

Directing healing thoughts is Black Magic

Metaphysical Healing

Part 1 of 2

Circular Letter

Directing thoughts and generally interfering with the mind of others, consciously or unconsciously, is Black Magic — regardless of motive. “Real *divine* theurgy¹ requires an almost superhuman purity and holiness of life. Otherwise it degenerates to mediumship or Black Magic”²

This compilation and articles by WQ Judge and HP Blavatsky was first circulated to members of the Theosophical Society 10th December 1999. Its aim was to clarify certain issues such as the motives and qualifications of prospective theurgists.

At the dawn of a new millennium, the opportunities for spiritual progress are awesome. So are the pitfalls. On 26th November 1999, an examination of the higher ethics of the Nirmanakayas had prompted a discussion about the merits of a popular practice amongst members of the Society: that is, of directing “healing thoughts” to fellow theosophists and friends. Because compassion was thought to be the underlying motive, the suggestion that mental healing is “Black Magic” was greeted with disbelief and indignation.

The full text of the publications reviewed below is given in “Metaphysical Healing 2 - Articles” in the same series.

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Gwernymynydd
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¹ Theurgy [*Θεουργία*, from *Gr. theos* god & *ergon* work] “Divine Work,” or producing a work of gods. Theurgy was the third head of Eclectic Theosophy; also *cf.* divine (“white”) magic. — ED. PHIL.

² *Key to Theosophy*, p. 3 *fn.*



Article A

Judge WQ. "Forum" Answers. Reprinted from *The Theosophical Forum* (1889-1896). Los Angeles: Theosophy Co, 1982; pp. 33-39.

The scene is set with WQ Judge's reply to a pointed question:

*Has a mother a right to use her will-power in throwing off disease and the painful results of accidents from herself and children? Please draw the line clearly between white and black magic in such work, occult work.*³

Judge explains that:

- Diseases invariably originate in the mind.
- Bodily ailments are derived from imagination and karma.
- Only a balanced mind and disposition are conducive to health.
- Metaphysical treatment and yoga practices are fraught with dangers.

Article B

Blavatsky Collected Writings, (PRACTICAL OCCULTISM) IX, pp. 155-162 & 285-286.

In this epoch-making article, HP Blavatsky sets up the difference between Black and White Magic:

It is the motive, *and the motive alone*, which makes any exercise of power become black, malignant, or white, beneficent Magic. It is impossible to employ *spiritual* forces if there is the slightest tinge of selfishness remaining in the operator. For, unless the intention is entirely unalloyed, the spiritual will transform itself into the psychic, act on the astral plane, and dire results may be produced by it. The powers and forces of animal nature can equally be used by the selfish and revengeful, as by the unselfish and all-forgiving; the powers and forces of spirit lend themselves only to the perfectly pure in heart — and this is DIVINE MAGIC.⁴

The corollary of this statement is that no matter how sincere and well meaning may be those who invoke mental forces for the benefit of others, the very fact that they still here on Earth, like the rest of us, indicates that their lower nature is riddled with selfishness — patent or latent. They may not be conscious of such "tinges of selfishness," as Blavatsky puts it, because it lurks in the dark recesses of the mind and they do not possess the sword of discernment. It is typical of lower minds to justify selfish acts and even to elevate vices to virtues. That is why well meaning but not always well informed people "in their blind love of benevolence" end up harming not only themselves but also the very people they wished to assist in the first place. Interfering with some one else's mind, even unintentionally, is not theurgy: it is goety,⁵

³ Judge WQ. "Forum" Answers. Reprinted from *The Theosophical Forum* (1889-1896). Los Angeles: Theosophy Co, 1982; p. 34

⁴ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (PRACTICAL OCCULTISM) IX, pp. 156-57

⁵ Goety is the antonym of theurgy, from Gr. γοητεία, *goes*, enchanter, sorcerer, wizard. Therefore, goety is sor-



bare sorcery. “A man who will wield a two-edged sword, must be a thorough master of the blunt weapon, if he would not injure himself — or what is worse — others, at the first attempt,” says Blavatsky.

