

MEDICATIONS AND MEDITATIONS IN THE NEW AGE

**A Compendium of New Age Deceptions
and Corresponding Church Teachings**

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and Corresponding Church Teachings



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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO



**ERROL C. FERNANDES OF BANDRA, MUMBAI, INDIA
(1946 - 2004)**

PIONEERING CRUSADER AGAINST THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

- "First, you can lose money, not just your faith," former New Ager Father Mitch Pacwa SJ said of the practices, explaining that the New Age seminars that teach them are very costly. "Don't pay to make yourself dumb." (The Dawn of Darkness? Andrew Walther, 2003, http://www.staycatholic.com/new_age.htm)
- "Being exposed for a longer term to therapies with an esoteric background, can influence a kind of thinking which is incompatible with the basic tenets of the Christian faith or even finds itself in opposition to it." (Dr. Fr. Clemens Pilar COp, author of books exposing New Age practices, in an article emailed to this writer, November 7, 2010)
- "It is not enough to say that you never did it yourself. To be aware that any of these things are being done and not to say something against it is to give tacit approval by your presence. Such failure jeopardizes your own soul." (Fr. David C. Trosch, <http://www.trosch.org/chu/exorcism.htm>)
- "All truth passes through three stages: first, it is ridiculed; next it is violently attacked; finally, it is held to be self-evident."
-Arthur Schopenhauer
- "If a thing is attacked for being too much this way and also attacked for being too much in the exact opposite way, then you can bet it is very good."
-G. K. Chesterton
- "The truth is not always the same as the majority decision." –St. Pope John Paul II
- "Benedict XVI has addressed severe reminders to bishops he believes to be timid, doubtful, reticent in teaching true doctrine. For example, he said to the Austrian bishops: "There are some topics relating to the truth of the faith, and above all to moral doctrine, which are not present in the catechesis and preaching of your dioceses to a sufficient extent, and which sometimes are either not confronted at all or are not addressed in the clear sense understood by the Church. Perhaps those who are responsible for the proclamation [of the truth] are afraid that people may draw back if they speak too clearly. However, experience in general demonstrates that it is precisely the opposite that happens. Don't deceive yourselves!" (<http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/46201?eng=y>)
- "Not to oppose error is to approve it, and not to defend the truth is to suppress it, and indeed to neglect to confound evil men, when we can do it, is no less a sin than to encourage them." -Pope St. Felix III
- "He that sees another in error, and endeavors not to correct it, testifies himself to be in error." -Pope St. Leo I.

- "Justice is trampled underfoot by weakness, cowardice and fear of the diktat of the ruling mindset. Evil draws its power from indecision and concern for what other people think." -Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI
- "We've had enough of exhortations to be silent! Cry out with a hundred thousand tongues. I see that the world is rotten because of silence." -St. Catherine of Siena
- "Wrong is wrong, even if everyone else is doing it. Right is right, even if no one else is doing it." -St. Augustine of Hippo
- "Fight all error, but do it with good humor, patience, kindness, and love. Harshness will damage your own soul and spoil the best cause." -Saint John of Kanty
- "Claiming that "we don't want to impose our (Catholic) beliefs on society" is not merely politically convenient; it is morally incoherent and irresponsible." -Archbishop Charles Chaput OFM Cap., Archbishop of Philadelphia
- "You shall not follow the crowd in doing evil. Neither shall you go astray in judgment, by agreeing with the majority opinion, apart from the truth." -Exodus 23:2, *Bíblia Católica Online*
- "I will tear off your veils and deliver my people from your power, so that they shall never again be ensnared by your hands. Thus you shall know that I am the LORD." -Ezekiel 13:21, *New American Bible*
- "Now come, write it on a tablet they can keep, inscribe it in a record; that it may be in future days an eternal witness: This is a rebellious people, deceitful children, children who refuse to obey the law of the Lord." -Isaiah 30:8, 9, *New American Bible* (Mandate received in his nascent apologetics ministry on 25 March 1995 when this writer prayerfully protested to the Eucharistic Lord about the unappealing Call that he believed he had received to write and expose New Age error.)
- "Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness; rather expose them." -Ephesians 5:11, *New American Bible*
- "Son of man, I have appointed you a sentinel for the house of Israel. When you hear a word from my mouth, you shall warn them for me.

If I say to the wicked, You shall surely die – and you do not warn them or speak out to dissuade the wicked from their evil conduct in order to save their lives – then they shall die for their sin, but I will hold you responsible for their blood.

If, however, you warn the wicked and they still do not turn from their wickedness and evil conduct, they shall die for their sin, but you shall save your life." -Ezekiel 3: 17-19, *New American Bible*

- ““Even dead bodies can float downstream but it takes a real man, a real woman, to swim against the current,” Bishop Fulton Sheen said. How true that is. It takes a real man or a real woman to stand up against the current that is flowing against the Church. It takes a real man or a real woman to recognize that when you are resisting the flood of criticism, you are safest when you stay attached to the Rock on whom Christ built his Church.”
-Fr. Roger Landry, <https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/a-crisis-of-saints>

- The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches:

#1868 - We have a responsibility for the sins committed by others when we cooperate in them:

– by not disclosing or not hindering them when we have an obligation to do so;

– by protecting evil-doers.

They have the right, indeed at times the duty, in keeping with their knowledge, competence and position, to manifest to the sacred pastors their view on matters which concern the good of the Church. They have the right also to make their views known to others of Christ’s faithful, but in doing so they must always respect the integrity of faith and morals, show due reverence to the pastors, and take into account both the common good and the dignity of the individuals. –Rights of the Faithful, Canon Law #212.3

Although my work and I are known nationally (even to all four Cardinals and most Bishops in India) and globally (to leading Catholic television and radio ministries, to many Catholic authors and writers on New Age themes, as well as to several dicasteries of the Holy See), very few Catholics in the city of Chennai (where I have lived since 1993) are aware of my two decades-long crusade against the New Age Movement (NAM). Fewer still of the dozens of our nephews and nieces as well as the many siblings and cousins of my wife and I (we are from large families) have even visited my website www.ephesians-511.net, if at all they know that such a one exists. To them in particular, and to the Catholic Church that I have come to love and defend passionately (as an apologist), I leave this book as a legacy.

- “But Jesus said to them: A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.” -Matthew 13:57, Douay-Rheims Bible

“And Jesus said to them: A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and in his own house, and among his own kindred.” -Mark 6:4, Douay-Rheims Bible

“And he said: Amen I say to you, that no prophet is accepted in his own country.” -Luke 4: 24, Douay-Rheims Bible

“For Jesus Himself gave testimony that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.” -John 4:44, Douay-Rheims Bible

Read: <https://zenit.org/articles/father-cantalamesa-on-a-prophet-without-honor/>

- The Second Vatican Council in *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) exhorted the faithful to “[read] the signs of the time and ... [interpret] them in the light of the Gospel.” (GS #4)
“Of the Issacharites, their chiefs who were endowed with an understanding of the times ... knew what Israel had to do.” (1 Chronicles 12:33, New American Bible)
“My people perish for want of knowledge! Since you have rejected knowledge, I will reject you from my priesthood.” (Hosea 4:6, New American Bible)

Prayer to St. Jerome for Insight’

Through your anger and confrontations you remind us that we all have a duty to confront others from time to time. You also remind us that we have a duty to examine ourselves and confront our own weaknesses and harmful behaviours. Your life teaches that I must accept others for who they are. You taught of the danger of self-righteousness; of the importance of reflecting upon one of Jesus’ most insightful teachings: “Let the man who has no sin on his conscience throw the first stone.” In the light of your teachings, Saint Jerome, help me to see my own self clearly. Help me to confront my own biases and to act to change others only out of love. If I see that I have the duty to confront another, I ask you to be with me during those necessary but unpleasant moments of confrontation. Help me to remember that love alone can make changes for the good. Amen.

(<http://www.vcatholic.com/prayers/prayer-saint-jerome-christs-mercy/>)

To safeguard themselves from spiritual danger, New Age esotericism and occultism, and strive for the salvation of their own souls and the souls of others, Catholics must keep themselves informed, discern the “signs of the times” and minister to one other in love. It is my ardent hope that this book will greatly contribute to that end.

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We have been living “by faith” since January 1993, God Our Provider (Jehovah-Jireh, Genesis 22:14) meeting all of our needs through miracles of both minor and major magnitude.

Naturally, He has used many instruments over the decades to sustain us from day to day.

Some of these “instruments” of His have hosted me in their homes several times over; others have provided me with invaluable information -- for the articles and reports that I write for my website -- and encouragement; still others have sent us their tithes and freewill offerings, while almost all of them have interceded for me and this ministry.

My task is even more difficult because there are those individuals and families who have not only opened their homes to me but also enabled me to give talks on the New Age Movement to groups of Catholics while meeting my financial needs.

It would be an impossible task to recall and record the names of every single one of them here, especially since some of them have gone off of my radar for one reason or the other, but I will try. While expressing to them my heartfelt gratitude for their responding to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and for their confidence in my ministry -- because the publishing of this book is the fruit of all of their contributions and support -- I would like to name them here in alphabetical order.

But first, there’s **Vinod Dass** (Bangalore) who designed the letterhead and logo of this ministry and **Barnabas Rex** (Chennai) who voluntarily contributed to the design and printing of my visiting cards in 2003. **Rajiv Balan** (Chennai) enabled my (then) vsnl email address.

They are followed chronologically by **Antony Mahendran** (Bangalore) and his brother **Antony Vijayendran** (Bangalore) who designed and managed my website.

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What is simply amazing is that I have never met in person the majority of this ministry's benefactors, even those who live in India. I only met some of them after months or years of correspondence. To all of them, I owe a great debt of gratitude:

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Buddhist nun, yogini, now Sr. Mari Magdalene, USA); Barry and Catherine Fernandes (Goa); (the late) Edgar Fernandes (Bangalore); (the late) Errol C. Fernandes (Mumbai); Joel Fernandes (Mangalore); Joshila Fernandes (Goa); Nazareth and Valerina Fernandes (Mumbai); Nigel Fernandes (Bangalore); Royston and Stella Fernandes (Bangalore); Winston and Netanya Fernandez (Chennai); Deepak Ferrao (Bangalore); Erika Gibello (Secretary International Association for Deliverance, London); Sharon Lee Giganti (USA); Valerie Godinho (Goa); Dawson and Joan Gomes (Mumbai); Stella Gonsalo (Bangalore); Maria-Del-Pilar Gonzalez, Belgium; Erlin and Hygiena Gozmao (Chennai); Reginald and Naomi Heiden (Australia); Rev. Ed Hird (ARM, Canada); Ignatious and Josephine Philips (Bangalore), Anette Ignatowicz (writer, former kundalini yoga teacher, ass. with International Association of Deliverance, London); Jerry and Anu Nirmal (Mumbai); John Antony (Chennai); Joseph K.A. (Kochi); Joseph and Fancy Sebastian (Kochi); Linda Keslar (USA); Freddy Kostka (Mumbai); Danuta Kowalska (Poland); James and Nadisha Kurian (Goa); P. Lawrence and Noelene (Delhi); Derine Leons (London); Leela Mathew (Bangalore); Louis Joseph (Pondicherry); Trevor Lewis (Jeevan Jal Ministries, Mumbai); Ajith Lobo (Mangalore-Australia); Dr. Bernadette Lobo (Mangalore); Anthony and Christina Lobo (Mumbai); Brian Lobo (Mumbai); Francis and Jyoti Lobo (Bangalore); Ivan and Asha Lobo (Mangalore); Myrtle and Joe Lobo (Mangalore); Alex and Joyce Louis (Malaysia); Maria Lozano (Mexico); Vishal Mangalwadi (author, Mussoorie-USA www.RevelationMovement.com); Manoj Sunny (Jesus Youth, Kochi); Sr. Mareena (Potta); Marianus and Prabha (Bangalore); Dr. Ralph Martin (author, USA); Vijay Martis (former New Ager, author, Mumbai); Martin Jose (Ernakulam); Martin Panjikaran (Angamaly); Fritz Mascarenhas (ICPE, Bangalore-New Zealand); Joseph Mascarenhas (Chennai); Yvonne and Jeanette Mascarenhas (Chennai); Richard and Vinita Mascarenhas (Oman-Mumbai); Pamela Mathias (Australia); Steven Mathias (Australia); Daphne McLeod (crusader against New Age, U.K. www.proecclesia.com); Irene McNeilly (Canada); Louis Mendonca (Pune); Basil Mendonza (Chikmagalur); Martin and Rema Mendonza (Chikmagalur); Ivan Menezes (New Delhi); John Menezes (Mumbai); Clare McGrath Merkle (author, writer, USA); Merisha John (Bangalore); Margaret Merrigan (Ireland); Claire Moquet-Miller (France); Fergus Misquitta (Lonavala); Joey and Berta Monserrate (Goa); Chand and Maya Mulchandani (Ajmer); Elaine Murray (Mumbai); Moira Noonan (former New Ager, writer, USA); Ditoza Noronha (Mumbai); Dr. Edwin A. Noyes (author, USA); (the late) Joseph O'Callaghan ISOE, Ireland); Vimala Padmaraj (Chennai); Odele and Vincent Pais (Bangalore); Navin and Maya Paul (Canada); Paul Francis Srinivas and Vanessa (Bangalore); Christina Pereira (Hubli); Milagres and Olive Pereira (Human Life International, Goa);

Aarti Peters (Bangalore); Eugene Pinto (Pune); Regina Pinto (Mangalore); Sonia and Blyton Pinto (Australia); Raakesh and Patricia Prabhu (Chennai); Vimal and Bertilla Prabhu (Chennai); Marino Restrepo (Colombia); Cyril Ribeiro (Mumbai); Walter Roberts (Bangalore); Crossly and Ingrid Rodrigues (Goa); Nelly and Antonio Rosario (Daman-Qatar); Anthony and Monica Sagayaraj (Bangalore); Savio Nirmal Paul (Nagercoil); Barbara-Anne (Hemrick) and Gaurav Salvi (USA-Pune); Baylon and Zenita Sequeira-Vaz (Goa); Lewis and Sheila Sequeira-Vaz (Goa); Irene Serrao (Mangalore); Sylvia Serrao (Mangalore); Gordon Sheeran (Australia); Blazie Shetty (Mumbai); Silpa Paul (Bangalore); Ron Smith (USA); Sunil Jacob (Kochi); Sunsun C. Jose (Bangalore); Anthony Tan (Malaysia); Sr. Teresa SFX (The Philippines); Javier Lopez Torres (Madrid), Joseph L.R. Vaz (Goa); Mariza Vaz (Mumbai); Tomy Verghese (Kochi); Babu Victor (Bangalore); Gangai Victor and Irene (Chennai); Lincoln and Maria Vinda (Bangalore); Mark Waterinckx (Belgium); Vineeta Wells (Bangalore); Simon and Danielle Wong (Mauritius).

I must not forget my non-Christian friends who have been a blessing to this ministry: N. Dorairaj (Coimbatore), Naresh Sehgal and Kuldip Sharma (New Delhi) and V.K. Kripakaran (Chennai).

There are priests who have been financial benefactors of this ministry, even among those who have forwarded Letters of Recommendation for this Compendium, but I'm not too sure that they would like to be named herein. (However, I can state that the late Most Rev. Frederick D'Souza, Bishop of Jhansi diocese, was one of my earliest clerical benefactors.)

All of these priests (and several more whose names I have omitted in this Compendium) have given me moral, spiritual and logistical support over the years.

A word of caution about lay Catholics engaged in healing-cum-deliverance ministry

I have found that there are three major issues that contribute to the demonic harassment, affliction, obsession and possession of Catholics as has been documented in many files (reports as well as testimonies) at this ministry's website: involvement in occultism, esotericism, and New Age, and also the use of religious symbols, chants and rituals of Hindu origin.

I have come across lay Catholic groups and ministries engaged in the ministry of deliverance who, while having no *credible* sanction from the Church, have gained their "knowledge" of the subject from courses that they attended or from books that they had read. Some of them then become experts on the subject

and write books on “Deliverance”. It is my opinion that such a crucial ministry demands that those attempting deliverance of others from occult bondage (and what other kind of deliverance is there?) should have responded to an unmistakable and properly discerned calling from God and experienced an anointing in a tangible way, and are also under submission to proper authority in the Church.

But, that usually does not seem to have been the case. Individuals take a fancy to conducting “deliverance” during charismatic prayer meetings, and begin giving courses and seminars to others as their popularity rating soars. (Can the gift of deliverance be “learnt”?) After all, who among the thousands that flock to charismatic renewal programmes doesn’t want to experience healing and deliverance?

However, the ministry of deliverance is a very serious one that comes with great responsibility.

Here and there in this Compendium, I have included a few examples (out of the scores that I have in my archives) relating to deliverance from the occult of individuals.

There is the testimony of charismatic retreat preacher Fr. James Manjackal MSFS in the Reiki healing chapter 21 where he mentions his encounters with demons of reiki and yoga.

At my website, there’s the **TESTIMONY-MY EXPERIENCE WITH REIKI** of a personal friend who was so “disturbed” after becoming involved with the “Om” symbol, the use of pyramids, reiki healing, meditations, etc. that he abjured them and underwent deliverance by a priest.

Once again, at www.ephesians-511.net, you will read the **TESTIMONY-PRANIC HEALING DID NOT HEAL MY MOTHER**, which testifies to the healing from terminal cancer of a long-time family friend who had sought recourse to Pranic Healing (performed by a “Catholic” layman), when we convinced her to abjure it and turn to Jesus for healing and deliverance.

In chapter 58 of this book, a young Catholic who attended a New Age Seminar given by me and experienced deliverance from occult bondage testifies that she came under after attending Landmark (and other New Age) programmes in Mumbai. At my website: **TESTIMONY OF A YOUNG CATHOLIC’S DELIVERANCE FROM NEW AGE**.

In chapter 92, Erika Gibello of the International Association for Deliverance holds that occult power attaches to pagan symbols. Having decades of experience in the deliverance ministry with leading exorcists like the late Fr. Rufus Pereira, she should know. Fr. Pereira himself has testified in Francis MacNutt’s book on Deliverance that he delivered a demon that had possessed a young Catholic girl who had taken up the Hindu temple dance called *Bharatanatyam*.

Both Fr. Rufus and Ms. Gibello categorically hold that *homoeopathy* is “soft” occult.

Describing the New Age Movement as “a movement dealing with occult spiritual power,” Bishop Donald W. Montrose DD of Stockton, USA uses the caption “*Spiritual Warfare: The Occult has Demonic Influence*” for his 1996 article (<https://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/occult.htm>)

What I am emphasizing is that the deliverance ministry must not be operated by lay people who are themselves compromised, and either ignorant of or in rejection of the truth about the intrinsic esoteric and occult nature of New Age medications and meditations, and the bondage which they weave over unsuspecting Catholic practitioners.

The wife of the founder of one such “ministry” had herself needed to be delivered of several demons (“*eight to ten spirits*”), according to their website, by a *Protestant pastor* after she indulged in the use of the Ouija board!

This writer has been ridiculed in public by the core team members of the very same “ministry” who asserted that they do not believe anything that he says, about homoeopathy for instance.

According to their website, this group has received official recognition from their archdiocese!

In October 2014 their leader was appointed as secretary for Asia of the International Association for Deliverance. He is closely allied with his yoga-promoting parish priest whom he has valiantly defended on Facebook in 2015 (as recorded in detail in a report on my website).

My three-decade experience-based estimate is that between 15 to 25% of prayer group members (and Bible College and Schools of Evangelization students) unwittingly practice New Age medications or meditations (especially yoga) or are in bondage to some innocuous occult practice or the other. Sometimes, it was the leader himself.

Some popular retreat centres run free homoeopathy clinics. Others chant the “Om” mantra.

All such groups should be disallowed by the Bishops from ministering to other Catholics.

Why two Bishops' Forewords to this Compendium?

Bishop Julian Porteous of Sydney had, in the year 2014, assured me that he would give me a Foreword in the eventuality of my bringing out a book on New Age medications and meditations.

However, for various reasons, I suspended my attempt to work on the book, concentrating on my website, and took up this project again just a month ago. When I completed the manuscript and attempted to contact Most Rev. Porteous in Hobart, where he is presently the Archbishop, I was unable to get through to him. Because of the urgency of the situation, I then approached an Indian Cardinal, an Indian Archbishop and an Indian Bishop, but met with no success even though I had not given them a clue as to the theme of the now-completed book when I had requested of them a Foreword for the book.

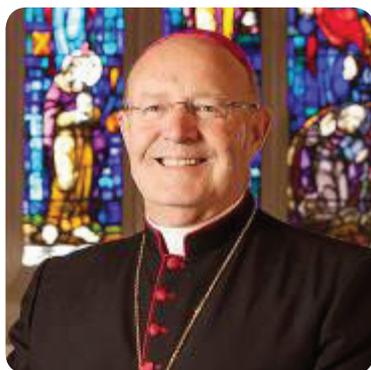
Meanwhile my communications had got through to Archbishop Porteous who immediately kept the word that he had given me five years earlier and, after I sent him a copy of the manuscript, emailed me the Foreword that you find on the following page.

But, with the experience that I had had with the first three Indian ecclesiastics whom I had contacted, I figured that this Compendium needed a Foreword from an *Indian* Bishop.

However, I did not want either a repeat of the silent treatment or a flat denial (which would be fully certain if it were known that the subject of my exposé was the New Age Movement).

That's when I remembered the good Bishop George Pallipparambil of Miao who has known me for several years. When I wrote to him, he unhesitatingly agreed to give me the second Foreword, even before his becoming aware of the theme that I had taken up. That speaks volumes of his confidence in me and my work.

Foreword I



**Most Rev. Julian Porteous DD,
Archbishop of Hobart, Tasmania**

I commend the thoroughness of **Michael Prabhu's** research and the comprehensiveness of his book **Medications and Meditations in the New Age**. I do hope and pray that it will be of great benefit to many Catholics across the world.

The spirituality and doctrines of the New Age have emerged as exercising significant influence in Western societies in recent decades. As Christian faith declines in many Western countries people have sought alternative sources for their spiritual needs. The adage that nature abhors a vacuum is very apposite here. As people have emptied their lives of Christian faith and spirituality, they have embraced many spiritual beliefs which come from non-Christian sources. There has often been a naïve acceptance of what these New Age spiritual teachings can offer them. People are often unaware of potential dangers to their spiritual and psychological health. Many are unaware of the significant variance of these practices to a sound Christian anthropology.

Michael Prabhu has done extensive research into the wide range of New Age ideas and beliefs and offered a Christian critique of them. This is a most valuable service to the Church. I commend his work to you.

Julian Porteous DD
Archbishop of Hobart,
Archdiocese of Hobart, Tasmania
March 29, 2019

Dear Michael,

I am pleased to hear from you and to learn of the work you are doing in the area of the New Age. I think the area does need to be explored by Catholic writers who can point out the dangers of involvement with New Age practices. Many Catholics are unaware of the spiritual dangers and do not understand the significant variance of these practices to Catholic Anthropology.

Julian Porteous DD

Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney, Australia

March 19, 2014, by email

Foreword II



Most Rev. George Pallipparambil SDB with Pope Benedict XVI



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6th April 2019

FOREWORD

We are living in an age of alliances, networks and groups. Promises are made; some kept, others broken! Compromises and shortcuts, explained away in various ways easily dilute many a value in society and religion. Many a religious festival and celebration have lost much of their sanctifying effect and have become social functions.

It is in this context that **Michael Prabhu** is bringing out his **Compendium on the New Age**. Michael is not questioning any of the values, or challenging any of the teachings but offers a gentle reminder to the people that there has to be some underlying principles and perennial values.

Everything being in a flux or can be altered or changed according to one's own fancy makes life chaotic. At the same time fanaticism or stoic unwillingness to change and adapt are equally detrimental to any system or Society. A healthy balance is needed always and in every case.

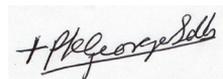
Voices that sound the alarm bells and caution people are essential for the healthy progress of Society and for the preservation of values. I am sure that **Michael Prabhu** is trying to do just that.

He has made in-depth study of church teachings and has boldly upheld what he believes is true.

I am sure that many will find this useful and inspiring.

May God bless Michael and all his attempts at helping others to know, love and reach God.

In Jesus the Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "+George Pallipparambil SDB". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

+George Pallipparambil SDB
Bishop of Miao

Letters of Recommendation from priests (in alphabetical order of sender's last name)

Why multiple letters of appreciation and recommendation from priests for this Compendium?

One significant reason is the unicity of the subject that is addressed in this Compendium.

After my not very encouraging experience of approaching Indian ecclesiastical authorities for a Foreword to this Compendium, I wondered how successful I might be in my requesting Indian priests to evaluate this book, especially since New Age is endemic in the Indian Church and consequently is a subject that is studiously ignored in the mainstream Catholic media.

New Age is endemic in the Indian Church; in some major dioceses it is virtually institutionalized. Since many Bishops are either overt participants in the promotion of some of the New Age practices that this Compendium critiques, or are silent when they are propagated by individual priests and by religious congregations (of priests and nuns) in their dioceses, I would be hard put, I believed, to get even a couple of priests to write Letters of Recommendation for a work of this kind. It would be even more difficult for me to find Catholic priests who were conversant about the dangers of New Age spirituality, I thought. The only Indian Catholic journals which used to expose New Age are now defunct or, if still in operation, have long since ceased to publish articles critiquing New Age. There is no dedicated Indian conservative Catholic blog (laity or priests') that exists, unlike multiple availability in the West, and the Indian Catholic online media as well as printed periodicals are either dominated by liberals and progressives or controlled by the institutionalized Church and do not accept for publication such articles (leave alone *Letters to the Editor*) as those written and contributed by this writer. I figured that my chances were poor or none at all. But, I went ahead and wrote...

Although for undisclosed reasons I did not approach several priests whom I have been in correspondence with over the years, I did many others, uncertain as to who would oblige and who would not. As expected, a few of them ignored my email almost as if they had never received it. A charismatic preacher whom I know for almost 20 years and with whom I had never had a problem wrote that it was his "personal decision" not to give me one, but he would surely "buy a copy (of the book) when printed"!

One very senior priest from a religious congregation gave me a beautiful letter but, 24 hours later, wrote and beseeched me not to use it along with his name as

he had been pressurised by his community to take it back from me, considering that his confrères were involved in some New Age medication/meditation or the other)!

But, I had already written to some of my overseas contacts and, when I found that every single one of them was enthused about giving this book a letter of recommendation, I widened the scope of my quest to a few more Indian priests.

It must be made known that 1) all of the contacted priests were aware that I was soliciting letters from other priests, and 2) the great majority of them agreed to contribute their evaluations of my Compendium without their having an idea of either its theme or its contents.

What is common to all of them is that 1) they are familiar with my crusade against the New Age Movement through my website, my articles and my reports and exposés; and 2) they possess a keen awareness of the spiritual dangers posed to Catholics by the New Age Trojan Horse within the Church.

One priest even sent me his Letter before I finished the book or even requested him for one. Six of the contributing priests hold doctoral degrees and/or are theologians; among them are retreat preachers; three are in charismatic renewal, one is a canon lawyer and one an exorcist.

It is my proud privilege and honour to present here their Letters recommending this Compendium:

I.

The recent book of Michael Prabhu titled **Medications and Meditations in the New Age** is meant as a Compendium on the New Age. It is a collection of the official teachings of the Catholic Church on the subject.

Although I could not read the manuscript fully, the claim of the work to be a compendium of the Church teachings is itself a good reason enough to recommend it for reference, for there is on the one hand the information about the Church documents on the theme and with it, at the same time, the possibility of verifying its claim. As far as I know Michael Prabhu as a committed defender of Catholic faith and teaching, his present work cannot be something contrary to it.

One of the tragic facts about our society and also of the church is illiteracy. There are people who are clever to exploit this deficiency to their advantage and vested interests. This is what happens in politics. Those who are illiterate and uneducated in the vast society believe what some so-called political and social leaders speak one-sidedly: whether half-truths or even callous lies! The illiterate

often lack critical examination of the statements made by the propagandists. At the time of elections the politicians know how to exploit this situation to their benefit and often to the ruin of the nation. Similar things happen also in the field of religion, spirituality and medicine. Esoteric practices flourish on the soil of illiterate minds. Without actually knowing what occultism teaches and practises one cannot evaluate its practices. Now-a-days it has become fashionable to be involved in esoteric methods in the name of spirituality and health. Are they truly beneficial or ultimately harmful not only to the body but also to the soul and spirit, to the whole person? I have come across many youngsters in the West who have been misled by the lack of proper knowledge of esoteric and occult practices and finally ended up in great misery. Some of them have fortunately realized this, regretted their folly and come back to the true ways of Catholic faith. Some suffer still from the wounds and harms already inflicted in their souls. Proper information and right guidance could have spared them from falling into a pit before.

The present book of Michael Prabhu could be of a great help to many who may come into contact sooner or later with the new movements which are summarized under the name New Age. (His) exposition of the sectarian doctrines and the assessment of the church will shed much light on the issue for a cautious encounter with them. I wish the book great success! Much effort and research have gone into this work. Hearty congratulations to the author!

Wishing him and the readers God's blessings,

Rev. Prof. Dr. Sebastian Athappilly CMI,

Catholic Parish of the Most Holy Redeemer, University Clinic Church, Graz,
Austria

April 6, 2019

**Prof. MMag. Dr. Fr. Sebastian Athappilly CMI holds a Doctorate in Theology
and teaches in Graz, Austria**

II.

Recommendation to read this great work by Mr. Michael Prabhu “**Medications and Meditations in the New Age**”, by Mr. Michael Prabhu, is a well-studied and well-documented scientific work, born of extensive research and profound reflection, well-authored by one who has vast knowledge on the topic and knows what he is talking about. He has indeed perceived the vast extent of the damage done to our faith through the invasion of erroneous western and eastern currents of thought and deceptive presentations in the form of belief systems, not coming from our true God and entrusted to the Catholic Church. These currents, mainly consisting of psychology and eastern esoteric beliefs and practices, have been drawn by the new saviors and pseudo religious preachers, teachers and experts of our human and spiritual realms. These trends were born where the Catholic Faith had no place or was rejected, as we know in the case of psychology that was born in some non-Catholic ambient and as an alternative to the Catholic faith and its teaching authority. The devil was the first psychologist, as we read in Genesis 3:1b that the serpent asked the woman “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden’?” The question led to doubt and then to the fall and that was because the devil knew the art of deception by raising a question in the mind of that simple woman. So the science of deceiving the mind was originated by the evil one to go against the demand of faith, something beyond limits of reason, at times. So psychology, to a great extent presented itself as an alternative to faith and dependence on God.

Another contagious and poisonous trend that rebelled against God is from the one who proclaimed oneself as a god equal to the only God and that too we know to be Satan. Ever since the first rebellion against God by the fallen angel, the craving for self-proclamation as gods or goddesses, was born and gave birth to all esoteric or self-saving belief systems. Ever since open proclamations of heresies stopped, something more subtle and deceptive has sprung up as alternative means of salvation to oppose what came through Jesus Christ and offered through repentance and faith, gifts of God the Father. This is the New Age phenomenon in brief. Today, the Catholic Church cannot take a stand on any of these false systems of self-generating salvation that requires no humility, repentance, faith and dependence on God because even the media usurped by the evil one mobilizes global opinion and strength against the authentic preachers of truth.

The innumerable channels of esoteric falsehood have enveloped the whole world and entered into all governing systems that legalize, support and propagate immoral and perverse modes of social patterns that corrupt even

the basic human family nucleus. Such evil patterns manifested in sexual deviations, called sexual orientations, claim to be alternatives to what is God-given in the form of sacramental marriage, known and practiced authentically in the Catholic Church.

Today, we are faced with a vast range of corrupting forces and trends that tend to destroy truth and our true faith that has come through Jesus Christ. In this context I say that **Michael Prabhu**'s scholarly work is unparalleled and can enlighten all those who want to be faithful to the truth. This I can say with conviction, as I have followed up a great deal of his contributions in the past.

Fr. Joseph Aymanathil, S.D.B

March 31, 2019

Dr. Fr. Joseph Aymanathil SDB holds a Doctorate in Canon Law and is presently spiritual director of Calcutta Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (CCCRS), Kolkata, West Bengal

III.

It has been a great blessing in my life to meet **Michael Prabhu** some 15 years ago and then to see him regularly almost every year when I come and visit India and especially Chennai. Our friendship has been built on this great common desire to help Mother Church. She has been repeatedly terribly shaken by the attacks on Faith and Morals level by an increasing number of dissenting voices, not only among Catholic faithful but also among clerics, priests and sometimes even bishops. All these individuals for different reasons don't keep the recommendations of St Peter in his first letter (1 Peter 5, 2) or of Saint Paul in his letters to Timothy (1 Timothy 6, 20-21: "O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, for by professing it some have missed the mark as regards the faith"; 2 Timothy 1, 13-14: "Follow the pattern of the sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; guard the truth that has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us") and prefer to turn to new doctrines: "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths" (2 Timothy 4, 3-4).

This painful ascertainment has strongly motivated **Michael Prabhu** to rediscover and to expose with clarity by means of conferences, seminars or pamphlets the subject that deals with the fundamentals of the Faith (*preambula fidei*) or what we call in common language *Catholic Apologetics*. According to

the recommendation of Saint Peter: “Always be prepared to make a defence to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence” (1 Peter 3, 14). In this context strengthening the faith of the people and trying to remove from their minds the obstacles that could prevent them to adhere to the person of Christ is a great spiritual work of mercy and one of the most precious before God for the sake of faithful and of non-Christians as well. This is what Michael did by helping people to really discern among the many realities and fashionable doctrines of today’s world what is in conformity with the values of the Gospel and the deposit of the Faith inherited from Christ and the Apostles, transmitted through generations by the Church.

Now **Michael Prabhu** has undertaken another great spiritual work of mercy. He has been labouring for years in order to publish this master work that required several years of hard research, a very complete and detailed **Compendium of deceptions on the New Age Movement** for a deconstruction of its claims, pretensions and practices.

This movement has sadly affected so many Catholics, damaging or destroying their Faith, leaving wide open the door of their souls to the enemy of our salvation. New Age is a system of thoughts, beliefs and practices that has many things in common with Gnosticism and Modernism. The latter solemnly condemned by the Pope Saint Pius X in his encyclical *Pascendi Domini Gregis* of 8 September 1907 has been the breeding ground that allowed the rise and boom of New Age. What was said about Modernism by Pope Pius X, can be said about New Age, i.e. that it is a kind of “synthesis of all the heresies” where “all the errors that have been broached against the Faith have been collected together” and where “the sap and substance of them are concentrated all into it”.

We can be very grateful to **Michael Prabhu** for having courageously taken the trouble of facing with perseverance this challenging enterprise. He has been able to collect in a systematic way all the elements of this huge and monstrous octopus and to give a critical appreciation of each one with many references to the teaching of the Church and to its magisterial documents. The publication of this important book is an appropriate response to the specific needs of our times where “having a clear faith, based on the Creed of the Church, is often labelled today as a fundamentalism”, as Pope Benedict said just before the aperture of the conclave in 2005, “whereas, relativism, which is letting oneself be tossed and *swept along by every wind of teaching*, looks like the only attitude (acceptable) to today’s standards. We are moving towards a dictatorship of relativism which does not recognize anything as for certain and which has as

its highest goal one's own ego and one's own desires" (Homily of Cardinal Ratzinger for the opening of the Conclave on the 18th of April 2005).

This Compendium will be useful for laymen who may have not much time for study and reading but want to know what to hold on specific and doubtful practices or teaching in use in some Catholic circles and that sound weird to them. These people will be able to go directly to the corresponding chapter and find light and clarity on the controversial issue.

This Compendium will be also useful for advanced people and scholars who are really uncomfortable with New Age theories and practices and want to know in details the references and other studies made on the topic so that they can investigate the matter more deeply.

As a Benedictine monk formed in the monastic tradition inherited from our Patriarch and Father Saint Benedict, having taught theology and spirituality in a good number of monasteries or studiums in France, in Europe and also in Asia, Australia, and America, I found very relevant the chapters dealing with all the dangers related to yoga and its substitutes. Let us also mention the chapter 48 dealing with *Catholic Ashrams* who often are not deprived of ambiguities or errors and syncretic practices incompatible with the Catholic Faith.

Let us hope a great success for this very precious book. May it be a source where many people who have been troubled, put in doubt or even ensnared by the New Age mentality will find light, comfort and even a remedy, if necessary, in order to serve and worship God as He wants to be served and worshipped, in spirit and in truth, so that He may receive the beautiful homage of a chaste and pure Faith, uncontaminated and shining as is the Faith of the Church.

Fr John Britto OSB, Doctor in Sacred Theology of Abbaye Saint Joseph, Flavigny, France Retreat preacher and Theology Teacher in various Seminaries and Houses of Formation in France, India, and Australia.

April 8, 2019

Dr. Fr. John Britto Dupré la Tour OSB is from the Abbaye Saint Joseph de Clairval, Flavigny sur-Ozerain, France

IV.

First of all I thank God for the 'sacrifice' of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the abundant 'New Life' He has given us through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. I also thank God for the gift of the Catholic Church, and its guidance, in helping us to journey towards this 'New Life'.

Time and again in the history of the Church we see that God raised prophets to safeguard its members and help them to discern, especially when the evil one tried to influence its members with strange doctrines, and deviate them from the experience of this 'New Life' through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. For the past 30 years the New Age practices have been on the rise and have not only influenced the laity, but also have even entered the formation programmes of religious congregations, and the priestly formation. Sometimes the priests and the religious have been at the forefront in promoting these practices.

At this critical moment, when these practices were beginning to spread rapidly, especially in the Indian Church, God raised persons like **Michael Prabhu** to fight the battle against the evil one and to expose his plan (Ephesians 5:11). Perhaps like the prophet Elijah, in the early years he fought the battle zealously and single handed, facing the wrath of the 'Arabs'.

Like Prophet Elijah, Michael championed the orthodoxy of the church, and was not afraid to speak his heart out. Having known him for the past fifteen years, I appreciate him for his non-compromising position, especially when it comes to Church teachings.

As regards the 'meditation' systems of the New Age practices, reading and understanding the life of the Christian mystics, and having been giving contemplative retreats, I have come to the realisation that the foundation of a God-experience is love. Since God is love, love is begotten of love alone. A God experience has to do nothing with techniques. Techniques to some extent can discipline us to sit in prayer, but they cannot give a person God-experience. The depths of a God-experience depends on one's desire to love God, and the extent one strives to practice the 'love command' of Jesus - *love one another as I have loved you* (cfr. John 13:34, John 15:12).

Since the 'medication' systems that are dealt in this book are vast, I will not be able to comment on them, but I did (personally) experience negative (occult) forces with the practice of a couple of them.

I thank God for giving Michael the grace to complete this work, and pray that this compendium on the New Age titled "**Medications and Meditations in the New Age**", helps many to come to their senses and return to the Lord with their whole heart.

Fr. Alvito Fernandes OCD
April 6, 2019

Fr. Alvito Fernandes OCD, presently at Ryshivana, Mangalore is a preacher of contemplative retreats to lay people and to congregations of religious. His Carmelite community invited me over to give a Seminar on New Age to around 130 nuns and priests at Ryshivana on 18 February 2018

V.

Michael Prabhu is a true son of that doughty warrior Victor Kulanday, founder of *The Laity* magazine, author of *The Paganized Catholic Church in India*, 1985, who with his wife Dr. Daisy Kulanday, stood Athanasius-like against the world of compromise and syncretism in his defence of authentic doctrine.

It is no coincidence that the Kulandays, on their retirement from service in New Delhi, came to Madras (now Chennai) and bought the upstairs portion of "Culford", the very same British bungalow in Santhome (San Thomé) which Michael's family had owned and where he had been born and raised before himself moving to Delhi, renaming it "Galilee", and starting his apostolate, launching, with a group of like-minded Catholics, a war on the liturgical and ritual Hinduisation of the Indian Church!

