

may sound as if the practitioner, rather than God, is the source of healing, but this is not so. Some healers may be self-deluded, and on an ego trip, but 'by their fruits' they must be judged.

To 'pray with' someone, in church terms, is called 'giving healing' by the lay person. Similarly God/Holy Spirit may be called Divine Source, Universal Love Energy, Cosmic Energy, Chi, Prana, and so on. 'To centre' can mean 'to attune.' These differences in terminology can be threatening to religious people, but they should be reassured that the majority of lay practitioners seek only to help their fellow human and other creatures, as servants of God.

The other leaflets mentioned below describe other ways in which the ministry of healing is recognised and practised within the Christian churches.

See also:

Leaflet 6 (b)

Christian Healing and Theology

Leaflet 6 (c)

Christian Healing and Mysticism

CFPSS Occasional Leaflets

1. **Sensitivity or Mediumship in a Christian Context.**
2. **The Death of a Baby: Giving Words to Sorrow.**
3. **Deliver us from evil...**
4. **The Psychic — What does the Bible say?**
5. **The Spiritual and the Psychic.**
6. (a) **Natural Healing Gifts**
(b) **Christian Healing and Theology**
(c) **Christian Healing and Mysticism**
7. **On Contemplation**
8. **Prayer**
9. **Science and God – A Grand Unifying Theory?**

available from the address below

Further advice and information
may be obtained from

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The Churches' Fellowship

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Occasional Leaflet 6 (a)

Natural Healing Gifts

by Gillian White

Perspectives on the giving and
receiving of healing through
lay ministry

*'O Lord, help me to help You
to reduce the world's pain.'*

(George Appleton)

Although some people are born with a natural gift of healing, we all have this potential which can be developed. This can be compared with a pianist. We can all push down the piano keys but to be a concert pianist, we need not only to be musical (a gift) but also to have lessons and to practise.

Healing one another through the hands has been practised ever since the earliest records of humankind. For example, evidence in cave drawings 25,000 years ago has been found in Europe. Healing is a natural part of creation and its practice is not exclusive to any one religion.

Healing is not about cure. It is a process of helping one another towards wholeness of body, mind, spirit and emotions. Touch is very important in our lives and many people are deprived of it these days. It brings comfort and relaxation and helps towards a state of harmony or health. There is a sense of well-being, and an improvement in the quality of life. It can lessen pain and boost the immune system, so enabling the person's self-healing process to function better. The healer can be compared to the jump leads to a car with a flat battery. The jump leads start the motor and then the car can re-charge its own battery.

Healing is not a replacement for the medical profession: these two ways of receiving help work alongside one another. Healthcare professionals, too,

understand that body and mind are inter-related and cannot be separated. Health, wholeness and well-being have to do with spirit, the emotions and relationships, as well as the need for pills, ointments and surgery.

All healers, whatever their religion or beliefs, have a faith in a power beyond the self that promotes healing. Prayer is the best means of linking up with this power. This prayer is usually silent and non-directive — a matter of 'letting go and letting God.' When healers are acting as channels for the love and light of God, this power flows through their hands into the person receiving. This energy moves the person towards their natural state or wholeness. Healing can either be in the presence of the person receiving, through touch, or through 'absent healing' at a distance. The energy is the power of unconditional love but we need to open to this power. Some Christians are more difficult to help through healing than people with no religious faith. For example, children, babies, and animals respond positively very quickly as they have no preconceptions and defences which can block the healing.

A gift of healing can be discovered in various ways. Some people become aware that they can help in this way, some are told that they have this gift and some are helped when ill themselves and go on to help others. It does not come through 'being religious.' You do not have to be

ordained (although some priests have this gift naturally) but those who discover the gift do themselves begin to discover their spirituality. Healers, to make a difference, need to work with love from the heart with the intention to help another.

Sometimes the faith of the sick person is effective. In other cases, someone without a religious faith can benefit by having faith or trust in the healer. The healer, however, needs to have a faith. Natural healing helps people to get in touch with their own inner resources and the healing process begins. Healing can sometimes appear to be instant and miraculous but more often it is a process happening over a period of time. If the emotional cause has not been healed, a physical problem can return. Mind and body cannot be separated.

We do not need to feel guilty if healing does not occur as we would like. Also, we must not blame God. It could well be that the healer, although well-meaning, is not a good enough channel. Perhaps the recipient of the healing was, for some reason, unable to open up fully to the power of healing. Healing will usually help in some way but not necessarily in the way we most wanted.

There can be misunderstandings in the church about the words used in natural healing. The practice of touch can be called 'faith healing,' 'therapeutic touch,' 'spiritual healing,' etc. Different healers use different words to describe what is happening. Use of the word healer itself