Practical Occultism is not relevant in its entirety to the aim of this letter but, because its catechism provides valuable insights to the practicalities of living the Live, it has been reproduced in full in the accompanying document, “Metaphysical Healing 2 – Articles.”

Article C

Blavatsky Collected Writings, (OCCULTISM VERSUS THE OCCULT ARTS) IX pp. 249-261.

Occultism versus the Occult Arts was first published in *Lucifer* a month after *Practical Occultism*. It is so momentous, that it should be considered as an indispensable text for students of *The Voice of the Silence*. On p. 254 ¶ 1, for example, there is an agonising question, which reflects the trials and tribulations of many a neophyte. Please read it carefully, go through the reply in the following paragraph and then ponder for a while, for, these ideas are the pith and marrow of Theosophy. Every other sentence is equally breath-taking. Another example can be found on p. 259 ¶ 2, where Blavatsky points out that “although it is the intention that decides primarily whether *white* or *black* magic is exercised, yet the results of even of involuntary, unconscious sorcery cannot fail to be productive of bad Karma.”



The following selections from the writings of Master KH, Blavatsky and Judge, bring out the qualifications for would-be philanthropists, the right limit for the practice of healing, and the consequences of ill-informed busybodies interfering with the mind and life of others.

cery, witchcraft. Porphyry condemned goety as black magic, distinguishing it from theurgy, which is white magic. — ED. PHIL.



Directing healing thoughts is Black Magic

Healing requires perfect benevolence, untainted even by latent selfishness.

If the healing be done under the impulse of perfect benevolence, unmixed with any latent selfishness, the philanthropist sets up a current which runs like a fine thrill through the *sixth* condition of matter, and is felt by him whom you summon to your help, if not at that moment engaged in some work which compels him to be repellent to all extraneous influences. . . . but the measure of its actual help to the psychopathist will be in ratio with the degree of will power he excites in himself, and the degree of psychic purity in his motive.⁶

Therefore, a would-be healer must be physically healthy,

. . . when one who is himself physically diseased attempts healing, he not only fails of that, but often imparts his illness to his patient, and robs him of what strength he may have. The decrepit King David reinforced his failing vigour with the healthy magnetism of the young Abishag;⁷ and the medical works tell us of an aged lady of Bath, England, who broke down the constitutions of two maids in succession, in the same way. The old sages, and Paracelsus also, removed disease by applying a healthy organism to the afflicted part, and in the works of the above-said fire-philosopher, their theory is boldly and categorically set forth. If a diseased person — medium or not — attempts to heal, his force may be sufficiently robust to displace the disease, to disturb it in the present place, and cause it to shift to another, where shortly it will appear; the patient, meanwhile, thinking himself cured.⁸

. . . morally healthy,

But, what if the healer is morally diseased? The consequences may be infinitely more mischievous; for it is easier to cure a bodily disease than cleanse a constitution infected with moral turpitude. The mystery of Morzine, Cévennes, and that of the Jansenists, is still as great a mystery for physiologists as for psychologists. If the gift of prophecy, as well as hysteria and convulsions, can be imparted by “infection,” why not every vice? The healer, in such a case, conveys to his patient — who is now his victim — the

⁶ Mahatma Letter 59 (111), p. 337; 3rd Combined ed.

⁷ 1 Kings i, 1-4

⁸ *Isis Unveiled*, I p. 217



moral poison that infects his own mind and heart. His magnetic touch is defilement; his glance, profanation. Against this insidious taint, there is no protection for the passively-receptive subject. The healer holds him under his power, spellbound and powerless, as the serpent holds a poor, weak bird. The evil that one such “healing medium” can effect is incalculably great; and such healers there are by the hundred.⁹

... and confident in his science
and in himself.

It is of supreme importance that the one who attempts to heal disease should have an absolute and implicit faith (a) in his science; (b) in himself.¹⁰

Only then can he heal effectively
and permanently.

