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Mainstreaming Soul Medicine

Society is heavily invested in the current medical system. Despite its failure to keep people well, to develop safe and non invasive techniques, and to study promising therapies outside of the consensus biomedical model, our social system continues to fund and support allopathic medicine to the hilt.

Allopathic medicine and research now accounts for some 15 percent of the Gross National Product of the United States. On cancer research and treatment, since President Nixon declared a War on Cancer, some two trillion dollars has been spent. For those of us suffering from “zero shock,” that’s *two thousand billion* dollars, or *two hundred thousand* million dollars. Despite this astonishing allocation of national resources, the percentage of Americans dying from cancer adjusted for age is about the same as it was in 1950. A recent report notes that long term survival rates from common cancers such as breast, prostate, colorectal and lung cancer has barely budged since the 1970s.¹ An editorial from Richard Smith in the *British Medical Journal* reminds us that “only 15 percent of medical interventions

are supported by solid scientific evidence,” and that “This is because only 1 percent of the articles in medical journals are scientifically sound, and partly because many treatments have never been assessed at all.”²

A study of the Gerson method of alternative cancer treatment, an approach that relies on frequent preparation of very fresh vegetables, and the elimination of virtually all toxins, evaluated the five year survival rates of 153 melanoma patients. It found that 100 percent of the patients with Stage One and Stage Two cancers receiving the Gerson therapy survived, but only 70 percent of the conventionally treated patients. For patients with cancer that had spread to other sites close to the original cancer Stage Three seventy percent of the Gerson patients survived, versus 41 percent of those treated with allopathic medical techniques. Of those patients whose cancer had spread to distant parts of their body Stage Four , 39 percent of the Gerson patients were still alive, compared to just 6 percent of those treated with conventional therapy.³ This kind of result is astounding; there were *six* patients alive on the Gerson treatment for every *one* patient receiving conventional chemotherapy and radiation.

Dartmouth Medical School did a study that examined death rates among patients recovering from heart surgery. They found that the survival rate of people who possessed a strong foundation in their religious faith, and a vibrant social network, had *fourteen* times the survival rate of those who did not. “A Yale University study of 28,212 elderly people found that those who rarely or never attended church had *twice* the stroke rate of weekly churchgoers.” Another study of older adults in Marin County, California, showed that those who attended religious services weekly even occasionally were 36 percent less likely to die after procedures than those that did not.⁴

A promising series of studies has been done on the fruit and wood of the paw paw tree by researchers at Purdue University. This plant contains acetogenins, which affect the production of ATP in the mitochondrial powerhouses of cancer cells, and reduces the growth of the capillaries that sustain cancer. It is also the only compound

proven effective against MDR or Multiple Drug Resistant cells in breast cancer.⁵ Purdue University has done several similar studies, but these and the Gerson study described above are among the very, very few properly conducted studies comparing alternative natural therapies with conventional treatments for cancer.

We have heard hundreds of anecdotal accounts from patients who have healed themselves using visualization, prayer, faith healing, electromagnetic stimulation, homeopathy, biofeedback, lifestyle changes, superior nutrition, emotional healing, herbs, meridian based therapies, and other forms of soul medicine.

One of those patients whose story stands out is Nancy. She was diagnosed in 1972 with Stage Four cervical cancer. Her cancer had metastasized to several other sites in her body. She was given only a few months to live by her doctor.

Nancy's diagnosis occurred when there were no cancer support groups, when alternative treatments were being vigorously suppressed, when alternative cancer clinics were being outlawed, when alternative therapists were being jailed, when research was scarce and hard to perform, and when there were no books or articles on surviving the grim statistics for metastatic cancer.

She'd heard of a technique called creative visualization. She could not bear the thought of going through the prescribed course of chemotherapy and radiation. An exceptionally strong willed human being, she reasoned: "My body created this thing, so my body has the power to uncreate it, too." She decided to try creative visualization for herself.

