



The Janki Foundation
for Spirituality in Healthcare

THOUGHTS THAT HEAL

Nowadays most people know that what we think and feel also affects the body.

Sometimes the impact is small, perhaps amounting to no more than a fleeting effect on blood pressure or body chemistry. At other times it can be life-threatening, such as when fear or anger cripple the heart or chronic unhappiness impairs our defences against infections and cancer. There is a wide range of conditions in between, in which upset feelings may contribute to a variety of aches and pains.

Ancient wisdom and modern science both inform us that we can lessen such risks by developing a positive outlook. The truth in the saying “a healthy mind in a healthy body” is better supported today than ever before. Looking for positive solutions, with optimism and humour, rather than becoming miserable by dwelling on all that is wrong, really is beneficial for health.

Despite heightened awareness of these mind-body connections, few people know how to enhance healing and optimise wellbeing by creating truly nourishing thoughts for the mind. The questions and answers in this booklet offer a simple introduction to this important aspect of health care.

Why does life seem to be getting harder for many?

Affluent societies have put huge effort into improving physical facilities, but our minds have suffered neglect. Increased levels of negative states such as anxiety, addiction, irritability and depression have accompanied burgeoning desires. As well as undermining the health of individuals, these negative attitudes and emotions harm society and the environment by causing a loss of fundamental values in our actions. We become less able to care for and cooperate with one another and the world around us.

What can we do about it?

When we feel sad and empty inside, we become part of the problem rather than the solution. Often, we try to comfort ourselves by blaming other people and circumstances, but that only makes matters worse. Instead we have to learn how to make our mind strong. That means, filling it with positivity.

What is positivity?

A subtle, spiritual attribute or energy, natural to all of us, that can accumulate in the mind just as electrical energy accumulates in a battery. A positive frame of mind promotes healing in oneself, and this energy then naturally flows out to others.

What kind of thoughts promote positivity?

When I think about what it means to be human, in terms of the qualities common to humanity such as love, peace and joy, I connect to an energy of truth inside myself. There is a core of goodness in us all and when I draw on this power, positive feelings emerge naturally.

How can I retain my positivity?

By working to remove worry and sorrow from my heart and mind. It helps to recognise that negative feelings are triggered by dependency on one or another physical aspect of existence: the body, relationships, wealth, or circumstances in the world around me. If any one of these is in a state of upheaval, I am liable to become troubled. But it is my dependency on these things, not the upheaval itself, which causes deep distress. If I become free inside, worry and sorrow will finish.

How can I take back control of my mind?

When I observe the inner world of my thoughts and feelings, I can develop new ways of responding to situations and events which help to keep me in a positive frame of mind. I may see for example that becoming upset and fearful about ill-health only makes it worse, whereas a period of illness could offer me a space to get off

life's roller coaster for a while, to rest and look at how I have been living. Then, if I am honest, I may see ways of improving my attitudes and actions. That realisation in itself will bring fresh hope and happiness. As long as I keep looking inside, I really do have a choice. Why choose worry, which will harm me? Why not opt for a positive approach, which will uplift me?

How can I not worry when my body is unwell?

When I awaken to the power of the mind I can begin to step back from what is happening in the body. The more I become the observer, watching what is happening instead of being caught up in it, the more free the mind can become. It is my mind, my thoughts and my feelings, and even when the body is ill, I can still create thoughts and feelings of happiness and peace. These positive feelings then help the body, so that quite often pain and sickness decrease or may even go away.

How can I feel good about someone who has treated me badly?

So often, we get into a 'tit for tat' situation in which we feel bad about someone else, so they have ill-feeling towards me, which confirms my opinion about them, and so on.

Where does love come from?

Love is intrinsic to human nature. But when we lose sight of the fact that we are love, inside, we chase after it outside of ourselves instead. When we let go of selfish desires, we become free from worry and ill-feeling and our lives become loving through and through. This is very healing.

Why should I feel love when people don't love me?

Because love heals and brings happiness. When I feel love towards others, there is benefit all round. To be loving is a natural way to live. If I make effort to become more loving, my own happiness increases immediately and soon the attitudes of others will also soften. Many people are burdened with negativity as a result of a shortage of love. It shows up in cycles of critical thoughts and negative feelings, sometimes directed against the self, and sometimes blaming others. Such thoughts and feelings run down energy and deplete everybody's wellbeing. If I recognise this and become determined to stay positive, I can end the negative cycles and reveal the power of love in action. Then there is benefit in all my interactions. In this way each and every one of us can contribute to a better world.

Everyone loses out. I need to see very clearly the damage this is doing. Illness often comes when I feel ill-treated or deceived. With strength of mind, I can recover my peace, and have positive feelings even towards those who don't feel good about me.

How does the power of positivity help others?

Positive thoughts and feelings flow between people like an electric current. They manifest as qualities such as compassion and understanding. When a sick person receives a gift of this positive energy they feel an inner calm that makes it easier for them to recover.

Isn't there good reason to worry about the world?

It is true that there is much suffering. But if we focus on the negative, it drains us of the strength to help. Goodness and truth are also at work in our world, as well as darker forces. When I switch on my awareness of the positive qualities common to humanity, it is like bringing light into the darkness. The past stops haunting me, and I stop worrying about the future. I see more clearly what I need to do now, for lasting happiness and health.

The Janki Foundation is a UK charity promoting spirituality in healthcare. Great advances in the field of medicine on the physical level have led to ever-increasing demands on the health services, but at the expense of a more human-centred ethic and practice.

The Foundation acknowledges the central role of positive thoughts and feelings, compassion and kindness in maintaining wellbeing and preventing illness. Through publications, experiential learning, talks and networking, the Foundation provides opportunities to further such approaches among individuals and professionals.

To request free copies of this booklet or to download a soft copy, see the 'Heart & Soul booklets' under Publications page on our website (more than 5 copies may be chargeable).



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