It is not in the least true either that mesmeric cures are impermanent or that one disease disappears only to be replaced by a worse one. If the operator be healthy and virtuous and knows his science well, his patient will be effectually restored to health in every instance where his or her own constitution is favourably disposed to receive the mesmeric aura.¹¹

There is nothing “spiritual” or
“divine” in any of the latent
occult powers in man.

What of the coming year?¹³ And first a word of warning. As the preparation for the new cycle proceeds, as the forerunners of the new subrace make their appearance on the American continent, the latent and occult powers in man are beginning to germinate and grow. Hence the rapid growth of such movements as Christian Science, Mind Cure, Metaphysical Healing, Spiritual Healing, and so forth. All these movements represent nothing but different phases of the exercise of these growing powers — as yet not understood and therefore but too often ignorantly misused. Understand once for all that there is nothing “spiritual” or “divine” in *any* of these manifestations. The cures effected by them are due simply to the unconscious exercise of occult power on the *lower* planes of nature — usually of *prana* or life-currents. The conflicting theories of all these schools are based on misunderstood and misapplied metaphysics, often on grotesquely absurd logical fallacies. But the one feature common to most of them, a



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⁹ *Isis Unveiled*, I p. 217

¹⁰ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE POWER TO HEAL) IV p. 384

¹¹ *Ibid.* IV p. 383

¹² *Black Magic I* by René Magritte, Brussels

¹³ [1891]



Interfering with someone else's mind, whether consciously or unconsciously, is Black Magic,

particularly since there is always more than a tinge of selfishness in the operator's mind.



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feature which presents the most danger in the near future, is this. In nearly every case, the tenor of the teachings of these schools, is such as to lead people to regard the healing process as being applied to the *mind* of the patient. Here lies the danger, for any such process — however cunningly disguised in words and hidden by false notes — is simply to psychologize the patient. In other words, whenever the healer interferes — consciously or unconsciously — with the free mental action of the person he treats, it is — Black Magic.¹⁴

Q. *Under what circumstances is hypnotism “black magic”?* . . . Sufficient to say that whenever the motive which actuates the operator is selfish, or detrimental to any living being or beings, all such acts are classed by us as black magic. The healthy vital fluid imparted by the physician who mesmerizes his patient, can and does cure; but too much of it will kill.¹⁶

But the one feature common to most of them [Healing Movements, Schools, and Sciences], a feature which presents the most danger in the near future, is this. In nearly every case, the tenor of the teachings of these schools is such as to lead people to regard the healing process as being applied to the *mind* of the patient. Here lies the danger, for any such process — however cunningly disguised in words and hidden by false noses — is simply to psychologize the patient. In other words, whenever the healer interferes — consciously or unconsciously — with the free mental action of the person he treats, it is — Black Magic. Already these so-called sciences of “Healing” are being used to gain a livelihood. Soon some sharp person will find out that by the same process the minds of others can be influenced in many directions, and the selfish motive of personal gain and money-getting having been once allowed to creep in, the one-time “healer” may insensibly led on to use his power to acquire wealth or some other object of his desire.¹⁷

¹⁴ Blavatsky *Collected Writings*, (THIRD LETTER TO AMERICAN CONVENTION) XII pp. 154-55

¹⁵ Persuasion by Rafal Olbinski

¹⁶ Blavatsky *Collected Writings*, (HYPNOTISM, AND ITS RELATIONS TO OTHER MODES OF FASCINATION) XII p. 397

¹⁷ *Ibid.* (THIRD LETTER TO THE AMERICAN CONVENTION) XII p. 155



Theosophists neither intrude in others' mind nor hinder others' freedom of thought.

We have no objections against anyone getting cured in any way they think good, but we have decided objections to “mind-curers” or “metaphysicians,” taking theosophists to task for not adopting their system and at once discarding all remedies. They argue that because they were thus cured, others must go the same road. This is our present difference with mental healers, and our correspondent should know that theosophists grant to all the right to use or dispense with medicine and claim for themselves similar privileges. They do not meddle with other person's liberty of thought, and demand the same independence for themselves.¹⁸

“Hypnotism is the new scientific name for the old ignorant ‘superstition’”

. . . variously called “fascination” and “enchantment.” It is an antiquated *lie* transformed into a modern *truth*.¹⁹

What the operator is using is not his will, as it is commonly thought. He simply bewitches the patient by means of his auric fluid.