The Kulandays fought that war till they went to their Reward toward the end of the year 1992. Around that time, Michael (at age 42) abruptly quit his job in New Delhi and moved back to Chennai in January 1993, to work full-time in the Church, a commitment that metamorphosed into the ministry he is into today.

The Paganized Catholic Church in India is reproduced in toto at Michael Prabhu's website.

Michael has reduced a very large amount of worldwide material from his excellent website on the New Age Movement (NAM) down to a book of over 400 pages.

He has continued with dogged determination in his research and exposure of the inroads of the NAM into many aspects of Indian Church life.

Many Indian missionaries brought up in this syncretistic environment in India are scarcely distinguishable from their Hindu or Buddhist contemporaries, forgetting that Jesus alone is "the Way, the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6) and "there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved" (Acts 4:12). As an exorcist I am continually coming across people demonised by exposure to the NAM. Michael's book should help expose the dangers.

“The gods of the heathens are demons” (Psalm 95:5).

Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM

March 27, 2019

Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM is the Official Exorcist of the Archdiocese of Pretoria, South Africa, and serves at St Columba Catholic Church, Capital Park, Pretoria

VI.

Dear Michael,

Along with my congratulations goes my gratitude for such work done to clarify the truth and denouncement of the lie.

I sincerely thank you because many of the practices you mention in the book I already suspected were malicious but this book of yours confirms and evidences it widely.

I have seen some points that other Christian authors have touched or warned about but nothing as complete and necessary as this book. I pray that the Lord, who surely inspired you, will grant you the grace that your book will be widely spread for the good of many souls.

May the Lord bless you and, as I said, make your work fruitful.

In Christ and in Mary, yours,

Fr. Justo Antonio Lofeudo MSE, Sabadell, Spain

March 30, 2019

Fr. Justo Antonio Lofeudo MSE, a Spanish Missionary of the Most Holy Eucharist, and his confrères, establish chapels of Perpetual Adoration across Europe

VII.

Appreciation of the book “Medications and Meditations in the New Age”

There are two forces that form history: one is visible and another invisible or rather we call them natural and supernatural. The invisible or the supernatural has two sources: one is God the Creator who cares for his creatures with love and concern even to the extent of giving His own life, and the other is His and the humanity’s enemy, the devil that lies, steals, slaughters and destroys (John 8:44, 10:10). When the true new age was dawned for the salvation of mankind by the life-giving

sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary, the only Savior and Lord of all, the devil, his/ His perennial enemy had stolen/stole the very word ‘New Age’ as its strategy

to lure people to its kingdom (Revelation 21:1). And today, many followers of Christ are prey to the cunning tactics of the devil that prowls around like a roaring lion to devour those who are saved by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 6:11, 1 Peter 5:8).

People who do not revere God their Creator are nevertheless bound to worship some object to worship as they have an inherent insatiable thirst for the divine. But an abnormality called sin invaded the hearts of His noble creature, man, whom He has created in His own image and likeness. The first and most serious sin anyone commits is to serve the creature rather than the Creator! (Romans 1:25). It is clearly explained in the book of the prophet Jeremiah, *“Two evils have my people done: they have forsaken me, the source of living waters; they have dug themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that hold no water”* (Jeremiah 2:13).

Glancing through the pages of **“Medications and Meditations in the New Age”** written by **Mr. Michael Prabhu**, a well-known Catholic apologist, author of short (unpublished) books (Pranic Healing, Transcendental Meditation, Zen meditation, etc.) and numerous articles (on his massive website www.ephesians-511.net), preacher and orator, I was amazed at the herculean and indefatigable study and research he had taken to present such an enormous and complex subject in a book that is very easily readable and comprehensible to any simple man. I would say that it is not just a reference book but an encyclopedia! Through encounters that extend to more than two decades from the time he attended my School of Evangelization at Fatima Retreat House, in Mangalore (1997-1998), I dare to define Michael as a multifaceted personality – an ingenuous gentle man with deep knowledge of the truth of Christianity by the vast reading of the Word of God through prayer, and a very practicing Catholic with an ardent love for Jesus and His Church. With a clear acumen of what happens today in Christianity especially in Catholicism, he discerns how the Catholic believers have gone away from faith and salvation by paying attention to deceitful spirits and demoniac instructions even by the leaders of the church and thus stopped listening to the truth and diverted to myths (1 Timothy 4:1 & 2 Timothy 4:4).

Michael is clear in his teaching but very uncompromising like His Master Jesus and his disciples especially Paul the apostle! His method and approach to the esoteric and New Age subject are indescribable and inconceivable.

The love of God put in his heart by the Holy Spirit urges him to tell us indispensable truth that ‘we need not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul but we must be afraid of those who can kill our body and soul’, and ‘although we are in the flesh, we do not battle according to the flesh but we are in a spiritual battle -field with weapons of the Holy Spirit that

are enormously powerful, capable of destroying the fortresses of the enemy' (Matthew 10:28, 2 Corinthians 10:4).

I recommend this book to all who search for truth especially to prayer group leaders, seminarians, priests, bishops, teachers and preachers who have the duty to shepherd the flock that now are going astray. My hearty congratulation to Michael Prabhu for this magnanimous book that gives an inexhaustible knowledge of the truth that would lead any one to the Only way and the Only Life-giver. May the Lord Jesus enlighten him to write more good books like this.

Hallo to Angela and children who helped Michael for this great work.

Fr. James Manjackal MSFS, <http://www.jmanjackal.net/>

April 2, 2019, on the 14th death anniversary of St. John Paul II.

Dr. Fr. James Manjackal MSFS, a retreat preacher holding Doctorates in Anthropology & Spirituality from the Angelicum, Rome, has preached hundreds of retreats in India and across Europe from his bases in Europe. He writes now from Piding, Germany. He was appointed as a Missionary of Mercy by Pope Francis

VIII.

In a world challenged by tyrannical relativism, critical of the rational methodology typical of the medieval scholastics and averse to religious certitude or orthodoxy in preference for religious indifferentism, humanity has resorted to many easy-way-out strategies. This is evident in our world today in the form of religious syncretism, emotional sentimentalism, secular atheistic humanism, equivocation and lack of clarity. This is manifest in the standing aloof in matters of faith, especially among the millennials and the so-called *nones* who claim to be spiritual but not religious. That this also affects those who lay claim to the Christian faith is not only scandalous but points to other causes: poor catechetics, shallow faith, misunderstanding and/or misinterpretation of authentic Catholic teachings. **Michael Prabhu** not only rejects this attitude but takes us into the heart and creedal reasoning of the Catholic Church, in the orthodox Christian tradition, as testified to by Church Fathers, Councils, Popes, theologians and eminent believers. He makes a case that the New Age Movement, in its subtle yet deceptive manifestations, is anti-Christ, anti-Christian faith and anti-Church.

New Age tendencies today impose themselves on us in even more subtle ways than imagined, such that the unsuspecting less spiritually conscious persons easily fall prey to them. This is manifested in esoteric practices around camouflaged religious exercises, music/dance, magical and martial arts, astrology, occultism, spirit-channelling, spiritualism/spiritism, countercultural innovations, some unwholesome so-called holistic therapies, secular eclecticism and humanism – some of which are not intrinsically evil on their own but can easily become channels against the true expression of the Christian faith. Anyone conversant with the many diabolical manifestations of demonic possession clearly will agree with this position. Bearing this in mind, the author calls us to brace up and put on alert our sensitive spiritual antennae and tentacles, immersing ourselves in the saving power of God, who in Christ has set us free, to the exclusion of any other source of salvation.

This **Compendium** puts in our hands a vademecum that serves both as a reference and referral for those who want to know the mind of the Church regarding this delicate subject, as they seek to grow in their Christian faith. This is a contribution from a concerned member of the Church, who knows his canonical duty to contribute to the growth of the faith, adding his voice to a growing and ongoing discourse. **Michael Prabhu** invites us to re-examine and re-align our loyalty, whether it is to Christ alone or to other anti-Christ practices. I recommend this book and hope that as many people as possible, with open mind, will find it helpful, enriching and edifying. Before you are tempted to dismiss it, I ask that you take it, read it, and let the discussion continue *sentire cum ecclesia*.

Fr. Peter Okafor

May 22, 2019

Fr. Peter J. Okafor is a priest of the Catholic diocese of Issele-Uku in Nigeria. He was a director of one of the leading schools of Evangelization in Africa for the training of clergy and laity. Having completed his Licentiate in Systematic Theology in Boston, USA, he is currently at the church of St. Leo the Great, Oakland, California as a resident student while he pursues a doctorate in demonology at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley.

IX.

Sentire cum Ecclesia is the all-time dictum of Catholic Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy is the ABC of religious faith and orthopraxis is the kernel of Christian Agape. The Compendium on Church documents and Papal teachings to be vigilant on New Age Spiritualities and Religions is a welcome venture. Our striving ought

to be directed towards Jesus Christ - Perfect Truth manifest of Our Heavenly Father.

All the best and showers of blessings for your great work.

Fr. George Olivera OFM Cap.

March 30, 2019

Dr. Fr. George Olivera OFM Cap., teaches Philosophy of Morals and Religions at Kripalaya Seminary, Mysore, Karnataka

X.

My interest in the study of the New Age Movement led me to various internet sites, one of which is www.ephesians-511.net operated by **Mr. Michael Prabhu**. It was truly a blessing because the articles and the links it provided were very helpful to me to go deep into the subject.

I came to know that Mr. Prabhu was going to publish a book on New Age spirituality and I was overjoyed. Needless to say, it is the outcome of his years of deep and strenuous study on the subject.

I am reminded of what is said of St. Athanasius, who was mainly instrumental in conquering the Arian heresy, "he is a man who fought against the world". The same can be said of Mr. Prabhu who fights untiringly against the invasion of New Age Movement on true Christian faith in India.

Mr. Prabhu deserves all our support as he is a true defender of Christian faith. This book, doubtlessly, will be a blessing to those who are genuine in faith and to those who are ready to stand by what they believe in. God bless him.

It was when I came to realize that there are two divergent approaches in the Church towards Yoga and that they confused and confounded the faithful that I decided to make a general study on this issue.

The first approach points out that Yoga is not harmonious with the Christian faith. Many preachers and exorcists give warning against yoga and New Age spirituality. For example, the late Rev. Fr. Gabriel Amorth, who was the chief exorcist of Rome, has affirmed that Yoga is harmful to the truly faithful.

The second approach tells everyone that there need not be any apprehension or doubt about Yoga and that it is totally acceptable to Christians. According to them, those who speak against Yoga are people with narrow-mindedness. The prominent among the supporters of the second approach are [the name of the priest and his yoga "retreat" centre are withheld]. Yoga is presented as an alternative for the salvation through Christ. For example, let me quote from the book written by [the name of the priest and his book are withheld].

“Yoga and Yoga spirituality are adequate to redeem and save a generation.”
-page 48

“Yoga is the means to lead our life to perfection. It is a comprehensive and spiritual training regimen... Yoga is a path that leads us from evil to good, from good to holiness of life and from holiness of life to the experience of God. It is a science... Yoga is universal and meant for all because yoga is a means to reach God” -page 14

Both the approaches mentioned above cannot be simultaneously true. If so, which one is right and acceptable? As I started delving deep into the question, I realized that the Vatican has brought out two documents pertaining to this matter. This ignited my eagerness to study it. Why should the Vatican be so much interested in it? What does the Vatican categorically teach us? As a result, I read the Vatican documents very carefully.

The first document of 1989 is named “*Orationis Formas*” written as a letter to the bishops of the Catholic Church about certain dimensions of Christian meditation. The second one of 2003 is “*Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life, a Christian study on New Age*” (JCBWL).

Both these documents point out how the basic tenets of New Age spirituality are different from Catholic faith and how the methods of Christian prayer differ from non-christian methods of prayer. When I studied these documents closely, I realised that the right approach for Christians is to be very alert against Yoga. The deeper I went into the matter, the greater was my realization that yoga had already influenced the Christian world adversely through its mediator, that is, New Age spirituality. In the western world the Christian believers were fascinated by Yoga, Zen meditation, Transcendental Meditation etc. Nothing was done to control and offset the adverse influences of such methods. Hence the vision of the Christian world was diverted from Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of life.

By the time the Church was aware of the impending spiritual anarchy and brought out these documents, many people had already gone astray and had found their own way of self-realization.

How do the Revelations of the Bible and the Philosophy of Yoga differ from each other?

According to the Bible, God is a person. However, according to Yoga, God is not a person, but a power (impersonal). According to the Bible, God is the Creator and all the rest are creatures. But according to yoga, the Creator and the created are not distinct but the same. The appearance of distinctness is due

to ignorance. Yoga is a means by which such ignorance is removed and the realization of one's identity with God is achieved in our consciousness.

According to the Bible, man's relationship with God was broken due to sin. Only through the remission of sin man can be saved and the relationship with God re-established. Remission of sins and salvation can be achieved only through genuine repentance of sins and through faith in Jesus Christ who incarnated and died on the cross as a sacrifice for the remission of our sins and resurrected.

In 'New Age,' there is nothing called 'sin'. There is only either incomplete knowledge or ignorance. It is ignorance that brings about a separation in one's relationship with God. This idea is borrowed from Hindu philosophy. In yoga the attainment of 'moksha' is not through the remission of sins. On the contrary, it is the consciousness of one's identity with God by removing ignorance - Aham Brahmasmi (cf. JCBWL 2.3.4.1). One has to take birth again and again until he attains this consciousness. Yoga is a means to deliver oneself from the cycle of births and re-births by effecting an altered state of consciousness. Hence through yoga, the identity between 'Jeevatma' (Individual Soul) and 'Paramatma' (Supreme Soul) is re-established.

The church categorically affirms that the divergence of Christian views and New Age views cannot be reconciled with each other (JCBWL 2.1). They are basically irreconcilable, according to Pope Benedict XVI also:

"A true believer in Christ should not blindly believe in whatever the world offers. This document demands that we should always assess and scrutinize them in the light of the glorious Christian faith. It also clearly points out the spiritual pitfalls that an ordinary Christian faces in this age" (*Truth and Tolerance*, page 121).

Those who accepted Christian faith after having been practitioners of yoga for many years thinking that yoga was harmless warn that yoga had dragged them to a kind of spiritual pitfall. What was started as a health-enhancing regimen took them to religious beliefs that were alien to true Christian faith and this is a warning for all of us to be on our guard against Yoga.

Catholic priests are called by their vocation and by their long training to profess Jesus as the unique savior of the world. Some of them have neglected this sacred duty and teach people that they can achieve union with God and attain salvation through yoga. This indeed is a great aberration of serious dimensions. JCBWL 6.2 says: "It must unfortunately be admitted that there are too many cases where Catholic centres of spirituality are actively involved in diffusing *New Age* religiosity in the Church. This would of course have to be corrected, not

only to stop the spread of confusion and error, but also so that they might be effective in promoting true Christian spirituality”.

Again we see in JCBWL 6.2: “We can be proud of what we have been given on trust, so we need to resist the pressures of the dominant culture to bury these gifts (cf. Matthew 25: 24-30)”. We should value this call given by the Church.

“At the core of the philosophy of yoga are the beliefs in the law of karma, reincarnation, the potential for self-realization or enlightenment without external aid, and a practiced and finally ultimate withdrawal from the world which is deemed to be an illusion or projection.

The core beliefs of this ancient discipline are, at best, incompatible with Christian doctrine, having been negated by the radical entrance of Christ into human history. Through the Paschal Mystery of His death and resurrection, we and the physical world were redeemed from sin and we were enabled to enter heaven.

While, doctrinally, yoga is an ancient outdated attempt to attain divine union, practically, this fact means little to a lukewarm laity that is hungry for access to spiritual experiences that they believe (erroneously) their own tradition denies them. Our goal must not only be to point out the hazards of yogic philosophy and practice, but to replace any false concepts and influences by offering seekers the true Living Water that is the gospel and love of Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, many Christians have experienced some of the beneficial effects of yogic postures, breathing and meditation including extraordinary healing, spiritual renewal and various bliss states. Many have become involved in one of the larger yoga societies or ashrams. Adding to the general confusion about the legitimacy of yoga is the guidance Christians receive from the now significant body of Catholic clergy, teachers and spiritual counselors who practice, write about and advocate eastern practices, especially yoga, often mixing them with Catholic mysticism.”

(Yoga – Health or Stealth, Clare McGrath Merkle OCDS, <https://www.ourladyswarriors.org/dissent/yoga.htm>)

Fr. Augustine Paraplackal

March 31, 2019

Fr. Augustine Paraplackal ministers from St. Thomas Church, Aimcomb (Diocese of Palai), Kadanad, Kerala

XI.

Dear Mr. Prabhu,

I am very glad to read about your work. It is very important in our days. The book "Esoteric Practices and Christian Faith" is the only one of my books which has been translated in English. In the recent years I began to work out flyers about different subjects concerning New Age. I've written 20 flyers, 14 of them are actually translated in English. Here I send them to you. I hope that they are helpful for your work and ministry. God bless you.
P. Clemens

Fr. Clemens Pilar COp

Fr. Clemens Pilar COp is a member of the Kalasantiner Community. Encouraged by the Archdiocese of Vienna, Austria, he has been writing on New Age since 1987. He is the author of "Esoteric Practices and Christian Faith - An Aid to Discernment", 2003, 127 pages, first published in 2001 in German under the title "Esoterik und christlicher Glaube - Hilfen zur Unterscheidung". I had received Fr. Clemens Pilar's permission to reproduce on my website fourteen of his articles that are available in the English language.

XII.

Dear Michael,

It is an amazing work you are undertaking in order to uphold our Catholic faith in right spirit...

You are a staunch Catholic. I understand your feelings for the Church. God bless you...

I am sure your hard work will pay you dividends...

I wish you well and good luck in publishing your book. I pray for you and for your family.

With warm regards,

Fr. Lawrence Pinto

March 30, 2019

Fr. Lawrence Pinto is former Executive Secretary of the CBCI Commission for Clergy and Religious, former Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences - O.C. General Secretary, and is presently at the Institute of Counselling and Psychiatry, Mangalore, Karnataka

XIII.

"I charge you... proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching. For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths. But you, be self-possessed in all circumstances; put up with hardship; perform the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry." (2 Timothy 4:2-5, New American Bible)*

"God-sent" Christ, Christianity and Christians emerged from a morass of metaphysical, moral and mental muddle & mess about 2020 years ago. For about 1950 years its creed code and cult were crystallized and developed, were fine-tuned and dissimilated with some measure of success universally in spite of the frailties, folly and foibles found in its adherents, by the sheer grace of God, working through Christ in the Holy Spirit.

The wheel seems to be turning full circle now, within a span of a few decades, with that the afore-mentioned morass now called "The New Age" or the "Age of Aquarius" (but actually a re-worked hash of ancient occult and pagan ideologies, philosophies and ways of life shored up with some unscientific claims) pervading every aspect of life without the church and within it too, to an alarming extent.

From within the hierarchical church a few, feeble attempts have been made to counter it, by way of some documents, which though categorical in creating an awareness and cautioning the believers about the dangers of the New Age Movement(s) to Christianity, have not been exhaustive in pointing out the details and nuances of many, many more of its beliefs and practices which seem harmless, "workable" or "useful", but which are in fact insidiously detrimental to the real Catholic Christian Faith.

Gaudium et Spes (1965) exhorted the faithful to "[read] the signs of the time and ... [interpret] them in the light of the Gospel." (GS #4). What many so called 'theologians', pastor-priests and Catholics have done is to read the "signs of the times" dim the light of the gospel to harmonize with and sputter in the shadow of these new-fangled fancies with dubious or diabolical origins. To meet that lacunae, I feel that this tome by **Mr. Michael Prabhu** is timely and "God-sent". It admirably and brilliantly meets the need and "signs" of the times, holds it up to the light of the scriptures and solid Church teachings to point out the hollowness and total incompatibility of the various beliefs and practices of the New Age Movement with anything truly Christian and Catholic. This book will serve as a ready reckoner for any Catholic Christian

who takes his Christian faith and Christian way of life seriously, especially for those of us in the battle to wean away Catholics from the pernicious perfidy of the New Age. I say that this 'Manual' is a must read for all Christians who love Christ and His Church and a 'must have' in every such Christian's bookshelf. My prayers are with him; may God bless him and all such endeavours and enterprises of his, for many more years to come.

Fr. Bosco Ryan

April 2, 2019

Dr. Fr. Bosco Anthony Ryan holds a Doctoral degree in Spirituality and is the Dean of Theology, Sacred Heart Seminary, Chennai; he preaches retreats to congregations of religious.

XIV.

During the past two decades, I have followed the relentless efforts made by **Mr. Michael Prabhu**, to make all Catholics and believers in general become aware of the dangers of the New Age Movement. I am not a theologian or an expert to on this topic. However, as someone privileged to preach God's Word to thousands and direct souls in spiritual counseling and Inner Healing Retreats in different parts of the World, I can testify to the great harm the New Age Movement has done to believers at large. No wonder St. John Paul II called the New Age Movement as one of the greatest threats to Christianity in the third millennium. The Word of God in Colossians 2:8 gives a warning to all the followers of Christ, "*See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ.*" When believers do not know the Bible and the teachings of the Church, they look for anything that will satisfy their appetite like the people of Israel who worshipped the molten calf forgetting the God who saved them.

Mr. Michael Prabhu has done a great service to the Catholic Church and to all believers by systematically exposing the lies and the venom spread through the New Age Movement, confusing the chosen ones of God. The research certainly has been very painstaking and laborious but very praiseworthy and meritorious. A true disciple of Jesus Christ, he has dared to stand up courageously for the true faith, facing criticism, ridicule and stiff opposition even from Church circles. But thanks be to God, he has not been crushed and the fruit of that hard work of several years, is beautifully presented in this book "**Medications and Meditations in the New Age.**"

Christians are supposed to be the well trained “good soldiers of Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 2:3) And Michael Prabhu has been a faithful, loyal soldier of Jesus Christ. I really pray that this great work will be read by the hierarchy and the faithful and will enable them to open their eyes to the great danger to our faith in Jesus Christ, in the gospels and Christian principles, by this great evil called the New Age Movement.

Human mind is so vulnerable and delicate to the Devil’s attack through erroneous doctrines. It is so exposed to the enemy’s teaching without any protection. St. Paul, struck at the root of the first sin by stating that it had its beginning in the mind of Eve, the first woman of the human race. And it happened through a deception of her vulnerable and fragile mind. *“I am afraid that as the serpent deceived by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”* (2 Corinthians 11:3) Her mind and thoughts were captured, corrupted, disillusioned and misled. Once the mind is misled, it is much easier to corrupt the person. It is a consequence of the mind-disillusionment by dubious deception.

Spiritual and moral illiteracy is the highest in the world, in spite of so much preaching by different denominations. St. Paul was quite categorical in his statement about the ignorance of our enemy’s tactics and methodology. *“And we do this so that we may not be outwitted by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his designs.”* (2 Corinthians 2:11) And it is unfortunate that there are centres of spirituality where New Age Teachings are imparted in the name of Pluralism and taking the Wisdom from others. But this is nothing but compromise. And compromise is becoming the biggest sin in the Church today. We are either for Christ or against Him.

I wish this great book **“Medications and Meditations in the New Age”** of **Michael Prabhu** will be read by those in authority, the clergy and the Faithful. May this research enlighten the minds of all believers.

Fr. C.J. Sebastian SDB, Darjeeling

April 3, 2019

Fr. C. J. Sebastian SDB is Founder and Director of the Calcutta Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services and preacher of retreats for the nuns of the Missionaries of Charity, Mother Teresa’s sisters

XV.

Glad your tireless work is seeing the light of day. God loves a generous giver. You have striven from the beginning to be a beacon light. As a layman deeply devoted to the mission of Jesus you have shown your undivided love even at the loss of your own personal family comfort

I wish God's love and blessings for your mission. Yours ever,

Fr. Juze Vas SVD

March 30, 2019

Fr. Joseph (Juze) Vas SVD is retired and lives in Indore

XVI.

Dear **Michael Prabhu**,

Thanks for the committed work for the sake of Jesus and His Church. Thanks for choosing me as one among many to comment on the book...

Thanks for forwarding me your pre-publication document. I have gone through it and am amazed at how you have given all your explanations based on documents. Above all, I like your approach namely, the purpose of this book when you said, *"This book does not seek to judge or condemn people of other religious persuasions for engaging in alternative therapies or oriental meditations, or who may be using the products that are critiqued herein, according to their beliefs or choices; nor does it judge or condemn Catholics who may be medicating and meditating the New Age way; but it is hoped that all readers who are ignorantly involved in New Age programmes will find this book useful in helping them to take an informed decision to abjure the use of these occult spiritual practices."*

I am reminded of the following:

If you warn a man of his evil ways and if he turned away from his evil ways you have atoned for your sins. (cf. Ezekiel 3:19)

"Truth" is not invented every now and then. Truth already exists it is only to be discovered. And Jesus alone said, "I am the Truth, the Way and the Life." (John 14:6) All that we need to do is discover Jesus.

When Jesus was demanded of a miracle to prove his identity, Jesus did not perform a miracle because he did not want to exert any force on human free will - even by way of a miracle - to force man to believe in him. That is the magnanimity of our God. And so, let everyone be guided but not condemned by this book. "As for me I don't judge anyone one." (John 8:15, John 12:47-48) The last time we interacted significantly was about the Emperor Emmanuel Church cult, which was again a timely warning from you based on your

research. It saved many Catholics in Manipur from being swept away by their agents' methods of apparent healings and visions. I hope this book will also save many from being swept away even by the so-called Catholic spiritual gurus who conduct so many different courses and make prey of simple souls.

Fr. Joy Vellattukara

April 1, 2019

Fr. Joy Vellattukara is the Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese of Imphal, Manipur

XVII.

Today we are living in a postmodern world. It is difficult to exhaustively define Postmodernism because; 'definition' itself is a modern concept. Postmodernism is more of a discourse which largely rejects the possibility of reliable knowledge and glorifies subjectivity. Therefore in a postmodern world eternal Truths do not matter anymore, things can never be good or bad in themselves, everything is relative. Everything that was glorified in the modern era is now brought to doubt, interrogation and eventually to nothingness. As a result, society appears to be more inclusive, more positive, more open, more intuitive and less judgemental. That sounds great, looks great, but unfortunately it isn't great.

Postmodernism is in itself a reductive discourse, which tends to reduce the complexity of the modern world to a power dynamics and in the event undermines Truth and Reason. I understand the New Age as the religion which is an offshoot of Postmodernism. It is a religion which is a mere assortment of the peripherals and the garnishing elements of great meta-narratives. It is a religion in which one worships himself or herself in an unsystemic fashion. It is a religion of the philosophical and economical elite. It is a unique form of a capitalized leftism. It is a coalition of conflicting ideas, essentially a nut difficult to crack.

Unless the pastors of the Church and leaders of the people acquire some working knowledge of the New Age, it will be difficult for them to nurture their flock unto holistic maturity. I see this Book "**A Compendium of New Age Deceptions and Corresponding Church Teachings**" by **Bro. Michael Prabhu** as something that will fill this vacuum, a Compendium that helps us understand this epidemic phenomenon of New Age.

Bro. Michael, over a period of several years has taken a lot of effort in begetting this text. I must put it on record that this book, in continuation of the papal document *Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life, A Christian Reflection on the "New Age"* by the Pontifical Council for Culture and the Pontifical Council

For *Interreligious Dialogue*, is an excellent textbook for young seminarians and leaders to acquaint themselves with what New Age is, failing which the danger of their becoming prey to this ideology increases.

Thank you Bro Michael Prabhu for this great contribution to the theological and doctrinal corpus of the Church Teaching. May God bless you and your ministry.

Fr. A. Ritchie Vincent

June 6, 2019

Fr. A. Ritchie Vincent is a priest of the Archdiocese of Madras-Mylapore

XVIII.

RECOMMENDATION

“The time will come when people will not listen to sound doctrine, but will follow their own desires and will collect for themselves more and more teachers who will tell them what they are itching to hear. They will turn away from listening to the truth...” (II Timothy 4:1).

What St Paul foresaw two thousand years ago is happening today. This we see being verified among some of the Catholic faithful and even among religious. In the 1960's the number of Catholic religious women in the U.S. was around 200000. By 2017 this number came down to around 47000. Ann Carey, in her book *Sisters in Crisis, The Tragic Unravelling of Women's Religious Communities* (OSV, 1997) describes in detail what led to this tragic situation. One of the main reasons was that they, especially the leaders, refused to pay heed to the instructions coming from the Pope and the Church and allowed themselves and their communities to be guided by 'American' religious teachers who had only contempt for whatever was coming from 'Rome'. Here we see the blind leading the blind. Hordes of religious sisters walked out of their convents. What happened among the American religious is happening in many places among the faithful too, following false teachers, new teachings, new practices, and subsequently falling away from the Catholic faith.

Those who really love the Church cannot remain mute spectators of what is happening to the Church.

I am happy that **Mr. Michael Prabhu** has taken up the challenge. I know Michael for the last fifteen years and we have often been corresponding, and sometimes meeting and exchanging our views. He is a crusader for the purity of Catholic teaching. With his deep conviction and vast knowledge he has in his book **Medications and Meditations in the New Age** exposed the true nature of the new fads and trends masquerading as effective remedies for all the ills of the modern man, and as effective steps for a happier and healthier life.

I am happy to recommend his book to all: to the simple that they may not be misled, to the leaders that may not, by mistake, mislead.

(Name of priest and religious order withheld on request)

April 1, 2019

This senior priest was later pressurised by his confrères to ensure that his letter was not published along with his name.

XIX.

Dear Michael,

The New Age Movement does have a connection with Modernism; I would classify it as one of the “fruits” of Modernism to a certain extent. I can offer you this short quote from our former Superior General, Fr. Franz Schmidberger SSPX:

He spoke of the “conscious and determined conspiracy of the forces of Gnosticism, Theosophy, and Esotericism, headed by the Illuminati and the Freemasons, and allied with Marxist infiltration. The Satanic movement “New Age” and the theology of liberation are their most recent products.

‘God is Green’ is the meaningful title of the brochure which accompanies the New Age calendar of Ecological Lent published by the Swiss bishops! Further on one reads, ‘All of us, sons and daughters of Hirwa (the supreme god of the Warali tribe), of the Green God, and of Bhomi, our common mother, the earth, make up together the great family of the faith.’” -Father Franz Schmidberger, Superior General, Society of Saint Pius X, (Letter #36), 12th February 1989

<https://fsspx.asia/en/publications/letters/february-1989-superior-generals-letter-36-2250>

(Name of priest withheld on request)

May 8, 2019

Contribution from a priest of the Society of St. Pius X. He prefers not to be named.

A.

Introduction

Personally speaking...

Being an eclectic blend of many ancient and modern cults, sects, religions and philosophies, the **New Age Movement (NAM)** has no single human founder, visible structure, or central organization. However New Age journals abound.

Some popular English language New Age publications are *Alternative Medicine Magazine, Awakenings, Awareness, Body Mind Spirit, Conscious Lifestyle, Conscious Shift, East West, Gnosis, Herb Quarterly, Inner Realm, Life Connection, Light of Consciousness, Natural Life News, New Age Journal, New Dawn, New Spirit Journal, Noetic Sciences, Omega, Oracle 20/20, Parabola, ROC Metaphysical, Sedona Conscious Magazine (SCM), The Edge: Holistic Living, The Inner Light Gazette, The Journey: A Mind, Body and Soul Connection, True Blue Spirit, Truly Alive, Wisdom, Yoga Journal, Zodi Habit*, etc.

They are chock full of advertisements and information on the occult and the paranormal, the esoteric and the bizarre.

In India, there is the monthly *Life Positive* <https://www.lifepositive.com/> which is available in hard copy as well as digitally, in English and in Hindi. Its editor-in-chief Suma Varughese is from a Christian background and some of the contributors of articles -- as well as New Agers featured in *Life Positive* - are Catholics (including a few Indian nuns and priests).

Online, there's *New Age Wellness World*, "India's No. 1 Wellness Network of Independent Wellness Centres", <http://www.newagewellnessworld.com/>.

There is no treatise on the New Age Movement (NAM) authored by an Indian Catholic that I know of. This is the first.

The manuscript for this book was typed (as is all of my work) using one finger.

And the one eye in which I have vision.

Because of space constraints, only a miniscule amount of the available "evidence" is presented in each chapter.

Exposing the New Age transcends Christian doctrinal affiliations, but although there have been scores of books published internationally since the early 1980s by Protestant Christians, only a few have been authored by Catholics. To be fair, and to emphasize their significance, it must be said that most of these Catholic writers have been religious and priests.

Indian Catholic writers on New Age themes have been barely three in number: Vijay Martis of Mumbai (whose articles were carried many years ago in *Charisindia*), the late Errol C. Fernandes (died 2004) of Mumbai (in *Emmanuel*,

his own now defunct quarterly, and *Charisindia*), and this writer (*The Examiner*, the Archdiocesan weekly of Bombay, *The Coastal Observer* which is also defunct, *Shalom Tidings* of Kerala, *Renewal Voice* of Bangalore, *Petrus* of Mumbai and *Streams of Living Water* of the Charismatic Renewal in Kolkata both of which too closed down). *Streams...* also carried a number of brilliant articles on New Age psychology and psychotherapy by Fr. Joseph (Jose) Aymanathil SDB, a Canon Lawyer. But since almost a decade, while New Age has not been a topic for discussion in Catholic magazines, the actual New Age *content* of virtually every Indian Catholic periodical without exception has burgeoned alarmingly and they have all become very unsafe for undiscerning Catholic consumption. It must be placed on record that issues of the *New Covenant* (the now defunct magazine of the U.S. Catholic Charismatic Renewal) published February 1984, June 1989, February 1991, July/August 1991, October 1991, March 1992, September 1995, etc., and *This Rock* (again a U.S. publication, June 1993, November 1997, etc.) have warned Catholics repeatedly about New Age in general, and the Enneagram, Yoga and Centering Prayer among some others, in particular.

However, the Internet provides us with a wealth of Catholic information on the New Age. There is even an excellent blog (“Women of Grace”, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/>) operated by Johnnette Benkovic and Susan Brinkmann from which I will quote extensively in this book. It is virtually dedicated to answering questions related to New Age products, practices and philosophies -- and more -- since 2008. I recommend that my Catholic readers subscribe to it.

During the two-plus decades (including sixteen years on the Internet) of my research on New Age, I have come across publications and pronouncements on generic as well as particular New Age themes by national Theological Commissions and Bishops’ Conferences, and by Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops and even three Popes.

Some examples from the Popes for the time-being, follow (citations of other ecclesiastical authorities will be included in due course in other sections of the book; out of necessity a few repeats of citations as well as of this writer’s comments are included by intention for a couple of reasons, and this writer asks to be excused for them):

“It is not inappropriate to caution those Christians who enthusiastically welcome certain ideas originating in the religious traditions of the Far East- for example, techniques and methods of meditation and ascetical practice. In some quarters these have become fashionable, and are accepted rather uncritically. First one should know one’s own spiritual heritage well and consider whether it is right to set it aside lightly. Here we need to recall, if only in passing, the

brief but important document of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith 'On certain aspects of Christian Meditation' (10/15/1989). Here we find a clear answer to the question 'whether and how [Christian prayer] can be enriched by methods of meditation originating in different religions and cultures' (n.3). A separate issue is the return of ancient gnostic ideas under the guise of the so-called **New Age**. We cannot delude ourselves that this will lead toward a renewal of religion. It is only a new way of practicing Gnosticism – that attitude of the spirit that, in the name of a profound knowledge of God, results in distorting His Word and replacing it with purely human words. Gnosticism never completely abandoned the realm of Christianity. Instead, it has always existed side by side with Christianity, sometimes taking the shape of a philosophical movement, but more often assuming the characteristics of a religion or para-religion in distinct, if not declared, conflict with all that is essentially Christian." –**Pope John Paul II** in his book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 1994

(http://www.excerptsofinri.com/printable/crossing_the_threshold_ofhope-popejpii.pdf)

"**Pope John XXIII**, in the apostolic constitution *Humanae Salutis* (1961), with which he convoked the II Vatican Council, began saying: 'The Church witnesses a crisis today taking place in society. While humanity turns towards a **new age**, tasks of immense gravity and breadth await the Church, as in the most tragic periods of history. Efforts must be made to confront the modern world with the vivifying and lasting energies of the Gospel.' Pope John XXIII was able to prophesy **the 'New Age,'** postmodernity, visible atheism, in which we are submerged."

(*The Church Is Always in Combat against the Beast*, 4 June 2006, <https://zenit.org/articles/kiko-arguello-s-address-at-vigil/>)

"When he was Cardinal Ratzinger, **Pope Benedict XVI** defined **the New Age** concisely by describing it as 'a multiple and changing phenomenon'."

(<http://www.argent-technology.com/Catholic/leaflets/Hidden%20dangers%20New%20Age.pdf>)

And those are only three citations of these three Popes on the New Age Movement. More follow later.

But many of us have not even heard of the term "New Age" even though it has pervaded every aspect of Catholic life, including our schools, parishes, our "retreat houses, seminaries and institutes of formation for religious" (#1.4), to cite the 3 February 2003 Vatican Document, *Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life, A Christian Reflection on the 'New Age'* (<http://www.vatican>

va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_doc_20030203_new-age_en.html), hereinafter called "JCBWL".

The Hindu, a leading daily Indian newspaper reporting just two days later, 5 February 2003, on what they described as "an unusually frank Church document," said that it was "intended to help churchmen respond to what the Pope sees as one of the greatest threats to Christianity in the third millennium." A threat that -- by and large -- we are blissfully ignorant of!

The New Age, and all its philosophies and practices, is about a spirituality that is antithetical to Christianity. If it did not pose a spiritual danger to Catholics, the Church would not have issued the fairly lengthy document about its potential threat to the faithful. However, the 2003 Document is not exhaustive for the simple reason that no single study of New Age can be comprehensive, considering its complexity. I have dozens of Christian books on the NAM in my library, all of them not available in bookstores in India, and each of them is unique in its approach to -- and analysis of -- the subject.

This book is an attempt to explain New Age themes for Catholics in particular, and hence this writer will cite Church publications and Catholic experts extensively. It is important for the reader to understand that these individuals think and speak with the mind of the Church (*sentire cum ecclesia*). A very few of the cited Catholic authors are partially incorrect in their conclusions on the safe use of just a couple of New Age therapies (medications, mostly) while they are in full agreement with other writers on the same as well as other issues, but those differences of opinion are not included here; (their "errors" are examined and commented on in the respective files at this ministry's website (www.ephesians-511.net) considering that everyone, not excluding this writer, is in the learning process when it comes to New Age.

The criticisms of Christian experts included in this book are not exhaustive but only representative. If one desires to read even more, I suggest that one visit this ministry's website, because the genuine Catholic inquirer will persevere in his/her endeavour to learn the truth about New Age; and one objective of this book is to point him/her in the right direction.

I must place on record that I am the only surviving Indian lay Catholic -- the only other individual that I know of is the late Errol C. Fernandes -- to have given talks as well as seminars on the New Age Movement across India.

The two of us delivered a one-day seminar at St. Joseph's Convent, Bandra, Mumbai, on 28 March, 2004. Regional charismatic renewal (CCR) leaders were in attendance; also present was Cyril John, chairman of the National Service Team (NST), New Delhi. Errol succumbed to leukemia barely three months later on June 25, but not before he requested a common friend to send me a

tithe (his first and last to my ministry) as well as his library of books on New Age themes. He and his pioneering work (his articles – especially on vipassana and yoga meditations – were par excellence; check them out at my website) have been forgotten by all those -- many still in some ministry or the other -- who were associated with him in the bringing out of Emmanuel and in his crusade against New Age in his archdiocese.

Seriously, this book will ensure that the same fate does not befall my life's work.