She left work, and began to do nothing except take care of herself. She rested, did what exercise her exhausted state would allow, and took ate and drank more carefully. She visualized the cancer cells being eaten up by little white stars in her body. She imagined the stars falling through her body many times a day. Each time one of the points of a star touched a cancer cell, it punctured the cell. The cell died, and the remains dribbled out of her body.

She would lie in a bath for hours, and imagined the cancer cells being washed away by the stars. She filled her mind with little except self nurturing, and little white stars.

She began to feel better and better. Her walks became longer. Her appetite increased. Her focus slowly began to shift from immediate survival, and she began to picture a future for herself. She started to dream of what goals she might pursue in the next few years.

After three months, she returned to her doctor, feeling vibrantly healthy. She was tested, but had no anxiety about the outcome. When the test results came back, her doctor was astonished; she was completely cancer free, as she knew she would be. She was still sharing her story with other people more than ten years afterwards. Nancy was still in excellent health, and the cancer had not returned.

Such images are highly personal, and work best when the patient comes up with images that speak potently to both conscious and subconscious mind. Another man visualized “white immune cell bunny rabbits feasting on fields of orange cancer carrots.’ A particularly fascinating part of these elaborate imageries is that some of those who created them seemed to know prior to medical discovery that their cancer was gone. One morning the man with the immune cell bunny rabbits ‘couldn’t find enough carrots for all my rabbits.’ Shortly thereafter, his physician reported the cancer gone.”⁶

Society’s ignorance of soul medicine is very costly. Billions of dollars lost in the form of sick days and underperforming employees. In the US the figures for economic losses are huge: Persistent pain costs the US economy an estimated 100 billion per year in medical bills, lost tax revenue, welfare and disability payments, and lost productivity by workers who are on the job but in pain.⁷ According to the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the latter factor alone, “presenteeism,” costs the US economy some 61 billion dollars per year.⁸ Occasioning some 40 million doctor visits each year, pain is the most common reason behind medical appointments.⁹ Chronic pain patients have, on average, complained of pain for seven

years, undergone three major surgeries, and incurred medical bills of between 50,000 and 100,000.¹⁰ The British health ministry estimates that 11 million work days are lost in the UK each year because of back pain alone.¹¹ This is a condition from which, at the Shealy Institute, we have found that 50 percent of patients, find relief using an inexpensive TENS device and another 35 percent benefit from the broader soul medicine approach.

During brain surgery videotaped for Bill Moyers' PBS documentary *Healing and the Mind*, a patient scheduled for brain surgery did not receive general anesthesia as would have been mandatory under the allopathic model. Instead, the patient received only an acupuncture treatment for pain. The patient remained awake and pain free during the brain surgery procedure, and was even able to converse with the attending medical staff.¹² Coauthor Norman Shealy performed such surgery with TENS devices in the late 1960s. Such results point to efficacy using soul medicine that is completely beyond the reach of allopathic medicine.

In a landmark study of wound healing, deep incisions were made on the shoulders of twenty three male college students. The experimental group received Therapeutic Touch, in which the hands of the healer are held over the wound and energy directed toward its healing. The control group did not receive energy healing. At an early point in the study, the wounds of the students in the Therapeutic Touch group were 94 percent healed. In the control group, the wounds were 67 percent healed.¹³ Experiments like this show dramatic results from energy medicine techniques – results that cannot be explained by any biomedical model. A large scale study of studies performed between the beginning of 1999 and the end of 2004 recently compared the cost effectiveness of conventional medical treatments with CAM alterative treatments. Because of the limited number of studies done on alternatives, the number of conditions they could compare for were limited. However, they found that CAM treatments were more cost effective than conventional medicine every time; for Parkinson's disease, for migraines, for neck pain, for stress management, for IBS irritable bowel syndrome , and for other conditions.¹⁴

You would assume that, given the success of soul medicine and alternative therapies for cancer, pain, and wound healing, society would be busily redirecting a huge proportion of that two trillion dollars into soul medicine based approaches. You would assume that scientists would be energetically studying people like Nancy, in a focused effort to understand where this magic comes from.

