

Western Medicine and Esoteric Medicine – One Surgeon's Perspective.

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Background

I am often asked, 'how does a Surgeon come to be involved with Esoteric Healing? The two seem so far apart'

I fully understand the question and the incredulity behind it, for as a medical student and trainee surgeon in abdominal organ transplantation I had absolutely no interest in any form of complementary medicine or anything to do with religion, spirituality or Ageless Wisdom and had not even heard of Esoteric Healing or Esoteric Medicine. At that time, to me all forms of complementary medicine were unscientific, unproven and pretty much a waste of time and in some cases even harmful if it prevented or delayed people from having 'proper medicine'. The answers to healthcare, illness and disease belonged only to medicine and science as I knew them to be, or so I thought.

Fast-forward to the present and my views have radically changed. My understandings of the human person, of illness and disease, of healing, of God and life have all undergone a seismic shift. I have come to understand and appreciate that there is more to being human, to healing and to illness and disease than the current medical paradigms permit or consider. It is clear to me that

Western medicine does not have all the answers (not that it says it does) and that there is room to include other ways of understanding the human condition and illness and disease. At the same time, however, this does not mean I acquiesce to or support all forms of complementary healing - far from it. I have come to appreciate that there is much more to discerning what is truly beneficial to health and what is truly harming and that many so called 'healing' modalities or forms of complementary healing are energetically harming rather than healing – even when there is a visible or tangible improvement in function. Hence, contrary to what one might expect, discerning what is truly beneficial is not as simple as accepting any healing modality or treatment that displays an improvement in function.

I did not specifically go looking for Esoteric Healing or any other form of complementary medicine. I came to the Ageless Wisdom teachings, Esoteric Healing, Medicine and Philosophy as a consequence of my search for Truth. As a result of my own personal journey, I began to question if there wasn't indeed more to this life than I had previously considered. I became open to questioning my own dogmatic atheistic assertions and started to explore in many different directions. I read voraciously on the subject of God, covering the major New Age authors and also the traditional scriptures and texts. I attended workshops, lectures and courses on spirituality, healing and personal development. I trained as an Interfaith Minister and Spiritual Counsellor and completed an MA in Applied Spirituality - all in my quest for Truth. The Truth about life, about God, about the human

condition, my own personal journey and why things happen the way they do.

Whilst I came across teachers and teachings that at the time resonated in some way with me, I still kept searching, my quest for Truth incomplete and unsatiated. This outer searching from one place or teacher to another ceased however, when I came to Universal Medicine and the teachings of the Ageless Wisdom and Esoteric Philosophy as presented by Serge Benhayon. I sensed that here (Universal Medicine/Serge Benhayon) there was something different to all the other courses and workshops and lectures that I had attended. However, it has to be said, that I didn't agree with everything I heard initially. Although some of the presentations challenged my pre-understandings and medical knowledge, I was not put off, for there was a deeper feeling, a deeper resonance that I had found the Truth I had been looking for and a knowing that I had come home at last.

And so my quest for Truth about God and life and my own journey, lead me also to uncover the Truth about the human condition, about illness and disease and healing. Of course people may ask “how do you know it is ‘the Truth’?” For me, Truth has to be universal and unifying, it must apply to all equally, it has to feel true, to resonate with me as Truth and to make sense – even if at times it challenges my pre-understandings. It has to be consistent with the God I have come to know that is pure Love. For me the teachings of Truth need to be consistent and unchanging in essence, though they may alter in expression. My awareness of Truth is something that continues to expand, unfold and develop

as I see and feel its expression expand. However, the essence of its universality and unification must remain unchanged. The teachings of energetic truth as presented by Serge are spherical or whole, complete and consistent. In Serge I saw someone who didn't just talk the talk, but who walked the talk, who presented from a lived knowingness and who lived what he presented with a high degree of consistency and without façade.