“From: The leader of the Bandra, Mumbai, Charismatic Service Team **Sent:** Saturday, April 17, 2004 7:58 PM

Report on the NEW AGE seminar

The New Age Movement is “one of the greatest threats to Christianity in the 3rd millennium” according to Pope John Paul II. Having recognized the growing trend of the subtle and disastrous influence of New Age and the truth behind the Pope's recent statement, the All Bandra Leaders team over the past few years have been addressing this urgent issue that faces the church today.

A one-day seminar ‘New Age and the Catholic’ was held on March 28th. The 70 members from the various prayer groups in Bandra who attended were mostly core-group members, cell animators and ministry heads.

The two speakers Errol Fernandes of Bandra (who has long been studying and writing on the New Age), and Michael Prabhu from Chennai (who has more recently been conducting an intense research on New Age in the Indian context) expounded this topic in a clear and lucid manner.

Some topics were ‘The principles of New Age’ and its incompatibility with Christianity, ‘Thinking about the way we think’ or becoming more discerning as Christians in the world, etc. Several aspects of New Age such as ‘holistic healing’ techniques, vipassana, yoga and other Eastern meditations etc. were covered. All of the above were explained in the light of church documents – *‘Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life’*, *‘...Some Aspects of Christian Meditation’*, *Ecclesia in Asia* etc.

There were two powerful testimonies, one by a lady who came out of her traumatic involvement with yoga, and another by a couple whose ministry reaches out to people in bondage to New Age philosophies and practices.

The question and answer session handled excellently by Errol and Michael at the end helped to clarify remaining doubts. For the participants it was a clear eye-opener to see how far the New Age in its devious ways has made inroads into the life of normal Christians. The people left with a deeper awareness of New Age and a burden to start speaking out against it, and most importantly, to back it up with intercession having understood that this is spiritual warfare. We were greatly encouraged and supported by the attendance of Luz Maria, the Bombay Service Team chairperson, who also spoke to us.

In closing, Cyril John the N.S.T. chairman addressed the participants and expressed the need to bring out a special issue of Charisindia dedicated to the different aspects of New

Age, and to hold seminars of this kind for leaders in the charismatic renewal on an all-India basis. A follow-up seminar is proposed to be held in July. –R.L.”

The follow-up seminar was held on 4 July 2004. I did not receive an invitation to attend, leave alone speak. Erika Gibello of London, about whom we will read more in due course, was the sole speaker.

Both, the March 28 as well as the July 4 programmes, were not reported either in the Archdiocesan weekly *The Examiner* or in the CCR national monthly, *Charisindia*. No other official CCR seminar on the New Age was ever held thereafter, anywhere in India. Such then, is the uphill battle that one faces in addressing the dangers of New Age in the Indian Church.

Some of the cities in which this writer has been privileged to speak on New Age are Bangalore, Chennai, Goa, Kochi, Kolkata, Mangalore, Mumbai, Nagercoil and Pune. These talks and seminars were delivered to prayer groups, to gatherings called by charismatic service teams and to a group of nuns and priests. They were given from 1997 (Chennai, the first one) to 2018 (Mangalore, the last). Some were for only an hour or two, others covered two or three sessions in a single day, while a couple of them were for two full days. I find it necessary to go into detail on this because there appears to be no one else on the Indian horizon who has the knowledge, the zeal, the courage or the anointing to carry this crusade forward.

A couple of lay persons here and there have attempted to speak on the New Age Movement but they lost momentum almost immediately.

In January 2018, the Dean of Theology of a major seminary gave an excellent presentation to a group of people under the auspices of a regional charismatic service team. It was a full day programme and was attended by around fifty people, most of whom were fairly elderly and should have been acquainted with this subject a long time before that day. The only youth in attendance were those who were involved in the praise and worship ministry. The response was lackluster. Not a single one of the former chairmen (and one chairwoman) of that service team was present. Not their families. Not the family of the incumbent chairman. After all, who is interested in learning about something called the New Age Movement or receiving confirmation that what one encounters on the premises of the local church, parochial house, diocesan retreat centre or school -- or even that some of the philosophies that one has subscribed to and some of the remedies that one has been taking -- are occult? If a responsible Catholic were to attend and learn the truth about New Age, he/she would be challenged to initiate change and speak out prophetically for the good of the Church and the salvation of souls.

In today's Church of Nice, those are indeed great expectations.

At the January 2018 event, the good priest who gave the presentation on New Age could not handle the objections of a member to his having included homoeopathy as a New Age remedy. I have personally heard eminent Catholic preachers touch very briefly on New Age therapies like reiki and Pranic Healing in their talks on the First Commandment and have seen them being stumped by the hostile questions thrown at them by priests in the audience. It is extremely difficult to deliver a seminar on the New Age if one does not have a thorough knowledge of the subject, not just one that is obtained by reading up. To put it differently, one has to be knowledgeable, called and anointed because in confronting the New Age, one is in direct conflict with the kingdom of darkness.

Incidentally, I have found the same disinterest among “charismatics” as well as the general Catholic population for the subject of Catholic apologetics (except possibly when the speaker is a big name from overseas; even then, the enthusiasm has not been long-lasting). Once again, I happen to be the sole lay Indian Catholic who has delivered talks and seminars on Catholic apologetics. If the theme is pre-announced (as it always is), the number of people in attendance was always abysmally low. Compare that with the crowds that throng to deliverance and healing sessions even when the speaker is quite “Protestant” and has little or no support from the hierarchical Church!

Erika Gibello (an Austrian residing in London) is, to the best of my knowledge, the only Catholic from outside India to have given talks and seminars on the New Age in this country. She was assistant to the late exorcist Fr. Rufus Pereira of Bombay and a former resident of Mumbai. She has written a book on the New Age in German. It has been translated into Russian. In her book, I understand that Erika has cited some of my work (although I do not have the details.)

She is an expert on New Religious Movements (NRMs) and knowledgeable on “Neo-Hindu religious movements”, and has served as secretary of the International Association of Exorcists (AIE) and the International Association for Deliverance (IAD) in Rome. She is, in her own words, “a qualified pharmacist, with a fully qualified studium in Homoeopathy.” She certifies that homoeopathy is both occult as well as New Age.

Now and then I may find it necessary and helpful to appeal to other sources -- secular or even New Age -- in order to present information or to emphasize a point in this book, but it will be my endeavour to keep that to a minimum.

I will certainly include my own observations on some New Age themes that are examined, as in the case of the Conybio products, the Bio Disc, Interplay, Siddha medicine and Unani medicine, and Pranic Healing for example, which

were extensively and uniquely -- on some of them no other authoritative Christian studies exist -- researched by me, but my years of experience in this ministry has been that many Indian Catholics tend to dismiss my conclusions -- especially on ayurvedic medicine, homoeopathy, the martial arts and yoga -- as narrow-minded or alarmist.

However, the many unsolicited testimonials and encomiums -- not a few from eminent international authors, writers, apostolates and speakers on the New Age (mostly lay persons but also including many priests) -- received this by writer, more than compensate for the criticisms and condemnations received from those who refuse to acknowledge the truth.

If, because of limitations of space in this book, my objections -- or my citations of other individuals -- against a particular New Age discipline appear insufficient and not conclusive enough for the reader, s/he must co-relate those informations with my arguments on other disciplines of the same genre, because if a particular criticism applies to one, it equally applies to all others in the same category, family or group.

A Document on the New Age from the Vatican. JCBWL. 3 February 2003

The underlying philosophies of all New Age medications and meditations are part of the religious traditions of major pre-Christian religions. It is enough for most Christian writers on the New Age to note that if the philosophies behind these practices, therapies and remedies, meditation systems (or products) originate in either ancient China (Taoism) or ancient India (Hinduism), the said practices, therapies, and meditations can be considered as inimical to Christianity.

Some of them can be traced back to Confucianism, Buddhism and even to nature religions.

In the case of major world religions like Hinduism and Buddhism, it would not only be insensitive and politically incorrect for Rome to openly condemn those medicine or meditation systems as spiritually dangerous for the faithful, but such declarations could also pose a potential threat from religious fundamentalists to Catholics where they are in a minority.

Hence the Document must be studied with understanding, and in the right spirit, despite its total rejection (see **THEOLOGIAN'S LAMBAST THE VATICAN DOCUMENT ON THE NEW AGE** at my website) by its detractors, mostly liberal theologians, many of whom had also condemned two other previous landmark Documents *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church On Some Aspects of Christian Meditation (or Oratoris Formas, 15 October 1989)* and *Dominus Iesus (On the Unicity of Jesus Christ, 6 August 2000)*.

Orationis Formas, dealing exclusively with the subject of Eastern or oriental meditations and the Christian response to them, may be considered an invaluable precursor to the 2003 JCBWL Document.

JCBWL leaves no room for ambiguity as to what constitutes New Age and how New Age paradigms may be identified.

The Document does not seek to research the origins and applications of the many New Age fads that it names and the hundreds of others that it doesn't. A more detailed study would have resulted in a voluminous and unreadable Document which is already fairly lengthy and tiresome to the uninitiated. However, it is incumbent on the Christian to investigate suspected New Age phenomena, keeping in mind that if the particular practice finds mention by name in the Document or if its philosophical underpinnings are described therein, it is only because the Church recognizes in them "some elements of New Age religiosity" (#4), meaning that there is a *spiritual* dimension to their origin and usage. Put simply, the said practices would not have been addressed by Rome in a Document unless they constitute a *spiritual* danger to Catholics.

Interestingly, a favourite New Age catch-word is "spiritual". New Agers reject religion for spirituality. Yoga meditation for instance is often posited as being areligious – "not influenced by or practising religion" -- and is touted as a "spiritual" discipline which, its protagonists argue, is therefore not antithetical to Christianity but adaptable to it.

However, when Catholics come across a discipline that is described as "spiritual", a red flag must immediately go up.

Christianity cannot and does not envisage the possibility of syncretism like Hinduism, for instance, does.

The spiritual dangers with New Age practices

This book is therefore about the *spiritual* dangers of selected New Age practices and products, including some which seem innocuous and are commonly believed to be harmless, beneficial -- or even scientific -- but, in reality, are none of those.

The Church is concerned about the "prospect of (Catholics) committing themselves unknowingly to another religion" (JCBWL #6.2) through New Age, some systems of which "verge, at times, towards the diabolic" (JCBWL #2.2.3). New Age in all of its manifestations violates the biblical First Commandment of God, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me... Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them" (Exodus 20:3, 5).

"The NAM offers a new spirituality. In fact, it is all about spiritual transformation.

Lucifer-worshipper and leading New Ager David Spangler, “possibly the most authoritative spokesperson for the New Age movement internationally”, admits that spirituality and transformation are the goals of NAM.”

(‘Images of New Age’ in *Reimagination of the World, A Critique of the New Age, Science, and Popular Culture: The Chinook Summer Conferences of David Spangler and William Irwin Thompson*, July 1988 and 1989; Bear & Company Publishing, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1991, pp. 2933. Cited in *A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*. Irish Theological Commission, 1994, <https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

There is a frightening similarity between the biblical account in Genesis 3:4, 5 (*the Lie of the Serpent*) and some of the fundamental beliefs/ideologies of the NAM ... and of the Hindu religion! In due course, we shall see how this is so.

“The potential dangers include misdiagnosis, mistreatment, and occultic influences.”

(*Holistic Health*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-30/>)

This book does not seek to judge or condemn people of other religious persuasions for engaging in alternative therapies or oriental meditations, or who may be using the products that are critiqued herein, according to their beliefs or choices; nor does it judge or condemn Catholics who may be medicating and meditating the New Age way; but it is hoped that all readers who are ignorantly involved in New Age programmes will find this book useful in helping them to take an informed decision to abjure the use of these occult spiritual practices.

The New Age categories that will be examined in this book

Mainstream New Age can be broadly classified into alternative or complementary medicines, eastern or oriental meditations, psycho-spiritual counseling techniques, and “personality-typing” devices. However, there are several practices which do not fit neatly into any of those categories. Only a few of them can be examined in this Compendium (they are simply too many) because of space constraints. You will find them in the “Miscellaneous” section of the book. But, most issues touched upon in this book concern New Age motifs that are extant, to a greater or lesser extent, in the Indian Church, and practised or propagated by Catholics (laity, religious brothers and nuns, priests) and even encouraged by bishops whom I have either corresponded with or whom I have come to learn about through the media.

But they “work”!

Read the pages “Why Does Alternative Medicine Seem to Work?” in Section E.

Sure, they sometimes do!

Although they are silent on their potential physical and mental dangers, practitioners will obviously insist that their meditations are beneficial for biological (physical) and emotional (mental) health and that their medications heal. And that exactly is one of the reasons why Christians must oppose and expose them.

Some diseases are psychosomatic; some practices -- such as yoga, which is a physical-mental-spiritual system whose objective is a monistic union with the Brahman -- and treatments really are, too.

Christian scholars agree that the New Age is not ‘new’; it is old hat, new wine in the proverbial old bottle -- even as old as the book of Genesis -- repackaged for modern times.

The twentieth century witnessed the emergence of the Pentecostal and charismatic movements with accompanying phenomena. As others began to imbibe New Age philosophies and indulge in New Age practices, Satan did not lag far behind in ensuring that his followers could confirm the validity of their own occult experiences in a similar way.

If New Age practices did not appear to “work”, I would not have to write this book; I would just ignore them, and so would the Church and her pastors. But in their usage, one often encounters tangible “results”. The writings of some founders and proponents of these arts often guarantee such “evidence” of their genuinity, and Catholic researchers and the testimonies of former New Agers offer evidence that many practices are accompanied by paranormal phenomena that include displays of un-natural physical power, clairvoyance (seeing the future), healing from a distance, altered states of consciousness, the experience of vibrations and the sensations of heat and light in the body, out-of-body experiences, bi-location, levitation, and much more.

These are spiritual counterfeits of the genuine Christian mystical or healing experience as the lives of hundreds of Catholic saints and many routine miracles would testify. Satan, we know, masquerades as an angel of light (cf. 2 Corinthians 11:14) Now, it is all too convenient to see Satan’s hand in everything until one realizes that there is no neutral power in the spiritual realm. If a non-natural (scientifically unexplainable) phenomenal experience is not of God, Christians must understand that it is of His -- and our -- mortal enemy.

Christian writers label all New Age practices and treatments as “esoteric” or “occult”. They concern the dark side of the spiritual world and that should

suffice for Catholics to distance themselves from them and avoid all of them like the plague.

And regarding the reported physical or mental “benefits” of some New Age practices, I would like to cite St. Paul:

“Avoid profane and silly myths. Train yourself for devotion, for while physical training is of limited value, devotion is valuable in every respect since it holds a promise of life both for the present and for the future.” (1 Timothy 4:7, 8)

Man is a tri-partite being – spirit, soul and body (Genesis 2:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:23), and when we treat the impermanent body and mind with medications and meditations, we should take great care to ensure that our spirit and soul are not endangered.

Further, all healing does not come from God. If there is some healing power or “force” or “energy” that cannot be explained by empirical science and cannot be attributed to God, it can only be a power that derives from the Enemy.

For further reading:

- *Can Satan Heal?* By Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1198>.

But I’m not worshipping other gods!

“Q: I had no idea that (one particular practice or therapy) had anything to do with another religion. I can’t see why it would be bad if I am not worshipping another god by doing this. God made us a miraculous body and why is using this therapy contrary to what he may have done for us. The body works as a whole, created by God. So, the parts relate to one another. That is not evil or weird ‘energy’, just the way the body is made. I can’t understand this being contrary to the Christian Faith as I can with Yoga. I guess that if you attributed the healing to yourself and not God or the way he made the body that would be a danger. I see that as a problem within the person themselves not with the exercises or practices. A person could think the same when going to the gym and “worshipping” all the machines and not seeing the glory in the way God made the body and how it works and attributing their health and fitness to themselves and the machines.

A: These are some of the most common questions I receive about the New Age. If a person is not deliberately worshipping other gods by practicing things such as alternative healing or yoga, is it still wrong to participate in them?

“1. I had no idea that (this particular practice or therapy) had anything to do with another religion.

All alternative healing methods that are based on the existence of a universal life force are based in pantheism, a non-Christian belief system that God is

an energy force that permeates all of creation. Major religions based on this concept include Taoism and Hinduism.

“2. God made us a miraculous body and why is using this therapy contrary to what he may have done for us?”

It is correct that God made us a miraculous body, but a body infused with a non-existent life force energy that can be manipulated through pressure points is not the body He created for us. Science has never been able to substantiate the existence of this so-called life force energy and considers any alternative healing method based upon this principle to be junk science.

It is also important to note that the Church considers any therapeutic practice that is not based on sound scientific research to be a superstitious practice (CCC 2110-2111).

“3. I am not sure why (certain “exercises”) would be against Faith or contrary to God’s plan for us.

The link between these exercises and the New Age comes through their ancient philosophies and modern founders who drew their ideas from occult-based fitness regimes rather than from Christ and the way God created our bodies to function.

The greatest danger in some of the more innocuous programmes are the instructors, many of whom are deeply immersed in the New Age and pass on these beliefs in their classes.

“4. I can’t see why it would be bad if I am not worshipping another god by doing this.

If only it could be so simple!

Unfortunately, it isn’t, and discerning Christians needs to educate themselves about the many subtle dangers that are hidden in what might seem to be innocent participation in these modalities.

For instance, even though you may not be consciously worshiping a false god (like an alleged universal life force) when you participate in one of these practices, you are definitely putting your faith in them to heal you or improve your fitness – otherwise you wouldn’t be resorting to them.

“This is why it’s important to remember that whenever we divinize powers that are not sourced in God, such as when we rely on an alleged universal life force to heal us or make us more fit, we are guilty of the sin of idolatry (CCC 2113).

We must also remember that we share responsibility for sins committed by others when we cooperate in them (CCC 1868) such as by paying for these classes/services, which allows them to continue and even proliferate.

Granted, unintentional ignorance can diminish the seriousness of these offenses (CCC 1860) but we have a responsibility to both learn about our faith and put it into proper practice.

“Those who believe they can participate without being affected by the non-Christian beliefs should examine their conscience to be sure they are not basing this assumption on the subjective (how we feel about something) rather than objective realities (science, Church teaching, etc.). Remember, wanting to determine what is right and wrong for ourselves rather than according to God’s law is what banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and left us all stained with original sin.

“Especially in regard to yoga, I can’t tell you how many people say they’re “just doing the exercises” and continue on with their yoga classes – even after they learn that every posture and breathing module is designed to culminate in a union with the Brahman! As long as they’re not worshiping this deity, what’s the problem, they ask?

Whenever I hear this, I can’t help but think of all the martyrs throughout the history of our Church who were willing to die rather than even *simulate* worship to a foreign god!

The bottom line is that these practices are a constant source of temptation that can easily lead someone of weak faith into sin. But even if it doesn’t lead to outright sin, there are a host of negative spiritual effects that can occur, depending on what the instructor may be dabbling in and bringing into his/her class.”

(But I’m not worshiping other gods! Susan Brinkmann, <http://womenofgrace.com/newage/?p=29#more-29>)

Note: This link is not opening. The 21 January 2010 blog post was apparently pulled by Women of Grace after this ministry pointed out a couple of errors in it. I have reproduced the article -- an excellent one -- here after correcting the errors.

Broadly determining how one can identify New Age medications and meditations

There are some simple factors that can guide even a novice in identifying whether something is New Age or not:

- The discipline is presented as “spiritual” but not “religious”
- The terminology (e.g. affirmations, altered state/s of consciousness or ASCs, at-one-ment, attunement, aura, chakra/s, cosmic energy, w/holistic, w/holism, harmony, harmonic convergence, interconnectedness, intuition, life force, oneness, prana, meridians, subtle body, synergy, vibration/s,

visualization, vital body, universal energy, wellness, yin-yang -- or one of their many equivalents/permutations and combinations) used in the promotion of a programme or therapy or product.

- The religious philosophies and backgrounds of their founders and promoters
- The compatibility of the particular programme or therapy or product with other established New Age practices.

If one is hoping to come across each and every New Age practice by name in the JCBWL Document, or in this Compendium for that matter, one will be disappointed. There are hundreds of them. We may classify a particular product, remedy, therapy, complementary medicine, psycho-spiritual technique, or meditation as New Age if it fulfils any one or more of the criteria that are determined as New Age by the Document, or by other Christian writers on New Age themes, or by running a check against the four general guidelines listed above.

To elaborate further, all eastern meditations have common anti-Christian or negative elements that are described in the two Vatican Documents (*JCBWL, and Orationis Formas*

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19891015_meditazione-cristiana_en.html).

So, if yoga, Zen Buddhism and Transcendental Meditation are named in a Document, or in the report of a Theological Commission – but Vipassana meditation or Mindfulness Meditation, two Buddhism-influenced systems are not – it does not follow that Vipassana and Mindfulness are not New Age.

Similarly, acupuncture and homoeopathy are among several complementary therapies called out in JCBWL while acupressure, pranic healing, reiki (and a few hundred more) are not; but that does not mean that those that are omitted are not New Age. The JCBWL Document provides us with enough information for us to be able to identify a system as New Age. If the criteria satisfy the identification of let us say acupuncture or homeopathy as New Age, the same will apply to acupressure, pranic healing, reiki, etc. all of which have much commonality with one another.

Since the different complementary/alternative therapies often have common New Age or esoteric underpinnings, the information about a particular therapy in which I have cited explanatory Catholic resources will help to illuminate some other area where the criticism may not be as detailed.

Why did the Church not speak out against New Age before the 3 February 2003 Document on the New Age Movement?

But She did! A number of times. We just weren't paying attention.

I have already pointed out the existence of *Orationis Formas*, a Document that is now almost thirty years old! When studying it, we come to know what Christian meditation is *not*. Even more, it names three oriental systems – Transcendental Meditation, Yoga, and Zen (Endnotes 1).

Moreover, common awareness of New Age only arose in Christian circles in the late 1980s and beyond.

It admittedly did not use the term “New Age” which was not yet employed at that time in Catholic circles but it was directed against so-called prayer techniques and Eastern methods of meditation which are universally acknowledged as “New Age”.

1. What the Church has said

Before JCBWL

During the Pontificate of **Pope John Paul II**:

“In response to the concern expressed by Episcopal Conferences throughout the world,” a questionnaire was dispatched by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity to all Episcopal Conferences in 1984.

An initial Provisional Report (from that Secretariat, the Secretariat for Non-Christians, the Secretariat for Non-Believers, and the Pontifical Council for Culture) on sects, cults, and new *religious movements* (NRMs) was issued in May 1986.”

(<http://www.ewtn.com/library/NEWAGE/VATREPRT.TXT>).

(Also <http://www.spiritual-wholeness.org/churchte/sectnrms/sectnrms.htm>* and *Sects and New Religious Movements: An Anthology of Texts from the Catholic Church 1986-1994* <https://www.amazon.in/Sects-New-Religious-Movements-Anthology/dp/1574550233>)

*[**Note:** A few of the older links which were retrieved years ago are not opening presently. In rare cases, the only available online information is to be found at this ministry's website. Much of the information presented/cited in this book is sourced from my archives and collated for the reader of this book.]

“In May of 1986 the Vatican published a lengthy document on sects, cults, and *new religious movements* (NRMs, for short), thereby demonstrating that the highest levels of authority in the Catholic Church are concerned about the impact these groups are having on the faithful, especially on young adults. The fact that the document was issued by several Vatican Secretariats (those for Promoting Christian Unity and for Non-Believers) and Pontifical Councils (those for Inter-Religious Dialogue and Culture) indicates that the increasing

activities of numerous religious and spiritual groups are considered to be an important issue that needs to be addressed."

(Fr. John A. Saliba S.J, 1992, <http://cdn.theologicalstudies.net/53/53.1/53.1.1.pdf>)

Before New Age was fully identified and individualised, it often appeared in Church documents and pronouncements as "*new religious movements*" as noted above. (The problems of the New Religious Movements or NRMs, and the New Age Movement or NAM are interrelated but this essay will concern itself only with the latter and not the former. In one sense, the New Age Movement is an NRM.) For instance:

"The **new religious movements** promise people wisdom, peace, harmony, and self-realization. Our presentation of Christianity should be that of good news, of divine wisdom, of unity and harmony with God and all creation, of happiness which is the earthly preparation for heavenly bliss, and of that peace which the world cannot give (cf. John 14:27) ... With reference to Christianity we can distinguish new movements coming from the Protestant reform, sects with Christian roots but with considerable doctrinal differences, movements derived from other religions, and movements stemming from humanitarian or so-called 'human potential' backgrounds (such as **New Age** and religious therapeutic groups), or from 'divine potential' movements found particularly in Eastern religious traditions. Different are NRMs which are born through contact between universal religions and primal religious cultures."

(*Challenge of the Sects and NRMs*, Cardinal Francis Arinze, President, Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, April 1991, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/newage/arinnewm.txt>)

The May 1986 Document on NRMs was described by Fr. Remi Hoekman, O.P. as "a first step in the process of gathering information leading to further study", (<http://cdn.theologicalstudies.net/53/53.1/53.1.1.pdf>), and so it turned out to be.

Under **John Paul II**, at the Cardinals' Fourth Extraordinary Consistory of April 1991 (<https://books.google.co.in/books?isbn=041527754X>), one session was dedicated to the NRMs; its title was *The Proclamation of Christ, the Only Savior, and the Challenge of the Sects*.

"The Vatican, in a letter approved by **Pope John Paul II**, warned Christians ... against spiritual dangers deriving from Eastern methods of contemplative meditation used in yoga and Zen Buddhism... The warnings were contained in a 25-page paper, titled 'Letter to the *Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of Christian Meditation*,' issued by the Vatican Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith with the full approval of the pope."

(14 December 1989, <https://www.upi.com/Archives/1989/12/14/Vatican-chanting-Ommmm-may-cause-moral-deviations/4021629614800/>)

The above-referred Document '*Letter to the Bishops...*,' or *Orationis Formas*, was signed by **Cardinal Ratzinger**, (later **Pope Benedict XVI**), and issued 'with the full approval' of Pope John Paul II.

"'We are witnessing,' the Holy Father (**John Paul II**) said recently, 'a furious search for meaning in our lives, the need for an inner life and desire to learn new ways and methods of meditation and prayer ... In secularized societies, the spiritual dimension of life is often like looking for an antidote to dehumanization.' (Redemptoris Missio, 38) This desperate search for meaning in our world today to which the Pope refers takes many forms. One of these is the '**New Age Movement**.'" (*Pastoral Instruction on New Age*, Archbishop Edward Anthony McCarthy of Miami, November 1991, <http://es.catholic.net/catequistasyevangelizadores/90/1915/articulo.php?id=32065>)

This is the very first time that I find the term "**New Age Movement**" used by a high-ranking Church prelate. 1991. It becomes increasingly popular thereafter.

It is next used by Pope John Paul II in 1993 (10 years ahead of JCBWL) in an official address to the US Bishops:

"It is not an exaggeration to say that man's relationship to God and the demand for a religious 'experience' are the crux of a profound crisis affecting the human spirit. While the secularization of many aspects of life continues, there is a new quest for 'spirituality' as evidenced in the appearance of many religious and healing movements which look to respond to the crisis of values in Western society. This stirring of the homo religiosus produces some positive and constructive results, such as the search for new meaning in life, a new ecological sensitivity, and the desire to go beyond a cold, rationalistic religiosity... this religious re-awakening includes some very ambiguous elements which are incompatible with the Christian faith. Many of you have written Pastoral Letters on the problems presented by pseudo-religious movements and sects, including the so-called '**New Age Movement**'. New Age ideas sometimes find their way into preaching, catechesis, workshops and retreats, and thus influence even practising Catholics, who perhaps are unaware of the incompatibility of those ideas with the Church's faith. In their syncretistic and immanent outlook, these parareligious movements pay little heed to Revelation, and instead try to come to God through knowledge and experience based on elements borrowed from Eastern spirituality or from psychological techniques. They tend to relativize religious doctrine, in favour of a vague world-view expressed as a system of myths and symbols dressed in religious language. Moreover, they often propose a pantheistic concept of God which is incompatible with Sacred Scripture and Christian Tradition. They replace personal responsibility to God

for our actions with a sense of duty to the cosmos, thus overturning the true concept of sin and the need for redemption through Christ.”

(*Address to the U.S. bishops during their ad limina visit*, Pope John Paul II, 28 May 1993, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/1993/may/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19930528_iowa-ad-limina_en.html)

“#47. With complete clarity, at the inauguration of the IV General Conference of the Latin American bishops in Santo Domingo, **John Paul II** told us: ‘After the example of the Good Shepherd, you must pasture the flock that has been entrusted to you and defend it from ravenous wolves. The cause of division and dissension in your ecclesial communities is – as you well know – the sects and the ‘pseudo-spiritual’ movements of which the Document of Puebla speaks (n. 628), whose expression and aggressiveness must be confronted.’” –John Paul II, *Inaugural Discourse of the IV General Conference of Latin America: Jesus Christ Yesterday, Today, and Forever*, n. 12, in Santo Domingo, 1992.

“#48. The Pope’s reference to ‘pseudo-spiritual’ movements, distinct from the sects, immediately brings to mind the long list of projects springing from ‘**New Age**’s’ ideological and religious background that we have considered in this letter. The responsibility to act incisively in the face of this multiform problem in our evangelizing work falls directly on each one of us.

Everywhere we notice the multiplication of bookstores, stores, courses and workshops, spiritual retreats, films, and television programs that promote the ideas and values of ‘**New Age**’. Its ideas, awareness campaigns, and spirituality appear with increasing frequency in our children’s classrooms and even in the preaching and religious teaching of Catholic institutions. Addressing this, John Paul II clearly warned a group of bishops not too long ago: *New Age ideas often open up a way for themselves in preaching, catechesis, congresses, and retreats, and thus come to influence even practicing Catholics who may not be aware of the incompatibility of those ideas with the faith of the Church.* –Address to the bishops of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska, U.S.A. during their *ad limina* visit, 28 May 1993, in *L’Osservatore Romano*.”

(*A Call to Vigilance, Pastoral Instruction on New Age*, Archbishop [later Cardinal] Norberto Rivera Carrera, 7 January 1996 <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/acall.htm>)

“Meanwhile, many in the West have embraced **New Age** beliefs, described by **Cardinal Ratzinger** as an anti-rationalist manifestation of the ‘everything is relative’ attitude. **New Age** followers seek a return to the mystery of the whole and the infinite, through ‘inebriating music, rhythm, dance, frenetic lights and dark shadows, and in the human mass,’ he said. ‘The gods return. They have become more believable than God’ to the New Agers, he said. Inevitably, Christianity is seen as a ‘spiritual imperialism’ that must be thrown off. The

cardinal said the much-reformed Catholic liturgy is especially vulnerable to **New Age** ideas today. Because some Catholics are weary of the pure, spoken liturgy, they seek what is 'inebriating and ecstatic.' 'I admit that I am exaggerating,' he said. 'But the tendencies are there.' Cardinal Ratzinger ... sees strong opposition to the gospel in the world; he calls it a miracle that the Christian faith survives in the current cultural situation."

(The New Danger, Ratzinger says, is Relativism, John Thavis, National Catholic Reporter, 18 October 1996,

<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+new+danger,+Ratzinger+says,+is+relativism%3A+when+Cardinal...-a018791240>)

"The activity of the sects seems to be reaching alarming proportions in the entire American hemisphere, so much so that many Catholics are leaving the Church to enter sects or follow the path of a syncretic current commonly called '**New Age**'...

The '**New Age**' phenomenon ... is negatively affecting the religious identity of America, and more specifically the Christian and Catholic faith. This movement is a 'contender' whose features cannot be seen clearly, since it cannot be placed in a defined category of a sect or a group, but is rather a way of thinking which spreads as an intellectual and spiritual current, silently leaving its mark on culture and many of its expressions. There are many suggestions regarding how to respond to the challenge posed by the religious movements, sects and other currents such as 'New Age'. In the IV General Conference of the Latin American Bishops, a series of specific measures were proposed which, in a certain way, have already begun to be put into practice in various parts of the hemisphere... An effective instrument in overcoming these challenges is the collaboration of bishops among themselves (at the level of bishops' conferences and regional meetings of metropolitan archbishops with their respective suffragan bishops) so as to develop an organic pastoral plan on this subject, which can have concrete results in an effective joint-action." -Synod of American Bishops under **Pope John Paul II**

(Jan P. Cardinal Schotte, C.I.C.M., General Secretary, 1997,

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_01091997_usa-instrlabor_en.html)

"What have the pastors of the Church taught us regarding how we should deal with **New Age**?

Pope John Paul II and the other pastors of the Church ask us to appreciate and promote the valid insights and concerns of New Age, since these are also shared by the Catholic Christian faith community. At the same time they also ask us to become knowledgeable about the errors in New Age teachings, to

educate our fellow Christian about these errors and to form them in the correct understanding and practice of Christian faith and morals.”

(*Primer on New Age*, Philippines Bishops' Conference, 8 January 2003, <http://cbcponline.net/primer-on-new-age/>) ...

After JCBWL

“As the Synod Fathers made clear, ‘man cannot live without hope: life would become meaningless and unbearable’. Often those in need of hope believe that they can find peace in fleeting and insubstantial things... In this way, hope, restricted to this world and closed to transcendence, is identified, for example, with the paradise promised by science or technology, with various forms of Messianism, with a hedonistic natural felicity brought about by consumerism, or with the imaginary and artificial euphoria produced by drugs, with certain forms of millenarianism, with the attraction of oriental philosophies, with the quest for forms of esoteric spirituality and with the different currents of the **New Age** movement. All these, however, show themselves profoundly illusory and incapable of satisfying that yearning for happiness which the human heart continues to harbour.” –**Pope John Paul II**

(*Ecclesia in Europe*, 28 June 2003,.

http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/6958%26eng%3Dy.html?refresh_ce)

February 2004 saw the holding of an International Theological Video Conference in Rome organized by the Congregation for Clergy on the topic “The Church, **New Age** and Sects”.

(27 February 2004, <http://www.clerus.net/clerus/dati/2004-02/28-13/01CNSIn.html>).

At this Conference, one sees the focus and emphasis shift from “**New Religious Movements**” to “**New Age**”.

In May 2004, there was the publishing of an anthology of texts, which last – along with the 2003 Provisional Report on the New Age – were cited in a Document released by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants. “#48. A particular danger to the faith comes from today’s religious pluralism, in the sense of relativism and syncretism in religious matters. To combat this danger it is necessary to prepare new pastoral initiatives that are capable of confronting this phenomenon which, together with the proliferation of sects⁵³, is one of the most serious pastoral problems of today.”

^{note 53}Cf. 1991 Message: *L’Osservatore Romano* 15 August 1990, p. 5; Secretariats for Christian Unity, for Non-Christians and for Non-Believers and Pontifical Council for Culture (eds.), *The Phenomenon of Sects and New Religious Movements: a Pastoral Challenge*, Vatican City 1986; and *Sects and New Religious Movements: Texts of the Catholic Church* (1986-1994) (by the Work Group for New Religious Movements), Vatican City 1995. Regarding “**New Age**”, cf. Pontifical Councils

for Culture and for Interreligious Dialogue, *Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life. A Christian Reflection on the "New Age"*, Vatican City 2003.

(*Erga migrantes caritas Christi*, 3 May 2004,

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/documents/rc_pc_migrants_doc_20040514_erga-migrantes-caritas-christi_en.html).

The then Bishop of Vasai and Chairman of the Doctrinal Commission of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, Thomas Dabre, participated in a **Seminar on the New Age**, 14-16 June 2004, at the Vatican. Prior to his leaving for the Seminar and later presenting a paper on the New Age in Bonn, Germany, on his return journey, I assisted the Bishop with information on New Age for which he later wrote me, expressing his gratitude.

"Cardinal Ratzinger distinguishes two main forms of religion. On the one hand, there is a kind of mysticism in which one seeks to merge into or become identical with everything, in an all-embracing, impersonal unity. Many Eastern religions and the **New Age** movement are religions of that sort. On the other hand, there is "a personal understanding of God," in which one is united in love with a personal God and yet remains distinct from him. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are examples of the latter kind of religion."

(October 2004, http://www.ignatiusinsight.com/features/cardratzinger_tt_oct04.asp)

"Sadly, there are those who seek the solution to their problems in religious practices that are incompatible with the Christian faith. There is a strong urge to believe in the facile myths of success and power; it is dangerous to accept the fleeting ideas of the sacred which present God in the form of cosmic energy, or in any other manner that is inconsistent with Catholic teaching. My dear young people, do not yield to false illusions and passing fads which so frequently leave behind a tragic spiritual vacuum!" **-Pope John Paul II**

(Message for World Youth Day 2005, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/youth/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_20040806_xx-world-youth-day_en.html)

"The announcement has just been made. **Cardinal Ratzinger** is the successor to Pope John Paul II. Personally, I could not be happier about it. Although the **New Age Movement** was apparently running rampant in the Catholic Church in the earlier 1980s, things started to change in about 1988... Cardinal Ratzinger played a most direct role in the entire change of direction of the Catholic Church from one of toleration to one of opposition to New Age doctrinal heresies."

(Protestant author of *"The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow,"* Constance Cumbey, 19 April 2005, <http://cumbey.blogspot.com/2005/04/cardinal-ratzinger-is-pope-benedict.html>)

As recently as on 16 May 2013, Rome held what can be considered as a follow-up meeting on the 2003 JCBWL Document to examine the twin phenomena of **NRMs** and the **NAM** which the Catholic Church perceives as “one of the most serious pastoral problems of today,” as we note having been recorded in the Document *Erga migrantes caritas...*, 3 May 2004.

The 2013 meeting “attended by around 40 representatives from various Vatican dicasteries, pontifical universities, the Italian Episcopal Conference, and the Vicariate of Rome, is a step further along the path of reflection, study, and the search for effective pastoral responses.

Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, opened and closed the meeting while Fr. Miguel Angel Ayuso Guixot, M.C.C.I., secretary of the same dicastery, acted as moderator. Some of the themes covered include: **New Religious Movements** and the New Evangelization; New Frontiers of the Sacred; Dialogue and Comparison between Faith and Credulity; Catholics and Pentecostals—Identity, Ties, and Perspectives; and **New Age**, Analysis of the Cultural Context.”

(Vatican Information Service, 17 May 2013, <http://www.catholicnewsworld.com/2013/05/pope-francis-with-guidance-of-holy.html>)

Comprehensive information on all of the above citations is available in different files at this ministry’s website.

We see that the Catholic Church has been far from reticent or silent about New Age. She has not been sleeping on this grave issue. It is we who have not kept ourselves informed of what She has been speaking.

Although as old as the Fall of Genesis and as early in the Church as Gnosticism, followed by the Enlightenment, Freemasonry and Theosophy, the spread of New Age as we know it now is relatively a late twentieth-century phenomenon. We have already noted that the first evangelical Christian books on New Age themes hit the stands only in the 1980s. Books by Catholic authors followed thereafter. Ultimately, there came JCBWL.

Catholics always want to know what the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) says about New Age. It doesn’t say.

However, CCC section #2115 to 2117 is titled “Divination and Magic”, and in a sense, that is what New Age is.

...A sound Christian attitude consists in putting oneself confidently into the hands of Providence for whatever concerns the future, and giving up all unhealthy curiosity about it. (# 2115) Astrology? Crystal Gazing? Palm reading? Tarot?

*All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to “unveil” the future. [Deuteronomy 18:10, Jeremiah 29:8] Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate **hidden powers**. They contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone. (# 2116)*

*All practices of magic or sorcery, by which one attempts to tame **occult powers**, so as to place them at one’s service and have a **supernatural power** over others – **even if this were for the sake of restoring their health** – are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion. ... Spiritism often implies divination or magical practices; the Church for her part warns the faithful against it. **Recourse to so-called traditional cures does not justify either the invocation of evil powers or the exploitation of another’s credulity.** (# 2117)*

IMPORTANT: There is a very significant admission in the 2003 JCBWL Document that the fundamental New Age belief in an all-pervasive impersonal life force energy was not identified till only recently: the “focus on **hidden spiritual powers** or forces in nature has been the backbone of much of *what is now recognised* as New Age theory”. (JCBWL #1.3)

New Age medications from acupressure to homoeopathy to healing with reiki are about the manipulation of hidden powers in nature that both, the CCC and JCBWL, talk about. The martial arts too. You’d better believe it. As a matter of fact, the prana of yoga and of Pranic Healing is another such “power”. We will, in the course of this book, come to understand how all of these medications and meditations are “spiritual”.