That which is transmitted has no name in European languages, and if we simply describe it as *will*, it loses all its meaning. The old and very much tabooed words, “enchantment,” “fascination,” “glamour” and “spell,” and especially the verb “to bewitch,” expressed far more suggestively the real action that took place and during the process of such a *transmission*, than the modern and meaningless terms, “psychologize” and “biologize.” Occultism calls the force transmitted, the “auric *fluid*,” to distinguish it from the “auric *light*.”²⁰

“No one has the right to take the mind of another, for any purpose, into his possession.”

. . . if one finds from actual experience that the fact of his or her being of a cheerful, happy, contented, charitable, loving, faithful, sunny disposition will always have the effect of giving health to those about in the family or elsewhere, then there can surely be nothing wrong of inexpedient in such a state. And that, in my opinion, is the right limit for the practice of metaphysical healing. For if one goes beyond that, and, following the rules of these [healing] schools, proceeds to send his thought out to another with the object of taking hold of that other's mind, then there is the greatest danger and also Black Magic.²¹

¹⁸ Blavatsky *Collected Writings*, (“THE EMPTY VESSEL MAKES THE GREATEST SOUND”) X p. 287

¹⁹ *Ibid.* (HYPNOTISM, AND ITS RELATIONS TO OTHER MODES OF FASCINATION) XII p. 394

²⁰ *Ibid.* XII pp. 395-96

²¹ Judge WQ. “Forum” *Answers*. Reprinted from *The Theosophical Forum* (1889-1896). Los Angeles: Theosophy Co, 1982; p. 35



Only “a highly developed adept in life may grasp the nettle.”

. . . and by his great intuitive powers, know whom to relieve from pain and whom to leave in the mire that is their best teacher. The poor and wretched themselves will tell anyone who is able to win their confidence that disastrous mistakes are made by those who come from a different class and endeavour to help them. Kindness and gentle treatment will sometimes bring out the worst qualities of a man or woman who has led a fairly presentable life when kept down by pain and despair. May the Master of Mercy forgive us for saying such words of any human creatures, all of whom are a part of ourselves, according to the law of human brotherhood which no disowning of it can destroy. But the words are true. None of us know the darkness which lurks in the depths of our own natures until some strange and unfamiliar experience rouses the whole being into action.²²

“The ignorant doing of good works may be vitally injurious, as all but those who are blind in their love of benevolence are compelled to acknowledge.”



As soon as he begins to understand what a friend and teacher pain can be, the Theosophist stands appalled before the mysterious problem of human life, and though he may long to do good works, equally dreads to do them wrongly until he has himself acquired greater power and knowledge. The ignorant doing of good works may be vitally injurious, as all but those who are blind in their love of benevolence are compelled to acknowledge. In this sense the answer made as to lack of Christ-like lives amongst Theosophists, that there are probably none strong enough to live such, is perfectly correct and covers the whole question. For it is not the spirit of self-sacrifice, or of devotion, or of desire to help that is lacking, but the strength to acquire knowledge and power and intuition, so that the deeds done shall really be worthy of the “Buddha-Christ” spirit. Therefore it is that Theosophists cannot pose as a body of philanthropists, though secretly they may adventure on the path of good works. They profess to be a body of learners merely, pledged to help each other and all the rest of humanity, so far as in them lies, to a better understanding of the mystery of life, and to a better knowledge of the peace which lies beyond it.²³

²² *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (“LET EVERY MAN PROVE HIS OWN WORK”) VIII p. 169

²³ *Ibid.* VIII pp. 169-70



Instead of healing, hypnotists awaken the dangerous forces of nature and end up inoculating patients with their own physical and mental ills and vices.

