveness with the very best of our capabilities and good intentions. We might also add conservative, not in any political sense or system per se, but in the overall sensibility of maintaining and sustaining the ancient wisdom of our respected ancestors and our future descendants, generation by generation, level by level, stage by stage [1].

The arts and sciences of healing are always alive—which do not stop here and now—but which inculcate the vital energetics of mother/father nature. We must always seek to transmit such universal healing creative initiatives and installations in these past, present and future generations inward, onward, outward and upward with respect to teachers, students and masters intertwined/interconnected for all concerned.

It often seems like a supernatural spark or match or torch ignited re-ignited and handed down year by year, decade by decade, century by century, generation by generation, always hopefully seeking to enhance the quality of life and potential enlightenment of all sentient beings in our universal healing endeavor and personal cultivation toward world peace and multicultural, interfaith international harmony.



Note: Aung Medical Qi Gong Calligraphy: Zen Spiritual Meditation Integrating Character of Half Calligraphy and Half Painting (Pan Su Pan Hao) Black and Red.

Figure 1 After many years of diligent practice you achieve a level of Samadhi crystalline concentration which enables you to project your spirituality in the healing form of arts thus becoming a healer.

Cultivation of Spirituality

The goal, vision and mission of positive, balanced and harmonious healing spirituality 'specialty' is for us to try to 'go with the positive inflow, outflow, downflow and upflow,' so to speak, toward and with the good and the utmost best of our heartfelt compassionate intentions, with positive well-focused vital energy, genuine loving kindness and dynamic energy/synergy in our relations with all sentient beings in nature, awe and total respect for Mother earth, Father sky and vice versa, and we might add, the clarity, insight and motivation to appreciate and embrace the synchronicities and epiphanies that appear within our daily lives from time to time as we live and inculcate our focused attention and perseverance to the healing arts, crafts, creative gifts and sacred treasures [1, 2]. This applies to everyone everywhere, since no one is exempt from spirituality toward inward and outward cultivation of the best of our good intentions.

The following encompass several possible vital steps toward cultivation of medicine and spirituality to the best of one's ability despite all the usual healing obstacles:

- Keeping one's body physically fit and well balanced;
- Keeping one's mind constantly harmonious and stable;
- Maintaining one's inner spiritual peace and positivity to the best of our ability;
- Remembering and respecting our inspiring ancestors and elders, parents, relatives, teachers, mentors, masters, friends, colleagues in the past, present and future generations everywhere around the world who have made some positive contribution and commitment to this wonderful unfolding universe, especially in the healing arts and sciences;
- Constantly self-cultivating awareness at the six senses, encompassing intuition, eyes, ears, tongue, nose and lips, transforming into the higher consciousness of awareness by interconnecting ourselves and others with our planetary and universal environment [1];
- Commitment and regularly practicing the vibration of the six senses with compassion and good intentions toward all sentient beings everywhere—this is the heart, root, and core of vital energetic essential consciousness and healing capacity/ability in our life and our environment/ecology [1].

To the above we might add: constantly seeking purification, harmonization and recycling of the negative to the positive vital energy of samadhi and vipassana — these are esoteric supreme concepts signifying crystallization and emanation of heartfelt meditative attention and concentration involving our holistic body, mind and spirit.



Figure 2 Spirituality starts in the early morning with tremendous the nature of energy such as the ocean, sun, waves, wind etc. that creates the starting point of spirituality.



Figure 3 Spirituality continues even at night, even though everything is peaceful spirituality is still active in the forest, the moon, rivers, clouds, fog, animals *etc.*

Spirituality and Religion

Thinking, feeling, practicing and meditating helps us to go positively forward toward fulfillment of the enrichment aspects of life, toward faith, hope, resilience, intelligence, common sense, creativity and courage that we inculcate and experience from the outward to the inward and vice versa, sharing with others these sacred energies. This involves the timeless foundations and fountains of spirituality, the rivers, lakes, oceans, forests, plains, deserts, mountains, cities and universes of our lives, which may serve to sustain and maintain us with all the strength, endurance and vital energetic intelligence that we need to gently, positively and creatively flow through our daily life's normal challenges and also some incredibly amazing and inexplicable miracles.

Even though we must suffer and come face to face with difficulty and negativity from day to day and time to time, year to year, *etc.*, in terms of spiritually this may be a karma resonance and a kind of symbiosis energetics strengthening of our body, mind and spirit depending on our instincts, attitudes, intelligence, education and culture and beliefs.