Remember my statement that that there is no neutral power in the spiritual realm? (I’ll be repeating it.)

For Christians, especially Catholics, we are talking of the First Commandment here. “I am the Lord, your God ... You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3)

While esotericism, New Age and yoga do not find mention in the 1992 CCC, they do in the 2010 YouCat – also called the Youth Catechism (#356). For the citation, go to the introduction to Section F of this book.

JCBWL is not a one-off thing, a mere “Provisional Report” as its detractors like to dismiss it as being. There are literally hundreds – if not thousands – of pages of very authoritative and unambiguous Catholic pronouncements on the New Age (in English alone, leave alone Spanish and other European languages),

both in general and broad terms as we have seen in the pages above, as well as on specific issues as we will read later in this book.

There have been numerous other statements and warnings from high-ranking clerics, Bishops' Conferences and Theological Commissions of which we shall present a few as we proceed towards the sections on medications and meditations.

II. What some Theological Commissions, Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops (and other eminent Catholics) have said

"It is interesting to observe that the **Korean Catholic Church**, which was rather tolerant to New Age in comparison with the Korean Protestant church, is more recently intensifying an anti-**New Age** campaign, distributing a series of pamphlets and booklets which warn their believers against **New Age**."

(*New Age in South Korea*, Hai-Ran Woo, 2007, <http://www.asanas.org.uk/files/woo%20advance%20publication.pdf>)

"The Catholic bishops of Korea have issued guidelines to help Catholics maintain a healthy faith life amid the 'hundreds' of religious and pseudo-religious sects and movements gaining adherents in South Korea. The Committee for the Doctrine of the Faith of the **Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea (CBCK)** issued a document on Sept. 24 titled '*Movements and Currents That Are Harmful to Orthodox Faith Life*.' ... Noting that **New Age** movements, sects relating to claims of extra-terrestrial life and 'cyber religions' have spread among the younger generation, the document says the Church 'has to develop pastoral care for youth and spiritual programs that answer to the quests of the young generation'."

(*Bishops Offer Guidelines for Healthy Faith Life amid Maze Options*, 22 October 1997, <http://www.ucanews.com/search/show.php?q=yoga&page=archives/english/1997/10/w4/wed/ko8576rw.txt>)

"Seoul archdiocese has cautioned priests and religious regarding the increasingly popular practice of 'ki' (energy) sessions that blend physical movement, breathing and concentration. **Auxiliary Bishop Peter Kang Woo-il of Seoul** sent January 12 a document titled '*Alert on ki training culture*' to all clergy and superiors of religious institutes in the archdiocese... "He said though people begin the practice for health, **they gradually develop it to a kind of spiritual dimension**. 'The religious dimension to which such ki culture leads becomes easily linked to a mystical, transcendental and individualistic outlook of the world - that is not easily compatible with Christian faith,' the bishop noted."

(*Church Warns Clergy, Religious of Popular "ki" Experience*, 23 January 2001, https://www.ucanews.com/story-archive/?post_name=/2001/01/23/church-warns-clergy-religious-of-popular-ki-experience&post_id=17714)

"Bishop John Chrysostom Kwon Hyok-ju of Andong, Korea ... pointed out that in spiritual fads such as **New Age** movements, anything can be justified if it is thought to be good for the peace and health of one's body and mind. 'The personal dimension of God is hardly found, and God having dialogue with humans through the word is unimaginable,' he said."

(*Bible has Answers to 'Modern' Spiritual Quests, Bishop says*, 19 November 2003, http://www.ucanews.com/story-archive/?post_name=/2003/11/19/bible-has-answers-to-modern-spiritual-quests-bishop-says&post_id=23395)

"The flourishing of **'new spirituality' movements** has prompted Church workers to recommend a shift in pastoral approach... Proof of this is the increasing popularity of methods such as yoga, Zen and 'ki' ('chi') energy training among Koreans, Catholics included, who say these techniques help them achieve soundness of body and mind. The **Korean Catholic bishops** have warned Catholics about such new spirituality movements."

(*Paradigm Shift Proposed to Counter 'New Spirituality' Movements*, 1 November 2004, <http://www.ucanews.com/search/show.php?q=yoga&page=archives/english/2004/11/w1/mon/KO7047Rg.txt>)

"The **Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea** issued *'Movements and Currents That Are Harmful to Orthodox Faith Life Part I'* in 1997 and *'Part II'* in 2003. The first dealt with phenomena such as 'doomsday cults' and private revelations. The second cites Zen and yoga as examples of the **new spirituality movement** which, it says, 'conflicts with Christian faith in many ways.' The document warns that 'the movement is highly probable to threaten the teaching of Christ and the Church's identity'."

(*Church has failed to live up to 'Gaudium et Spes', scholars say*, 7 November 2005, https://www.ucanews.com/story-archive/?post_name=/2005/11/07/church-has-failed-to-live-up-to-gaudium-et-spes-scholars-say&post_id=26483)

"The **New Age Movement** is a form of millenarianism especially attractive as the 20th century turned toward the Third Millennium. It is a belief in an imminent new era of rapid and radical change that would bring in a better world, an era of peace, love, and prosperity. Many **New Age** ideas originate from Gnosticism as well as from Eastern non-Christian religious and philosophical beliefs such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism. It is an eclectic system without solid internal coherence and includes ideas of occultism, spiritism, and esotericism. As one of its beliefs, it affirms that, as parts of the universe, human beings are part of 'cosmic energy' to which every living being can be reduced. Hence, **New**

Age teaches that we must be aware of this cosmic energy and harness it toward personal self-development and the enlightenment of human consciousness... As your Pastors, we are particularly and strongly concerned about the religious beliefs of the **New Age Movement**, such as its views of God, Christ, the world, the human person, salvation, redemption, resurrection, religious experience, etc. Its beliefs in reincarnation and karma are certainly against the Christian faith. Its re-interpretation of Christianity and use of Christian religious symbols, including language, to explain its religious and philosophical beliefs lure many Catholics 'into erroneously thinking that **New Age** is compatible with the Christian faith."

(*Primer on New Age*, **Philippines Bishops' Conference**, 8 January 2003, <http://cbcponline.net/primer-on-new-age/>)

"**New Age** thinking has been penetrating Catholic realms, says an adviser to the **Argentine bishops' conference**. **Dr. José Maria Baamonde** established the Service for the Elucidation of Sects and New Religious Movements (SPES) Foundation, in 1989. He currently heads the foundation's documentation-and-research section... He gave a lecture on '*The Permeability of New Age in Religions.*' **New Age** is 'the great challenge of the present century for society,' he added, because 'it raises flags such as pacifism, universal brotherhood and ecology, which can hardly be challenged by the public of a society that increasingly lacks a true formation'."

(*New Age Seen Penetrating Catholic Circles*, 18 July 2005, <https://zenit.org/articles/new-age-seen-penetrating-catholic-circles/>)

"The very presence and success of the so-called **New Age** Movement is evidence that not all Christians are hearing the Gospel in a life-giving and fruitful way... Secular humanism, atheistic materialism, rationalism and religious scepticism, which were so popular in the early part of this century, left a great void in the human heart. Unfortunately, our secular society did not look to God to fill this void. Instead, it turned to eastern religions in search of a new mysticism. The result was a flood of gurus who came to teach the west how to meditate. They introduced yoga, transcendental meditation, mantras and related teachings, but without reference to Christ, the Church, or revealed truth. Many Christians have participated in these exercises, even thinking they could 'Christianise' them by using Christian language to explain what is essentially non-Christian, for example the use of so-called 'Christian' mantras, and putting Christian explanations on yoga or TM practices. But these gurus taught the only thing they knew, which is Hinduism, and the Hindu Pantheon."

(*A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, **The Irish Theological Commission**, 1994, <https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

“One should not be excessively hasty in considering secularisation as the key for interpreting all modern society’s significant phenomena. There exists in fact another side of secularisation, uncontrolled religiosity, of which there are many signs. The **New Age** falls into this category. This movement is expanding rapidly, and a number of Christians are fascinated by it.”

(*The Declaration on the New Age*, **Cardinal Georges Cottier OP**, Theologian of the Pontifical Household, 2004, <http://www.clerus.org/clerus/dati/2004-03/18-13/14CNAING.html>)

“Much has already been said about the *New Age Movement*, and much more will be said. I had asked the specialist, Jean Vernetto, to dedicate a subheading to ‘*Movements of the New Age*’ in the third edition of my Italian work, *Grande Dizionario delle Religioni* (The Comprehensive Dictionary of Religions), which describes them in the following words: ‘The *New Age Movements*, like a huge running river with its numerous off shoots, represent a typical form of the modern religious awareness as a new religiosity that assumes many traits of the ‘Eternal Gnosis.’’ (Piemme, 2000, p. 1497-1498) ... the origin of the rather wide-spread disillusionment with institutional religion, derives from a growing obsession in Western culture with Oriental religions and the paths of wisdom... people, involved in such types of Eastern or ‘indigenous’ spirituality, are really not in a position of being fully aware of the implications behind the first invitation to observe these gatherings.”

(*New Age is a pressing Religious, Cultural Challenge*, **Cardinal Paul Poupard**, President, Pontifical Council for Culture L’Osservatore Romano, 5 March 2003, <http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=4709>)

“Notwithstanding the fact that the ‘**New Age**’ Movement espouses a confused religious syncretism which is not always well-intentioned, some of its ideas have found a warm reception among some people and institutions within the Catholic Church. The so-called “global theology” traces the signs of divine revelation in all known religious expressions, in search of a common denominator that can serve as a meeting point for religions... When this trend appears (openly or veiled) in the teaching of certain seminaries and Catholic educational institutions, it can only cause a deep concern in the hearts of the faithful and their bishops. Another phenomenon that is especially disconcerting to the Catholic faithful is the inexplicable enthusiasm with which certain priests, religious, and people dedicated to teaching the faith have embraced techniques of non-Christian meditation. Frequently imported from the east, forms of asceticism historically far removed from Christian spirituality are practiced in

retreats, spiritual exercises, workshops, liturgical celebrations, and children's catechism courses." (*A Call to Vigilance: Pastoral Instruction on New Age*, **Archbishop [later Cardinal] Norberto Rivera Carrera** of Mexico, 7 January 1996, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/acall.htm>)

"Christians are not exempt from the influence of today's culture. It produces individuals whose Christian identity is weak and confused; faith is little more than a routine practice often influenced by a dangerous syncretism of superstition, magic and **New Age**."

(*Ecclesial Movements and New Communities*, **Archbishop [later Cardinal] Stanislaw Rylko**, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, 2006, http://www.catholic-thoughts.info/catholic_life/RylkoOnMovements.html)

"Most of what sells as 'spiritual reading', usually classified under the heading of '**New Age**', does not demand any more faith or belief than going to the movies. Not all that is marketed under the rubric 'spirituality' is 'chicken soup' for the Christian soul. Indeed, much of it, if consumed indiscriminately or unwarily, could prove poisonous to the life of faith. While New Age writings may seductively appeal to the legitimate longing of human nature, they are fundamentally opposed to Christian revelation."

(*New Age is Old Gnosticism*, **Archbishop Thomas Wenski** of Miami, 10 February 2011, http://www.miamiarch.org/ip.asp?op=Article_11210115817433)

"New York's **Archbishop Timothy Dolan** offered reflections on his blog about the Feasts of All Saints and All Souls, saying that people who leave the Church for the **New Age** in order to be 'more in harmony with the universe' must have missed school the day they were taught about the Communion of the Saints because Catholics have believed in this 'harmony with the universe' for two millennia."

(*Archbishop Comments on Emptiness of New Age Movement*, Susan Brinkmann, 2 November 2010, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=243>)

"As the document *Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life* notes, the sects, in as much as they fall under the umbrella of **New Age**, draw from many traditions, from ancient Egyptian occult practices to contemporary practice of Zen Buddhism and Yoga."

(International Theological Video Conference 27 February 2004, *The Church, New Age and Sects*, **Bishop [now Archbishop of Hobart, Tasmania] Julian Porteous** of Sydney, Exorcist, <http://www.clerus.net/clerus/dati/2004-02/28-13/01CNSIn.html>)

In 2012, Bishop Porteous wrote the Foreword to the best-selling Australian book on New Age, "*Yoga, Tai Chi, Reiki: A Guide for Christians*" by Bro. Max

Sculley DLS. Bishop Julian Porteous and I have corresponded with each other in March 2014.

“Although virtually unknown a few years ago, this movement is gaining in popularity on an international level. On the surface it appears to be a ‘peace’ movement, but in my estimation, it definitely belongs to the occult. This is because it presents some basic characteristics that are identified with the occult, even though Satan is not mentioned. For example, the ‘god’ of the **New Age** is not the God of Christianity and Judaism. The **New Age** god is more like an impersonal energy or force of which the whole universe consists. This is a form of pantheism. For us God is Creator and Lord of all. We are his creatures. In the **New Age**, Jesus becomes one of the many spiritual masters who discovered his higher self. It is believed that in the **New Age** we can also be enlightened, and this through our own efforts not through revelation and the grace of God. The **New Age Movement** is sometimes called a *peace* (read chapter 79) movement. Somehow, it is said, that when we become a part of this ‘Harmonic Convergence’ we can bring to bear a mighty power that is beyond ourselves for achieving world peace. But when we talk about any power that is not from God, and beyond ourselves we are really talking about the occult. Do not be deceived by the talk about ecology, the beauty of nature in the world, and the fundamental goodness of the apparent goals of this movement. Those who join the **New Age Movement** are entering a movement dealing with occult spiritual power. It is not a spiritual power that comes from God, but from the Kingdom of False Light and Darkness.”

(*Spiritual Warfare: The Occult has Demonic Influence*, **Bishop Donald W Montrose DD** of Stockton, USA, 1996, <https://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/occult.htm>)

“My spiritual leadership cannot but be consistent with the leadership of the universal Church which clearly states that **New Age** theories and doctrines are not compatible with our Christian Faith and cannot be reconciled with it. The Church doesn’t force you to go one way or another. You are free to choose. If you choose to be faithful to your faith in Christ, then the time has come for you to say ‘NO’ to New Age’s influence in your life and to stand up for your faith, telling others to do the same.”

(*A Message Concerning New Age Spiritualities*, **Bishop Nicola de Angelis** of Peterborough, Ontario, 25 February 2004, <http://www.peterboroughdiocese.org/bishopmessage.htm#Ash%20Wednesday%202004>)

“The document *Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life* seeks to study the **New Age** phenomenon. Today this mentality is spreading in different parts of the world, India not excepted. Rather, much of the New Age thinking emanates from Indian sources. This document should be studied particularly

in our theological institutes, for the New Age ideas about God, the mystery, salvation, saviour, meditation . . . are ambiguous and incompatible with the tenets of our faith... Some of the clergy, religious and the laity are adopting Zen meditation, yoga exercises, vipassana and other eastern and psychic and therapeutic practices and techniques. Some of these things are done in our houses of formation.”

(**Bishop Thomas Dabre** of Vasai, India, Chairman, Doctrinal Commission of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India, Vidya Jyoti Theological Review, March 2004)

“At times some Catholics seem to be tempted to adopt an unusual kind of Triumphalism. They believe that the Church can happily absorb and ‘baptize’ almost anything in other religions. We have seen this trend developing over recent decades with Catholics embracing various forms of Eastern mysticism, meditation or healing. In our schools, parishes and religious congregations, these practices come and go. The Enneagram is a case in point. Halls and other facilities are rented out to meditation circles or martial arts groups. Even children are introduced to what seem to be only peaceful methods of meditation. In a society where the New Age movement flourishes, where everything is tolerated in the gaudy supermarket of ‘spirituality’, few dare to question whether Christians should be involved in practices that seem directed towards human flourishing and well-being... I hope that we will receive further guidance from Rome in the future because the problem of false spirituality shows no sign of going away. That is evident in the nonsensical ‘eco-spirituality’ that has penetrated several congregations of religious in this country.”

(Yoga, Tai Chi, Reiki, Bishop Peter Elliott of Melbourne, Fidelity, December 2012, <http://www.christendom-awake.org/pages/book-promotions/yoga-tai-chi&reiki/FIDELITYNov201239-41.pdf>)

“A constant theme of Benedict XVI has been what he calls a ‘hermeneutic of continuity’: the interpretation of any teaching of the Church in the context of the word of God and her whole tradition. In October he applied this to the Vatican Council’s Declaration on Non-Christian Religions. In its emphasis on the good side of those religions and its silence on the bad, seeking thus to correct a previous imbalance, the Council produced a contrary imbalance. This has allowed, on the one hand, scriptural ignorance and modernism to blunt the two-edged sword of the Church’s mission to the world; and, on the other, the leaven of error to poison her from within (cf. Gal 1: 8). I recently visited a Catholic Retreat House run by a great Religious Order. Most of its conferences during the year are ‘New Age’, including Yoga and Tai Chi. Thus members of the Church who have the generosity to make a retreat and who, therefore, with good teaching one might expect to be among her most faithful

and fruitful members, are being diverted, by a centre claiming to be Catholic, into the enemy camp.”

(*Yoga, Tai Chi, Reiki: A Guide for Christians*, Fr. **Jeremy Davies, Exorcist**, 2012, <http://www.christendom-awake.org/pages/book-promotions/yoga-tai-chi&reiki/jer-davies-bk-review.htm>)

“**Fr. Mitch Pacwa SJ** whose book *Catholics and the New Age: How Good People are being drawn into Jungian Psychology, the Enneagram and the New Age of Aquarius* was recommended by the Vatican document ... noted wryly that the reason the **New Age** is constantly changing from one ‘fad to another is simple: It doesn’t work.’ ... He warned that the variety of alternative medicines New Age proponents focus on have as little chance of success as typical treatments, and some, he said, are downright dangerous. New Age activities can lead people to ‘dabble in the occult and become obsessed with occult power’.”

(Andrew Walther, StayCatholic.com, 2003, http://www.staycatholic.com/new_age.htm)

“It is not my intention to simplistically condemn the whole **New Age** movement as demonic. But I believe that an intellectual analysis needs to include the possibility that certain New Age techniques are facilitated by, or open a person to, the influence of evil spirits.”

(*Framing a Christian Response to New Age practices*, Dr. Fr. Gareth Leyshon, 8 March 2004, <http://www.drgareth.info/NewAgeRP.pdf>)

“The ideas associated with the **New Age** movement are incompatible with the Catholic faith. They are incompatible with doctrines essential to Christianity, such as the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the redemptive sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, and the God-ordained necessity of the Church for salvation. The **New Age movement** is rooted in the ideology and practice of witchcraft. Because of the direct opposition between **New Age** ideas and the truths of the faith, participation in New Age activities is gravely sinful and is offensive to Christ and His Church.”

(*Let the Son Shine: The Truth about the New Age*, Catholics United for the Faith, 20 March 2003, <http://www.cuf.org/FileDownloads/newage.pdf>)

“The most serious challenge for Christianity today isn’t one of the other great religions of the world, such as Islam or Buddhism. Nor is it simple atheism, which has no depth, no mass appeal, (and) no staying power. Rather, it’s a religion most of us think is dead. That religion is paganism—and it is very much alive... The new paganism is the virtual divinization of man, the religion of man as the new God... The new paganism’s favorite Scripture is ‘judge not’. The only judgment is the judgment against judging. The only thing wrong is the idea that there is a real wrong. The only thing to feel guilty about is feeling guilty. And, since man rather than God is the origin of values, don’t impose ‘your’ values on me (another favorite line)... The new paganism is winning not

by opposing but by infiltrating the Church. It is cleverer than the old... (It) is a joining of forces by three of the enemies of theism: humanism, polytheism and pantheism... The so-called '**New Age Movement**' combines all the features described under the title of the new paganism."

(*Comparing Christianity and the New Paganism*, Dr. Peter Kreeft, National Catholic Register, May 1987, http://www.peterkreeft.com/topics-more/religions_newpaganism.htm)

"As a traditional Catholic, an important question I have often asked myself is why do some Catholics turn away from their faith and turn to **New Age** spirituality?

I have concluded that the answer can be found in one word – PRIDE. The pride comes from the desire to be like God; the same temptation that took place with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The temptation that says: 'You are equal to God. You are the Creator.' These are some of the promises of the New Age Movement."

(*Catholics and the New Age*, Susan Beckworth, 29 December 2006, http://www.catholicmediacoalition.org/catholics_new_age.htm)

Pride was the sin of Lucifer. And **Lucifer is the God of the New Age Movement**. (See the evidence in section C: The New Age: **A Luciferic Initiation...**)

"The basis of our Faith is the authority of Christ and the Church which He founded; but what about the claims to authority by the **New Age** proponents? The following quote gives us a clue. The words are those of (David Spangler) a co-director of the Findhorn Community – a community which claims to be guided by spiritual beings: '...Lucifer is the angel of man's inner light – he comes to give us the final gift of wholeness. If we accept it then we are free. This is the Luciferic initiation. It is an initiation into the New Age'."

(*Some Deceptions of the New Age Movement*, Michael Akerman, 1991, www.catholicassociates.com/leaflets/Somedeceptionsfthenewage.pdf)

"Satan, also known as Lucifer, or 'Light-Bearer', was the most beautiful and intelligent Angel of all before he was cast out of Heaven for trying to take God's place. He is *still* trying to take God's place by adopting his most seductive mask in the form of the '**New Age**' Movement... There can be no doubt whatever that the Devil is the motivating force behind the '**New Age**' movement..."

Why the '**New Age**' Movement is Satanic:

The simple three-step process of elimination

- (1) There are *only two* ultimate sources of supernatural power: GOD and SATAN. [Remember my 'There is no neutral power in the spiritual realm' maxim?]
- (2) The '**New Age**' movement involves supernatural phenomenon which are, quite obviously, not of God.

(3) Therefore, by simple elimination, all 'New Age' supernatural phenomena must be Satanic."

(*The New Age Movement: Highway to Hell*, EWTN, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/PROLENC/ENCYC130.HTM>)

Watch these videos on the New Age Movement by Marino Restrepo, Catholic Apologist:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKHsiyQYQT4> 1:09:19
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJvYzUNApzY> 1:16:14

B.

Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life, a Christian Reflection on the 'New Age' (JCBWL, 2003). A summary.

This write-up by Michael Prabhu was serialised in *The Examiner*, the Archdiocesan weekly of Mumbai, the issues of 24 and 31 May 2003

The Document is titled "*Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life, A Christian Reflection on the 'New Age'.*"

On the 3rd of February 2003, the Vatican issued a "provisional report", "concerned with the complex phenomenon of the 'New Age', which is influencing many aspects of contemporary culture". (Foreword, JCBWL) The Document was "the fruit of the common reflection of the Working Group on New Religious Movements composed of different dicasteries of the Holy See", "to explain how the NAM differs from the Christian faith" (Foreword), illustrating the points where New Age spirituality contrasts with the Catholic faith and refuting the positions espoused by New Age thinkers in opposition to Christian faith" and "the rapidly growing number of people who claim that it is possible to blend Christianity and New Age by taking what strikes them as the best of both". (#1)

Few Catholics are aware of the New Age Movement; fewer still know of its infiltration into almost every aspect of modern life from education to health and medicine to ecology, from science to religion to philosophy, from the corporate world to entertainment to government, and from your neighbourhood bookstore to your local church.

"From the point of view of Christian faith, it is not possible to isolate some elements of New Age religiosity as acceptable to Christians while rejecting others. It is therefore necessary to accurately identify those elements which

belong to the NAM and which cannot be accepted by those who are faithful to Christ and his Church". (#4)

It is obligatory for us to increase in knowledge (Hosea 4:6), especially those who are "involved in preaching the Gospel... teaching the faith at any level within the Church... and in pastoral work". (#1)

The character and goals of the New Age Movement

"New Age is not a single uniform movement but rather a loose network of practices whose approach is to think globally but act locally". (#2) "It is important to recognize the fundamental characteristics of New Age ideas. What is offered is often described as simply 'spiritual' rather than belonging to any religion, but there are much closer links to particular Eastern religions than many 'consumers' realize". (#2.5)

"It is not playing with words to say that New Age thrives on confusion". (#6.1)

"To deal with today's problems, New Age dreams of a spiritual aristocracy in the style of Plato's *Republic*, run by secret societies". (#2.3.4.3)

"New Age shares with a number of internationally influential groups the goal of superseding particular religions in order to create space for a universal religion which could unite humanity". (#2.5) "The New Age which is dawning will be peopled by perfect, androgynous beings who are totally in command of the cosmic laws of nature. In this scenario, Christianity has to be eliminated and give way to a global religion and a new world order". (#4)

Origins and background of the New Age Movement

Noting that there is "little in the New Age that is new", the study locates the roots of the New Age in ancient Egyptian occult practices, gnosticism, Cabbalism, Sufism, anthroposophy, spiritualism, etc. ... and traces it down the ages through the growth of medieval alchemy, rationalism, secular humanism and the human potential movement, its connections with banned secret organizations like Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry, the writings of the founders of the Theosophical Society, Zen and Yoga, involving a "progressive rejection of a personal God and a focus on other entities". (cf. #1.3, #2.1, #3.1)

"Here is what is 'new' about New Age: It is a syncretism of esoteric and secular elements. They link into a widely-held perception that the time is right for a fundamental change in individuals, in society and in the world... In these contexts the term 'paradigm shift' is often used", toward a "modern revival of pagan religions with a mixture of influences from Eastern religions and from modern psychology, philosophy, science and the counter-culture that

developed in the 1950s and 1960s". (#2.1) "New Age has a marked preference for Eastern or pre-Christian religions which are reckoned to be uncontaminated by Judeo-Christian distortions". (#2.3.4.2)" John Paul II warns with regard to the return of ancient gnostic ideas under the guise of the so-called New Age: We cannot delude ourselves that this will lead toward a renewal of religion. It (the New Age) is only a new way of practising Gnosticism". (#1.4)

The coming New Age of Aquarius

According to astrology, "the Age of Pisces is due to be replaced by the New Age of Aquarius" in what is actually a purely astronomical shift of the vernal equinox which approximately every 2000 years passes through a new constellation of the zodiac. The pisces or fish (Gk. Ichthus) is associated symbolically with Jesus. New Agers maintain that with this transition, the era of Christ is ending and Aquarius the Water Bearer will now pour his water over the world to symbolize the coming of a new spirit and the dawn of a new age as was "set forth in the emblematic song 'Aquarius' in the 1969 musical 'Hair'." (#2.1)

In deciding on the title of this Document, rejecting New Agers' claims as false, the Church proclaims that the true New Age was heralded in 2000 years ago by Jesus of Nazareth Who alone is the Giver of the Water of Life (John 4: 10-14), the Sender of the Spirit (John 14:16, 17) Who will reveal all truth to those who genuinely seek it. (cf. #4, #5)

The New Age and God, sin and salvation

"A fundamental point which pervades all New Age thought and practice", is an understanding of "a Mother Earth whose divinity pervades the whole of creation... and removes the prospect of being judged by such a being". (#2.3.1). "'Gaia', Mother Earth is offered as an alternative to God the Father... There is talk of God but it is not a personal God; the God of which New Age speaks is... an impersonal energy... 'All is one'.

This unity is monistic, pantheistic or more precisely, panentheistic... In a sense, everything is God". (#2.3.4.2).

"Jesus of Nazareth is not God, but one of the historical manifestations of the cosmic and universal Christ"; "Jesus was not the Christ but simply one among many historical figures in whom this 'Christic' nature is revealed as is the case with Buddha and others". (#3.1, #2.3.4.2)

"When it is consciously received by men and women, 'divine energy' is often described as 'Christic energy'" (#2.3.4.2) "In terms of the relationship between New Age and Christianity is the total recasting of the life and significance of Jesus Christ. It is impossible to reconcile these two visions". (#2.1) "The innermost ('psychic') level on which this 'cosmic energy' is 'heard' by human beings is also called 'Holy Spirit'." (#2.3.4.2) "The energy animating the single

organism which is the universe is 'spirit'. There is no alterity between God and the world. The world itself is divine...God & the world, soul and body... heaven and earth are one immense vibration of energy". (#2.3.4.3)

"In New Age there is no distinction between good and evil. Human actions are the fruit of either illumination or ignorance... Hence nobody needs forgiveness". (#2.2.2) "We need to make a journey in order to understand where we fit into the unity of the cosmos. The journey is psychotherapy, and the recognition of universal consciousness is salvation. There is no sin, there is only imperfect knowledge". (#2.3.4.1) "New Age imports Eastern religious practices piecemeal and reinterprets them to suit Westerners; this involves a rejection of the language of sin and salvation" (#2.4). Believing in "reincarnation as participation in cosmic evolution", New Age "dispenses with the notion of hell". (#2.2.3)

The New Age and the human person: holistic health

"The real danger is the holistic paradigm. New Age is based on totalitarian unity and that is why it is a danger." (#4, cf. notes 71) "The cosmos is seen as an organic whole. It is animated by an energy which is also identified as the divine Soul or Spirit." (#2.3.3)

Referring to the New Age fascination with "wholeness" as "a magical mystery tour" and "one of the central concerns of the NAM" (#2.2.4), the Document reports that "Alternative Therapies have gained enormously in popularity because they claim to look at the whole person" which "formal (allopathic) medicine ... fails to look at." (#2.2.3) "Holism pervades the NAM from its concern with Holistic Health to its quest for unitive consciousness and from ecological awareness to the idea of global 'networking'." (#2.2.4)

"A focus on hidden spiritual powers or forces in nature has been the backbone of ... New Age theory." (#1.3) "The source of healing is ... our inner or cosmic energy." (#2.2.3)

"...New Age covers a wide range of practices such as acupuncture, biofeedback, chiropractic, kinesiology, homeopathy, iridology, massage and various kinds of "bodywork" (such as organomy, Feldenkrais, reflexology, Rolfing, polarity massage, therapeutic touch etc.), meditation and visualisation, nutritional therapies, psychic healing, various kinds of herbal medicine, healing by crystals, metals, music or colours, reincarnation therapies and, finally, twelve-step programmes and self-help groups. The source of healing is said to be within ourselves, something we reach when we are in touch with our inner energy or cosmic energy..." "The connection between the spiritual and physical aspects of a person is said to be in the Indian Chakra System" (#2.2.3)

A belief in the existence of this network of psychic energy centers (chakras) along with energy conducting nadis or meridians in one's energy body, and the notion of god as an all-pervasive universal life-force which may be manipulated for holistic (body, mind/soul, energy/spirit and inter-personal) healing as prana (Sanskrit, Hindu philosophy), and as chi, qi or ki (Chinese, Taoist/Japanese, Buddhist), is the cornerstone of these Alternative Medicines and the basis for explaining the phenomena experienced by therapists and patients. There are scores of other New Age Alternative Therapies that are generically similar to those named and they satisfy all the conditions described by the Document for being categorized as New Age.

In the section titled 'Health: Golden Living', one out of three paragraphs deals with the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation which is an essential ingredient of the holistic health potpourri:

"Inasmuch as health includes a prolongation of life, New Age offers an Eastern formula in Western terms". (#2.2.3)

Among the New Age influences treated to a greater or lesser extent in the Document and about which we are alerted, are the Arcane School, AMORC, Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, Theosophists and New Agers Helena Blavatsky, Alice Bailey and David Spangler, the doctrine of karma, hypnosis, yin and yang, the I Ching, altered states of consciousness.

There's mantras, meditation and visualization techniques, a 'paradigm shift' from left brain rational to right brain intuitive thinking, people following enlightened masters, Cabbalism, Sufism, Zen Buddhism, Yoga, people contacting the upper or lower worlds by means of their imagination, the search for the 'god within' oneself, mind-expanding techniques, self-realization, the concept of matter as waves or energy rather than as particles and that this 'interconnected energy includes our deeds, feelings and thoughts' (the principle behind Distant Healing techniques), esotericism, evolution, parapsychology (extra-sensory perception, mental telepathy), positive thinking (affirmation), paranormal phenomena etc.

All of the above entities, without any exception, are in the pages of the pranic healing books. Many of them are inseparable from the philosophies and practice of reiki and other "no-drug" alternative remedies, acupuncture and acupressure, even homoeopathy.

Holistic healing seeks to treat us "**wholly**", spirit, soul and body, with gnostic philosophies, paranormal techniques and occult 'energies'.

But St. Paul exhorts us to remain perfectly **holy** and blameless "entirely, spirit, soul and body" [1 Thessalonians 5:23].

The New Age and the mind: psychology, Eastern meditations and New Age prayer

The Vatican says “New forms of psychological affirmation of the individual have become very popular among Catholics, even in retreat houses, seminaries and institutes of formation for religious”. (#1.4)

“Transpersonal psychology, strongly influenced by Eastern religions and by Jung offers a contemplative journey where science meets mysticism” encouraging the “search for ‘the God within’ oneself. To realize one’s potential, one had to go beyond one’s ‘ego’ in order to become the god that one is deep down. This could be done by choosing the appropriate therapy – meditation, parapsychological experiences, (and) the use of hallucinogenic drugs. These were all ways of achieving ‘peak experiences’, ‘mystical’ experiences of fusion with God and with the cosmos”. (#2.3.2)

“The point of New Age techniques is to reproduce mystical states at will... Holotropic breathing, hypnosis, mantras and transcendental meditation (T.M.) are attempts to control these states and experience them continuously. These practices all create an atmosphere of psychic weakness and vulnerability”. (#4)

“Many people are convinced that there is no harm in ‘borrowing’ from the wisdom of the East, but the example of Transcendental Meditation should make Christians cautious about the prospect of committing themselves unknowingly to another religion, in this case Hinduism”. (#6.2)

Asking the question “Are we talking to ourselves or to God?” the report answers “The tendency to confuse psychology and spirituality makes it hard not to insist that many of the meditation techniques now used are not prayer... The achievement of silence can confront us with emptiness rather than... contemplating the beloved. It is also true that techniques for going deeper into one’s own soul are ultimately an appeal to one’s own ability to reach the divine, or even to become divine”. Explaining what genuine Christian mysticism and prayer are, it comments that any technique to manipulate oneself into “an easy ‘relationship’ with God, where God’s function is seen as supplying all our needs, shows the selfishness at the heart of this New Age”. (#4)

Centering Prayer, another type of “meditation” technique, is not named in the Document.

Fr. John Dreher says “Its techniques are neither Christian nor prayer... It is essentially a form of self-hypnosis... The technique is not only futile, but objectively sinful” and involves “the danger of opening oneself to evil spirits”. (The Danger of Centering Prayer, *This Rock* magazine, November 1997 <http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/1997/9711fea1.asp>)

Fr. Emile Lafranz SJ asserts, "It comes from Hinduism. And it is an attempt to reach an altered state of consciousness. It is simply Transcendental Meditation in a Christian dress".

"Altered states of consciousness are induced either by drugs or by various mind-expanding techniques, particularly in the context of 'transpersonal psychology'". (#2.2.3)

"The heart of genuine Christian mysticism is not technique. It is always a gift from God". (#3.4)

While the Vatican Document speaks lucidly about New Age mysticism, leaving no room for ambiguity, the article "*New Age Prayer: Can Yoga, Meditation, Chanting and New Age Music bring us closer to God?*" succinctly concludes "Knowledge, understanding and prayerful discernment- these are our safeguards. When we are properly equipped, the deceptive practices of the New Age become clear". (*New Covenant* magazine, June 1989)

For New Agers, "There is a need to experience the salvation hidden within themselves by mastering psycho-physical techniques which lead to... enlightenment... Psychology is used to explain mind expansion as 'mystical' experiences. Yoga, Zen, T.M. and tantric exercises lead to an experience of self-fulfillment or enlightenment". (#2.3.4.1)

Pranic healing's initiation ceremony, the Meditation on Twin Hearts in which one experiences "pervasive darkness" or "the great void", "a feeling of temporary omniscience", is an amalgam of the parameters that define New Age mind-games. Histories of reiki inform us that its Christian founder was initiated and inspired with the techniques of Reiki only after practising Zen meditation learnt by him under Buddhist monks, and experiencing occult phenomena.

The Document confirms that the Enneagram, "the nine-type tool for character analysis" is New Age (#1.4 and Glossary). "No fad has swept through Catholic seminaries and retreat centers in recent years with as much fervor as has the Enneagram". (*Crisis* magazine, September 1997) It can be traced to ancient Egyptian occult and Sufi mysticism. Oscar Ichazo, its modern founder and lapsed Catholic "studied Oriental martial arts, Zen, shamanism, Yoga, hypnotism and psychology" according to Fr. Mitch Pacwa sj, who attended a workshop on the "enneagram along with Yoga, Zen and Sufi meditation techniques". (*New Covenant* magazine, February 1991)

The New Age and the paranormal

"One of the most common elements in New Age 'spirituality' is a fascination with extraordinary manifestations and in particular with paranormal entities".

The Document warns us that “the manifestations are indeed spiritual, but are not from God despite the language of love and light which is almost always used”. (#2.2.1)

In the New Age “much credence is given to the mediation of various spiritual entities”. (#2.3.3)

“The essential matrix of New Age thinking is to be found in the *esoteric-theosophical* tradition which was... particularly strong in Freemasonry, spiritualism, occultism and Theosophy. In this world-view... nature is a living being... People can contact the upper or lower worlds by means of their imagination, or by using mediators (angels, spirits, devils) or rituals.” (#2.3.3)

New Ager David Spangler, quoted in the Document, admits “Individuals and groups are living out their own fantasies... usually of an occult form... The New Age has become populated with strange and exotic beings, masters, adepts, extraterrestrials: it is a place of psychic powers and occult mysteries... and hidden teachings... a confusion of the New Age with ultimate truth”. (#3.2) “Some groups are both esoteric and occult. At the center of occultism is a will to power based on the dream of becoming divine”. (#2.3.4.1)

(Note: esoteric=secret. The opposite is exoteric= known to everyone).

The founders of pranic healing, reiki, homeopathy, the enneagram, etc. were immersed in occult, esoteric and paranormal research and activities.

The New Age and the Word of God: The lie of the serpent

“In a New Age context, reincarnation is linked to the concept of ascendant evolution towards becoming divine”. (Glossary) “In New Age there is no real concept of sin, but rather one of imperfect knowledge; what is needed is enlightenment... It is clear that one life is not enough, so there have to be reincarnations to allow people to realize their full potential. (#4)

“The identity of every human being is diluted in the universal being and in the process of successive incarnations. To be opened to the divinity which lives within them...there is no need for Revelation or Salvation... from outside themselves, but simply a need to experience the salvation hidden within themselves by mastering... techniques which led to enlightenment”. (#2.3.4.1)

“New Age involves a fundamental belief in the perfectibility of the human person by means of a variety of techniques and therapies as opposed to the Christian view of co-operation with divine grace... Mind-expanding techniques are meant to reveal to people their divine power; by using this power, people prepare the way for the Age of Enlightenment... We are co-creators and we create our own reality... This exaltation of humanity overturns the correct relationship between Creator and creature and one of its extreme

forms is Satanism. Satan becomes the symbol of a rebellion...that often takes aggressive, selfish and violent forms". (#2.3.4.1)

"Our problem in a New Age perspective is our inability to recognize our own divinity... The fundamental idea is that 'God' is deep within ourselves. We are gods". (#3.5)

"In the first centuries of Christianity, the Fathers of the Church waged war against gnosticism...