At face value, it may appear that I am supporting two very different and perhaps incompatible ways of understanding the human person, illness and disease and healing. They are the evidence-based scientific 'truth' of Western Medicine and the energetic Truth of Esoteric Healing and Medicine. I would therefore like to expand a little on each of these and perhaps demonstrate that they are not only not incompatible but that perhaps the 'best' healing or medicine is to be found in a harmonious marriage of Esoteric Medicine and Western Medicine.

Western Medicine

The word medicine comes from the Latin 'ars medicina' and means the 'art of healing'. However, many Western doctors would balk at being called a healer, as I myself did a number of years ago. Western doctors in general terms identify more with science than healing and consider themselves scientists rather than healers. Healing (apart from physiological processes of wound healing etc.) has been pretty much side-lined from Western Medicine and is reserved for those who partake in complementary or alternative medicine and who are generally considered to be unscientific and a bit flaky, in the eyes of many Western trained doctors and indeed

this can be the case. However, by focusing predominantly on the scientific, technological and pharmaceutical aspects of medicine, Western medicine, to its detriment, has lost touch with its healing roots and the healing dimension of healthcare.

The biomedical model of illness and disease has dominated Western Medicine and despite the development of newer models, it remains embedded in the medical system.(1) The biomedical model sees illness and disease as something that happens to you but is not caused by you. It sees the cause of illness and disease as a virus, a bacterium, a toxin, a chemical, a gene, a mutation or perhaps a medical mystery or just bad luck. The cause is seen to be beyond the control of the individual, who has had no part to play in its manifestation. In this model, the patient comes to the Doctor to be cured, to be fixed such that they can return to living the same life that they had before the illness or disease. It is clear to see how this model disempowers the individual, who is seen as a victim of circumstances beyond their control, and who relies on the Doctor and Western Medicine to be cured or fixed, without paying any attention to or taking any responsibility for how they have been living.

However, George Engel recognised that this model was incomplete and published a paper in 1977 on the biopsychosocial model of illness and disease.(2) He encouraged physicians to take into consideration the psychological and social aspects of a person's life in the recognition that these also influenced disease manifestation. He was aware that the patient had a greater role to play in the manifestation of illness and disease than had previously been considered. The biopsychosocial model was expanded to become

the biopsychosocialspiritual model and raised awareness that the spiritual dimension also had a part to play in health and wellbeing. (3) With each of these models, there is increasing recognition that the individual person has more influence and responsibility for their health and wellbeing than Western biomedicine had considered or allowed and each of them include more and more dimensions of the human being. The holistic model goes a step further and includes all dimensions of the human being and all aspects of an individual's life when considering illness and disease manifestation and healing. Esoteric Medicine and Healing are within the holistic paradigm. In the holistic model the individual is no longer seen as a victim of circumstances beyond their control, but as someone who has responsibility for the choices they have been making that lead to the illness and disease and who thus can be empowered to make different choices, healing choices. Thus there is increased responsibility on the individual and a shift of power back to the individual and away from the Doctor. Although there are more people within Western Medicine talking about providing care according to the biopsychosocial model or even the holistic model, in practice this often falls short and the biomedical paradigm frequently still reigns.

In 2009 Steve Boorman reported that the health and wellbeing of medical professionals also influenced the care and outcome of their patients.(4) He stated that ‘what we have got to do is raise awareness that your own individual health is your own responsibility’ and he called for basic training for medical professionals to include that ‘even for surgeons.’ And so we can begin to see here that there is growing awareness around the need

for personal responsibility for health within Western healthcare in some arenas but also that there is a much wider picture developing. This demonstrates that how we are as doctors, also impacts and influences others in a way that can be healing or harming and thus as well as individual responsibility there is a collective responsibility to maintain our health and wellbeing because of the effects on those around us.