And you would be wrong. The Gerson study mentioned above is one of only a handful comparing conventional cancer treatment with alternative therapies. Just a few million dollars a year are spent on soul medicine, less than one percent of one percent of what is spent on conventional treatment.

If we take as a starting point the National Institutes of Health figure that patients spend 34 billion a year on complementary and alternative medicine CAM, and that the total health care expenditures of the US are about 1.8 trillion annually, this means that CAM represents less than .02 percent of medical spending. This ratio, with allopathic care receiving 99.8 percent of funding, and CAM receiving just a tiny sliver, represents a severe imbalance.

Our society is like a man trying to improve an engine. He's been spending a thousand dollars a year for half a century on the enterprise. He's believed he is on the verge of a breakthrough many times, but his engine functions at about the same level of efficiency as it did when he began his tinkering fifty years before.

He spends twenty bucks and ninety minutes on a brief experiment called the Gerson engine. He discovers that it works six times better than his existing engine. He raises his eyebrows in surprise. Then he shrugs his shoulders, sets it aside, and goes back to spending a thousand dollars a year on his failed endeavor.

"Modern medicine," observes Larry Dossey, "has become one of the most spiritually malnourished professions in our society.... Because we have so thoroughly disowned the spiritual component of healing, most healers throughout history would view our profession today as inherently perverse. They would be aghast at how we have squeezed

the life juices and the heart out of our calling.”¹⁵ Thomas McKeown, a British professor of social medicine, brought to our attention that only 8 percent of the longevity gain in the recent centuries can be attributed to the “miracles” of modern science. Instead, pasteurization of milk, chlorination of water, improved sewage control and better nutrition contributed the remaining 92 percent gain.¹⁶ While modern medicine has done little to increase longevity and perhaps even less to enhance the quality of life, soul medicine holds out the promise of both. Yet progress in changing society’s focus, in order to shift the ratio of research and treatment dollars in the direction of effective soul medicine treatments is agonizingly slow. Many people are dying, and suffering unnecessarily, in the interim. The pendulum is starting to swing in the other direction, but gradually.

Accreditation Standards for Soul Medicine Practitioners

One factor we believe will accelerate the pace of change is a commonly accepted accreditation program for soul medicine practitioners. Accreditation gives patients the confidence of knowing that a practitioner has received a basic training that encompasses a defined suite of skills, and has passed a basic competency test.

U.S. physicians accomplished this a century and a half ago with the establishment of the American Medical Association in 1847. Two hundred and fifty delegates, hailing from twenty eight states, were present at the initial meeting at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. At this first meeting, the delegates elected Dr. Nathaniel Chapman as president. They adopted a code of medical ethics, as well as a national standard for pre medical education, and guidelines for the degree of M.D. The prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association* published its first issue in 1883.¹⁷ Psychologists emulated them, with the formation of the American Psychological Association APA in 1892, but it was not until the acquisition by the APA board of the journals published by Princeton University psychology professor Howard Warren in

the mid 1920s, including *Psychological Review* and the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, that the APA began to speak with a coherent voice. When the Flexner report destroyed most competition to the allopathic model, the AMAs methods became the dominant modality of treatment.

The chiropractic profession began the process when the educational director of the American Chiropractic Association, John Nugent, began prodding the heads of chiropractic colleges in the 1950s to raise their standards to the levels required for federal accreditation. He first made contact with the United States Office of Education in 1952. Gradually, instructors in the basic sciences were required to have an advanced degree, and a two year liberal arts college requirement was required as an admission standard. In 1971, under the leadership of Dr. George Haynes, the ACA separately chartered its education committee as the Council on Chiropractic Education CCE . After a sustained effort, in 1974 the CCE received a letter from the US Commissioner of Education stating that it would be added to the “list of nationally recognized accrediting agencies and associations.” At that time there were 4,812 students enrolled in US chiropractic colleges. The largest of these was the oldest, Palmer College, with 1,965 students, and the smallest, Northwestern College, with 130 students. Other than Palmer, no college had more than 600 students.¹⁸ Meanwhile, in 1966, chiropractors brought the far more powerful AMA to its feet with federal suits that stopped flagrant allopathic attacks upon chiropractic. Meanwhile, chiropractic was fighting a running legal battle with the AMA, which was seeking to outlaw chiropractic. The AMA, however, was forced to settle in federal antitrust cases by chiropractors in 1978, 1980, 1986, and 1990.