Some see a rebirth of gnostic ideas in much New Age thinking and some New Age authors actually quote early Gnosticism". Explaining New Age gnosis as neo-gnosticism, the Document defines gnosis as a form of knowledge that is not intellectual, but mystical, thought to be...capable of joining the human being to the divine mystery". (Glossary)

Following John Paul II's statement on "the return of ancient gnostic ideas under the guise of the so-called New Age", he warns us about the 'distortion of God's Word' by neognostic ideas "in the name of a profound knowledge of God". (#1.4)

We find that the ideologies of the New Age Movement correspond to the lie of Satan in Genesis 3: 4, 5: *You shall not surely die (reincarnation)... then your eyes shall be opened (enlightenment)... you shall be as gods (self-deification)... you will know good from evil (gnosis).*

Ultimately, the intelligent source and driving force behind the NAM is none other than Satan. The Document tersely states "We live in the last times". (#4) And the Bible prophesies that "In the last times some will turn away from the faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and demonic instructions..." (1 Timothy 4:1)

What Catholics are called to do about the New Age Movement

"The success of New Age offers the Church a challenge". (#1.5) "It is often a response to people's religious questions and needs". (#2) And, "It must never be forgotten that many of the movements which have fed the New Age are explicitly anti-Christian... It is occasionally made clear that there is no... place for... Christianity". (#6.1)

There is a great "need for Catholics to have an understanding of authentic Catholic doctrine and spirituality in order to properly assess New Age themes". (Foreword)

"Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness; rather, expose them". (Ephesians 5:11)

The New Age is so complex that it is impossible to remain on a particular thread without going on to a related issue. Hence, in this presentation, one

might come across what appear to be ‘repeats’, but care is taken to present them from different angles with a view to make New Age paradigms more understandable and to increase one’s compendium of knowledge.

C.

What New Agers believe versus what Christians believe An Overview

- New Agers believe that God is an amoral, impersonal, evolutionary all-pervasive life force or energy within the universe that is in all and is all, and which man must manipulate, balance or channel for psychospiritual healing and wellness; but the God of the Bible is a moral, eternal Personal Being who is omnipresent (all-present), omniscient (all-knowing), all-powerful (omnipotent), and Who has revealed Himself through natural revelation -- nature and human conscience -- and through special revelation – the prophets, His Son Jesus, the Holy Bible and the teaching of the Church.
- New Agers believe that we can mystically become aware of the divinity of all things including ourselves, that we can experience union with the “Absolute”, and that “higher entities”, “angels”, “guides” and “ascended masters” can assist us in achieving this union using a variety of techniques; Christians believe that Creator and creation are distinct from each another.
- New Agers posit that Jesus was one of many “masters” called “*The Christ*” who are the most highly evolved beings in a given age. He was, they hold, one who achieved enlightenment and became aware of His divinity and dedicated Himself to help each one of us become aware of ours; Christians know that He is the unique Son of God, the eternal second person of the Trinity, The Enlightened One, true God and true man, and Redeemer of the human race and of the universe.
- New Agers believe that we, humans, are the apex of evolution, yet still evolving, having unlimited divine potential, depending not on reason but on intuition; but Christians know that God created us in His image and likeness as rational, moral, mortal beings with free wills and immortal souls.
- New Agers believe there are no absolutes, and there is no external source of authority, only an internal and relative one; but we believe that the external sources of authority are God, His Word in the Holy Bible, and the magisterium of the Church that His Son founded on St. Peter. If there were no absolute external authority, the moral order would collapse.

- New Agers believe that sin is simply ignorance that results in a “separation” of the individual self, the jivatman, from the paramatman, the Absolute Self, Over Soul or Brahman, since “all is one”; it is a failure to recognize one’s own divinity, to know that truth is subjective, and that good and evil are relative and not absolute. This separation is an illusion and one must strive to overcome this separation and re-attain monistic unity by merging the individual self with the Absolute Self through systems like yoga that purportedly assist one to attain such a unity; Christians understand that sin is a wilful violation of God’s Laws, a moral evil that results in our total separation from a God who is all-Goodness.
- New Age eschatology holds that since evil and sin are illusory, and “all is one”, no personal Judge exists, and that we will be saved through psycho-spiritual techniques like meditations; but we are certain that we will be judged by God for our actions, and merit either eternal reward in heaven or be consigned to eternal damnation in hell.
- New Agers believe that salvation is deliverance from the Law of Karma and the cycle of rebirth through reincarnation; but we know that salvation is deliverance from the power and penalty of sin through baptism and ongoing repentance and it is because of Jesus’ atoning death on the Cross.
- New Agers believe that we can be liberated when our consciousness is enlightened through meditating on the “god within”, which is a discovery of our own “divinity”; but we adhere to the knowledge that salvation comes by grace through faith that results in good works and that true meditation is to reflect on God’s greatness and glory and the living Word of God in the Holy Bible.
- New Agers believe in the principle of monism, that “all is one”, a divine “energy” from which all things emanate and return to, and they strive to manipulate that energy for healing body, mind and soul through alternative therapies in what they call “holistic healing”; but we understand that God has provided us with medicines (in nature and through the development of science) and the wisdom of doctors (Sirach 38), and the Sacramental ministry of the Church, and that the healing of our whole selves, spirit, soul and physical body (1 Thessalonians 5:23) comes from Him alone according to His holy will and plan for each one of us.

“The most central and commonly shared beliefs among New Agers are various combinations of Gnosticism and occultism. Gnosticism is an ancient world-view stating that Divine essence is the only true or highest reality, and that the unconscious Self of man is actually this essence. It is through intuitional discovery, ‘visionary experience or initiation into secret doctrine’ (not the

plenary revelation of propositional truth in the Bible), that man becomes conscious of this true Self. (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 10, 1968, p. 506; J.D. Douglas, ed., *New Bible Dictionary*, pp. 473-4)."

(Craig Branch, <http://www.watchman.org/profile/nwagmpro.htm>, 1996)

Gnosticism is an ancient heresy; and occult practices are expressly forbidden by the Church.

Professor at the Mater Ecclesiae Higher Institute of Religious Sciences of the Lateran, Fr. Alessandro Olivieri Pennesi says:

"The attempt at divinizing man that the New Age propagates, through a transformation that can be brought about by working on oneself, comes with a retrieval of the idea of alchemy. In [James Redford's] the *Celestine Prophecy* [popular among New Age Catholics] there is the metaphor of the spiritualization of the man who becomes pure energy: a Gnostic attempt to get back to the divine spark. That also comes in another of the sacred texts of the New Age, *A Course in Miracles*. It's a book that came out of academic circles in the United States, the work of Helen Schucman, who is Jewish.

She claimed to enter in contact with her deep self, receiving from it the 'revelation' of Christ".

(<http://www.30giorni.it/us/articolo.asp?id=910>, May 2003)

A Course in Miracles, the "Bible" of the New Age Movement

"Insofar as sin is concerned, while reference to Adam's sin is silenced, it is affirmed, as '*A Course in Miracles*' states, that man's principal problem is his ignorance of his divinity. Every perceptible fault that man thinks he has is more an absence of knowledge; with this is eliminated the need for salvation and for a savior."

(*Why New Age is a Challenge for Christianity*, Fr. Alessandro Olivieri Pennesi, at an international consultation on New Age held by the Holy See, 14-16 June 2004, <http://www.zenit.org/english/visualizza.phtml?sid=56135>)

A Course in Miracles is the name of a book (which fundamentalist Christian ministers have called the most dangerous ever published) that was dictated by a channeled spirit, who *claimed to be Jesus*, to Helen Schucman (1909-1981) between 1965 and 1972. Described as "spiritual psychotherapy", it's been widely promoted by New Age guru Marianne Williamson on the Oprah Winfrey show. The book, a system of spirituality that proponents claim is the "Third Testament" of God to His people, has been described as **the bible of the New Age Movement** and a modern version of the heresy of Gnosticism.

They are to be continuously repeated as affirmations or *mantras* (read chapters 42, 72) so as to spiritually benefit the user.

Extracts from its *'Idea for today'* [with the lesson number in brackets]:

- Your sinlessness is guaranteed by God. Over and over this must be repeated until it is accepted [93]
- Salvation comes from my one Self. [96]
- Let me remember I am one with God. [124]
- I am the Holy Son of God Himself. [191]
- My Self is ruler of the universe... It is I who rule my destiny. [253]
- Let me remember that there is no sin. [259]
- Christ's Second Coming... is merely the correction of mistakes and the return of sanity. [300]

"Moira Noonan, once a New Age minister and psychic, a former disciple of *'A Course in Miracles'* who returned to the Catholic Church calls it *a course in brainwashing.*"

(*New Age – Brainwashing*, Tracy Moran, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/newage/brainwas.txt>)

"I view this as the most dangerous **New Age** material in circulation today... During an October 1994 lecture on 'Discernment' given at Holy Cross Church, Rumson, N.J., Fr. Benedict Groeschel (exorcist) told those in attendance that he believed Helen Schucman's experience with the channeled 'spirit' was possibly a true diabolic manifestation."

(<http://www.sempercatholic.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=7043&sid=fd994f3ccef529a9bf598be20208abb2>)

The devil and your intentions

"It's a well-established fact that most people who get involved in the **New Age** – which includes many practices founded in the occult – are 'dabblers'. They're just poking around in this or that, looking for a spiritual high, a 'connection' to the universe, an escape from reality, a cure for what ails them. Others are in it for the money. "Most New Age activities are commercial ventures, initiated by small entrepreneurs, fortune-tellers of all kinds, mediums and 'healers'," writes Benjamin Beit-Hallahami in *Psychological Perspectives in Religion and Religiosity*. But almost no one takes it very seriously.

In fact, one of the most common remarks I hear from people who dabble in things as serious as the occult is, 'But I was just fooling around!'

"Like the youngsters who are playing with Ouija boards and who say, 'But we're just trying to have some fun!'

The grieving widow who visits the medium, 'I just want to know my husband is okay!'

The exercise enthusiast who balks at warnings about yoga and claims, 'I'm just doing the exercises.'

The parents of children who read sorcery-laden books because they're popular at school who say, "But it's just fiction!"

While it's true that all of these excuses are innocent enough, does this mean that just because the people involved in these scenarios weren't intending to consort with the devil that they're protected from demonic attack?

Absolutely not. Let me explain.

"The Catholic Church teaches that a person's intention really matters when it comes to committing sin. As we read in #1750 "Freedom makes man a moral subject. When he acts deliberately, man is, so to speak, the father of his acts. Human acts, that is, acts that are freely chosen in consequence of a judgment of conscience, can be morally evaluated. They are either good or evil."

The morality of his acts depend upon: 1) the object chosen; 2) the end in view or the intention; 3) the circumstances of the action. "The object, the intention, and the circumstances make up the 'sources,' or constitutive elements, of the morality of human acts," the *Catechism* summarizes. And why is this so?

"Because ours is a just God. He takes into account our intentions, circumstances, infirmities, weaknesses, etc. But when we're talking about the devil, there is no such sense of justice. He could care less that you're playing with an Ouija board just for kicks. He's going to answer your attempts to contact the "other side" regardless of who you think you're communicating with. The devil could also care less that you believe posing your body in a position designed to worship the sun god is a harmless exercise. Our early Church Fathers taught that demons hide behind the names of false gods. This means that the demon hiding behind the sun god is perfectly happy to respond to this summons regardless of who calls him into an exercise class.

"And because he's also a cold-hearted monster, he is even more pleased when he can convince a grieving widow that she's really hearing her husband's voice rather than his own perfect imitation.

He's also delighted when he can trick an innocent child into practicing some of the spells he reads about in Harry Potter or any of the dozens of other books that promote sorcery to children.

The bottom line is that the devil doesn't play fair. This is why there's no such thing as dabbling in the occult or any of a variety of New Age practices that open the door to the occult, such as certain healing techniques like Reiki,

medical intuitives, angel readers – all of which rely upon the intervention of “spirit guides” or other spiritual entities.

Unless you are in a state of grace (regular confession and Eucharist, sincere desire to turn away from sin) even something as minor as an occasional dabble can be dangerous.

“This explains why Monsignor Patrick Branken, official exorcist for the Diocese of Tulsa, warned curiosity seekers who might attend a black mass planned for the Oklahoma City Civic Center in 2014 (<https://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2014/09/18/exorcists-warn-of-danger-from-oklahoma-city-black-mass/>) that they are placing themselves in extreme danger regardless of just being there out of curiosity. “I would think that there would be a real strong possibility, especially in the state of sin, that they would walk out possessed,” Msgr. Branken said (link) about these attendees. “If someone went there out of curiosity, especially if there was a possibility that they were not in the state of grace, they could easily come out with a demonic attachment, whether it would be an oppression, obsession or a full possession.”

“The devil is real and he despises every single one of us with a murderous hatred. Does this sound like someone you want to “dabble” around with?”

(*The Devil and your Intentions*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=57235>)

The New Age: A Luciferic Initiation. Alice Bailey, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, David Spangler and Benjamin Crème

Theosophist **Alice Bailey**’s books (recommended as good reading for his Pranic Healing students by founder Choa Kok Sui), are produced by the **Lucis** Trust. Its original name was ‘**LUCIFER** Publishing Company’. Bailey, founder of the occult Arcane School, finds mention in the JCBWL Document, #4 and the Glossary. Lucis Trust says:

“The Baileys’ reasons for choosing the original name (“**Lucifer** Publishing Company”) are not known to us, but we can only surmise that they, like the great teacher H.P. Blavatsky, for whom they had enormous respect, sought to elicit a deeper understanding of the sacrifice made by Lucifer.”

(*The Esoteric Meaning of Lucifer*, https://www.lucistrust.org/arcane_school/talks_and_articles/the_esoteric_meaning_lucifer)

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (JCBWL #2.3.2, #4, three mentions in #7), a Russian medium who founded the *Theosophical Society* with Henry Olcott in New York in 1875, in *The Secret Doctrine* says:

“Lucifer was really the first Archangel who was transformed by the church into **Lucifer or Satan** because he is higher and older than Jehovah, and had to be sacrificed to the new dogma.”

(*The Secret Doctrine, The Classic Work* by H. P. Blavatsky, abridged and annotated, Jeremy P. Tarcher, Penguin, page 71)

Constance Cumbe in *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*, Huntington House, 1983, page 44, reveals that leading New Ager **David Spangler**'s (co-founder of Findhorn, a leading New Age centre, JCBWL #2.2.2, #2.3.2, #2.4, #7.3 and #9.1) *Revelation, the Birth of a New Age* is “treated as a Bible within the New Age Movement”. He also wrote “*The New Age Vision*”, 1980, and “*Towards a Planetary Vision*”, 1977, both with Forres, Findhorn Publications.

Spangler says:

“There will be several religions and spiritual disciplines as there are today, each serving different sensibilities and affinities, each enriched by and enriching the particular cultural soil in which it is rooted. However, there will be a *planetary spirituality* that will celebrate the sacredness of the whole humanity in appropriate festivals, rituals, and sacraments. There will be a more widespread understanding and experience of the holistic nature of reality, resulting in a shared outlook that today would be called mystical. Mysticism has always overflowed the bounds of particular religious traditions, and in the new word this would be even truer.”

(<http://newagemess.blogspot.in/2013/01/new-age-in-christianity.html>)

In his *Reflections on the Christ*, (Forres, Findhorn Publications, 1978/3rd ed.1981, pages 40-45), New Age high priest David Spangler says this:

“The true birth of the Christ was not the birth of Jesus. Jesus was an individual who himself had to recapitulate certain stages. He built upon the pattern Buddha had established.”

(Michael Akerman, www.catholicassociates.com/leaflets/Somedeceptionsfthenewage.pdf)

“Lucifer, like Christ, stands at the door... and knocks. ... **Lucifer** is the angel of man's inner light. He comes to give to us the final gift of **wholeness**. If we accept it then he is free and we are free. This is the **Luciferic initiation**. It is one that many people now, and in the days ahead, will be facing, for it **is an initiation in the New Age**. It is an initiation of becoming **whole** and at peace because we have recognized our inner light... the light of God.”

(*Reflections on the Christ*, page 45, as quoted in *Lucifer Rising – Part 2*, Carl Teichrib, <http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/2002/carl-teichrib/lucifer2.htm>)

“In *The Hidden Dangers of The Rainbow*, page 139, Constance Cumbe states that Spangler has “uttered some of the most outrageous blasphemies ever spoken against Jesus Christ and God the Father”.”

(Fighting the Demonic Surge-2, Satanism, Witchcraft and Church Feminists by Robert Eady, <http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=611&CFID=32583699&CFTOKEN=84458373>)

Constance Cumbey is one of many Christian authors who have written to me appreciating my work exposing the NAM.

“The true light of *Lucifer*, this great Being, can only be recognized when one’s own eyes can see with the light of the Christ, the light of the inner sun. *Lucifer works* within each one of us to bring us to **wholeness**, and as we move into a **new age**, which is the age of man’s **wholeness**, each of us is in some way brought to that point which I term the *Luciferic initiation*, the particular doorway through which the individual must pass if he is to come fully into the presence of (*Lucifer’s*) light and his **wholeness**.” (Read also chapter 50: Channeling...)

(www.catholicassociates.com/leaflets/Somedceptionsfthenewage.pdf)

[Read section D: **The New Age paradigms of Holism, Wholeness and Holistic Health**]

“The Christ” or the Cosmic Christ could be anyone or all of them, the Buddha, an “Ascended Master”, Jesus... or **Lucifer**.

“The doctrine of the Christ spread in *New Age* circles is inspired by the theosophical teachings of Helena Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner’s anthroposophy and Alice Bailey’s ‘Arcane School’. Their contemporary followers are not only promoting their ideas now, but also working with *New Agers* to develop a completely new understanding of reality, a doctrine known by some observers as ‘**New Age truth**.’ ... Blavatsky claimed to have contact with the *mahatmas*, or *masters*, exalted beings who together constitute the Great White Brotherhood. She saw them as guiding the evolution of the human race and directing the work of the Theosophical Society.” (JCBWL #4)

“The *New Age* has become populated with strange and exotic beings, masters, adepts, extraterrestrials; it is a place of psychic powers and occult mysteries, of conspiracies and hidden teachings.”

(JCBWL #3.2, citing David Spangler, *The Rebirth of the Sacred*, London, Gateway Books, 1984, page 78)

“David Spangler also says that those who do not enter the **New Age** “will lose, for the time being ... the ability to control or influence the developments upon Earth. ... They will have moved from an active state to a relatively passive one”. (*Revelation: The Birth of a New Age*, Lorian Press, 1976, 5th printing, page 164).

“And that those not attuned to New Age energy “have no place in the new world”; they will be sent “where the patterns of the old still hold sway (for their) highest good”.

(*Ibid*, pages 160, 161)

“All the **New Age** soothsayers say that the extinction of the opposition is for their own good, the beginning of their cosmic re-education.”

(*New Age*, Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/new_age.html)

Spangler insists that “The Second Coming of Christ in our age will be fundamentally, most importantly, a mass coming. It will be the manifestation of a consciousness within the multitudes.”

(*Towards a Planetary Vision*, Forres, Findhorn, 1977, page 108; quoted in Ron Rhodes, **New Age Movement** (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995) page 72. Mike Shreve <http://www.thetruelight.net/booksections/articles/bookarticle28.htm>)

Spangler, Director of *Planetary Initiatives* of the U.N. (see following sub-title), also wrote “*The New Age*”, Issaquah (The Morningtown Press) 1988. (JCBWL #9.1). And *The Findhorn Garden, Manifestation*, and *The Laws of Manifestation*, 1983.

Benjamin Crème, a leading lecturer and proponent of the New Age says: “**Lucifer** is the name of a great Angel, not an upstart in heaven who revolted against God and was put down into the nether regions as the Devil. That is a complete misinterpretation. Lucifer means light, and comes from the Latin lux, lucis, meaning light. It is the name of the Angel Who ensouls the human kingdom; every person, therefore, is a fragment of **Lucifer**.”

(Ageless Wisdom teachings and spirituality, Basic tenets FAQ, http://www.share-international.org/archives/agelesswisdom/faq_basic.htm)

The above quotes on Lucifer are available from multiple sources, but for my convenience I took all of them from Carol Brooks’ http://www.inplainsite.org/html/new_age_vs_the_bible.html), unless otherwise indicated.

Carol Brooks is one of many Christian authors who have written to me appreciating my work exposing the NAM.

The United Nations (UN), the new world religion and the New Age Movement

One could dedicate an entire book to this subject alone, the UN and New Age, but I shall make this as brief as I can.

“As the **NAM** prepares man for his role in the New World Order, the vehicles and philosophies are also being prepared. One is the **United Nations (UN)**.

“In order to bring about a **one-world order** it is necessary to justify ever increasing government interference in our private lives... Here we look where one eventual focus will be- the United Nations. Robert Muller is the Asst. Secretary-General and has served under numerous Secretaries-General. His

book 'New Genesis- Shaping a Global Spirituality' is an eye-opener for those who will see the spiritual direction the UN is headed.

"Let us see Muller's way of 'shaping a global spirituality':
'...as vividly described in the story of the Tree of Knowledge (in Genesis), having decided to become like God through knowledge... we have also become masters in deciding between good and evil... This gives Catholic, Christian and all spiritual educators a marvelous opportunity to teach a new morality and ethics...'

"Some Christians will question the negative view of the UN, yet in any reading about the **UN** it is never long before the **New Age** and occult spirituality is encountered.

"Paul Henri Spaak, former President of the UN General Assembly once said 'Send us a man who can hold the allegiance of all the people, and whether he be God or devil we will receive him.'

"One booklet based on Alice Bailey's teachings which deals with the **United Nations** and entering the 'Global Age' points to the new way of thinking and behaving... The view is taken that the UN stands not only as the vehicle for this change but as the catalyst.

"When we turn to the UN we are able to see for ourselves the diabolical evidence. The Meditation Room at the **UN** Headquarters in New York is shaped like a truncated pyramid (the Illuminati insignia) laid on its side.

"'To those versed in esoteric understanding, the crescents and triangles present a definite form that takes shape, in the centre and outer circle of the mural as the Illuminati eye.' (*The Broken Cross*, Piers Compton, 1981)

The New Order is political, social and religious, and we see the hand of the UN in all three... The evidence for the **UN** being central in Satan's plan is almost endless..."

(*Understanding the New Age*, Roy Livesey, 1986, pages 27-36)

The author, Roy Livesey, provides several pages of supporting evidence for his statements.

"Recently the Brahmakumaris (read chapter 47) were granted Consultative Status by the **United Nations**. It is the first spiritual institution to be given such status. Referring to this, Dr. Muller ... stressed the need for evolving spirituality to usher in peace. '*Such spirituality will be based on a happy blend of spiritual values of the East and the material progress of the West*', he said."

(*Zero Update No.3*, Maranatha Revival Crusade, Secunderabad, India, 1983)

"A prestigious 'Universal Peace Conference' was held in India in 1983 at the World Spiritual University, headquarters of the Brahmakumaris (read chapter 47) Raja Yoga Society, a **United Nations** affiliate. Among the 3000 delegates from 42 countries was Robert Muller. In his keynote speech to the delegates,

he said: 'The time has come to obtain peace on this planet... The U. N. Charter has to be supplemented by a charter of spiritual laws... I think that what is wrong... we have forgotten that... we have a cosmic evolution and [spiritual] destiny'."

(*The Seduction of Christianity*, Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon, 1985, pages 53, 54)

"At the Parliament of the World's Religions that met at Chicago in 1993, a 'Global Ethic' was adopted that stressed the need for cooperation among the religions of the world to end hunger, war and injustice... (In it) the word 'God' does not appear as a concession to Buddhists (who) do not believe in the existence of any God or gods. Instead, the word 'earth' is capitalized throughout, reflecting the pantheistic nature of the conference. In keeping with globalism, it said: 'We pledge to work for transformation in individual and collective consciousness, for the awakening of our spiritual powers.' Whereas the old religions separated people... the new religion unites them... In this new synthesis, religion and science are combined. God is defined as 'energy' or 'the force' that men can harness to bring about Utopia."

(*Christ Among other Gods*, Erwin B. Lutzer, 1994, pages 11, 170, 171, 48)

"The new ideological base of the **New Age** political agenda is a unity of all religions... A unity of religions is absolutely necessary if the 'oneness of mankind' is to become a reality. Muller spoke on this theme at a Universal Peace Conference in February 1983."

(*The New Age Cult*, Walter Martin, 1989, pages 70, 71)

"Environmentalism (read chapter 26) is an entry point to the **New Age**, and there is no shortage of occult and **New Age** within the ranks of the **United Nations**."

(*More Understanding the New Age*, Roy Livesey, 1990, page 51)

Make special note of the location of the following **New Age** organizations and their activities: 'New Group of World Servers', 'Planetary Citizens', 'Planetary Initiative for the World We Choose', 'World Goodwill', the 'Unity-in-Diversity Council' & 'Lucis Trust'. They all have their headquarters at the **United Nations** Plaza in New York.

- *New Group of World Servers* was organized by Theosophist and occultist Alice Bailey, who wrote 'The Plan' (see below), under the direction of 'the Masters' (spirit entities) in 1925, to serve as a vanguard for the reappearance of 'the Christ.'

- *Planetary Citizens*, according to a report in 'New Age Politics' by Mark Satin, is to aid the above "World Servers everywhere. David Spangler was on its Board of Directors, along with Peter Caddy, the founder of the (New Age centre) Findhorn Foundation, Scotland.
- *Planetary Initiative for the World We Choose* calls their official publication 'The Initiator'. New Age guru Benjamin Crème's demonic transmissions from 'Lord Maitreya' say "I am the Initiator of the little ones". Spangler, who is associated with this project, has defined this 'Initiation' as being Luciferic.
- *World Goodwill* distributed a 'prayer' called "The Great Invocation" for the first time in 1945, the same year the UN was founded. According to *World Goodwill*, this world prayer expresses truths central to all major religions and is based on the true and inner unity of all religions and philosophies. By the combined and daily use of the Invocation by men and women of goodwill, an open channel into human consciousness is created, through which spiritual energies flow to heal and rebuild a troubled world. The Invocation refers to the 'opening cycle of the Aquarian Age' and the prayer contains Alice Bailey's key words, 'the Masters' and 'the Plan'. (Bailey's secret teachings for a New World Order, communicated to her by mediumistic dictations, is set forth in 'The Plan'.) The Great Invocation hopes to be to the coming new world religion what the Lord's Prayer is to the Christian.

It has been distributed in Hindi, Urdu and Tamil among other world languages.

In 1965, a leaflet was issued showing how the Invocation relates to the UN, how it could be used to strengthen the UN, and including the text from the UN Charter of the Principles of the United Nations.

- *The Unity-in-Diversity Council's* advisory board features New Age luminaries like Peter Caddy, and Robert Muller. The Council sponsored the huge New Age Mind-Body-Spirit (MBS) Festivals in San Francisco and Los Angeles, and in London ("the largest New Age event on the planet"). It was founded in 1965, the year designated by the UN as International Cooperation Year, as the International Cooperation Council, and sponsored the yearly 'Festival of Human Unity' since then. Some of its several hundred member organizations are *Tara Center*, a New Age network, *Findhorn Foundation*, and New Age prophet Marilyn Ferguson's *Leading Edge Bulletin and Brain Mind Bulletin*. The introduction to their 1979 Directory noted that they were to be considered a new species- homo noeticus as opposed to *homo sapiens*.

The Statement of Its Purpose and Work includes to affirm the oneness of all life, healing of the whole person, exploring the interaction between matter, energy and consciousness, facilitating the evolvement of Universal Persons through consciousness expansion (meditation techniques), transpersonal psychology, creating a new global civilization, a network of planetary citizens, a functional [one] world government.

In its Declaration of Interdependence, it pledges to integrate reason and faith, science and religion; and to build with joy a new civilization of freedom, justice and peace founded on reverence for life.

- *The Lucis Trust* was originally incorporated in 1922 as Lucifer Publishing Company by Alice Bailey.

Under its auspices are Lucis Publishing Company (for Bailey's books), World Goodwill, the Arcane School etc.

Lucis Trust is reportedly the brains, from an occult planning basis, of the New Age Movement.

"Significant is the **New Age** link with prominent international organizations such as the **United Nations Organization, UNESCO...** etc. New Age goals are promoted by leading personalities such as the UN's Robert Muller."

(New Age from a Biblical Viewpoint, Mother Basilea Schlink, Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary, 1988, page 10)

"The fronts of the Theosophical Society today connect closely at many points with the activities of the **UN...** One direction where the **UN** is making significant advances is that of 'traditional' or 'alternative' medicine. The promotion of occult medical therapies through the Traditional Medicine Programme at the World Health Organization is as varied and exotic as the wide membership of the **UN...** The areas which Alice Bailey wrote would prepare the world for the New Age were holistic health, mind control and meditation."

(Understanding the New Age, Roy Livesey, 1986, pages 45, 69)

D.

The New Age paradigms of Holism, Wholeness and Holistic Health

We have already seen that when some practice or treatment (related to meditation or health) is described as “spiritual”, we should immediately be suspicious about its antecedents and alleged benefits. We came across other often-used New Age terms under the sub-title “Broadly determining how one can identify New Age medications and meditations” in my Introduction. But there are still other health-related New Age buzz words as will learn in this section of the book.

At the International Theological Video Conference on *The Church, The New Age Phenomenon and Sects*, 27 February 2004, in a follow-up to the release of the Document, quoting #2.2.3 of JCBWL, Cardinal Dario Castrillón Hoyos, Prefect for the Congregation of the Clergy, said:

“(One) area of great concern of the New Age movement is the promotion of **holistic health** through techniques ‘derived from ancient cultural traditions, whether religious or esoteric... Advertising connected with New Age covers a wide range of practices such as acupuncture, biofeedback, ... meditation and visualization, psychic healing, ... various kinds of herbal medicines ... The source of healing is said to be something within ourselves, something we reach when we are in touch with our inner energy or cosmic energy.’ As with New Age, some methods were simply natural, some were magical, a few verged, at times, towards the diabolic.”

JCBWL lists a number of holistic therapies (of which I have reproduced only a few in the Cardinal’s quote); it also names three eastern meditations: T.M., Zen Buddhism, and (Hindu) Yoga.

Holism and Wholeness

JCBWL identifies “‘**holism**’ an essential ingredient in *New Age*, as one of the principal *signs of the times* in the last quarter of the twentieth century.” (#2.3)

“**Holism** pervades the NAM from its concern with **Holistic Health** to its quest for unitive consciousness and from ecological awareness to the idea of global ‘networking’.” (#2.2.4)

“One of the central concerns of the *New Age* movement is the search for “**wholeness**”.” (#2.2.4)

All New Age medications, including the innocuous homoeopathy, are touted by practitioners as “holistic” healings.

All New Age meditations claim to benefit the person “holistically”.

“Holistic” pertains to the whole person – body, mind and soul – in New Age parlance. We recall that the whole human is spirit, soul and body – and not body, mind and soul – according to Christian revelation. New Age-speak does away with the “spirit”. Though describing itself as “spiritual” and believing in the interventions of “angels”, “higher beings”, “Ascended Masters”, spirit guides, avatars, channeled spirits and many other entities, New Age rejects the spirit because it cannot reconcile itself to the notion of there being an individual human spirit. If New Age were to accept the existence of the individual “spirit”, one of its fundamental premises that “all is one” and “there is only one Reality” (monism) would collapse because it would mean that it would then have to accept the existence of a personal God, a personal judgement by God of individual human beings, eternal reward/punishment, the jettisoning of the popular New Age doctrine of reincarnation, etc.

If we are already part of that all-is-one god, how then can we become fragmented by sin since such separation (i.e., sin, in the Christian worldview) is not possible?

The two more common areas in which the holistic paradigm is injected into Catholic society are medicine and meditation. But, the New Age holistic approach is also found everywhere: in psychology, counseling, economics, education, entertainment, ecology, feminism, global networking, media, politics, ‘prayer’, science, sexuality, stress-management, etc.

So, what is “holism”? It is the concept of understanding, and treating, man as a “whole” – “body, mind and soul”, and going further, in man’s relation to society and the entire cosmos. In the New Age interconnectedness of things, all is one continuum. New Age considers the human being as a microcosm of the macrocosm, the universe. Individual healing is effected only when the “whole” is treated. The whole is the same as the part, and vice versa, but treatment is individualized. In both the Vedic/Upanishadic and Taoist/Buddhist traditions, the universe is ideally in balance and in harmony. Any defect in the whole is the result of defects in the individual parts. But since the parts themselves are actually holographic images of the whole, for ideal healing the defective part must be treated holistically. This will restore the part, which will contribute to the restoration of the whole, both to their original ideal states.

In New Age, creation is deified. Thus, ‘Mother Earth’ is the Greek goddess Gaia. New Age centres for practising healing and meditation are set up at locations where supposed ley lines cross or converge. Here, clairvoyance, spirit channeling and other psychic phenomena are a common occurrence, along with the holding of annual Body-Mind-Soul (BMS) festivals attended by witches, mediums and New Agers.

Three such places, Esalen, Findhorn and Monte Verità are mentioned in JCBWL (#2.3.2, #7.3, etc.) They are the ideal choice for mass meditations or “harmonic convergence” where people meet and focus their energies to “heal the world”. Since “all is one” and there is no alterity between matter, energy and space, thoughts produced by the mind can be focused over time and space to heal from a distance. There is no dichotomy between science and spirituality. Everything is this energy that can be harnessed and transmitted if only we can learn to tap the resources hidden within ourselves, this latent power in the self that is ‘god’. In the Vedic/Upanishadic tradition, the Divine Self or *paramatma* dwells within each one of us through its microcosmic representative, the individual self, *jivatma*. Separation is an illusion. All is one (monism). The goal of all activity and life is to overcome this separation and re-attain this unity, this wholeness, by merging the self with the Self. Thus, eastern meditations like yoga work holistically: entry is at the physical level (asanas), which is followed by mental exercises that culminate in the spiritual activity that results in enlightenment – which is oneness with the Absolute or Brahman.

Ayurveda, the philosophical underpinnings of which are from Hinduism, similarly proposes a holistic treatment of disease.

The Taoist/Buddhist traditions are symbolized by the yin-yang symbol which represents the balancing or complementarity of all opposites. Here again, all esoteric therapies from acupuncture to reiki and pranic healing, and even the entire range of martial arts, subscribe to these philosophies in greater or lesser measure.

There is a commonality between the two mainstream traditions – which underlines much of New Age – in the concept of a life force energy that is divine/God/all. In the Indian tradition, there is the *prana*, which is called *chi*, *qi*, or *ki* in the Far Eastern traditions. Thus we have Tai *Chi*, *Qi* Gong, *Chi* Kung, *Reiki*, etc.

Pranic Healing is a cleverly concocted modern combination of the two systems. Even homoeopathy, which is among the New Age holistic therapies named in the Document, presumes the existence of a ‘vital body’ (or “subtle body”) and a ‘vital force’ that heals human beings and animals at the holistic level, not at the physical level as is commonly, and very mistakenly, presumed.

The process of healing in these holistic therapies, also called alternative or complementary medicines as opposed to allopathic medicine, boils down to the simple transfer or balancing of (chi, cosmic, etheric, ki, life force, prana, psychic, qi, universal, vital) energy either directly or at a distance as in “distant healing”.

They suppose that man is an energy being (since all is energy, 'god' is energy) with an accidental, and maybe even illusory, physical body, and a mind or soul ('god' is the Over Soul). This primeval energy is perfection in itself. Energy flows through 'Mother Earth' as 'ley lines'; and in the human body through channels, meridians, nadis and chakras.

Man, through his ignorance and his exploitation of the universe, has disturbed the balance of energies. But, harmony and healing, whether of the Earth, the cosmos, or in the human body can be achieved by restoring the balances or reconciling the opposites.

One's energy levels or meridians might be depleted or congested, affecting the energy flow and causing a repercussion which manifests as disease at the physical level. While allopathy treats only the symptoms of disease, alternative remedies correct imbalances at the energy-body level, thus ensuring holistic health. Acupuncture and its related systems use pins or pressure to restore the unimpeded flow of energy. Pranic and Reiki healers may channel energy from external sources like the sun or particular trees that are full of 'good' energy, or even from the pictures of their founders, to replace the 'dirty' or diseased energy in the patient's body. Crystals, said to be powerful repositories of 'good' energy, are popular in New Age.

The above scenario is not as uncommon as we would like to imagine. "Even if it can be admitted that New Age religiosity in some way responds to the legitimate spiritual longing of human nature, it must be acknowledged that its attempts to do so run counter to Christian revelation. In Western culture in particular, the appeal of "alternative" approaches to spirituality is very strong. On the one hand, new forms of psychological affirmation of the individual have become *very popular among Catholics, even in retreat-houses, seminaries and institutes of formation for religious.*" (JCBWL #1.4)

Leading Catholic writers on New Age themes confirm the widespread practice and propagation of New Age holism in Catholic institutions worldwide, including in India.

The late Fr. Bede Griffiths OSB of Saccidananda Ashram, Shantivanam in Tamil Nadu, India (read chapter 48), wrote in November 1982 (he was a New Ager and was closely associated with leading world New Agers): "I think that we are in an age of transition. The old model of the Church, and also of society is breaking down, and a new model is emerging- a contemplative, intuistic, **holistic** model as opposed to our scientific, rational, mechanistic, analytical model. But I am afraid that our present system will have to break down more or less violently before a new world can emerge."

If one entertains any doubt that any alternative medicine or any eastern meditation system does not fit the holistic bill, one has to read the writings of those propagating these practices. All of them treat the human person – and society – as a whole, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Now, that in itself is not a bad thing. Except that in the New Age worldview of holism, all basic Christian truths are replaced with lies or counterfeits. In fact, they are incompatible with and inimical to Biblical revelation and Church teaching.

To appreciate the danger of the deceiving paradigm of “holism” or “wholism”, one must make a detailed study of the Document on the New Age. The sections ‘Health: Golden Living’ (#2.2.3) and ‘**Wholeness**: A Magical Mystery Tour’ (#2.2.4) are directly related to the subject under study in this chapter, but others such as #2.3, #2.3.1, #2.3.4.2, #2.3.4.3, #2.4, and #2.5 will further enhance the picture.

“The real danger is the **holistic** paradigm. New Age is based on totalitarian unity and that is why it is a danger.” (#4 citing *L’Ideologia della New Age*, Michel Lacroix, Milano (Il Saggiatore) 1998, page 68) “The cosmos is seen as an organic whole. It is animated by an energy which is also identified as the divine Soul or Spirit” (#2.3.3).

Referring to the New Age fascination with ‘wholeness’ as “a magical mystery tour” and “one of the central concerns of the NAM” (#2.2.4), the Document reports that “Alternative Therapies have gained enormously in popularity because they claim to look at the **whole** person” which “formal (allopathic) medicine ...fails to look at.” (#2.2.3) “A focus on hidden spiritual powers or forces in nature has been the backbone of much of what is now recognised as New Age theory.” (#1.3) “The source of healing is... our inner or cosmic energy.” (#2.2.3)

“The perennial philosophical question of the one and the many has its modern and contemporary form in the temptation to overcome not only undue division, but even real difference and distinction, and the most common expression of this is **holism**, an essential ingredient in *New Age* and one of the principal signs of the times in the last quarter of the twentieth century.” (#2.3)

“**Holism**: a key concept in the ‘new paradigm’, claiming to provide a theoretical frame integrating the entire worldview of modern man. In contrast with an experience of increasing fragmentation in science and everyday life, ‘wholeness’ is put forward as a central methodological and ontological concept.