Spirituality for some people may include a belief in various supernatural powers, as in a religion per se according to their conscience but also a natural ordinary daily direction in the healing seems most often oriented toward direct 'hand's on' experience within the context of one's education, experience, culture, compassion and vital energetic awareness inspirations, aspirations and, indeed, what may be termed 'wisdom' or 'philosophy' [3]. What is referred to as 'religion' and what is referred to as 'spirituality' are often as not one and the same essence and experience. In more recent years, the concept of spirituality has often carried connotations of a believer's faith being more personal but less dogmatic, fanatic and more open to new ideas and creative influences, shared beliefs and values and perhaps more pluralistic, open-minded, optimistic and selfless than perhaps indoctrinated by the usual priests or politicians or salespersons of any established spiritual religious system.

Those given to speaking of 'spirituality' rather than 'religion' are apt to believe that there are so many divergent and indeed esoteric paths and that there is no absolute objective so-called 'scientific evidence' about which is the optimal path to follow in this post-modern technological and multicultural world and even in the apparently ancient and modern times in the present—as time goes by [3]. This may or may not proceed to various levels or stages of more enlightened modalities of medicine and healing endeavors which might depend on the cultivation of good intentions/actions (karma) toward all sentient beings.

Definition of Healing and Spiritual Healing

Some enlightened spiritualist healing philosophers and practitioners might believe that the goal of 'being spiritual' is to simultaneously improve one's wisdom, willpower and communion with God/universe, which necessitates the removal of illusions and delusions at the sensory, feeling and mis-thinking aspects of one's personality [4]. It is a challenge for each and every one of us every second, minute, hour, day, week, month, year, decade, century, millennium, and so on to radiate, emanate and share these spiritual developmental, environmental energies, processes, material and vibrant structuration.

Other spiritual participants and proponents might point out that spirituality is a kind of a complex multi-dimensional/directional maze of karma pathways. Some vital energy fields radiate inward and outward toward our upward growth, development and enlightenment and other vital energetic fields emanate inward toward the aspects of our spiritual awareness, initiations, intentions, intuitions and possible improvements or enhancements in the world/reality around us as a result of our attentive realizations, proper motivations and appropriate positive discretions, directions and diverse interconnections during our lifetimes. Spiritual approaches in this motivation, direction and innovation encompass prayers, blessings, sermons, meditations, mutras/mantras, rituals and so on in various religious settings from the one's birth to death (the 'cradle to the grave') and beyond to our reincarnations and non-reincarnations. We can only just wait, watch, hope and see what happens with respect to the best of our abilities and good intentions toward all sentient beings.

The Interconnectivity of Spirituality and Healing

Consider the following spiritual points of attention and perhaps some kind of eternal wisdom, with respect to the great religions that have been developed over the past lifetimes of so many generations of human beings on this planet, which is basically: 'do not do unto others that you would have them do unto you.' This, of course, encompasses all sentient beings—past, present and future. To which we might not have forgotten to add: love the living God with all your heart, soul and being and never remember to respect your neighbors and all sentient beings who might need our heartfelt assistance [5]. If you are an atheist and do not believe in God or any spiritual system, you might simply try to help yourself and others contemplate how this world exists in its multi-dimensional energetic and structural formations and installations [6].

The Vital Importance of Spirituality and Healing in Medical Practice

In the clinical application of the healing arts and sciences, as physicians or other dedicated health care providers of whatever nation, race, culture, sex, age, religion, etcetera, we may hope to apply the above general principles and practical clinical applications with respect to ourselves within the context of compassion, competence and creativity and for the benefit of our dear patients anywhere around the world. Some people may benefit by being healed by helping others in return and so on and so forth, and as the old folk saying goes, what comes around goes around and vice versa, and so on and so forth (and according to Newtonian physics to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction and according to Einstein the energy of two objects impacts upon one another and generates a kind of gravitational reaction and inter-reaction). Even quantum physics cannot fully in any linguistic or mathematical language or philosophy explain how something exists or why and how it came from nothing.

Physicians who become healers rather than mere technicians follow the path of cultivating healing spirituality to the best of their physical, mental and spiritual ability in association with their respected masters, mentors, teachers, colleagues, fellow students and with respect to the input of their dear patients [7]. The following general criteria are indicated:

1. Clinical and religious settings may be divergent but also applicable if applied appropriately;
2. Holistic health care—entailing both biomedicine and other relevant complementary medical practices—should be a basic and necessary humwo/manistic perspective;
3. Both health care practitioners and their clients/patients should seek to arrive at a relatively comfortable 'comfort level' in relation to their unique interaction in the health care practice and facility situation and also their pain and suffering;
4. Pain, suffering and impending death are always our major interests, especially with respect to the worldview of patients and their physicians, whatever age, religion, sex, nation, etcetera;
5. Spiritually sensitive healing is best for all concerned—for physicians, therapists, aspiring healers and their hopeful students and patients now and in the years to come;
6. In severe cases of death and dying, sensitive pastoral and palliative care is absolutely indicated and totally necessary for anyone anywhere;
7. The religious background of patients must always be considered and respected for anyone anywhere in whatever class, culture, nation or whatever religion a person adheres to according to the best of their ability.