Soul medicine finds itself in a similar position today. The balance of research dollars and institutional momentum is clearly with the established medical profession. Yet soul medicine treatments are gaining increasing currency among consumers and medical professionals alike. In Philadelphia, the same city that witnessed

the founding of the AMA, the University of Pennsylvania has partnered with an alternative medicine school, Tai Sophia Institute, in a program to teach medical students about CAM. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, more than 95 of the nation's 125 medical schools require some kind of coursework in CAM.¹⁹ With consumers now spending so much money each year out of their own pockets to cover the costs of alternative therapies not covered by their health insurance plans, it's become essential that medical doctors be informed about them.

In addition to the accreditation of individual practitioners through a national board licensing program such as the one that currently exists for holistic MDs, we believe that the accreditation of the educational institutions that train soul medicine practitioners is an essential early step. Holos University Graduate Seminary, in which both coauthors of this book are involved, is in the midst of accreditation proceedings. It is one of several training institutions offering course work in sacred healing; it is striking that their numbers and composition mirror the breakdown of chiropractic colleges thirty years ago.

We are advocating the establishment of an internationally recognized common degree, such as an Energy Medicine Diploma, an EMD. We are suggesting a common set of professional ethics. We are also calling for the establishment of an accrediting agency for institutions offering soul medicine courses. A student would become a diplomate in energy medicine once they have completed the requirements for graduation at an accredited school, which would include a basic curriculum of 60 graduate hours roughly four full time semesters and a substantial practicum. After a board certified written and oral test, and a residency period, they would be licensed for the clinical practice of soul medicine. To be admitted into an EMD program, a student would be required to have completed at least two undergraduate years 60 credits or be certified as a registered nurse or physician's assistant from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the US Secretary of Education.

Here's what a set of required courses might look like. Some of the descriptions draw on analogous courses at Holos. If Holos offers a similar course, the course number is noted at the end of the description.

1. Anatomy and Physiology

A conventional review of the structure and function of the human body. Particular emphasis on signaling systems: biochemical, neural, endocrinal, electromagnetic, and kinesthetic. part of Holos 942

2. Soul Medicine Modalities

An overview of all the soul medicine modalities, along with a list of the principles of each, and scientific studies that demonstrate the applications and limitations of each. Demonstrations of each one when possible. Modalities may include: aromatherapy, homeopathy, light and color therapy, kinesiology, electrotherapy, acupuncture, healing touch, prayer, spiritual energetics, and the biochemistry of nutrition. Holos 841

3. Human Energy Anatomy

An examination of the characteristics of the human bioenergy systems, noting how they interact, and what therapies can be applied to each. The link between physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual interventions. The chakra system. Somatic psychology and therapies. Demonstrations by qualified professional practitioners. Holos 808 and 879

4. Neurology, Psychology, Immunity, and Gene Expression

Energy systems interact with physical structures in various ways, especially through the immune system, emotional states, intentions and beliefs. This course reviews how genes express when influenced by these systems, and gives students a grasp of the fundamentals of psychoneuroimmunology.

5. History of Soul Medicine—Eastern, Western and Indigenous

All societies have developed cultures of healing. These, however, differ from society to society. This course, while examining healing practices in various societies, also will consider what patterns they have in common. This course introduces students to the various systems of integrative health care found in all parts of the world. Western holistic standards, requirements and expectations are reviewed. Indigenous spiritual healing traditions are explained, including Brazilian, Chinese, Hawaiian, Ayurvedic, and Native American. Holos 876, 882 and 891