In order to take responsibility for our health we need to know or be aware of the factors that influence our health such that we can be empowered to choose those that are beneficial. There is growing awareness within Western Medicine that what we put into our bodies (food/drink) has an effect on the body that may be detrimental or beneficial to our health. The World Health Organisation have identified that 3/5 people in the world will die from 'largely preventable' diseases like stroke, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and chronic lung conditions.(5) They point the finger at alcohol, tobacco, diet and 'lifestyle' in general. Lifestyle includes factors like exercise and stress. Stress is a wide-ranging term that conveys there is some degree of dis-ease or disturbance with the normal physiological responses within the body as a result of internal or external factors or stressors. This can include how we react emotionally to life events, situations or people and there is research demonstrating the ill-effects of emotional states like anger, hostility and depression on one's physical health and wellbeing. (6, 7)

In addition, the field of psychoneuroimmunology(6, 8) is demonstrating how our thoughts and emotions impact the immune system and thus physical health giving additional weight

to the understanding that *'how we are on a daily basis influences our health'* (Serge Benhayon). Furthermore, the field of epigenetics is demonstrating how genetic expression can be reversibly altered by changes in the environment of the cell and the latter can be potentially influenced by what we take into the body in terms of food/drink/thoughts and emotions. (9)

Thus even within Western Medicine there is a growing understanding that we are responsible for the condition of our health and that perhaps how we live on a daily basis affects our health and wellbeing much more than was previously recognized or considered.

So what if there is a way of living that is naturally harmonious for the body, that builds vitality and engenders a joy-full and loving way of being?

What if there is a way of living and being that means we do not get so affected by life's stressors?

What if there is a way of understanding illness and disease that is transformative and empowering?

What if there is a way of understanding ourselves and life that could alter how we treat ourselves and others, that would influence the food we eat, the drink we consume, how we interact, how we respond to life situations such that rather than being harming to the body, it would develop harmony within and without? Surely that would be worth exploring?

Surely that would be worth considering – even if it was not yet established in scientific research but which **made sense** and the application of which delivered its own fruits?

Esoteric Medicine presents the understandings that can allow us to do just that – to develop a daily way of living and being that is harmonious for the body, that leads to true joy and vitality and is in fact medicine or the true ‘art of healing’ itself.

Esoteric Medicine

Esoteric Medicine utilizes the Ageless Wisdom/Esoteric Philosophy understandings that are based on knowing life at the energetic level.(10-12) It is based on understanding what the true energetic make-up is of the whole human being not just the physical body. Thus it presents understandings that go beyond Western Medicine and the current scientific paradigm and as such those who believe that science is the only way to understand the human body and the human condition are likely to dismiss these understandings out of hand. It requires a willingness to consider other disciplines and ways of knowing without being fundamentalist about science and evidence if one is to consider what is offered by Universal Medicine and what to many others and me, does in fact make sense. Not only does it make sense – but **put into the practice of daily living, it produces tangible results in one’s health and wellbeing**. That said, however, Esoteric Medicine does not focus on outcome based goals for there is a much deeper, more encompassing understanding.

Esoteric Medicine approaches the human condition, illness and disease and healing from a different perspective than Western

Medicine. Western Medicine largely treats and endeavours to cure symptoms and to restore function. Esoteric Medicine starts with the knowing of the true energetic essence of the individual and healing occurs by empowering the client to reconnect with that essence and to address the underlying cause that gave rise to the symptoms in the first place in order to restore harmony to the whole being, rather than just function to the body. Illness and disease are recognized to have occurred as a result of our living in a way that is disharmonious to our true nature and are seen as the body's way of clearing that which we have put into it, which is harming to it. Thus illness and disease are not seen as 'bad' as is the tendency within Western Medicine but as a natural response or consequence of how we have lived and can awaken us to a deeper understanding of ourselves and healing if we so choose.

As previously mentioned, Esoteric Medicine is holistic in nature in that it addresses all dimensions of the human being – mind, body, heart, spirit and soul. It is only by being aware and understanding all dimensions of what it is to be a human being that we can truly address the root causes of illness and disease and thus have a true form of healing rather than perform band-aid medicine, as we so often do, that just treats symptoms without addressing the underlying cause. Thus Western Medicine, with its focus on the physical and psychological, will always be fragmented and incomplete in its understanding of the human person and illness and disease for as long as it continues to ignore the other dimensions of the human person. As Plato said over 2000 years ago(13)

As it is not proper to attempt to cure the eyes without the head, nor the head without the body, so neither is it proper to cure the body without the soul for when this [*the whole*] is not in a good state, it is impossible for a part to be well.