“Humanity fits into the universe as part of a single living organism, a harmonious network of dynamic relationships. The classic distinction between subject and

object, for which Descartes and Newton are typically blamed, is challenged by various scientists who offer a bridge between science and religion. Humanity is part of a universal network (eco-system, family) of nature and world, and must seek harmony with every element of this quasi-transcendent authority. When one understands one's place in nature, in the cosmos which is also divine, one also understands that 'wholeness' and 'holiness' are one and the same thing." (#7.2)

Earlier Documents

On 3 May 1986, the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, the Secretariat for Non-Christians, the Secretariat for Non-Believers, the Pontifical Council for Culture and the Secretariat of State released a Document titled, *Sects or New Religious Movements: A Pastoral Challenge* from which I quote:

"3.3 Personal and **Holistic** Approach. People must be helped to know themselves as unique, loved by a personal God, and with a personal history from birth through death to resurrection. 'Old truth' should continually become for them 'new truth' through a genuine sense of renewal, but with criteria and a framework of thinking that will not be shaken by every 'newness' that comes their way. Special attention should be paid to the experiential dimension, i.e., discovering Christ personally through prayer and dedication (e.g., the charismatic and 'born again' movements). Many Christians live as if they had never been born at all! Special attention must be given to the healing ministry through prayers, reconciliation, fellowship, and care. Our pastoral concern should not be one-dimensional; it should extend not only to the spiritual, but also to the psychological, social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions."

On 15 October 1989, Cardinal Ratzinger signed the Document *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of Christian Meditation*. While assessing what is and what is not genuine Christian prayer, the Document warns of the spiritual dangers involved in the practise of yoga, T.M. and Zen. These meditations are holistic in nature, involving "body, mind and soul".

The Christian understanding of Holistic Health

The pagan New Age worldview ignores the reality of sin which is the cause of suffering, disease and death. It reduces the Creator to an impersonal energy, deifies the self and all creation, and offers wholeness and salvation through techniques and by works.

New Age cannot accept the Christian revelation that man is spirit with a soul and body (Genesis 2:7). It substitutes the "spirit" with the "energy body", which is "seen" either clairvoyantly or through Kirlian photography as one's "aura". New Agers do believe in higher beings, ascended masters or angels, but they

are not the same as the angels of the Bible. They are simply spiritually “evolved” beings who may guide us in our own evolution.

New Age cannot concede that man is spirit, because if it does, it will be obliged to accept that there must be other spirits: evil spirits, good spirits... and God. If man is spirit, it also follows that there is no reincarnation, a fundamental belief in New Age (as in Hinduism), and that there is death, judgement of sin by a personal God, hell, heaven (cf. Hebrews 9:27) as held in Christian eschatology. Alternative Therapies seek to treat us wholly or holistically: physical body, mind, and soul. But, St. Paul exhorts us to remain perfectly holy and blameless “entirely, spirit, soul and body” (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

It is significant that Paul places the body last, while New Age order is in the reverse: it is always body, mind and soul. New Age fairs are almost always known as Body Mind Soul (BMS) festivals.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew equivalents for *spirit* and *soul* are often interchangeable. But, simplistically speaking, in our spirit we are in the image and likeness of God, the very “breath” of the Creator, and our soul is our mind, intellect, will, judgement, reasoning, etc. In New Age however, distinction is made between the mind and the soul, though it is never clear what that distinction is. Neither does the body-mind-soul triad account for the New Age’s so-called “energy body”.

The believer is enjoined, like the Bereans, to study the claims of both New Agers and Catholic holistic healers and meditators who “Christianize” these therapies, and they are exhorted to “examine the Scriptures to determine whether these things are so” (Acts 17:11). New Agers are never able to restrict their explanations and teachings to the body-mind-soul concept, and invariably end up speaking of the spirit in terms of spirituality or paranormal/occult powers.

Since there are no neutral powers in the spiritual realm, the believer is also exhorted to “Test everything” (1 Thessalonians 5:21), and “not trust every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they belong to God” (1 John 4:1), to see if they stand the test of God’s Word in Scripture and Church teaching. I do not believe that it is coincidence that the letter to the Thessalonians asks us to be blameless in spirit, soul and body and immediately thereafter enjoins us to “test everything”.

BUT...

Christian healing, too, must be holistic – treating spirit, soul, body, because man is spirit, soul, and body!

Protestants love to cite Acts 9:34 which their King James Version Bible renders as “Jesus Christ maketh thee **whole**.”

True holistic healing is available from New Testament times in the Catholic Church through the merits of Jesus Christ.

For the body we have doctors and medicine. Sirach 38: 1-14 is a beautiful description of God’s providence for man’s physical health through nature and the doctor. God created the plants and minerals that go into our medicines, and he gives the doctor the wisdom to write his prescriptions. Modern drugs and medical technology are an extension of this.

As with Isaiah’s treatment of King Hezekiah using a poultice (Isaiah 38), God is always the source of the healing.

For the soul, the Lord has revealed the ministry of Inner Healing or the Healing of Emotions. We do not need ‘Chicken Soup for the Soul’, psychology, psychotherapy, Jungian techniques, hypnosis, etc.

Furthermore, the believer is exhorted to remain sober, to be alert, to renew his mind, to put on the mind of Christ, to reflect on the Word and to love the Lord with his whole heart and mind (Psalm 119, Mark 12: 30, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 2:16, 1 Corinthians 14:15, 2 Corinthians 10:5, 1 Peter 1:13); not to empty his mind, not to go “inward” or not to indulge in the practice of dubious or occult meditations. Emptying one’s mind and mantra chanting in meditation are a devious Satanic ploy to deflect Christians from genuine prayer and communication with God.

For the spirit, Catholics have sacramentals, the Sacraments of Reconciliation, the Eucharist, etc. The confession of – and forgiveness for – sin, community prayer for the sick, and Holy Mass are resources that God has provided for the greatest possible healing (James 5: 14, 15; 1 Cor. 11:27 ff.) Charismatic retreats are good examples of holistic healing: spiritual, emotional (inner healing), and physical, occurring in that Biblical order! While conventional medicine may be used to heal the body, it is only God who heals a person spiritually through the ministry of the Church.

The Bible offers the ultimate solution to the problem of sickness: “If you really listen to the voice of the Lord, your God, and do what is right in His eyes, if you heed his commandments and keep all his precepts, I will not afflict you with any of the diseases with which I afflict the Egyptians; for I, the Lord, am your Healer.” (Exodus 15:26)

Truly the very best book on the Biblical Christian approach to sickness and disease that I have read till date is "*None of These Diseases*" by Dr. S. I. McMillen M.D., Lakeland, 1963. I have gifted away maybe a dozen copies of it over the years.

E.

MEDICATING IN THE NEW AGE

Alternative medicine is also known as Traditional Medicine, Complementary Medicine, Integrated Health Care, Alternative Health approaches.

[Remember: A criticism applied to a particular alternative therapy generally extends to all similar/related therapies]

Much of New Age "healing" is effected by the manipulation, "balancing" or "channeling" of the esoteric Universal Life Force Energy (chi, ki, vital energy, prana) in one's "energy body", (aka vital body, subtle body, plasma body, etheric body...) using its supposed energy centres and channels: "meridians", "chakras" and "nadis" commonly called "psychic anatomies". The underlying philosophy for all of them is found in pre-Christian religions including Taoism and Hinduism.

"Psychic anatomies are alleged invisible, nonphysical, inner "structures" frequently associated with Eastern/occult religions, related to mystical energy, and often employed in New Age diagnosis and healing. These structures were apparently first noted psychically by occultists having spirit guides in various pagan religious traditions. New Age healers who utilize these structures claim that they help reveal physical, mental, and sometimes spiritual illness even before it manifests on the physical or mental level. Use of these "anatomies" is characteristically dependent upon altered states of consciousness, psychic development, and/or the spirit contact necessary to "see" and "influence" them. Theoretically, such inner structures could exist, although this is doubtful because those who claim to psychically see them offer contradictory reports as to their number, nature, and function. For example, the numbers of astral bodies range from 1-9; meridians from 72-2,000, *chakras* from 6-12, and *nadis* from 72,000-326,000. Further their almost universal association with occultism and the need for occultic development to use them negates any claim to a neutral science of psychic anatomies. Thus, various contradictions in theory and practice belie the claim that these structures can be used in any objective manner in medical diagnosis and treatment."

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-31/>)

Are Catholics forbidden to use alternatives such as acupuncture and homoeopathy?

“Q: I don’t see any mention in the Catechism about Catholics being forbidden to use alternatives such as homeopathy or acupuncture to treat illnesses like cancer or diabetes. If this is true, can you tell me what documents contain this teaching?

“A: Yes, this is true. This teaching can be found in the [Ethical and Religious Directives for Health Care Services*](#) (link) (Part V, No. 56) which is based on the *Catechism*.

*United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, November 17, 2009, <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/health-care/upload/Ethical-Religious-Directives-Catholic-Health-Care-Services-fifth-edition-2009.pdf>.

“These Directives state that ‘A person has a moral obligation to use ordinary or proportionate means of preserving his or her life. Proportionate means are those that in the judgment of the patient offer a reasonable hope of benefit and do not entail an excessive burden or impose excessive expense on the family or the community.’

This teaching derives from Pope John Paul II’s encyclical *On the Value and Inviolability of Human Life (Evangelium Vitae)*.

“Keep in mind that ‘proportionate means . . . in the judgement of the patient offer a reasonable hope of benefit...’ does not mean that we can use alternatives such as homeopathy and acupuncture in spite of their lack of scientific credibility just because we want to believe they’ll work. If the science is not behind them, we cannot use them to the exclusion of ordinary means to treat serious or contagious diseases.

*“As I’ve quoted elsewhere in this blog, and in my *Learn to Discern* booklets, Kevin G. Rickert, Ph.D. explains in *Homiletics and Pastoral Review* that ‘Catholic moral teaching requires that we use ordinary means to save a life or to treat a malady. When a person is confronted with a life threatening condition, or some less serious illness (especially a communicable disease), which can be easily treated by ordinary means, there is a moral obligation to do so.’*

“Unscientific medical cures such as alternatives that are either untested or failed to pass the test of rigorous scientific scrutiny (as is the case with most alternatives in use today) are not considered to be ordinary ‘because they are not real means at all,’ Dr. Rickert writes. ‘As such, they are neither required nor permitted. The main problem with these kinds of “cures” is that they don’t really work; they are irrational, and as such they are contrary to the natural

law. In this case, I subject my mind to deception, and at the same time, I neglect my obligation to employ ordinary means; in so doing, I subject my body to illness and my loved ones to potential hardships.'

"When we put our full faith in one of these untested methods to treat a serious illness like diabetes or heart disease, while refusing the best science of the day, we fall into the trap of deception and error, aka 'superstitious medicine'."

(*Can Catholics Use Alternatives to Treat Serious Illnesses?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=17080%20-%20more-17080>)

Why Does Alternative Medicine Seem to Work?

"Why is it that so many people are seeking alternative medicine therapies when so many of them have been shown not to work in clinical trials?

"There are at least eight reasons why.

"1. Genuine therapeutic effects.

Some alternative medicines genuinely work.

Over half of prescription and over-the-counter drugs originate as natural compounds or are based on them (e.g. aspirin, digitalis, morphine, adrenaline, curare, all antibiotics except the quinolones etc.); and the natural world may hold many more therapeutic treasures. It is quite conceivable that some alternative medicine practitioners are using useful compounds or techniques which are not yet known to orthodox medicine. But if this is the case then we need to discover what they are so that they can be isolated and given in the correct dose!

"2. The placebo effect.

If we strongly believe that something (or someone) has the power to help us, then we are much more likely to experience benefit. It is a fact that one third of people given an inert compound to relieve a particular symptom will report relief of that symptom. This is called the placebo effect. In the same way patients who share the therapist's belief in New Age pantheism or the existence of 'life force' will be more likely to benefit from their therapy.

"3. Concurrent use of therapies.

Belief in an alternative therapy's effectiveness may develop when it is used concurrently with another more effective orthodox therapy. The effect is then wrongly ascribed to the alternative therapy.

"4. Psychosomatic illness.

Many illnesses are psychosomatic; in other words a patient's stress level or mental state can aggravate the symptoms. Asthma, eczema, peptic ulcer and

rheumatoid arthritis fall in this category. Alternative therapies, which induce relaxation, may then improve the symptoms.

"5. Spontaneous remissions.

Many diseases get better by themselves. Viral infections (e.g. warts, common cold) and some tumours (e.g. malignant melanoma) are examples of conditions, which may spontaneously regress. In such cases people may well then attribute therapeutic effect to the remedy they were trying at the time of recovery, when in fact their improvement at that time may just have been coincidence. This is called the 'post hoc, propter hoc' fallacy; in other words 'because B followed A, then A must have caused B'.

"6. Dietary influences.

There is a strong link between diet and health, and many alternative therapists recommend that patients drink less coffee or alcohol, eat less fat or more fibre or take vitamins. The resulting improvement may then be due to the change in diet, rather than the alternative therapy being used concurrently.

"7. Imagined improvement.

Some patients, especially if open to suggestion from others that they 'look better', may simply imagine that they 'feel better'; especially if the symptoms were of a vague nature in the first place. Alternatively they may simply get better at tolerating symptoms, and imagine that the symptoms themselves have diminished.

"8. Demonic involvement.

There may be real spiritual forces operating to bring healing through demonic power. Such healings may be the bait that Satan then uses to draw a person more deeply into the occult, or into accepting a pantheistic worldview."

(*Responding to Alternative Medicine*, Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/alternative_medicine_2.html)

How to tell whether a doctor is practicing scientific medicine, and how to identify occult New Age medicine

"The Church does not approve or disapprove of a practice based solely on its scientific efficacy, but also on its compatibility with revealed Truth. Irregardless of whether something "works", if it does so based on a reliance upon occult powers, for instance (i.e. "life force energy" or psychic powers) it would not be approved of for use by the Church. Science may, however, discover that a practice works for reasons other than the various mystical philosophies with

which it is associated, which might then change the way the Church rules on the use of a particular practice.”

(Science and the Church, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=210>)

“Informed and attentive listening is important. Ask the doctor to explain things in simple English; critically think through what a doctor says. If you believe it is necessary, do not hesitate to bring up the subject of New Age medicine. What does a doctor think about it, and why? Has a doctor ever considered adopting New Age medical treatments? Which one(s), and why? What is the doctor’s religious worldview? Does he have a spiritual leader or guru? Does he follow an Eastern religion or practice a form of Western occultism? Is he frustrated from some of the problems in conventional medicine and looking for alternate ways of treating his patients? Has a personal crisis in his life led him to explore alternate spiritual lifestyles?

“Unfortunately, the occult nature of New Age treatments may be camouflaged by scientific, neutral, or spiritual-sounding euphemisms. Because of this, it is often necessary to investigate the background of a given treatment thoroughly before placing one’s physical or spiritual health at risk. Certainly anyone who suspects any unusual or unorthodox method or therapy should investigate the matter before treatment begins or continues.

“How did the practice originate? Who was its founder? What was his worldview and spiritual orientation? Is the method or practice accepted in the medical community, and if not, why not? Does a method require a psychic sensitivity to operate successfully? Is there any evidence to substantiate that this method really functions on the basis of its stated principles? If it claims to function on spiritual or mystical principles, what is the worldview tied to those principles, and how are they related to the occult? Does accepting the method *require* adopting a new worldview? Does the method require faith: Does it “work” only if one believes in it?

“There are a number of principles for determining which therapies or techniques should be avoided. We have reproduced these principles below, added others, and provided illustrations with various New Age therapies. In recognition of the ancient Latin phrase ‘caveat emptor,’ that is, ‘let the buyer beware,’ they are listed as ‘caveats’.

“**Caveat #1.** Beware of therapies that are energy based and claim to manipulate invisible or mystical energies or that rely on psychic anatomies. Examples are acupuncture, muscle testing, ayurvedic medicine, reflexology, and color therapy. Be aware, also, that a practice which appears entirely innocent, such as passing a hand over the body (as in therapeutic touch), may not be innocent at

all. Therapists who claim to manipulate invisible energies may harm a person spiritually by such a method.

“Caveat #2. Beware of those who seem to use psychic knowledge, power, or abilities, as in clairvoyant diagnosis, psychic healing or surgery, crystal healing, therapeutic touch, radionics and psychometry, channeling energies, and shamanistic medicine.

Those having psychic abilities are ultimately linked to the spirit world, and their methods and practices are consequential.

“Caveat #3. Beware of a practitioner who has a therapy that almost no one else has heard of. We could cite something called Terpsichoretrancetherapy or TTT. This is a ‘hypnopsychotherapeutic’ method which claims that ‘the ritual kinetic trance existing in primitive Afro-Brazilian spiritual [spiritist] sects may be used therapeutically,’ noting that ‘under [both] TTT and during a ritual [spirit] possession, the subject undergoes [allegedly therapeutic] regression’.

“Caveat #4. Beware of any technique that is promoted before it has been validated by mainstream science. This includes New Age medicine in general. To accept such practices is unwise because responsible persons do not publicly promote techniques whose value and safety is undemonstrated. Such practices are typically quack methods whereby people lose their money through experimentation and do not get better.

“Caveat #5. Beware of anyone claiming that the therapy will cure almost anything, as in color therapy, acupuncture, homeopathy, and some forms of chiropractic. Those who maintain that the therapy will cure almost anything will probably cure almost nothing.

“Caveat #6. Beware of someone whose explanations are bizarre or don’t make sense, as in astrologic medicine, behavioral kinesiology, homeopathy, and color therapy. A practitioner of astrologic medicine may tell you that the influence of Jupiter or Pluto has affected your nucleic acids. A homeopath may claim that the more diluted a ‘medicine’ is, the greater its power to heal. A color therapist may ask you to drink water bathed in ‘yellow rays’ to cure indigestion. (Never hesitate to ask your doctor to explain in simple English, and to offer scientific evidence, why the therapy works on the basis of its stated principles.)

“Caveat #7. Beware of therapies whose primary ‘proof’ is the claims of satisfied clients. Again, this includes New Age medicine in general. In fact, the only ‘evidence’ we have that New Age medicine works comes from testimonials which are better explained by other means. Of course, satisfied clients (at least

initially) are found in everything from con schemes to witchcraft, but that hardly validates them. Therapies can seem to work and still be false.

“Caveat #8. Beware of therapies that rely upon entering altered states of consciousness, such as hypnotic regression, therapeutic touch, meditation, and visualization techniques. Altered states of consciousness are notoriously deceptive, unreliable in health matters, and frequently open the doors to spiritistic influences.

“Caveat #9. Realize that a practitioner’s sincerity is no guarantee of scientific or medical legitimacy. This holds true for all practitioners, including Christian ones. Even noted evangelical health therapists and pastors have employed or endorsed questionable or discredited techniques.

“Caveat #10. Beware of any method that has been scientifically disproven, such as iridology, homeopathy, applied kinesiology, astrologic medicine, radionics, and many chiropractic claims.

“Caveat #11. Beware of a therapist or physician who claims to diagnose or treat patients on the basis of “intuition.” In New Age medicine, ‘intuition’ is often a euphemism for psychic and spiritistic inspiration or ability.

“Caveat #12. Beware of spiritual imperialism. Avoid any therapist who thinks his or her methods are specially connected to God. For example, many of these therapists will attempt to treat clients psychically without their knowledge or permission. Some nurse practitioners of therapeutic touch have admitted this. Such therapists may assume the divine ‘right’ to do so because ‘divine’ intuition tells them such treatment is ‘needed’. Also, it is always wise to make certain a physician has attended an accredited medical school. This is no guarantee that he or she will practice legitimate medicine. But it will weed out those who are medically untrained, to help you determine whether the therapy offered is commensurate with their educational background. And be wary of a practitioner who will not directly answer your questions or seems evasive. Even some physicians are closet spiritists or psychics. When directly asked if they are practicing energy manipulation or have spirit guides, they will evade the issue in order to retain respectability and credibility. Or they will redefine their occult beliefs and practices so that they sound scientific. Continue to pursue the issue until you have a definite answer concerning their orientation.

Finally, if the buyer is to beware, the seller of questionable therapies should also beware. Those who deal in the realm of health, not to mention the human spirit, have a responsibility to others not to promote therapies which may endanger the physical, emotional, or spiritual health of their clients. Those who

offer therapies that are not scientifically established, and which may harm their patients, need to realize they can be held legally accountable for their actions.” (Excerpted from *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*, Harvest House, 1996, **cited in *Caveat Emptor***, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/new-age-medicine-caveat-emptor/>)

“It’s pretty telling that many of the founders and leaders in modern new age medicine had occult involvement. [...]

“The following is quoted from *Can You Trust Your Doctor? The Complete Guide to New Age Medicine*:

*New Age medical practices are **spiritually dangerous** in two ways:*

(1) *They may bring people into the realm of spiritism so that the spirits gain some degree of physical or moral influence or control over their lives, whether this is perceived or not;*

(2) *New age philosophy is strongly anti-Christian and therefore may permanently insulate one against salvation in Christ, thereby insuring the loss of eternal salvation.*

“Being involved with New Age medicine can be seen as a form of idolatry because its practices reflects an underlying religious philosophy that promotes a false god. New Age practices consistently underscore variations on New Age pantheism which is unbiblical.”

(J. Williams, <https://deliverancefromdemonsinjesusname.wordpress.com/2017/07/18/new-age-medicine-exposed/>)

“As with the ‘alternative medicines’ themselves, the variety of establishment is seemingly endless. They can be headed up by people who would (quite fairly) describe themselves as ‘leading psychics’ with ‘specialist’ establishments. Others, more subtly, can be offering therapies which, away from the occult, would be valuable. Often today they are super-smart and sophisticated. Whatever its image, there may well be a variety of therapies on offer. It could be mainly a healing centre, beauty parlour, health food store or whatever. Therapies on offer alongside the ‘cosmetic camouflage’, the ‘beauty therapy’ and the ‘simple food bar’ will in these days include acupuncture, reflexology, relaxation, yoga and all the rest!

The centres vary and yet they are the same! Small town establishments are springing up. Large retail chains now specialise in health foods with homoeopathic remedies, self-hypnotism cassette tapes and so on... Also there are Bach Flower Remedies (read chapter 6) supposed to balance emotional deficiencies...

Nothing should be taken away from the sincerity, commitment, care and willingness to help that lies behind the motives of this sort of centre. My plea is for discernment of spirits (1 Corinthians 12). The purpose of this book is to

caution that there are two realms in the spiritual dimension and to encourage Christians [to be] mindful of their responsibility (1 Corinthians 2:14) to seek the discernment to know if a particular therapy is of God. Spiritual therapies which are not of God are very dangerous. Commitment, care and sincerity on the part of the unknown helpers understandably eager to support their fellow men in the times of their greatest need, serves only to promote the activity of deceiving spirits. So beware, Satan masquerades as an angel of light."

(*Beware Alternative Medicine - the Christian View*, Roy Livesey, 1983)

The use of Alternative Medicine can be physically dangerous, even fatal

"The following is quoted from *Can You Trust Your Doctor? The Complete Guide to New Age Medicine*:

*New Age medicine is **physically dangerous** in two ways:*

"(1) New Age medicine practices are ineffective medically, can easily misdiagnose a serious ailment, and may prevent a serious ailment from being treated such that the condition progresses toward permanent injury or death;

(2) New Age medicinal practices are also physically dangerous because to the extent they involve someone in the world of the occult, they bring the same kinds of physical dangers associated with occultic involvement."

(J. Williams, <https://deliverancefromdemonsinjesusname.wordpress.com/2017/07/18/new-age-medicine-exposed/>)

"These are stories of people who have been harmed by not thinking critically about *homeopathy*. This includes deaths, injuries, hospitalizations..." (<http://whatstheharm.net/index.html>)

"Many of these *Ayurvedic* concoctions are **dangerous** and health officials in India and other countries, including the U.S., are taking steps to address this problem. For instance, a NCCAM-funded study published in 2004 found that of 70 Ayurvedic remedies that were available over-the-counter, 14 contained lead, mercury, and/or arsenic at levels that could be **harmful**.

This study, which was published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, concluded that "One of 5 Ayurvedic HMPs (herbal medicine products) produced in South Asia and available in Boston South Asian grocery stores contains potentially **harmful** levels of lead, mercury, and/or arsenic. Users of Ayurvedic medicine may be at risk for heavy metal toxicity, and testing of Ayurvedic HMPs for toxic heavy metals should be mandatory."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also reports 12 cases of lead poisoning occurring within the last few years that were linked to

Ayurvedic medicine... There are also concerns about the possible interaction of Ayurvedic formulas with other medicines a patient may be taking."

(*Ayurvedic Medicines*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=132>)

"The New Age has made huge inroads into the healthcare industry, especially in the area of self-help "cures" in the form of everything from pills to chi machines. However, New Age miracles are usually more hype than fact, which is why consumers would be wise to review new guidelines from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on how to spot a fraud before it costs them their money – and their health. According to this consumer update from the [FDA](#) (link) a health product is fraudulent if it is deceptively promoted as being effective against a disease or health condition but has not been scientifically proven safe and effective for that purpose. "The snake oil salesmen of old have morphed into the deceptive, high-tech marketers of today. They prey on people's desires for easy solutions to difficult health problems – from losing weight to curing serious diseases like cancer," the FDA writes. "Scammers promote their products through newspapers, magazines, TV infomercials and cyberspace. You can find health fraud scams in retail stores and on countless websites, in popup ads and spam, and on social media sites like *Facebook* and *Twitter*." They're easy to spot because they use grandiose language such as "miracle cure" or "revolutionary scientific breakthrough" and are often referring to products used for weight loss, sexual performance, memory loss, or any one of a number of serious diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes and heart disease. These products can do a lot more than just waste your money, says Gary Coody, R. Ph., FDA's national health fraud coordinator. They can also cause **serious injury and even death**. "Using unproven treatments can delay getting a potentially life-saving diagnosis and medication that actually works," Coody says. "Also, fraudulent products sometimes contain hidden drug ingredients that can be **harmful** when unknowingly taken by consumers." "Health fraud is a pervasive problem," says Coody, "especially when scammers sell online. It's difficult to track down the responsible parties. When we do find them and tell them their products are illegal, some will shut down their website. Unfortunately, however, these same products may reappear later on a different website, and sometimes may reappear with a different name."

So how do you protect yourself from scammers? The FDA offers the following tips:

- **One product does it all.** Be suspicious of products that claim to cure a wide range of diseases. A New York firm claimed its products marketed as dietary supplements could treat or cure senile dementia, brain atrophy, atherosclerosis, kidney dysfunction, gangrene, depression, osteoarthritis,

dysuria, and lung, cervical and prostate cancer. In October 2012, at FDA's request, U.S. marshals seized these products.

- **Personal testimonials.** Success stories, such as, "It cured my diabetes" or "My tumors are gone," are easy to make up and are not a substitute for scientific evidence.
- **Quick fixes.** Few diseases or conditions can be treated quickly, even with legitimate products. Beware of language such as, "Lose 30 pounds in 30 days" or "eliminates skin cancer in days."
- **"All natural."** Some plants found in nature (such as poisonous mushrooms) can kill when consumed. Moreover, FDA has found numerous products promoted as "all natural" but that contain hidden and dangerously high doses of prescription drug ingredients or even untested active artificial ingredients.
- **"Miracle cure."** Alarms should go off when you see this claim or others like it such as, "new discovery," "scientific breakthrough" or "secret ingredient." If a real cure for a serious disease were discovered, it would be widely reported through the media and prescribed by health professionals – not buried in print ads, TV infomercials or on Internet sites.
- **Conspiracy theories.** Claims like "The pharmaceutical industry and the government are working together to hide information about a miracle cure" are always untrue and unfounded. These statements are used to distract consumers from the obvious, common-sense questions about the so-called miracle cure.
Always ask your doctor or other health care professional before trying an unproven product!"

(Six Ways to Spot Health Care Fraud, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=19902>)

Read also about the physical dangers of dozens of other Alternative Medicines and the hundreds of testimonies of those who tried them: <http://whatstheharm.net/index.html>.

Chapter 1

Acupuncture, Acupressure, Reflexology or Zone Therapy, Sujok, Shiatsu, and associated alternative therapies such as Auriculotherapy, Acu-Yoga and Zen-Shiatsu

Acupuncture is not only about pain alleviation as is commonly thought. It is also used to heal a variety of ailments using different methods. A laser beam is used in **laser acupuncture**, while the needles are connected to an electrical supply which produces vibrations in **electro-acupuncture**. Ear acupuncturists who practise **auriculotherapy** claim that all the needle sticking points have their equivalents in the ears, thus making whole-body acupuncture unnecessary.

Animals are also treated with acupuncture.

Acupuncture can also be used in conjunction with heat produced by burning specific herbs, this is called **moxibustion**.

Cupping is another type of treatment. This is a method of stimulating acupuncture points by applying suction through a metal, wood or glass jar, in which a partial vacuum has been created. This technique produces blood congestion at the site, and therefore stimulates it. Cupping is used for low backache, sprains, soft tissue injuries, and helping relieve fluid from the lungs in chronic bronchitis.

Sujok is acupuncture of hand and foot ('su' stands for 'hand' and 'jok' stands for 'foot').

In **Acu-Yoga** meditation and exercise, three contracted positions known as 'locks' are used. They are Root Lock (Mula Bandha), Diaphragm Lock (Uddiyana Bandha) and Neck Lock (Jalandhara Bandha). Applying of these three simultaneously is known as Master Lock. Application of these allegedly locks increases blood circulation, help regulate endocrine glands, rebalances the reproductive system and strengthens the urinary system.

In **acupressure**, a non-invasive method of massage therapy, the pressure of the fingers substitutes for the needles. Stimulation of the acupuncture points is performed with the fingers or an instrument with a hard ball shaped head.

Origins and development

The earliest textbook on acupuncture, dating from around 400 BC was the *Nei Ching Su Wen* or *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine*.

In ancient China, since dissection of the human body was prohibited for religious reasons, the Chinese had only a vague idea of anatomy. So, early Chinese medicine was more influenced by the astrological and spiritual concepts of the time. The qualities of five known 'elements' [water, fire, wood, earth and metal] were correlated to five solid organs of the body [like the heart] which corresponded with five hollow organs [e.g. the stomach], and were later allocated a planet and a season of the year. They believed that diseases were sent by gods and demons. The earliest doctors were shamans who performed rituals with incantations and spells, while sticking needles into the patient in an effort to expel the demons. Later the demon model was exchanged for an astrological one. The Emperor Huang Ti observed from a study of the stars that harmony and balance reign in the universe. He concluded that man is the microcosm and must correspond to the macrocosm. In other words, man's physical and mental processes must be maintained in tune with each other. Further developments took place with the emergence of a philosophical school called *Taoism*. Taoism comes from *Tao* [meaning 'the way'] which was believed to be the first principle, the universal cosmic energy behind the order of nature, preceding even God. It dates back to the philosopher Lao Tse. The Tao's two faces are the Yin and the Yang. Each has several attributes that are in opposition to the other, yet they are still one. According to the theory of acupuncture, there are two more organs in the body unknown to Western man: the 'Triple Warmer' and the 'Gate of Life', both of them being Yang. Everything in the universe is either Yin or Yang. For example, good is Yang and evil is Yin. They do not oppose each other, but are simply two sides of the same coin. Similarly, Chinese medicine understands man as one in body and spirit, a complete unit that finds its ultimate harmony only in Tao. This is the doctrine of monism or 'all is one'. Fundamental was the chi or life energy which permeated all things, and was all things, with its polar components of Yin and Yang, which constantly strive or interplay to achieve a harmonising balance. Disease in the human body was manifested due to imbalance in the chi or energy body of a person. Man can function properly only when his chi is in harmony with the cosmic energy of the universe. Acupuncture was performed to restore the balance of chi in the patient, arriving at a harmony between Yin and Yang, thus ensuring good health. Along with the use of meditative techniques, Taoists sought for the ultimate wholeness, a surpassing of the human condition, in the prize of immortality. Some modern Western acupuncturists downplay or ignore its Taoist underpinnings, while others adopt the use of the pendulum and other practices that Christians consider occult.

News about **acupuncture** (Latin *acus*, needle; *punctum*, prick) hit the headlines when in 1971 a group of Americans witnessed surgery on the chest of a patient

at the Peking Medical College in China. Apart from a dose of morphine injected at an acupuncture site near his jaw to act as a tranquillizer, the only anaesthetic used seemed to be a needle inserted into the man's forearm and manipulated (moved up and down, to and fro) by an acupuncturist. The patient was able to communicate with the surgeons and even eat some fruit! This incident prompted several American medical institutions into initiating acupuncture research programmes.

Between 1976 and 1977 alone, more than 100 articles were written in medical journals to explain how the system worked. Acupuncture had come to the West to stay.

Shiatsu or Shiatzu

In Japanese, *shi* means 'finger' and *atsu* is 'pressure'. Hence *shiatsu*, finger pressure, is the Japanese version of acupressure which came there from China in the 6th century, and was originally known as *anma*.

The Yin and Yang organs are here called Fu and Zang. The Japanese equivalent of chi, is ki. In shiatsu the acupoints, which are called *tsubos*, are pressed not only to stimulate ki but also to diagnose the presence of disease, in the belief that when ki is blocked in an acupoint, it becomes sensitive to pressure.

As with acu-yoga and acu-massage, there is a hybrid practice called **Zen Shiatsu**.

“**Shiatsu** finger pressure is another form of mind/body energy balancing therapy in the massage group. It is considered diagnostic as well as therapeutic. Skilled fingers are said to be able to detect energy imbalances and in turn, correct such. It claims to be able to stimulate the immune system, thereby benefiting the whole body. A variety of Shiatsu therapy disciplines exists in Japan and throughout the world. It has similar basis in the meridian concept as acupressure and acupuncture. This massage is gentle and is done close to the diseased organ. It, too, is a treatment based on the correspondence or sympathies of the body to the cosmos – man as the microcosm of the macrocosm. It has its origin from Japan.

The book *Shiatzu* assures us that Shiatsu therapy can equal the results of acupuncture without use of needles. The book also lists the following disorders that one can expect to see improved from its therapeutic use.

“**Acupuncture** uses needles, **zone therapy (reflexology)** concentrates principally on applying pressure to the hands and feet, and **Shiatsu** employs its own type of pressure. It does not matter much that the key points might be called by different names – reflexes, acupuncture points, or Shiatzu points. The seed of thought, basic to all, is the same. The history of Shiatsu then goes back to this deeper understanding of its essential nature.

The difference among the various treatments seems to lie in the kind of pressure treatment recommended by each method; yet, in all methods, results are obtained. To this day, no one quite knows why."

(*Reflexology or Zone Therapy and other energy-balancing therapies...*, Dr. Edwin A. Noyes M.D. MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

Reflexology

Another relative of the acu family is **Reflexology**, also known as **Zone Therapy**, or 'compression massage'.

It is a technique of diagnosis and treatment in which certain areas of the body, particularly the feet, are massaged to alleviate pain or other symptoms in the organs of the body. Of Chinese and ancient Egyptian origin, it was introduced to the West in the 1920s by Dr. William Fitzgerald, an American ENT specialist. Along with Ms. Eunice Ingham, who mapped out the sensitive areas on the feet, he applied ten zones or energy channels to the body, hence 'Zone Therapy'.

The zones do not correspond to the meridians of the Chinese system. A person's 'vital energy' is said to flow along these zones, ending in the hands and feet. Thus, when pain is experienced in one part of the body, it could be relieved by applying pressure elsewhere in the body, within the same zone.

Some reflexologists dismiss suggestions of any connections to the chi and yin/yang of acupuncture. They claim that they are breaking up and dispersing 'impurities in the blood' or 'crystals' which are causing congestion and interfering with the blood circulation. The crystals settle in the soles of the feet where reflexologists claim to be able to feel them. Others link their work with their belief in the existence in man of an etheric body, and they are bringing about a state of harmony between the physical and the etheric body.

New Age

"**Acupuncture** is a *holistic system* of healing, in that it treats the whole man, not just his present condition. It is a system in tune with Universe, and to understand it, we must understand something of Chinese philosophy."

(*Healing Without Harm, Pathways to Alternative Medicine*, E.G. Bartlett.) Bartlett is an enthusiast of Alternative Medicine

In all lists of New Age holistic health therapies, secular or Christian, including JCBWL, acupuncture and acupressure come out upfront, and not only for alphabetical reasons. "Advertising connected with New Age covers a wide range of practices such as **acupuncture**... massage and various kinds of 'body work' (such as ... **reflexology**) etc." (JCBWL #2.2.3)

According to Dr. Fr. Clemens Pilar COP, the book *The Other Medicine* by the German 'Stiftung Warentest' or 'Foundation for Testing Products' examines and rates a large number of these therapies. Among those therapies that did not

pass the test and which, therefore, the public was warned of were **acupuncture**, and **Foot Reflex Massage (Reflexology)**.

(*Esoteric Practices and Christian Faith*, Dr. Fr. Clemens Pilar COp, 2001 German edition, translated. Into English 2003)

Fr. Clemens Pilar COp is one of many Catholic authors who have written to me appreciating my work exposing the NAM.

Father Jeremy Davies, exorcist for Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor says, "Beware of any claim to mediate beneficial energies (e.g. reiki), any courses that promise the peace that Christ promises (e.g. enneagrams), (or) any alternative therapy with its roots in eastern religion (e.g. **acupuncture**)."

(Catholic News Service, <http://www.baltcatholicreview.org/subpages/storyworldnew-new.aspx?action=3688>)

"A study published in the *Arthritis Care and Research* journal found that among 455 patients with painful knee arthritis, **acupuncture** delivered no more relief than a sham treatment. *The New York Times* is reporting that the study, conducted at the prestigious MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston found that among the patients tested, there was no difference in pain relief between those who received acupuncture and those who received a phony version."

(Relief from Acupuncture linked to Placebo Effect, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=188>)

"Contrary to popular opinion, there is no scientific evidence proving that **acupuncture** works."

(*Acupuncture Remains Scientifically Unconvincing*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=463>)

Acupuncture, forms of **Massage** and **Reflexology** are named in the JCBWL document. (#2.2.3)

Chapter 2

Alexander Technique

Reporting on the first International Conference on Holistic Health and Medicine in Bangalore, November 8-11, 1989, UCAN, the largest Catholic news agency in Asia, wrote: "An Indian Association of Holistic Health and Medicine was formed. The conference included lectures and workshops on oriental and traditional medical systems such as ayurveda, yoga, acupuncture and Tibetan medicine. Post-conference courses were held on holistic approaches in psychoneuro-immunology, the **Alexander Technique**, spiritual healing, electro-magnetic therapy, homeopathy and naturopathic medicine."

(<http://www.ucanews.com/search/show.php?q=yoga&page=archives/english/1989/11/w5/mon/as8732.txt>)

Origins and development

Frederick Matthias Alexander (1869-1955) was an Australian actor who began to experience chronic laryngitis whenever he performed. When his doctors could not help him, Alexander discovered a solution on his own. He had not been aware that excess tension in his neck and body were causing his problems, and began to find new ways to speak and move with greater ease. His health improved to such an extent that his friends and several of the doctors he had consulted earlier persuaded him to teach others what he had learned. Over a career span of more than fifty years, he refined his method of instruction. After teaching for over 35 years, he began to train teachers of what has now become known as the Alexander Technique.

(<http://www.alexandertechnique.com/fma.htm>)

New Age

The June 2000 issue of New Age Journal has an article (<http://www.bodyzone.com/site/alexander-technique/alexander-technique-and-back-pain.html>) about back pain, citing the re-education process of the **Alexander Technique** as a valuable tool in back care. In May of 2000, the New York State Massage Board determined that the Technique does not fall under the scope of practice of any of the licensed professions in New York. The technique is truly a body/mind tool.

"According to practitioners, the **Alexander Technique** 'is a method that works to change (movement) habits in our everyday activities. It is a simple and practical method for improving ease and freedom of movement, balance, support and coordination. The technique teaches the use of the appropriate amount of effort for a particular activity, giving you more energy for all your activities. It is not a series of treatments or exercises, but rather a reeducation

of the mind and body. The Alexander Technique is a method which helps a person discover a new balance in the body by releasing unnecessary tension. It can be applied to sitting, lying down, standing, walking, lifting, and other daily activities...’ (Changing the Way You Work: The Alexander Technique)

The Alexander Technique was developed by F. M. Alexander (1869-1955)... To discover what it was, he set up three tailor’s mirrors and observed himself as he spoke. After a long period of observation, he realized that every time he spoke loudly, he would tighten his neck muscles, which in turn caused the laryngitis. He began to teach himself how to stop tensing these muscles and his vocal problems disappeared. In solving his own problem, Alexander became convinced that many of the difficulties people experience in learning, performing, or physical functioning, are caused by unconscious habits like his own that can interfere with a person’s natural poise and capacity to learn. He believed that when we stop interfering with the innate coordination of our bodies, we can take on more complex activities with greater self-confidence.