Learning and doing good rightly with knowledge, is far more effective and safe than an imprudent haste for good works.



“The acceptance of Truth and the practice of virtue cannot avert Karma waiting from other lives, but can produce good effects in lives to come.”

[Hypnotists] interfere with, and awaken to action the most dangerous forces of nature, without being aware of it. Instead of healing diseases — the only use to which animal magnetism under its new name can be *legitimately* applied — they often inoculate the *subjects* with their own physical and well as mental ills and vices. For this, and the ignorance of their colleagues of the minority, the disbelieving majority of the Sadducees are greatly responsible. For, by opposing them, they impede free action, and take advantage of the Hippocratic oath, to make them powerless to admit and do much that the believers might and would otherwise do.²⁴

None know more keenly and definitely than they [Theosophists] that good works are necessary; only these cannot be rightly accomplished without knowledge. Schemes for Universal Brotherhood, and the redemption of mankind, might be given out plentifully by the great adepts of life, and would be mere dead-letter utterances while individuals remain ignorant, and unable to grasp the great meaning of their teachers. To Theosophists we say, let us carry out the rules given us for our Society before we ask for any further schemes or laws. To the public and our critics we say, try to understand the value of good works before you demand them of others, or enter upon them rashly ourselves. Yet, it is an absolute fact that without good works the spirit of brotherhood would die in the world; and this can never be. Therefore is the double activity of learning and doing most necessary; we have to do good, and we have to do it *rightly*, with knowledge.²⁵

. . . and what the extreme practice of mental curing does is to stave off for a time an amount of Karma which will, later on, reach us. We prefer to let it work out naturally through the material part of us and to expel it quickly if we may with even mineral remedies. But for all that we have no quarrel with mental healing at all, but leave each one to his or her own judgment.²⁶

²⁴ Blavatsky *Collected Writings*, (BLACK MAGIC IN SCIENCE) XII p. 226

²⁵ *Ibid.* (“LET EVERY MAN PROVE HIS OWN WORKS”) VIII p. 170

²⁶ *Ibid.* (“THE EMPTY VESSEL MAKES THE GREATEST SOUND”) X p. 288



Therefore, compassionate action is what really counts, not mere thoughts and wishful thinking.

Central to spiritual development is compassion-sacrifice that, when enacted, becomes altruism.

“What, then, shall the mother do for herself and her children?”

Members [of the Theosophical Society] they are, by virtue of their having joined the Society; but the latter cannot make a Theosophist of one who has no sense for the *divine* fitness of things, or of him who understands Theosophy in his own — if the expression may be used — *sectarian* and egotistic way. “Handsome is, as handsome does” could be paraphrased in this case and be made to run: “*Theosophist is, who Theosophy does.*”²⁷ — not thinks, not studies, not feels, but *does.*²⁸

To feel “compassion” without an adequate practical result ensuing from it is not to show oneself an “Altruist” but the reverse. Real self-development on the esoteric lines is *action*. “Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes *an action* in a deadly sin.”²⁹

Use her best judgement, follow the best rules for the cure of diseases, train her children to be self-reliant and careful so that they shall have few accidents, teach them to avoid evil and danger and keep their minds and bodies in right condition, and Karma will take care of the rest. And if they are hurt or really sick, then send for a good physician.³⁰



²⁷ *Key to Theosophy*, p. 20

²⁸ Wadia BP. *Studies in the Secret Doctrine*. (A series of articles in three books) First published in *Theosophy* (Los Angeles), 1922-25; reprinted in the *Theosophical Movement* (Bombay), 1959-61. Bombay: Theosophy Company (India) Private Ltd, 1961. Bk. I (2nd series) iv, p. 78

²⁹ *Voice of the Silence, fragm. II vs. 135*, p. 31 — *qu.* in: *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (WHAT SHALL WE DO FOR OUR FELLOW-MEN?) XI p. 469

³⁰ Judge WQ. “*Forum*” *Answers*. Reprinted from *The Theosophical Forum* (1889-1896). Los Angeles: Theosophy Co, 1982; p. 38