This remains true today as it did then as it is based on understanding the whole person and the fundamental nature, essence or soul of the person. This essence or true nature is love – this is not a fluffy new age concept or idea but an energetic fact that can be felt and known by all. It has nothing to do with the conjured up images of romantic emotional based love for there is no emotion in divine or true love. Understanding that our essence, our soul is love, it is perhaps quite simple to understand and logical to follow that if we live in a way that is not self-loving that will ultimately produce detrimental effects on our physical body and health over time. Thus the key to true health, harmony and vitality is to develop a *way of living and being* that is aligned with our true nature, with love, for that is what we are. This means understanding what it means to be self-loving in terms of the food we eat and the drinks we consume based on how those substances affect us energetically. These are the teachings of Serge Benhayon; simple messages that have profound and very real healing effects as they relate to the wholeness of one's being on a daily basis.

Thus, Esoteric Medicine is not based on a belief or an ideal or a clever thought process but on what is actually happening energetically and how we get affected energetically by thoughts, emotions, ideals, beliefs, food, drink, actions, words, deeds, interactions – indeed no sphere of life is left out.

In Esoteric Medicine, a key teaching is that the body is the marker of truth as it reveals all our choices and has lived all our experiences. It is by honouring what we feel in the body instead of over-riding it with the mind that we can begin to appreciate the truth of these teachings. The more self-loving we are, the more aware we become of how everything affects us – such that we can be empowered to feel and choose a diet and behaviours that are self-loving and self-caring.

Esoterically it is quite clear that the emotions are the root cause of illness and disease for there is no emotion in love and emotions are of a different energy to love and thus are detrimental to health and harmony. These understandings are consistent with the growing developments in psychoneuroimmunology, psychosomatic medicine and epigenetics.(6, 8, 14) For those who need ‘evidence’ more research is required to fully establish the links between all the emotions and illness and disease. However, the ‘evidence’ can be found within oneself if one chooses to look and feel. It has become quite clear to me and in a way, common sense, that if we do not live according to our true energetic nature that will be detrimental to our health. Also, once one’s true nature is known and felt, it is also quite clear that the emotions are toxic to that and the physical body. Furthermore, with a fuller understanding of the human condition, it becomes easy to understand how the buried emotions, hurts, wounds, beliefs and ideals that we hold within ourselves that are not loving, can fuel the self-loathing and self-hatred that underlie so much self-abusive and destructive behaviour. It is by addressing these false beliefs and

misperceptions that fuel the self-loathing and self-hatred that we can begin to truly heal these behaviours.

Healing within Esoteric Medicine is about restoring harmony to the individual by arresting the loveless choices that lead to the condition in the first place and empowering the client to live in a way that is self-loving. Hence any healing modality that merely attempts to improve function without restoring harmony and empowering the client to address the underlying root causes and their way of living is not going to truly heal. Indeed it can bury the person deeper in the illusion that all is 'well' because function has improved but in truth no true healing has occurred if the person returns to the same behaviours and lifestyle that gave rise to the condition in the first place. Thus the energetic discernment of all healing modalities is very important and is why I say that just because I fully support and endorse Esoteric Medicine, the same does not apply to other forms of complementary healing/medicine.