What resulted was a therapy that uses guidance and education to improve posture and movement while teaching a person how to use muscles more efficiently in order to improve the overall functioning of the body. It’s most common usage is for lower back pain and symptoms of Parkinson’s disease.

This might sound innocent, but F. M. Alexander counted among his friends and supporters several high profile theosophists (occultists) in his day, such as John Dewey, the notorious Aldous Huxley and George Bernard Shaw.

This troubles me because Alexander definitely includes a philosophical element in his technique based on the concept that a lack of happiness comes from the negative effects of poor posture on the ‘psycho-physical’ self.

Learning how to move in ways that produce less stress and strain on the body is thought to create a positive effect on one’s emotional and mental well-being.

“This could be more or less problematic, depending on the instructor and how deeply they may be involved in New Age ‘body awareness’.

I did notice that many practitioners who advertise themselves as teachers of the **Alexander Technique** also offer yoga, Pilates, Cranio-sacral therapy, and other New Age practices to their clients.”

(*The Alexander Technique*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=171>)

Chapter 3

Applied Kinesiology (AK) or Muscle Testing, Touch for Health (TH), Behavioral Kinesiology (BK), and Therapeutic Touch (TT)

Origins and development

The founders of these methods are George Goodheart (**Applied Kinesiology**), John Thie (**Muscle Testing**), John Diamond (**Behavioral Kinesiology**), and Dolores Krieger and Dora Kunz (**Therapeutic touch**).

“**Muscle testing** is often a combination of chiropractic and Chinese acupuncture theory plus ‘muscle-testing’ practices. It involves physical diagnosis, e.g., testing the supposed ‘strength’ or ‘weakness’ of muscles which are believed to be related to organ systems. And it may employ treatment or healing by acupressure, meridian tracing, ‘cosmic energies’, or other dubious methods. Muscle testing claims that disease can be evaluated, at least in part, through specific patterns of muscle weakness. It also claims to manipulate alleged body energies to produce and maintain healing. By supposedly ‘unblocking’ congested energy along meridian pathways, or by infusing energy into deficient organs or bodily areas, practitioners believe that physical health can be maintained.

Modern ‘New Age’ muscle testing methods must be distinguished from the scientific discipline of kinesiology proper. Webster’s Third New International Dictionary and the Encyclopaedia Britannica both define formal kinesiology as ‘(the) study of the principles of mechanics and anatomy in relation to human movement.’ Webster’s New Twentieth Century Dictionary defines it as ‘the science or study of human muscular movements, especially as applied in physical education.’ While New Age muscle testing may or may not employ some of the methods of formal kinesiology, scientific kinesiology never employs the methods of New Age muscle testing. The two disciplines are based on an entirely different approach to physiology and health.”

(*Applied Kinesiology*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon,
http://www.inplainsite.org/html/applied_kinesiology_1.html)

“**Touch for Health** is the evaluation of a patient’s condition by testing the alleged strength or weakness of muscles. It’s a popularized presentation of George Goodheart’s applied kinesiology.

Developed by chiropractor John Thie, the practice claims that body organs and systems are related to particular muscles through the alleged meridian system. The muscles that test “weak” indicate a blockage of “life energy” (chi) to the

corresponding organ. By acupressure (finger pressure on acupuncture points), hand passes (tracing meridian lines over the body), or other methods, the flow of chi is allegedly restored, muscles re-strengthened, and body organs and systems reinvigorated.

However, muscles are not related to organ systems in the manner that Touch for Health claims, making such diagnosis and treatment useless. Further, this practice can potentially become a form of psychic diagnosis (read chapter 54) and healing. Touch for Health may not only involve one in occultic influences, but a patient may draw false conclusions concerning the state of his/her overall health, as in alleged food allergies or other medical conditions supposedly determined to exist."

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-39/>)

"Therapeutic touch is a form of psychic healing stressing the manipulation of alleged body energies such as *prana*.

Therapeutic touch was developed by two psychics, Dolores Krieger and Dora Kunz. Kunz has served as president of the occultic Theosophical Society. Therapeutic touch claims to work by channeling (psychic transfer) of the therapist's supposed *prana* (mystical energy) in to the patient. Practitioners claim that this prods the patient's own "life energies" toward healing.

Therapeutic touch appears so innocent and is sufficiently accepted within the nursing profession that many people refuse to classify it as a form of psychic healing. But this is exactly what it is. Therapeutic touch: (1) was developed by psychic healers; (2) requires altered states of consciousness; (3) develops psychic ability; and (4) utilizes other occultic activity such as dowsing, and may be associated with other occult practices. Further, users' descriptions of their practice are indistinguishable from those of psychic healers, and recommended teaching strategies for learning therapeutic touch include books by psychic healers, mediums, and other spiritists. Because the power behind psychic healing is spiritistic, the same conclusion holds true for therapeutic touch."

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-38/>)

New Age

The invoking of life energy, especially in the spin-offs from applied kinesiology, throws critical thinking to the wind. Therapists who use such techniques have strayed far from the mainstream of objective knowledge about the human body. Their 'science' is based on conjecture, subjective impressions, unreliable

data and, most importantly, the precepts of Taoism. (Ibid.) What that means is that Kinesiology is science; *Applied Kinesiology*, etc. is New Age.

“The practice of **muscle testing/applied kinesiology** was founded in the occult. George Goodheart, a Michigan chiropractor who “discovered” applied kinesiology in 1964, combined elements of psychic philosophy, Chinese Taoism, and a belief in what early chiropractors called “Innate Intelligence” a kind of universal energy or ‘life force’. Goodheart’s own published materials, along with those of other early proponents of applied kinesiology, openly describe the occult-based theories that have been incorporated into this practice. ‘He combined the concept of ‘innate intelligence’ with the Eastern religious concept of energy (chi) and the idea that muscles reflex (reflect back) the condition of each of the various body organs via the chi’s meridians. ‘Innate intelligence’ is described as spiritual intelligence which runs the body and is connected to the universal intelligence though the nervous system...’ (Kinesiology, Muscle Response Testing, page 1)”

(*Muscle Testing*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=303>)

“In their February 2004 position statement, titled, ‘Therapeutic Touch is not a Catholic Hospital Pastoral Practice,’ the Catholic Medical Association explains why these practices come with considerable “religious baggage” in spite of the application of a secular veneer, and are therefore not compatible with Catholicism.

‘**Therapeutic touch** is essentially a ‘New Age’ manifestation in a medical setting,’ writes Doctor Patrick Guinan in the CMA document. ‘New Age philosophy is well defined in the recent Vatican document, Jesus Christ, The Bearer of the Water of Life. New Age is the belief that conscious reality consists of cosmic energy and pantheistic forces that can be known and controlled by an elite knowledgeable in this mystical system. New Age is in direct contrast to traditional Western Judeo-Christian culture that posits a personal God and humans endowed with a free will.’”

(*Christian or New Age?* Part VIII, Susan Brinkmann,

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=8761>)

“**Applied Kinesiology** is not based on a well-established understanding of physics, anatomy or manual therapies, but rather on the philosophical beliefs of Taoism and of traditional Chinese medicine. The assumption of a “Qi” power is purely speculative and stems from a religious background.”

(Dr. Fr. Clemens Pilar COP in an article emailed to this writer, available at my website)

Applied Kinesiology and **Therapeutic Touch** are named in the JCBWL document. (#2.2.3)

Chapter 4

Aromatherapy, Essential Oils, Herbalism and Herbal Medicines

Origins and development

Aromatherapy is explained by one practitioner as “the art of healing through the use of aromatic substances.”

“**Aromatherapy** is a *holistic* approach to healing; hence the practitioner endeavours to build up a complete picture of the patient and his or her lifestyle.”

(*The Brockhampton's Reference Guide to Alternative Medicine*, 1996, page 31)

“**Aromatherapy** is the use of organic essences of aromatic plants for healing and the maintenance of *vitality*.” (*Aromatherapy, A Guide for Home Use*, Christine Westwood, 1991.)

Using another New Age term, Westwood states that **essential oils** in their natural state have been found to possess a powerful ‘*synergy*’. Of course she does not make any attempt to substantiate that claim.

That the book from which I quoted has had nearly three dozen reprints is an indication of the popularity of the practice of Aromatherapy. Should Catholics be concerned?

Let us examine extracts from a secular article on Aromatherapy.

“**Aromatherapy**, the science of healing with the organic essences of aromatic plants, has always been inextricably mixed with perfumery and ritual religious functions. It might be the fashionable health treatment of the ‘90s, but its serious therapeutic functions have a pedigree as ancient as civilization itself...

Essential oils in their natural state have been found to possess a natural synergy; the therapeutic quality of the unadulterated natural oil is more effective than any synthetic or partially reconstituted equivalent.

And that is the basis of aromatherapy’s problems of acceptance. It would not be so controversial if it did not challenge the precepts of synthetically-based modern medicine. It would not press so many medical establishment buttons if it claimed merely to be a socially acceptable and benign mood-altering treatment used by the likes of royalty...

More difficult to prove through scientific methodology are the holistic benefits of aromatherapy.

It was Plato who wrote in his *Chronicles*: ‘The cure of the part should not be attempted without treatment of the whole.’ **Aromatherapy** aims to look at the patient as a whole... and to select essential oils for treatment accordingly...

The essential oils are essences of flowers, leaves, barks, roots and berries, each having its own therapeutic property. In a plant, the fragrance is its essential oil, and contained at the heart of this oil is its life force or energy. Aromatherapy works by introducing this life force into the body and releasing its curative powers."

(In *Selamta*, the December 1998 In-flight Magazine of Ethiopian Airlines, pages 29-32, Juliet Hight)

A New Age practitioner, Gwydion O'Hara teaches how to blend oils "for the purposes of protection, love and money"; the "therapeutical and magickal properties of a variety of scents"; to "become familiar with the *universal energies* of elements and plants and how they influence **aromatherapy**"; and, to "honor gods and goddesses through scent".

She explains the meaning of the word *magick* as related to her practice of Aromatherapy:

"The use of natural energies in order to effect a physical change. Spelled with a 'k' to differentiate it from stage magic."

There are three basic magickal applications of aromatherapy, O'Hara teaches: "The first is tied to the will and intention of the magician. Effect is generated by a pure extension of will... The second type of working is related to the will of the magician, but is based on the magickal principle of creating an effect on the intended recipient as well. This is known as sympathetic magick, and is the root working of many well-known magickal disciplines such as voodoo. The traditional voodoo doll is a prime example of this.

In magickal use, the aromatic substance may be applied to a separate object that is representative of the individual on whose condition the change is to be enacted.

The final type... involves the use of forces and energies outside of the practitioner.

This may include the enlisting of the aid of fairies, demons, angels, spirits, or actual deities. In this kind of working, the oil blends employed may be made of scents sacred to one entity or another."

O'Hara admits that the fragrances may be used "to honor or for the appeasement of outside forces or entities."

"According to many of the ancient magickal traditions, there are influences that permeate the universe, pushing our lives this way and that, determining our fates... The function of magick is to work with these forces; to captivate them and persuade them to lead us in a predetermined direction... There are many different areas of domination in which universal energies are perceived... The proof of a remedy lies in its effectiveness. No matter where its roots may lie, if

the end product is something that is usable and effective, it remains above the challenges of the scientific community... The final judgement of an oil mixture should be in its effectiveness. It matters little whether it is directed toward healing or magickal application. The only question should be, *Does it Work?* “ (The *Magick of Aromatherapy – The Use of Scent for Healing Body, Mind and Spirit*, Gwydion O’Hara, 1998)

New Age

“There is nothing essentially wrong with something that smells nice. Aromatic fragrances can make you feel relaxed, comfortable and at ease. We know that our sense of smell triggers memories- some good, some bad. For instance, we can start to salivate if we smell particularly good food. Aromatherapy involves massaging, bathing and inhaling with essential oils of various herbs. Nothing wrong with that, except that many of the essential oils on the market claim to be made in such a way as to release the vital energy of the original substance, therefore stimulating and enhancing the body’s energy... There is on the surface very little harm with herbal remedies, unless of course it is claimed that their healing properties are the result of some form of energy, or if the herb has undergone an alteration, change or dilution in some unknown or non-scientific way.”

(*The New Age and You*, Roger Ellis and Andrea Clarke, 1992)

“It is essential to bear in mind that people are involved with *New Age* in very different ways and on many levels. In most cases it is not really a question of ‘belonging’ to a group or movement; nor is there much conscious awareness of the principles on which *New Age* is built. It seems that, for the most part, people are attracted to particular therapies or practices, without going into their background, and others are simply occasional consumers of products which are labelled ‘*New Age*’. People who use **aromatherapy** or listen to ‘*New Age*’ music, for example, are usually interested in the effect they have on their health or well-being; it is only a minority who go further into the subject, and try to understand its theoretical (or ‘mystical’) significance.” (JCBWL #2.5)

“**Essential oils** are derived from a plant usually through some kind of distillation process such as steam or pressure. These oils contain the natural chemicals that give the plant its “essence” which is why they are referred to as “essential oils”. There is nothing New Age about essential oils. They are commonly used in perfumes, cosmetics, soaps, and in medicinal treatments such as oil of clove which is used to relieve dental pain. They are used in the form of salves, tinctures, and in diffusers. How the New Age gets involved in this picture is by contriving all kinds of outlandish uses for these oils ... none of which are supported by science. One of the biggest players in the New Age essential oil

business is a company called **Young Living Essential Oils**. It was founded by Donald Gary Young, a high school graduate with no medical degree. There are many serious problems in his background, such as his arrest for practicing medicine without a license, the drowning death of his own infant daughter, a long history of inflating his own credentials, and warnings from the FDA about claims he makes concerning essential oils."

(Essential Oils, Susan Brinkmann, 11 March 2010, <http://womenofgrace.com/newage/?p=63>)

Gary's Young's multi-level marketing company is a major producer of Essential Oils under the name "Young Living".

"Young Living Essential Oils:

- Attributes spiritual qualities to their products
- Uses witchcraft jargon to describe their products
- Places Luciferian symbolism on their Product Guide and certain products
- Teaches witchcraft doctrines in connection with the use of their products."

(http://www.libertytothecaptives.net/young_living_warning.html)

"The Last Hiker blog published a spectacular expose on the connection between essential oil "blends" and witchcraft. The author of this blog was candid enough to reveal that she was once a dabbler in the occult and is aware of the way (essential) oils are used in various Wiccan and pagan practices. Several priests have warned us that many of these oils are 'blessed' at the point of manufacture."

(Essential Oils and the Occult, Susan Brinkmann <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=48455>)

"AromaTouch is a questionable form of massage therapy (read chapter 12) that is based upon the existence of a universal life force and uses **essential oils** to address 'four systemic constants' in daily life which may impact a person's health: stress, immunity, the inflammatory response and autonomic imbalance.

The technique was developed by a chiropractor named David K. Hill who claims to have devoted himself to extensive research in the area of natural medicine and, specifically, essential oils and their alleged healing powers. The technique he developed makes use of the doTERRA brand of oils such as peppermint, lavender, melaleuca, and wild orange which are massaged into certain points on the body."

(*Is AromaTouch New Age?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=32286>)

"New Age covers a wide range of practices such as ... various kinds of **herbal medicine**..." (JCBWL #2.2.3)

“Wherever you look, it seems like there is an infomercial or ad for **herbal products**. According to a 1998 study in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, between 1990 and 1997, there was a 380 percent rise in herbal remedies and a 130 percent increase in high dose vitamin use in the US. Current estimates say 60-72 million Americans use herbal supplements. Many **herbal treatments** make remarkable claims of healing cancer, arthritis, depression, and other illnesses. What are we to make of the herbal craze?

“Be discerning if you choose to use herbs. *Natural* does not guarantee *safe*. There are many natural herbs that can produce dangerous, and even deadly, side effects. Be wary of the marketing hype. Despite the ads, the truth of the matter is that research has concluded that the effectiveness of herbal use is questionable at best. You also need to consider quality control. Unlike prescription and non-prescription drugs that are tightly regulated by the FDA, no organization is directly responsible for monitoring the quality or concentrations of herbal products. Be skeptical of “a pill for every ill” mentality.

Finally, be sure to avoid anyone who claims to have a secret formula, especially if he reports to have been persecuted by the American Medical Association or Federal Drug Administration. Avoid any retailer, radio ad, or person who is bent on selling his product as a cure-all.

“Some herbal treatments are costly and provide no enhancement. However, some herbal supplements *have* shown some promising benefits. **Herbal treatments** may prove to be helpful additions to conventional treatments. Herbs like ginseng have shown to be beneficial for Type 2 diabetes, for example. Herbal preparations are sometimes less potent in dosage than prescriptions drugs and may be less toxic.

It is important to thoroughly research the product you are considering using. Inform your doctor and pharmacist. They know your medical history and can alert you to any potentially dangerous interactions between herbs and pharmaceutical drugs. Be leery of thinking that if taking a little is good, a heavier dose must be even better. Find out whether the herbs are for long or short term. Check the quality of the product and be aware of the possible side effects. Don't assume that if the product has been used for a while, even for centuries, it must be better.

“There is no biblical admonition forbidding the use of **herbal products**. However, Christians should approach the herbal market from an informed perspective. Some excellent books on the subject are *The American Pharmaceutical Association Practical Guide to Natural Medicines* and *Alternative Medicine: A Christian Handbook*. Excellent Websites include herbalgram.com and naturaldatabase.com.

In times of health and especially in dealing with illness, our goal is always to honor the Lord".

(Alternative Medicine, Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/alternative_medicine_1.html)

"**Herbal medicine** is the use of herbs and other plant products to allegedly help cure a wide variety of physical ailments, or the use of 'spiritually potentized' herbs and plants for physical or psychic healing and/or other occult pursuits—as in the Bach Flower Remedies, Vita florum, **aromatherapy**, and similar practices.

"**New Age herbal medicine** includes such things as botanotherapy, phytotherapy, **aromatherapy**, vegotherapy.

Particular herbs, plants, or flowers are believed to possess physical or spiritual healing properties. Roots, leaves, stems, plants, seeds, etc., are prepared in various ways, sometimes through psychic methods, and either consumed orally as medicine or used on the skin as ointment.

"Some herbs and plants do contain medicinal properties and in extracted or synthetic forms are used in modern health care and medical treatment. The scientific discipline known as pharmacognosy is a legitimate and important field, but extensive scientific research is required to separate the wheat from the chaff. Unfortunately, New Age herbalism largely ignores scientific concerns and pursues its own methods and interests.

For example, **New Age herbal medicine** may incorporate practices such as developing altered states of consciousness and spirit contact through use of hallucinogenic plants (as in many forms of shamanism) or practicing psychic healing through regulating a supposed occult power latent within plants and herbs.

"**New Age herbal medicine** is largely, if not exclusively, a combination of questionable commercialism and wishful thinking based on ignorance (cf. V.E. Tyler, *The Honest Herbal*). Many commonly sold herbal remedies, even some herbal teas, are potentially harmful by themselves or through allergic reactions or synergism. Some remedies contain plant products that are carcinogenic and others are labeled or found to be contaminated with insect parts. Further, using ineffective or dangerous treatments may delay or otherwise exacerbate serious illness, and one may also encounter other occult influences through **New Age herbalism**."

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-19/>)

"Even though the alternative healing market is inundated with both vitamins, herbs and the New Age, there is nothing inherently New Age about vitamin

or **herbal** compounds. However, it's good to keep in mind that some New Age herbalists create their concoctions with plants they believe are "spiritually potentised" and thus suited for use in psychic healing and/or other occult practices. This may also involve the use of hallucinogenic plants to produce altered states of consciousness."

(*Vitamins and Herbs*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11444>)

"In summary, **herbalism** is a self-discovery educational effort, in which, the seeker is reliant upon the teacher, and the resource. Many respectable proponents produce materials and information designed to benefit the individual. Their only goal is a sincere desire to help others. The pitfall in this system is the utilization of herbalism as the means to expose, and entice the unlearned to false philosophies and occult dogma.

"The core belief of the *energy* of the **herb** must be viewed with grave discernment. This belief is the hinge, which opens the door wide to falsehood. This concept is central to the development of a false view of God, wherein, God is energy, and as energy, God is in everything. It will lead to the false premise that we are gods. This is not the biblical view of God, and must be recognized as such, and rejected. If the individual accepts this concept of energy, it opens a very dangerous realm, wherein, possible progression into occult belief and practice may ensue.

"Having established that **herbalism** has its roots in earth-centered religions, including Taoism and Hinduism; these religions are expounded in great detail to the student in the course of studies. These are false religions and must be rejected."

(Herbalism, Doug Ecklund, R. Ph., <http://logosresourcepages.org/NewAge/herbalism.htm>)

Aromatherapy and **herbal medicine** are named in the JCBWL document. (#2.5, #2.2.3)

Chapter 5

Ayurveda, Marma Therapy (Marma Chikitsa), Pulse Diagnosis (Nadi Pariksha) and Pulse Therapy (Nadi Chikitsa) and AYUSH

Origins and development

Said to be part of the *Atharva Veda* of Hinduism and practised from Vedic times, **ayurveda** derives from the Sanskrit *ayur* (life) and *veda* (knowledge or science), thus meaning 'the science of life'.

One story concerning its origin goes like this:

Concerned about the problem of disease on earth, sages meeting on the Himalayas deputed one Bharadwaja to approach the god Indra who knew about **ayurveda** from the Ashwini twins, the physicians to the gods, who learnt it from Daksha Prajapati who in turn had received his knowledge from the creator, Brahma. Bharadwaja passed on his learning to the other sages, of whom one Punarvasu Atreya taught it to his six disciples. Agnivesha, one of the six, wrote his learning down in the Agnivesha Tantra around the 8th century BC, which was revised by Charaka as the Charaka Samhita in the 6th century BC, and again revised in the 9th century AD by Dridhabala, a Kashmiri pandit. Another text, the Susruta Samhita, (by Susruta who is regarded as the father of ayurvedic surgery) is the main source of knowledge about surgery in ancient India. Other ancient Indian ayurvedic classics are the Bhela Samhita, Nava Nitaka, Ashtanga Samgraha, Ashtanga Hridaya Samhita, Madhava Nidhana, and the Bhava Prakasha of Bhavamisra.

"The approach of **ayurveda** can be divided into three basic categories:

- (1) Well-established health principles (adequate rest, sleep, exercise, nutrition, etc.);
- (2) Use of "natural" remedies such as herbs and plants which are codified in numerous ayurvedic texts; and
- (3) Ideas, concepts and treatments that can only be considered unscientific and/or irrational, or occult."

(A Consumer's Guide to "Alternative Medicine", Kurt Butler, page 111.)

In **ayurveda** there is the concept of prakriti which means 'nature' or the 'natural form' or 'constitution' of the human body. *Pra* means 'source' or 'origin'. *Kruthi* means 'to form'. Put together, they mean 'natural form' or 'natural origin'. Disease is said to occur when there is a change in this original form at the physiological or psychological level.

The philosophy of **ayurveda** is based on the doctrine of the *pancha bhutas* (five elements) or *panch mahadev* (five primal divine energies) of which all living and non-living things are believed to be composed. They are *akasha* (ether), *vayu* (air), *teja* (fire), *apa* or *jala* (water), and *prithvi* (earth). The combination of these five elements are represented in the form of one of the three *doshas* (*tridosha*) or 'body humours' which are *vata* (ether + air), *pitta* (fire) and *kapha* (water + earth), also described as wind, bile and phlegm respectively.

One task of the ayurvedic practitioner is to maintain a "balance" between these three *doshas* or occult forces within the body. Thus, **ayurveda** is not merely, or even primarily, a physical medicine; it is fundamentally a spiritual method incorporating physical concerns, e.g., "An understanding of the need to strive for spiritual self-development is taken for granted and in this respect the physician combines the role of spiritual guide."

(A Visual Encyclopedia of Unconventional Medicine, Ann Hill ed., page 21)

Ayurveda considers the human being as a combination of the five elements, the three *doshas*, the seven body tissues (*sapta dhatu*), five senses (*pancha indriya*), mind (*manas*), intellect (*budhi*) and soul (*atman*).

For instance, "Osteoporosis or *ashtakshaya* is due to the lack of *agni*... It is an imbalance in the *doshas*, especially an increase of *kapha* with *vata*." (4th D magazine, January 2004)

Ayurveda aims at keeping these structural and functional aspects in *samyavastha*, a state of equilibrium or simply, good health. This equilibrium is maintained through various techniques, procedures, regimens, diets and medicines.

The theory of *rasas* (tastes) plays an important role in ayurveda, as it determines the selection of medicines and diet. The food that we consume is composed of the *pancha bhutas*. All five elements go to make any one taste, but in different tastes, different elements predominate thus giving it its characteristic taste. The various *rasas* (tastes) of different foods are said to produce certain physiological functions, effects, and characteristics.

"Diagnosis involves several examination points like pulse, tongue, eyes, urine, faeces and visual and sensory inference and includes questioning of the patient on aspects of his lifestyle. Treatment consists of two measures, preventive and curative. The former includes personal hygiene, appropriate social behaviour and *rasayana sevana* or use of rejuvenative materials. The latter consist of drugs (*oushadhi*), diets (*anna*), and exercises (*vihara*)."

(<http://www.hestories.info/new-website-v4.html?page=2>)

In their *Ayurveda: The Yoga of Health*, Baba Haridas and Dharma Sara Satsang observe, "according to **ayurveda** and Hatha Yoga, no healing therapy is

complete unless it takes into consideration the health of the subtle [occult] body.”

(*The Holistic Health Handbook: A Tool for Attaining Wholeness of Body, Mind, and Spirit*, Berkeley Holistic Health Center, page 53.)

“In line with the monistic outlook of the Vedas, ayurveda considers the human being as a microcosm of the cosmic macrocosm, but treatment is individualized.”
(<http://pdf-booksread.info/find-astro-diagnosis-or-a-guide-to-healing-including-the-occult-principles-of-health-and-healing-pr.php>)

New Age

“Although laboratory experiments suggest it is possible that some substances in **Ayurveda** might be developed into effective treatments, there is no evidence that any are effective as currently proffered. Ayurvedic medicine is considered pseudoscientific. Other researchers consider it a protoscience, or trans-science system instead.

“Adverse reactions to herbs are described in traditional Ayurvedic texts, but practitioners are reluctant to admit that herbs could be toxic and that reliable information on herbal toxicity is not readily available. There is a communication gap between practitioners of modern medicine and Ayurveda. A 1990 study on Ayurvedic medicines in India found that 41% of the products tested contained arsenic, and that 64% contained lead and mercury. A 2004 study found toxic levels of heavy metals in 20% of Ayurvedic preparations made in South Asia and sold in the Boston area, and concluded that Ayurvedic products posed serious health risks and should be tested for heavy-metal contamination. A 2008 study of more than 230 products found that approximately 20% of remedies (and 40% of *rasa shastra* medicines) purchased over the Internet from U.S. and Indian suppliers contained lead, mercury or arsenic.

(Extract taken from a lengthy article at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayurveda>)

“The theory and cosmology behind the practice of **Ayurveda**, as are the theories behind Chinese medicine, are hostile and contrary to Christianity. There is potential medical harm with this method, and there are potentially occult elements that may be included in treatment. As a Christian under no circumstances would I advise taking this job, or submitting yourself to the treatment.”

(*Ayurveda*, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=1738>)

Dhanvantari is said to be the Hindu deity of **Ayurveda**.

(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayurveda>; *Ayurveda “Old Fashioned” Therapy? Well, Sure, If You’re A Hindu*, Christine Pack, <http://www.solasisters.com/2010/05/ayurveda-old-fashioned-therapy-well.html>)

According to leading New Ager Dr. Deepak Chopra, “**Ayurveda’s** approach to physical disorders is not basically physical at all... Ayurveda works because it corrects a distortion in consciousness.”

(*A Consumer’s Guide to “Alternative Medicine”*, Kurt Butler, page 113)

Drs. Ankerberg and Weldon add, “Dr. Chopra, who is also a practicing endocrinologist, discusses the major premise of **ayurvedic medicine**, which *primarily involves treating a person’s consciousness, instead of his/her body*. The ancient doctors of India were also great sages, and their cardinal belief was that the body is created out of consciousness... Theirs was a medicine of consciousness, and their way of treating disease pierced the body’s matter and went deeper, into the core of mind. When you look at ayurveda’s anatomical charts, you don’t see the familiar organs pictured in *Gray’s Anatomy*, but a hidden diagram of where the mind is flowing as it creates the body. This flow is what ayurveda treats.”

(*Quantum Healing: Exploring the Frontiers of Mind/Body Medicine*, Deepak Chopra, pp. 5-6, emphasis added, in *Is the popular Hindu medicine Ayurveda dangerous to your health?* <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/is-the-popular-hindu-dangerous-to-your-health/>)

They explain that “Ayurveda is thus not based on the scientific disciplines or on traditional anatomy but upon the theory that the physical body is part of the “flow” of the mind. Further, in its true nature, the mind is one essence with divine consciousness (in Hindu terms, *satchitananda*):

In ayurveda, each and every symptom of disease, from a minor neck pain to a full-blown cancer, is under the control of attention (divine consciousness). However, between us and the symptom lie barriers—the veils called Maya (Hindu for illusion)—that prevent us from exercising our attention (divine consciousness) in a therapeutic way. All mind-body medicine attempts to remove these obstacles so that healing can take place... (It is important) to have a science of awareness. Ayurveda supplies just that... When I teach people Maharishi’s ayurvedic healing techniques... I am trying to let them realize that their own awareness (divine consciousness) creates, controls, and turns into their bodies... Together, meditation, the bliss technique, and primordial sound are the practical application of all that I have been building up to, the tools of quantum healing.” (Ibid, pages 237-239)

Catholic crusader against New Age Susan Brinkmann elaborates at length:

“Were you to begin using **Ayurvedic medicine**, you would be putting your faith in an ancient Indian medicine system that is based on a pagan belief that health comes from the proper integration and balancing of the body, mind and spirit with the surrounding universe. Ayurvedic medicine is based on three main concepts – the idea of universal interconnectedness, the body’s constitution, and three life forces which they call doshas. The concept of interconnectedness is based on the idea that all things in the universe (both living and nonliving) are joined together and that every human being contains elements that can be found in the universe. Disease arises when one is out of harmony with the universe.

Christians do not believe that God is a ‘force’ in the universe. We believe that while God created the universe, he transcends his creation because he is ‘infinitely greater than all His works’ (CCC 299-300).

“The second **Ayurvedic** concept is that of a person’s constitution, which they describe as an individual’s unique combination of physical and psychological characteristics that practitioners believe contribute to the way the body functions to maintain health.

“The third concept concerns three life forces or energies. According to **Ayurveda**, the five fundamental elements that make up the universe – space (akasha), air (vayu), fire (agni), water (apu) and earth (prithvi) – also make up the human physiology. By looking at how these elements work within us, Ayurveda identifies three basic biological humors or psycho-physiological energies called doshas. A person’s health and ability to resist disease is thought to be related to the way these doshas are balanced.

“To date, there is no scientific evidence that **Ayurvedic medicine** works. Most clinical trials have been too small or contained design problems that rendered the results meaningless. The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine contends that more rigorous research is needed to determine whether Ayurvedic medicine is safe and effective.

Personally, I would not even consider Ayurvedic treatment, first because it conflicts with my religious beliefs and second because its efficacy is unknown, which means that at the present time, the risks outweigh the benefits.”

(*Ayurvedic Medicines*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=132>)

“In **Ayurvedic medicine**, colors are assigned to the chakras, which are alleged energy centers located along the spine.”

(*Can the Color Red improve your Circulation?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1150>)

“There have been numerous problems with **Ayurvedic medicines**, which include 600 herbal formulas and 250 single plant drugs that are compounded according to ancient Indian methods. Some of these botanicals are mixed with metals and other naturally occurring substances.

“In 2004, a study by the National Institutes of Health found that of 70 Ayurvedic remedies that are available over-the-counter, 14 contained potentially dangerous levels of lead, mercury, and/or arsenic. The Centers for Disease Control also reported 12 cases of lead poisoning occurring within the last few years that were linked to these medicines. As a result, mandatory testing of all Ayurvedic medicines is now required in the U.S.”

(*Just because Herbal Medicines are derived from nature doesn't make them safe*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=841>)

“Acupuncture, homeopathy, chiropractic, naturopathy, **Ayurvedic** – none of these treatments have proven to be effective even after literally hundreds of blind and double-blind testing.”

(*Fed up with Medicine*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=438>)

With the growing popular emphasis on “wellness”, total health, body care, and nutrition, the “ayurvedic” label sells, but most manufacturers use substances found in nature as the basic ingredients for the manufacture of their skin and hair care oils, creams, soaps, shampoos, toothpastes, digestive pills, tonics etc. These preparations are generally safe, and reasonably effective. Their laboratories often use scientific methods of research, clinical testing and standardization, and are more allied to modern biochemistry than to bhutas, doshas and rasas. The Christian believer must be able to distinguish between classical or *shuddha* [pure] ayurveda remedies with their inherent Vedic philosophical underpinnings and holistic diagnosis of the human person, and modern commercial preparations that are marketed as “ayurvedic” preparations.

“**Marma therapy** is an important part of Ayurveda that helps to maintain health by cleansing blocked energy.

The word Marma is of Sanskrit origin ‘*Mrin Maranae*’. The Sanskrit phrase, “*mriyatae asmin iti marma*” means ‘there is likelihood of death or serious damage to health when these points are inflicted. Hence, these areas are called marma. Marma in Sanskrit also means hidden or secret. By definition, a Marma point **is a juncture on the body** where two or more types of tissue meet, such as muscles, veins, ligaments, bones or joints.”

(New Age guru Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, <https://www.artofliving.org/in-en/ayurveda/therapies/marma>)

Pulse Diagnosis, a Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) practice, is called **Nadi Pariksha** in Traditional Indian medicine, Ayurveda to be specific. What Traditional Chinese Medicine calls “meridians”, Traditional Indian Medicine calls “nadis”.

“Advocates claim that by taking a **pulse** examination, humoral imbalances such as the three Doshas – Vata, Pitta, and Kapha – of Ayurveda can be diagnosed.” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulse_diagnosis)

“**Nadi Chikitsa (Pulse Therapy)** is the science of observing the pulse from a perspective of diagnosis of the human body, mind and the sub-conscious. The pulse communicates more than what we can feel. Energy flowing through the various channels (nadis), carry information about the health of all that connect to them as organ channels (srotas), tissues (dhatus), organs and their health and regeneration into the blood ... and even information about our conscious, sub-conscious mind, attitudes, and ... about our samskaras (experiences) and vasanas (patterns) that we lived through in the past are available as energies in blood for a nadi parikshak to know.” (<http://nadichikitsa.com/nadipariksha.html>)

Ayush is the acronym for **Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy**. The five-some of Ayush is almost always accompanied by **Naturopathy**. (Read chapter 17.)

The Ayush five make strange bedfellows, but in the New Age, nothing is impossible.

Ayurveda and yoga share to a large extent the same Vedic origins and philosophical and developmental background.

Yoga (read chapter 31) is not a physical exercise but a meditation regimen that involves the use (non-use, rather) of the mind and that has spiritual goals.

The last three of the Ayush five are different traditions of complementary or alternative medicine, each as different from the other and from the first pair – in their origins as well as in the methodology of their application – as chalk is from cheese, but united in the New Age.

Unani is a system of treatment with medications whose origins are in Perso-Arabic traditional medicine. (Read chapter 23)

Siddha is a system of treatment with medications whose origins are in Hinduism. (Read chapter 22)

Homoeopathy (also spelt as homeopathy) originated in Germany around 250 years ago, but its prevalence in India is so extensive that some think that it is an indigenous remedy. Its theories were influenced by the occult as well as by ancient Chinese philosophies like Confucianism and Taoism. Its founder was a Freemason who hated Christ. (Read chapter 13)

Chapter 6

Bach Flower Remedies

Origins and development

“Bach Flower Remedies, a system of treatment using the supposed healing power of flowers, was invented by Dr. Edward Bach [pronounced ‘baakh’], a Harley street bacteriologist and homoeopathic physician who was greatly influenced by the thinking and work of Samuel Hahnemann, the German founder of the alternative medicine, homoeopathy.

“Disillusioned, like Hahnemann, with the side effects of drug therapies in conventional medicine, Bach gave up his medical practice in 1930 to move to the Welsh countryside and work on his ‘remedies’. His first book titled The Twelve Healers dealt with twelve such remedies. Heal Thyself is another book authored by Bach, published by Fowler, 1931. Later he added twenty-six more remedies to make a total of thirty-eight. His remedies are made of flowers found mostly in Britain.”

Apart from the thirty-eight, which range alphabetically from Agrimony and Aspen to Wild Rose and Willow, Dr. Bach formulated a composite remedy comprising of five flowers: Star of Bethlehem for shock, Rock Rose for terror and panic, Impatiens for mental stress and tension, Cherry Plum for desperation, and Clematis for feeling of faintness. This amalgam is called the ‘Rescue Remedy’. It is used *“in emergencies and for trauma cases to marshal the body’s own healing powers and to succour and sustain the patient until medical help arrives.”*

Bach based the treatments of his Bach Flower Remedies on his belief that illness is the result of *“a conflict between the soul of a man, and the mind. Because it had this spiritual base, illness could never be cured by purely materialistic means.”*

Accordingly, **Bach remedies** are prescribed against a patient’s personality, and not his complaint.

Bach taught, *“They cure not by attacking the disease, but by flooding our bodies with the beautiful vibrations (read chapter 96) of our Higher Nature, in the presence of which disease melts away as snow in the sunshine.”*

(All above citations from Healing Without Harm, Pathways to Alternative Medicine, E.G. Bartlett, Jaico, 1995)

Like with Aromatherapy, diagnosis, prescription and treatment with **Bach Flower Remedies** are ‘holistic’ and subjective.

“Most evidence and case studies are subjective and anecdotal.”

(The Encyclopedia of Alternative Health Care, Kristin Gottschalk Olsen, Pocket Books, 1989)

Patients give their feedback; practitioners record them, and use them as a guide for future treatment of others.

New Age

“We clearly see how the teachings and practices provide the essential building blocks of the esoteric ideology. Every-thing is said to emanate from a creative cosmic energy. Each man is part of the evolving cosmos and has to fulfil his task within it. This task can be revealed to him by nobody else, only by his own divine soul, his own higher self. This is why obedience towards others is described as idolatry, and as such, ruinous- since it is a disregard of one’s own divinity. It is important to find out what the soul or higher self really wants- and then to consequently carry it out. Following the aims of one’s higher self is thus the best way to assist the overall cosmic harmony. The personality is the mortal, carnal form of an existence, within which the higher self has to fulfil its terrestrial task. This higher self can come back to earth more than once. The soul and the higher self are – similar to the lower personality – forms of energy, patterns of vibration. In fact, Bach thus teaches an absolute materialism, even if he constantly maintains the opposite.

“The personal mystery of man is dragged down to the level of impersonal nature (which is of course also true of large areas within homoeopathy). Character flaws are no longer overcome by conversion and a conscious application to changing one’s own personality, but are supposed to be remedied by a treatment with ‘something’. Wrong attitudes are thus turning into ‘functional disturbances’. It is thus self-evident that in this concept there is no room for guilt or sin.

“Many of us are under the impression that complementary medicines like homoeopathy and **Bach Flower Remedies** are useful and safer alternatives to orthodox medicine. However, Fr. Pilar demonstrates that they are in fact undergirded by spiritual philosophies with spiritual implications that cannot be isolated in their acceptance and use. They are all not simple natural remedies to be used for treatment of physiological illness.