Concluding Remarks

The body, mind and spirit encompasses an amazing and indeed constantly inspiring vital energetic field that must be in diligent interaction and harmony in the interest of past, present and future generations [8]. From a medical perspective, this entails and involves a direct relationship of trust, belief and creative intuition among patients, healers and all involved persons interested in cultivating and generating and regenerating the best of the best of good health and wellbeing for their family, friends and all sentient beings everywhere in our precious environmental conditions, It is just that simple and just that complex, but if memory serves ourselves righteously, good people working together as a team, if possible, encompassing

physicians, therapists, hospital staff, family, friends, and colleagues will surely enhance the healing experience for all concerned. Moreover, with the best of past, present and future endeavors we will eventually arrive at what appear and may happen to be the appropriate healing solutions for some sentient beings during our natural lifetimes. This involves excellent primary care with positive Karma good Feng Shui and our Shen to enhance and enrich the quality of spiritual healing in the sacred diagnostic and treating endeavor. Appreciation of impermanency and emptiness is a positive aspect of our spiritual growth and quest, but the permanency and harmony of compassion and loving kindness is just like a supreme, healing pathway.

Advice for References

With respect to this present article, it is hopeful that all of you will find the right references and karma interconnections and installations regarding spirituality and healing if you are wholeheartedly dedicated within this vitally important endeavor. Each of the thousands of libraries around this world in so many languages and cultural belief systems have so many excellent works created, published, produced within their perspectives and reproduced by the so many dedicated and diligent seekers of spirituality. If one is wholly serious in her or his intentions, looking for understanding among many multidimensional questions and answers, you can try your very best to seek and find them—at least on an introductory level—on the www (various diverse internet installations for which you can easily type in your search terms if you so fortunate to have an internet connection). This is why we honour not only the dedicated librarians but also the essential creators, installers, readers and appreciators of these ancient and modernistic written and electronic works preserved in these past, present and future generations, if possible. Naturally, the original works or appropriate reproductions of the masters of the healing arts are optimal, if obtainable, at any cost one can afford to pay. For our own good health and that of our loved ones the cost is priceless and will never be lost.

On a deeper, more intensive level we might consider aligning ourselves with a genuine master and spiritual community of the inter-faith concept and compassionate, integrative medicine perspective. This may help guide us into and toward a more fruitful and enriched empowerment dimension of spirituality and healing. Of course, finding a genuine healing master remains an extremely difficult challenge, for both the aspiring humble healers and their hopeful patients. My own perspective remains rooted in traditional Buddhist healing and traditional Chinese medicine integrated within the context of modern biomedicine. This embodies and reflects my spiritual foundations and aspirations over the past decades and has contributed to the ongoing constant cultivation and development of my daily spirituality in attempting to heal others to the utmost best of my ability and also helping others toward the golden heartfelt goal of perfect health and well-being, if at all possible.

References

1. Motoyama, Hiroshi. Theories of the chakras: bridge to higher consciousness. *Journal of Neurology*, 2001. 242(7): 437-442.
2. Aung SK. Loving kindness: the essential Buddhist contribution to primary care. *Humane Health Care International*, 1996. 12(2): E12.

3. TP D. Topic two: spirituality assessment. American Academy of Family Physicians home study self-assessment program. 2005: FP audio 316, September
4. T., H., *The Uncommon Touch: An investigation of spiritual healing*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1994.
5. White AR. The Web that has no Weaver: Understanding Chinese Medicine. *Focus on Alternative & Complementary Therapies*, 2001. 6(1): 45-45.
6. Aung SK. The integrative quest: neither, nor ... medical acupuncture inward, outward and beyond. *Med Acupunct*, 2004. 15(2): 2.
7. Resch KL. *The Desktop Guide to Complementary and Alternative Medicine*. 67–68.
8. Aung SK. The vital importance of the Qi gong tree hugging experience and installation. *Qi*, 2005. 15(1): 7.



Enjoy *OBM Integrative and Complementary Medicine* by:

1. [Submitting a manuscript](#)
2. [Joining in volunteer reviewer bank](#)
3. [Joining Editorial Board](#)
4. [Guest editing a special issue](#)

For more details, please visit:

<http://www.obm-pc.com/journals/icm>