6. Medical Intuition

Students study the many personal blocks that prevent their natural intuitive ability. They are introduced to ways to change how they receive, react, and adapt to stressful situations, all of which may inhibit intuitive impressions. The course includes personalizing and tuning one's own style of intuition. Practical applications of intuition will be explored through a variety of intuitive exercises. Students then learn how to recognize and facilitate dialogue not only with their own bodies, but those of others. Students learn the foundation skills and application of Body Scanning and its relationship to basic physiology. They then practice their skills against known medical diagnoses in actual case histories. Holos 942 and 945

7. Soul Medicine and Recent Science

A review of statistical methods in research, an evaluation of the quality of research, and a listing of research sources and databases, followed by investigation of some of the most recent publications, scholars and institutions performing research. Holos 949

8. Energy Psychology

Students learn to understand how the body receives, transmits,

and processes emotions, and how anger, sadness, guilt, anxiety, and depression play an important role in our growth. The link between consciousness and emotional processes is emphasized, with the understanding that disease may be a powerful catalyst for change. Meridian based energy psychology techniques such as EMDR, Shiatsu, EFT and TAT are taught, and the student receives depth instruction of one of the Energy Psychology techniques. Holos 940 and 943

9. Ethical Standards for Soul Medicine Practitioners

Review of the ethical standards governing each modality, and of a unified statement of professional ethics for soul medicine. Awareness of the importance of holistic practice, treating the entire patient. The value of a diagnosis, and cases in which a diagnosis is difficult. An understanding of drug interactions, and the interaction of drugs with herbal formulations and naturopathic treatments. Authoritative sources of professional information. Asking for explicit permissions to work on the patient's energy systems. Ethical marketing, financial and business practices. Maintaining professional boundaries.

10. Practicum

The goal of the advanced practicum is to permit the student to demonstrate professional competency in addressing a particular method soul medicine under the direction of the instructor and guidance of an approved sponsor at the field study site. Students complete a daily journal and prepare a scholarly paper summarizing their findings for the field study. The field study may also consist of a pilot research project in preparation for thesis or dissertation research. Holos 841 and 846

Licensing Board and Residency

Once the student has completed a course of study at an accredited institution that includes these ten classes, or a similar consensus of courses, the student would sit for a board examination,

which would consist of a written and an oral examination. The written examination would be in the form of a standardized test that adequately assesses a student's grasp of all the areas of knowledge in the above courses.

Finally a student for the Energy Medicine Diploma would need to pass an oral examination by a group of examiners. At that point, the EMD would be permitted to practice under the supervision of another licensed professional for a period of time a residency prior to being licensed and entering into independent clinical practice. Until there are a sufficient number of licensed EMDs under which residents can practice, and even past that point, residents could be supervised by licensed professionals from other professions, such as MDs, DOs, and L.Ac.s Licensed Acupuncturists . The American Board of Scientific Medical Intuition certifies both Medical Intuitives and Counseling Intuitives who pass such an examination.

This plan fits neatly into existing curricula, and is flexible enough to accommodate both existing universities and students already enrolled in graduate and post graduate degree programs. These classes could be completed *during the course of* getting a doctorate or a master's degree at a university. Most of the above courses are already part of the core requirements for an advanced degree at Holos and other institutions. So a student would graduate with both a doctorate and an EMD.

This plan is also flexible enough to permit specialization in almost any modality. An EMD could graduate from a school of acupuncture. That would give the practitioner not just a primary treatment method in the form of acupuncture, but a wide grasp of the entire field of soul medicine, and how different modalities can combine for effective complementary treatment. Such a graduate would be both an EMD and an L.Ac. An EMD might alternatively choose a course of study, or an accredited school that focuses on aromatherapy or applied kinesiology, and graduate with a specialization in that field. Such a graduate would be both an EMD and an Applied Kinesiologist.

As holders of EMD degrees provide successful treatment of

patients, contribute to clinical studies, serve on the faculties of institutions, lecture at professional conferences, publish research in peer reviewed professional journals, and write books expanding the scope of professional knowledge, the field of soul medicine will gain in credibility and visibility. Research dollars and publicity should follow, and the promise of soul medicine to alleviate or cure many conditions poorly served by allopathic medicine will be realized.