The understandings of Esoteric Medicine do not just focus on the individual but are wide-ranging and all encompassing. Esoteric Medicine is not about empowering people to be solely focused on their own health and wellbeing but instead to be soulfully inclusive of all, recognising that all that we do, say and think affects the all. Thus it is not surprising to the esoteric student to hear that the health and wellbeing of healthcare staff affects the outcome of patients for that is already a known – without any research. In any interaction we can be healing or harming according to the energy we are expressing with and that is either love or that which is not love (e.g. emotions). The call of love is to serve – thus the esoteric

student develops a self-loving way of being, in order to be love, to express love in all that they do, say and think that another may arise to a loving and healing way of being for themselves. For the esoteric student this is a process of development or 'unfolding', and as such, he/she are not ever out to be perfect or under any fundamentalism to advocate or embody.

My own life experiences are testimony to the fact that it is possible to heal and transform oneself by coming to these deeper truths. The energetic fact is that it is lovelessness that is the root problem for all of man's ills. There is of course more to understanding the whole process of life, illness and disease and healing than can possibly be covered here for I have not even touched on the topics of karma, reincarnation, childhood illness and disease and much more besides. I have only offered a flavour of what Esoteric Medicine is about in order to show that there is a different way to understand the human person that is inclusive and all encompassing, that provides transformative understandings of illness and disease and that can develop a way of living and being that is in itself medicine.

Conclusion

The point is this: Western Medicine is crawling towards a holistic paradigm that places personal responsibility for health on the individual. It is beginning to recognise this also affects the collective. Esoteric Medicine already has these understandings fully developed and from which Western Medicine can learn if it so chooses. Western Medicine is complete on many important levels. It is 'complete' in its application and development will only make it

better. That said, Western Medicine is incomplete in its understanding of the human person and thus it cannot provide a complete true healing based on a fragmented understanding of what it is to be a human being. On that note, and with no critique or judgment but as a matter of fact - it remains somewhat stuck in the biomedical paradigm despite efforts to progress. In addition, its focus is on restoring function and treating symptoms without fully addressing the underlying root cause why the person has the specific ailment. On the whole, and in balance, Western Medicine has a vital role to play in maintaining health and wellbeing of humanity utilising modern technology, surgery, pharmacology and all the different specialities that are contained within its system. It can do many wonderful things with and to the human body that are beyond the remit of Esoteric Medicine. Indeed, it is a sobering thought to consider how the health of humanity would be were we to remove Western Medicine - perhaps we would then see just how far we have separated from our true nature and how loveless we really are. I clearly support Western Medicine and work within it every day, but I also know that if we are to provide true healing, one that encompasses all dimensions of the human person, then Western Medicine needs to expand its horizons. I know from my own healing experiences and the beneficial changes in my own health, life and wellbeing by endeavouring to live according to esoteric principles – in other words, by endeavouring to live in a way that is self-caring and self-loving based on what that means energetically that these understandings would assist the health and wellbeing of all those who apply them. Esoteric Medicine can address those questions that Western Medicine is not yet fully able to – the ‘why do I have this condition’ question and also can assist

people in healing themselves of the root cause and restoring harmony. Thus for me, Western Medicine and Esoteric Medicine are not exclusive, it's not a matter of choosing one or the other but rather utilising both according to the condition and the needs of the client. For example, a patient with cancer could have the best of Western Medicine to remove the tumour surgically and have any additional chemotherapy that is recommended and could also attend an esoteric practitioner to understand why the cancer developed in the first place and address that, heal that, thus providing a complete healing with Western and Esoteric Medicine working together in harmony.

Ultimately it has been long since known that all true healing is self-healing and Esoteric Medicine empowers people to understand how to do this by re-connecting with their true nature or essence of love and making self-loving choices and self-caring non-emotional choices. This calls people to take responsibility for their health and to alter their lifestyle and way of living and being accordingly – therefore it will not appeal to those who desire a ‘quick fix’ and who shy away from personal responsibility or who do not wish to adjust their lifestyle choices. Unfortunately, we have a habit as human beings of not making such changes until we are forced to by some suffering or ill-condition. However, it doesn't have to be that way – we could choose to begin making self-loving, self-caring choices and addressing the underlying hurts and wounds and developing a non-emotional loving way of being such that we can perhaps avoid the need for our graver ills by Living Esoteric Medicine.

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