“All these fake therapies... have one thing in common; their effectiveness is due to the power of suggestion. It is mostly just the packaging which distinguishes these therapies from each other- and in most cases this packaging is a philosophy. The so-called alternative therapies primarily disseminate alternative philosophies throughout society. And this is especially the case where treatments claim to be ‘holistic’. The term ‘holistic natural medicine’ in itself is an ideological concept. It claims that man in his entirety can be treated and healed by nature. This idea however does take the so-called holistic medicine into the spiritual and religious sphere.

Many a popular booklet on homoeopathy or **Bach-flowers** thus has more in common with a booklet about religion than with a medical paper.

“As ideological aspects are concerned as well, I am obliged to make the following statement: What is offered today as ‘alternative or complementary medicine’ does by no means guarantee that we have to do with ‘natural medicine’.

Prof. Dr. Malte Buhning, professor of naturopathy at the Free University of Berlin, clearly differentiates between genuine treatment with natural remedies and the diverse forms of alternative medicine, among which he counts homoeopathy, **Bach-flowers**, electro-acupuncture, etc.

“‘Purifying’ the spirit of man (**Bach-flowers**), ‘healing’ it (homoeopathy), ‘refining’ it through material substances or energy (precious stone therapy) is a magical idea and activity. It is claimed that all these therapies can alleviate character weaknesses, remove spiritual wounds and even overcome a weakness in faith by the appropriate vibrations.

Man’s spirit-soul thus becomes a treatable object. These (and similar) practices deny man’s highly personal mystery, which- according to Christian faith- can be neither comprehended nor physically treated. Spirit can only be affected and formed by spirit, not by physical means. These magical practices bypass the freewill of the spirit, which becomes a will-less object, manipulable and formable by diverse energies. Vitalism [belief in the existence and use of vital i.e. cosmic energy as in acupuncture, aromatherapy, homoeopathy, martial arts, pranic healing, reiki etc.] thus provides an essential basis for all kinds of magical thinking and each magical practice. The majority of ‘holistic’ therapies are thus based on the concept of magic. Where up to now a meeting between two free personalities took place- person to person- where will power and decision played their original role in deciding what was to happen, this is the very point from where from now on the spirit is likely to be coerced based on knowledge and use of hidden [esoteric] laws.

“There is hardly anyone among those who practise them who bothers to rack his/her brain about alleged effects, or to consider such things thoroughly. If you produce arguments to try and clarify the untenable- or at least dubious- nature of a therapy, take for example homeopathy or the **Bach flower therapy**, you are rarely confronted with well-founded counter-arguments, but instead you are quickly subjected to a personal attack... Of course it is a nuisance that it was never possible to demonstrate specific effects of homoeopathy, Bach-flower therapy, radiaesthetics [dowsing, using pendulum or rod] etc. in scientifically controlled tests. But this cannot shake the faith of a real believer. There will always be a plausible explanation for an experiment’s failure.”

(*Esoteric Practices and Christian Faith*, Dr. Fr. Clemens Pilar COp, 2001 German edition, translated into English 2003)

Despite its religious nature, holistic health has nothing to say about issues that are fundamental, at least from a Christian standpoint, to spirituality. According to Fr. Pilar:

“a) The notion of ‘sin’ does not exist in this concept. Suffering and disease are caused by a wrong way of thinking or are simply symptoms of a disturbance in the flow of energy. The way to perfection therefore lies in applying oneself to working at one’s proper self. Man must acquire the correct way of thinking and have good vibrations.

Even more important is: his baser instincts or personality must be conformed to harmonise with his ‘higher self’.

Man attempts to achieve this goal by adopting various ways and by practising diverse methods as for example yoga, **Bach-flowers**, precious stones or energy activities... The spectrum on offer seems to be boundless.

However, absolute evil as a reality is denied. Nevertheless, the ‘devil’ is after all part of a force that ‘always tries to implement evil, yet always brings forth good’ (to quote Rudiger Dalke, *Die spirituelle Herausforderung*, or *The Spiritual Challenge*, page 29). Thus, believers in esotericism ‘never fight against evil or for good. Esotericism proclaims that both poles have a right to exist’. As a matter of fact, the devil ‘even becomes a light bearer and an important partner in God’s creation’.

“b) It is self-evident that the notion of salvation does not fit into the esoteric pattern. Man seeks perfection through knowledge. Moral abnormalities that need correction can be eliminated by an application of specific ‘spiritual’ methods. Disease patterns must be ‘wiped out’, to be replaced by sound patterns. These concepts perceive even spiritual or mental problems as energy related problems, as symptoms of a ‘life force that is pathologically out of balance’. Energies can be increased through meditation, through motion-based therapies or other practices.

Medicines which have good vibrations are said to be helpful too. An imbalance of the energy flow can be removed with the help of massage, needles, motion, sounds, colours etc. (Here, Fr. Pilar is categorizing the different alternative therapies according to their various applications). Here everybody is responsible for his own progress. Everybody is answerable for his own enlightenment, his health and inner harmony. Dr. Bach... writes, ‘Don’t forget that man must bring about his own salvation... Man must do it himself... his own effort enables him to find the path to the peak...’

To allow oneself to be influenced by others, to comply with other people's desires, or to obey requests of some other mortal being is in fact idolatry' [*From Homoeopathy to Bach-flowers*, Edward Bach, pages 172, 173]."

(Dr. Fr. Clemens Pilar COp in **BACH FLOWER THERAPY-FR CLEMENS PILAR 02** emailed to me for my website)

"Even Dr. Bach assumed that his medicines did not help in a conventional way. The therapy goals cannot be compared with the goals of conventional medicines. **Bach Flower** believers are of the opinion that the essence of chicory will help to understand love as a universal force or power and as a result of such understanding to unconditionally give it away.

The spiritual essence of the pine is meant to free a person from an 'exaggerated sense of duty'.

The Freemason Dr. Bach formulated his therapeutic concept based on his own esoteric view of the world. According to Bach, illness is always an expression of the wrong way of thinking and of a deficiency in the soul's development. Thus each person is responsible for his or her own recuperation. Dr. Bach believed in reincarnation and was of the opinion that his medicines were helping people to cope with the spiritual 'tasks' in their present existence.

Within man he differentiated between the higher (divine) self and the earthly appearance of a personality. As far as he was concerned, it was man's task to recognise his own divinity and in the end to only follow that 'truth', which can be found in one's own inner core. The 'spiritual' flower essences are not to be seen as 'healing' essences, but should rather be considered as means towards 'salvation'. Consequently Dr. Bach himself called them 'sacraments', sacraments that were meant to help man on his way to a spiritual perfection. In line with the esoteric conceptual approach, man thus is meant to learn to only trust in himself and not to accept any other teaching from outside.

"The ideological concept behind the **Bach Flower Therapy** is not reconcilable with biblical-Christian thinking. Even if people think it a natural medicine and do not necessarily consider or look into the esoteric world view it is based upon, using such "drugs" long term may well influence the way of thinking and thus take away from the Christian world view. Christians believe that illnesses do not necessarily originate in the wrong thought processes of the persons concerned, but that a suffering of the innocent does exist. Moreover Christians are of the opinion that the human character can only be rendered perfect through continuous personal efforts, conversion, dialogue and divine grace, but not through the ingestion of medicines.

Due to its very background and approach, the Bach Flower Therapy is not an alternative healing art, but rather an element of an esoteric salvation doctrine.

Christians should therefore refrain from adopting the Bach Flower Therapy.”
(Ibid)

JCBWL does not specifically mention Bach Flower Remedies. It does not have to. The purpose of the Document was not to identify individual alternative therapies though many are named. Its main purpose was to identify the genesis and socio-cultural and religious philosophies of the New Age Movement for more informed pastoral care. Though Fr. Pilar has done the needful above, the reader should by himself be able to identify the New Age elements in the use of Bach Flower Remedies from some of the New Age signposts that this writer has highlighted in the “Overview” chapter in Section C.

However, the following excerpts from the JCBWL Document will be additionally helpful. (The reader will be able to reconcile them with the analysis of Fr Pilar):

1. “Some nature spirits are described as powerful energies existing in the natural world...” (JCBWL #2.2.1)
2. “(In New Age) Nature is a living being, shot through with networks of sympathy and antipathy...” (JCBWL #2.2.2)
3. “New Age spirituality... refers to the inner experience of harmony and unity with the whole of reality which heals each human person’s feelings of imperfection... People discover their profound connectedness with the sacred universal force or energy which is the nucleus of all life.” (JCBWL #3.1)
4. “New Age involves a fundamental belief in the perfectibility of the human person by means of a wide variety of techniques and therapies (as opposed to the Christian view of co-operation with divine grace).” (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)
5. “New Age traditions consciously and deliberately blur real differences: between creator and creation, between humanity and nature...” (JCBWL #6.1)

Chapter 7

Bio Disc, Conybio, Chi Machines, and other wellness products. Pseudo-science, quackery and the occult

“Wellness” is a New Age euphemism for “health”

In the event of any medico-legal suits that the manufacturers of such products might have to face for their failure to match their tall claims, many companies include a sort of disclaimer stating that their products are not an alternative to regular medical treatment. What they do not admit is that their claims are bogus and that their products do nothing at all.

To know about hundreds more of such products, read <http://www.quackwatch.com/> by Dr. Stephen Barrett M.D., a psychiatrist who debunks quackery and various alternative medical therapies on his twenty-four websites.

Bio Disc

What is the Bio Disc?

The Bio Disc is nothing but a disk made of ordinary clear glass a few millimeters thick and with some etchings on its faces. The Bio Disc is only one of an inexhaustible range of products available nowadays that claim to employ one or other form of “energy” healing. It is supposed to create ‘energized water’, enhance the taste of food, improve sleep, reduces stress levels, etc. I have taken it as an example of the massive barrage of quackery that people are challenged with in this age. The suppliers of the Bio Disc offer other products with magical abilities, and they have competitors by the hundreds. Other items are stir rods and straws, wands, bands, crystals, amulets, pendants, bracelets, mugs and cups, jewelry, etc. They come in three broad categories according to the field they purportedly work through and in: water, infrared and magnetic.

The suppliers of the Bio Disc claim that their crystals are put through a “Secret Crafting Technique. This technique is a tightly guarded secret.”

We are cautioned by the manufacturer “not to wear (**Bio Disc**) pendants while sleeping because the energy frequency from the pendant may interfere...” But that’s probably simply because the cord carrying the pendant might snap. However, putting it the way they do does lend an aura of mystery to the practice.

“The **Bio Disc** balances yin and yang and creates a chi life force by carrying the disc with you and place on your body, will actually balance your meridian (Yin and Yang)... It is a natural energy generating device that produces scalar energy frequencies that have no negative effects.”

(<http://web.archive.org/web/20070314032731/www.qngroup.net/pdf/BioDisc.pdf>)

The Bio Disc promotion site admits, "This Product has been used traditionally and has not been scientifically evaluated for its benefits and efficacy."

(http://web.archive.org/web/20070707031330/amezcua.com/bodyandhealth/product_biodisc.html)

Some New Age key words in the Bio Disc (and related) literature that should alert Christians: chi life force, yin and yang, wellness, energisers, energy, harmony, human bio field, positive energy, energy levels, balanced and harmonised, energy field, crystal energy, energy vibration[s], energised, meridian, chakras and energy centres, energy influences, bio-energetic(s), balancing energy centres, meridian system, bioenergetic state, Holistic Center, meridian diagnostics, biofield, subtle energy, complementary medicine, holistic health, biofield sciences, ayurvedic and Chinese medicines, Polycontrast Interference Photography (PIP), crystal therapist, energy medicine, energy therapies, psychic studies, homeopath, homeopathy, homeopathic, Kirlian photography, reiki master, yoga, ayurveda, zapper healing, aura healing, chakra essence, pyramid energy, Gas Discharge Visualization (G.D.V.), Resonant Field Imaging (R.F.I.), subtle anatomy, etc.

Conybio

There is at least one common denominator to every single product in the **Conybio** stable: ceramics. Or, as the promoters would insist we call it, '*Bio-Ceramics*'. And it seems that the secret behind the successful employment of these bio-ceramics, in accessories ranging from beauty soaps to bracelets to brassieres, is largely in the **Far Infrared Rays (FIR)** that they allegedly emit, this FIR being extremely conducive for good health and a "wellness feeling" using the oft-repeated words of their brochure). However, every brochure carries a caveat that reads: "Our products provide you with goodness of the Sun and conforms to supportive therapy only. Our products are neither a medicine nor an alternative to medicine and we do not claim preventive and/or curative properties/benefits by usage of our products."

Professor Zhang Jian Dong, a "Medical Consultant" of the Conybio company writes in the **Conybio** literature:

"Some people are able to treat ailments of others because their personal emissions of FIR are very strong. This is what is known as 'Qi-gong' and 'The Healing Powers of Qi-gong'... Our vital energy is actually the body's Far Infrared Rays known as 'qi'... When one of the FIR products of the same wavelength is placed near our body, simultaneous vibration of FIR of the same wave-length will occur due to our body temperature. Such simultaneous vibration will help the weaker parts of our body absorb more rays which will in turn strengthen and revitalize our health..."

“According to traditional Chinese medical science, vital energy circulates through body passages and there is ‘qi’ everywhere... Vital energy consists of strong energy, weak energy and dead energy... The circulation of ‘qi’ in the human body exists in the so-called ‘field of qi’ which is the symbol of human energy and indicates how active the body functions are. There is a saying in ‘Nei Jing’ written by Huang Di which means that when the vital energy is strong, evil fails to enter the human body... When this vital energy circulating in the human body is obstructed, ailments take place... When the circulation of energy is regular, health will automatically be restored...”

“By utilizing FIR Health Products, we can replenish and increase our body’s vital energy through mutual vibration and absorption. FIR enables vital energy to circulate smoothly in the human body... The FIR Pillow Pad, Socks and Shoe-pad are highly recommended to address headaches. Although there is a distance between the head and toe, acupoints and passages through which vital energy circulates are connected to each other... When bio-ceramic Sun Beads are worn over the chest, the radiation of Far Infrared Rays will help in the control of asthmatic problems. If placed at the ‘acupoints’ of your body, Sun Beads have the effects of actual acupuncture...”

There are scores of other companies that hawk products (seats, socks, wraps, jewelry, toothpaste) purporting to use ‘Far Infrared technology’ ‘to relax tensed or strained muscles, tendons and joints.’

‘Infrared’ simply means ‘below red’. All objects and creatures give off Infrared but they are careful not to let you in on that!

“Far Infra Red is just ordinary heat energy that is radiated by all objects; anything beyond this is lies.”

(*Gallery of water-related Pseudoscience*, Dr. Stephen Lower, <http://www.chem1.com/CQ/gallery.html>)

Dr. Stephen Lower, a scientist whose website (www.chem1.com/CQ/index.html) debunks such products, writes: “These manufacturers and multi-level marketing promotion schemes warn the public of nonexistent dangers.”

“Magnets and ‘catalysts’ for softening water, magnetic laundry balls, waters that are ‘oxygenated’, ‘clustered’, ‘ionized’ or ‘vitalized’ (purporting to improve cellular hydration, remove toxins, and repair DNA), high zeta-potential colloids and vortex-treated waters to raise your energy levels, halt ageing and prevent cancer – all of these wonders and more are being aggressively marketed via the Internet, radio infomercials, seminars, and by various purveyors of new-age nonsense. The hucksters who promote these largely worthless products weave a web of pseudoscientific hype guaranteed to dazzle and confuse the

large segment of the public whose limited understanding of science makes them especially vulnerable to this kind of exploitation.”

(*AquaQuackery: Wellness Waters for whatever ails you*, Dr. Stephen Lower, <http://www.chem1.com/CQ/index.html>)

While many of the devices examined by Dr. Lower are definitely both occult as well as New Age, there are just as many that he describes as “scams, snake oils, quackery, nostrums, scientific-sounding nonsense, crackpot physics/chemistry, fantasies, hokum, lies, worthless junk, flapdoodle, bullshit, bull-poop, creative bunkery, nonsensical hype, rubbish, wishful thinking, garbage, geegaws, howlers, malarkey, health misinformation, fabrication, myth, junk science, claptrap, patently false, goofy, baseless, dumb, pseudoscientific, ridiculous, weird, dubious, unbelievable, over-hyped, impossible, fictitious, fictional, misleading, nutty, absurd, bizarre, good for laughs, unknown to medical science, impressive to the science-challenged.”

The packaging of **Conybio** products such as socks, wrist guards, briefs, braces, T-shirts, singlets, winter caps, toxin absorbent, starter pack etc. have, towards the top side, a *multicolored* half-inch band that encircles the box, representing not the FIR but the *visible* rays of the light spectrum. Now why would such an anomaly exist? This band of colours of the visible spectrum forms the rainbow, and the rainbow is one of the more common symbols of the New Age Movement.

For the average man on the street, danger from these products may be non-existent, unless he chooses to substitute necessary medical treatment with their use. But it may not be so for a baptized Christian.

If medical science rejects all possibility of any biological effect of these products on the human body, and if despite that there is evidence of something happening when one uses these products, there is a power at work. If one can eliminate the possibility of a scientific reason operating in the material realm, not forgetting the placebo effect (the Bio Disc people insist that they have been satisfied with their double-blind placebo-controlled test results, but as Dr. Lower repeatedly points out in his studies, no one has ever seen the results of such tests), psychological influence, and the power of suggestion, only one more possibility remains – the power is spiritual. Remember Scripture: Satan masquerades as an angel of light.

Chi Machines

“A **Chi Machine** is a gadget used as a form of “passive aerobic” exercise that promoters say can promote detoxification and healing. The machine oscillates from side to side at approximately 144 times per minute. The claim is that 15

minutes on the machine is the equivalent of 1.5 hours of walking. The user is instructed to lay on the floor with their ankles resting on the machine and to think 'happy calming thoughts' while using the device...

"The original chi machine is known as the Sun Ancon Chi Machine which was invented by Dr. Shizou Inoue who claims it was the result of 38 years of medical and scientific research and came about as a result of watching goldfish swim.

Chi Machines are based on the belief that a universal life force energy (chi) permeates the universe and can be used to help unblock the flow of chi in the body. Belief in a universal life force is part of a pantheistic belief system that is espoused by the New Age as well as many Eastern religions which is why it is not compatible with Christianity."

(Are Chi Machines Associated with the Occult? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=54765>)

Chapter 8

Biofeedback

Origins and development

“**Biofeedback** is the use of special electronic equipment and mental exercises to influence physiological responses. The goal is to gain some degree of control over particular physical functions that people do not normally, consciously regulate.

Mental control over bodily functions extends into antiquity through yoga and related practices. Elmer Green and Barbara Brown are among the most recognized modern leaders and innovators in biofeedback, although aspects of biofeedback principles and application were explored by earlier pioneers such as Johannes Schultz, the developer of autogenic training.

Biofeedback claims to work by enabling people to learn to recognize and consciously control certain biological parameters such as skin temperature, muscle tension, brain waves, pulse rate, etc. As a result, a person can better regulate physical problems normally associated with these parameters, such as tension headache, high blood pressure, etc.

Biofeedback offers only limited effectiveness for people who are highly motivated, and in particular, for those who are adept at visualization or meditation. Biofeedback can also be used to develop altered states of consciousness, psychic abilities, and spirit contact. In addition, it may offer unknown or unexpected consequences relating to manipulation of the consciousness.

While biofeedback is permissible in theory, we do not necessarily recommend the practice. As in hypnosis, unanswered questions remain, certain issues are tentative, and much work is experimental. Further, physical or mental problems may arise from improper use by unqualified therapists. Those people who choose to use biofeedback should avoid any occultic methods or applications and be certain of their practitioner’s orientation and qualifications.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-9/>)

New Age

“When I use the word **biofeedback**, I am speaking specifically to a method that uses a combination of monitoring and adding a mental act to facilitate an altered state of consciousness. This is usually achieved by use of *muscle relaxation*, *deep breathing exercises*, use of a *mantra* or repetitive sentences/phrases, and by use of *visualization*.

“The special paper prepared by the Seventh Day Adventist Biblical Research Committee listed several sets of questions that need to be answered as a

person studies medical treatment methods to determine if they are *spiritually* safe. The committee took these questions from Dr. Warren Peters' book, *Mystical Medicine*. They are excellent questions. No single question should determine the issue, but several questions, when answered, should give evidence of a spiritualistic relationship before you finalize judgment.

"The first set of questions was: Where did the method come from; what is its source? Does it have mystical roots? With what other therapies is it often associated? What did the founder believe? What is the life story of the founder or founders?

"A renowned German brain physiologist, Oscar Vogt of the Berlin Institute, during the 1890's was using hypnosis in guided sessions. Some of the people in the sessions learned to put themselves, for a self-determined time, into a state similar to the hypnotic state they achieved with the doctor's guidance. (*Beyond Biofeedback*, Elmer Green Ph.D. and Alyce Green, M.A, page 26; *A Visual Encyclopedia of Unconventional Medicine*, Ann Hill, page 190)

"Vogt found he could have these people, in their auto-hypnotic practices, treat and alleviate many different stress-like medical disorders with which they were afflicted. In the early 1900's, Johannes Schultz, a psychiatrist and neurologist in Berlin, continued the work that Vogt started. This state of self-hypnosis was called "autohypnosis."

"Schultz wanted to perfect autohypnosis because it would eliminate the tendency of the participant to develop dependence on the hypnotist. It was recognized that the state of self-hypnosis could be induced by 1) using certain basic verbal formulas repeated over and over by the individual desiring autohypnosis; repeating these phrases contributed to developing a state of pronounced 2) *relaxation* of the muscular and vascular systems, as did practicing 3) *deep, slow breathing*; 4) *visualizing* colors, objects, and abstract concepts.

"This is followed by meditating on one's own feelings or on the image of another person, and finally, at the deepest level, *one may interrogate and get "answers from the unconscious" levels of one's own nature, as Schultz put it. (Elmer Green, Ibid. page 27)*

"Dr. Wolfgang Luthe had been a student of Schultz, and continued the work after Schultz's death. Luthe called autohypnosis *autogenic training* in a book authored by Schultz and Luthe (1959). In the early 1960's, Dr. Joe Kamiya of San Francisco attached an electroencephalograph to college students' heads to see if they could, at will, change their brain wave patterns. He found they could. He came up with the word *biofeedback*.

"He studied the brain waves of Zen meditators and proposed that it might be possible to develop a 'psychophysiology of consciousness. (Ibid. pages 44, 118-119)

“Dr. Kamiya presented a lecture at the Psychophysiological Research Society meeting in 1965, which was attended by one, Elmer Green, Ph.D., a physicist and psychologist. It was the first time Dr. Green had heard of biofeedback. He was inspired to investigate this ability to self-control brainwave patterns. (Ibid., pp. 44, 118, 119)

There were many therapists who dabbled in the use of autogenic training, but one outstanding investigative group led the way to what we now call “**biofeedback**.” Dr. Green, along with Alyce Green, M.A., a psychologist, and Dale Walters Ph.D., a colleague, were investigators at the Menninger Foundation, a psychiatric institute in Topeka, Kansas. In 1965, they began to explore the autogenic techniques in their research. Dr. Green developed electronic devices to monitor physiological changes while people were in autogenic training. They could see changes in the rate of nerve impulses, muscular tension and relaxation, temperature of the skin in specific locations, and brain wave amplitude and rates. “From these studies of autohypnosis or biofeedback, brain wave monitoring studies were done. By *muscle relaxation, deep slow breathing*, and use of *mantra* phrases along with *visualization*, a certain brain wave rate called *theta* could be achieved. It is at this level of brain activity that the autohypnosis takes place. Dr. Green stated the following:

“In my view theta training is a form of accelerated meditation– and the benefits to students are incalculable. They range from better physical functioning, to improved emotional balance, to sharpened intellect, to true creativity–to the solution of insoluble problems in unpredictable ways, coming into mind as from another dimension.” (Ibid, Preface xiv–xv)

“With the addition of electronic monitors, a person could see evidence of changes in his physiology as he practiced the *autohypnosis* or *autogenic training*, or as it is now called, **biofeedback**. The Greens’ work and writing for scientific journals has made biofeedback well known, and has rapidly increased belief in, and use of, this technique.

“At this point in our discussion of biofeedback the difference should be made clear again between “monitoring” some physiologic function of the body versus “biofeedback.” Monitoring of blood pressure, skin temperature, brain wave, or heart by appropriate mechanisms is not biofeedback.

“Biofeedback is a procedure wherein monitoring various physiologic activities of the body is done, but the critical difference is the added emphasis of combined use of *muscle relaxation, deep slow breathing, visualization and repeating a mantra word or phrase*. These practices together can bring about an altered state of consciousness, bringing the mind to a neutral or stilled state, opening it for spirit control.

“Dr. Elmer and Alyce Green refer to **biofeedback** as “Western Yoga.” (Ibid. page 16)

In their book, *Beyond Biofeedback*, both Elmer and Alyce express their belief in the “energy concept” of the cosmos and its relationship to man. They have, from youth, studied and practiced the astrological concepts of the East. In their book preface (p. xix) they state: “*From our viewpoint, the development of full human potential starts most easily with mastery of body energies (through internal control of images, emotions, and volition), and the process can be extended to energies which influence the outside world.*” (Ibid, Preface xix)

The book tells the story of their life, which is deeply entrenched in the Eastern teachings.”

The above lengthy extract, condensed from chapter 19 of Dr. Edwin A. Noyes’ 2011 book *Exposing Spiritualistic Practices in Healing*, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com, will suffice to debunk biofeedback as New Age.

Biofeedback is named in the JCBWL document.

“...New Age covers a wide range of practices such as ... **biofeedback** ...” (JCBWL #2.2.3)

Chapter 9

Colour Therapy or Chromotherapy, and Colourstrology

Origins and development

“Colour therapists believe that the seven colours of the rainbow relate to the body’s seven main chakras. The seven colours of the spectrum relate to the seven main chakras – or energy centres – of the body. Depending on your mood and physical health, the colour therapist will use specific colours to treat the afflicted parts of your body. Colour therapy is administered in several ways. In many treatments coloured lights are shone on the body or coloured silks are worn. Other practitioners use different coloured liquids in bottles or small torches with coloured beams that are pointed at the relevant acupuncture (also known as colourpuncture) points. Colour therapy became more widely used during the 20th century, when Swiss psychologist Dr. Max Lüscher developed the Lüscher-Colour-Diagnostic test. During the test, the recipient is asked to select eight coloured bottles in order of preference. The results are said to reveal your worries and their solution.”

(<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2008/jul/06/healthandwellbeing.relaxation31>)

“A bogus branch of **color therapy** appears to have been founded by a man named Dinshah P. Ghadiali (1873-1966). He founded the Ectro-Medical Hall in Surat, India. By the time he emigrated to the U.S. in 1911, he had developed a theory about his colored light treatment. Dinshah believed that all of the elements exhibits a preponderance of one of the seven prismatic colors. Oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbon, the elements that make up 97% of the body, are associated with blue, red, green, and yellow. In a healthy person these colors are balanced, but they fall out of balance when disease strikes. The therapy is simple: to cure a disease, administer the colors that are lacking or reduce the colors that have become too brilliant. He created a Spectro-Chrome to treat patients with colored light. It was a box outfitted with a 1000-watt light bulb in it and an opening that was fitted with colored filters. The five filters could be deployed singly or in pairs to produce twelve different colors. He developed a therapeutic system detailing which color to use for which illness – such as using green to treat the pituitary and red to improve sexual vitality. Dinshah ran into trouble with both the scientific and the legal establishment in the U.S. – the former because of his advice to patients to forgo conventional medicine for his cures instead, and the latter because of sexual and other improprieties that landed him in jail for four years. Needless to say, there is no scientific evidence to support any of the above claims.”

(Is Color Therapy Legit? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=31518>)

“**Colorstrology** (or **Colourstrology**) is the brainchild of a woman named Michele Bernhardt, author of *Colorstrology: What your Birthday Color says about you*, who describes herself as an intuitive, astrologer, numerologist, and metaphysician who believes she can help people with the healing power of color and sound. She came up with a formula based on astrology, numerology, and intuition to create a color system. She looks at a person’s sun sign, their ruling planet, and what element the person belongs to (earth, air, fire, and, water). Because she believes a person’s birthdate carries a “numerological vibration with specific meaning,” all of these elements combine to form a person’s personality and experience which can be expressed through color.”

(*Do Colors have Power?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=63580>)

New Age

The Vatican Document on New Age speaks of “healing by crystals ... or **colours**” and identifies the healing power as “our inner energy or cosmic energy” (JCBWL #2.2.3).

“**Color therapy** is an alternative medical practice that is founded upon the New Age belief in a scientifically unsubstantiated life force energy that permeates the universe. In Ayurvedic medicine, colors are assigned to the chakras, which are alleged energy centers located along the spine. Some of the tools used in color therapy treatments are gemstones, crystals and crystal wands, colored fabrics, colored eye lenses, lasers and color bath treatments.”

(*Can the Color Red improve your Circulation?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1150>)

“One type of meditation on colors for a therapeutic effect on the physical body or the spirit is sometimes known as **color therapy** or **chromotherapy**. It involves deep breathing and visualization. The individual inhales while visualizing a specific color into what New Agers call “chakras” (energy centers) of the body. He or she exhales while visualizing that same color surrounding the body’s aura (natural field of energy). The color is chosen based on the desired effect upon the body and/or mind. It is believed that each color of the spectrum of light affects the body and spirit in a unique way.”

(http://www.heavenlymanna.net/christianArticle.php?article_id=989#.WsTFyiSuaM8)

“Health therapies that have no scientific basis such as crystal therapy and therapeutic astrology, aromatherapy and **chromotherapy**.”

(*The Lure of Alternative Religions*, Roberta Grillo, <https://www.catholic.org/featured/headline.php?ID=4107>)

“**Color therapy** involves the alleged psychic use and perception of color to diagnose and treat physical illness and/or emotional problems. For example,

color therapists claim they can accurately diagnose the condition of the body by psychically “seeing” and evaluating the condition of the ‘aura,’ an alleged psychic sheath surrounding living things, or the *chakras*, alleged psychic centers within the body. They claim that prescribing appropriate ‘color treatments’ or ‘energy channeling’ will correct color/vibration deficiencies in the aura and/or *chakras*, helping to heal the body.

“The field of **chromotherapy** is replete with subjective practices and conflicting beliefs, making objective diagnosis and treatment impossible. Chromotherapy is almost always either an occultic practice and/or fraud. Examples of occultic potential found in chromotherapy treatments include psychic development, energy channeling, occultic meditation, and development of altered states of consciousness.

Complications arising from color therapy could include misdiagnosis of a serious illness or susceptibility to occultic influences. Color therapy should be distinguished from the legitimate scientific study of color and its effects upon animals and humans.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-14/>)

“A ... series of ‘alternative therapies’ have arisen as a result of a more integrated view of man’s biological, psychological, and spiritual facets, and as a reaction against the positivist mentality that at times characterizes the practice of medicine.

‘New Age’ has frequent exaggerations and abuses in the field of ‘holistic’ medicine, which bases its healing methods on the interrelation of body, mind, and spirit. Thus, for example, **chromotherapy, or healing through colors**, healing by way of energy fields surrounding us, and ‘Reiki,’ which promises to recover the balance of personal energy by applying universal energy by laying hands on various parts of the body.”

(*A Call to Vigilance* – Pastoral Instruction on New Age, Archbishop [later Cardinal] Norberto Rivera Carrera, Primate of Mexico, 7 January 1996, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/acall.htm>)

“It’s one thing to wear colors or paint a room in a cheerful color to create a certain ambience, but it’s quite another to ascribe powers to a color such as the ability to attract prosperity. These beliefs, combined with the fact that **colorstrology** is based in divinatory practices, makes colorstrology off-limits for Catholics.”

(*Do Colors have Power?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=63580>)

“Mood rings became popular during the 1970’s when two New York inventors, Josh Reynolds and Maris Ambats, filled a fake **gemstone** (read chapter 11) with a liquid crystal thermometer and mounted it into a ring. Changes in air or

body temperature would cause the crystals to reflect different wavelengths of light which would result in changing the **color** of the stone. These **colors** were said to be associated with certain moods. New Agers latched on to the fad and saturated it in their customary mumbo-jumbo. The Healthy New Age (link) site said: *From a chakra point of view, yellow corresponds to the third chakra energies so perhaps it could also indicate a time when you are in some sort of ego, or personality.* (Are Mood Rings OK to Wear? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=52620>)

Healing with colours is named in the JCBWL document. (#2.2.3)

Chapter 10

Craniosacral Therapy (CST) or Cranial Sacral Therapy, Cranial Osteopathy

Origins and development

“**Craniosacral therapy** (founder William Sutherland, 1873-1954) is another body – mind – spirit therapy quite like Reiki in its application, using a very soft touch to the head and neck area. Reiki is said to initiate a flow of cosmic energy through the therapist to the patient; however, therapists of craniosacral therapy tell us that they are correcting the clogged, sluggish, unbalanced flow of cerebrospinal fluid about the brain and spinal nerves. The disturbance of cerebrospinal fluid flow is proclaimed by those practicing craniosacral therapy to be the source of most disease and disorders of the human body. Such a concept is not recognized by medical science; indeed there is no evidence to support such a hypothesis.”

(*Exposing Spiritualistic Practices in Healing*, 2011, Dr. Edwin A. Noyes MD, Chapter 12, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

“**Cranial biodynamic osteopathic manual medicine**, also known as **cranial osteopathy**, is a belief that the skull bones can be manipulated to relieve pain (especially of the jaw joint) and remedy many other ailments. While osteopathy in general is a legitimate medical practice, this particular concept has many critics both within the medical community and within osteopathy itself. A systematic review of studies regarding cranial sacral therapy by the University of British Columbia found no ‘valid scientific evidence that craniosacral therapy provides a benefit to patients.’ Even more alarming, it reports ‘adverse events’ resulting in head-injured patients following cranial sacral therapy.”

(*Cranial Osteopathy*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=81>)

“**Cranial Sacral Therapy** is indeed bogus. It is based on the notion that living tissues are imbued with an energy that produces impulses which can be palpated by trained hands. Sutherland believed that cranial sutures (the place where the skull bones meet) were designed to allow small degrees of motion caused by the body’s “life force”, which he referred to as the “Breath of Life”. There is no scientific support for CST due to the fact that its underlying premise – that the cranial sutures move – is false. The bones of the skull fuse by the end of adolescence and research has never demonstrated that these bones can be moved by manual manipulation. In addition, while the brain does indeed pulsate, this is related to the cardiovascular system – not some imaginary Breath of Life. Last, no relationship between brain pulsation and general health has ever been demonstrated.”

(*Craniosacral Therapy*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=92>)

New Age

“While the Vatican has not issued a statement about the use of **Cranial Sacral Therapy**, its moral theology warns that reliance on unproven medical treatments can constitute suspicious medicine.”

(*Craniosacral Therapy*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=92>)

Chapter 11

Crystal Healing or Crystal Work, and Healing with Gemstones

Almost everyone knows of the “Crystal ball” that is used for fortune-telling in the occult practice of “Crystal ball gazing”.

This method of divination, known as Crystallomancy (also known as crystal-seeing, crystallomancy, gastromancy, and spheromancy) is a method for seeing visions achieved through trance induction by means of gazing at a crystal ball.

“The first symbols of this “movement” to penetrate Western culture were the remarkable festival at Woodstock in New York State in 1969 and the musical *Hair*, which set forth the main themes of *New Age* in the emblematic song “Aquarius”.

It is worth recalling the lyrics of this song, which quickly imprinted themselves on to the minds of a whole generation in North America and Western Europe: “*When the Moon is in the Seventh House, and Jupiter aligns with Mars, then Peace will guide the Planets, and Love will steer the Stars. This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius... Harmony and understanding, sympathy and trust abounding; no more falsehoods or derision – golden living, dreams of visions, mystic **crystal revelation**, and the mind’s true liberation. Aquarius...*” (JCBWL Notes 20)

But the New Age use of crystals – including ones of quartz – and gem stones, extends to placing them at strategic points, such as on the alleged chakra points of the human person, to effect “healing”.

Pranic Healing (read chapter 19) for instance, promotes healing with gemstones and crystals. They are also used along with Reiki healing (read chapter 21), to work on the “subtle energy body”. Healers in these systems peddle “prana-infused” and “reiki-charged” precious stones.

Crystals and gems are also employed in Polarity Therapy (read chapter 18). Other practices include the use or wearing of crystal talismans, amulets and bracelets. New Agers believe that crystals vibrate at the perfect frequency of the “universal energy”. One premise behind the wearing of crystals is the belief that rocks absorb energies such as electrical, psychic, magnetic and nuclear. These energies can then be used to effect healing of any one of a variety of ailments.

Another explanation is that the **crystals** act as a “bio-transmitter comparable to aromatherapy and homeopathy”.

(*Amber Teething Necklaces*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=231>)

Crystals are believed by New Agers to vibrate at the perfect frequency of the universal energy and are used as tools along with Reiki healing, to work on the subtle energy body

Origins and development

“Simon Lilly, in *The Complete Illustrated Guide to Crystal Healing* page 190, states that the oldest written recordings of the use of precious stones for healing comes from a variety of writings recorded in India. Their use was closely associated with beliefs and practices of astrology. Gemstones were believed to absorb and transmit energy radiating from the planets and to facilitate balancing of negative and positive energy in man. If the position of the planets were not satisfactory according to a person’s birth chart, then **crystals** and **gems** were supposed to be able to improve the relationship of energies coming from the planets to man. The teachings from India spread across the world and left its influence in most civilizations. Even civilizations that had little contact with, or influence from India or other advanced civilizations, developed some type of use of precious stones in the practice of health and healing. This concept is clear when one reads the history of shamans, medicine men of the Americas, witch doctors of Africa, native healers of Australia, and elsewhere.

“Michael Harner, present day shaman and instructor of shamans, shares with us some of the history of shaman use of crystals and gemstones. In his book, *The Way of the Shaman*, page 109, he quotes Jerome Myer Levi: The wide spread employment of quartz crystals in shamanism spans thousands of years. In California, for example, quartz crystals have been found in archaeological sites and prehistoric burials dating as far back as 8000 years.

“**Crystal work** is a component of both ancient and modern shamanism. In Native American healing, the shaman will utilize the crystal as a method for both diagnosis and treatment; it is believed to be a vehicle through which the healing spirits work.

A Talisman is a gemstone, a crystal worn about the body in the belief that this object can aid us in our life; it is considered to act as a charm. This ‘aid’ comes from the stone, supposedly, by amplifying our own powers, by focusing our feelings, thoughts, actions, and habits, thus benefiting us in reaching our goals. Secondly, it is taught that a talisman is a source of energy and power in and of itself due to its mineral nature, and its ability to amplify our own power by channeling in more universal life force from the *sun*, *moon*, and *earth*. The mineral crystals have seven fundamental structural arrangements in their molecular lattice and each type will have a specific type of influence on a person. Example: a triclinic crystal system produces a talisman that is believed to have barrier properties. A barrier talisman supposedly is protective against illness and

injury. The monoclinic crystal system is considered to produce a talisman that is *protective* physically and spiritually. It then is called an 'amulet'.

"Not only is the molecular structure and lattice type, but the color, and even the shape of the gem considered to influence its effect. Talismans and amulets are used to maintain the optimum function of the physical and spiritual attributes of man.

We now turn to the use of crystals in illness and disease. The discipline of **crystal healing** is totally dependent upon the hypothesis of universal energy and it's believed negative and positive characteristics. This teaching is out of astrology. Subtle energy system concepts, such as electrical polarity, meridians, pressure points, chakras, aura, and subtle bodies, are used to assess and correct what are perceived as energy imbalances. Crystal healers view the human body in totally different ways than orthodox scientists and doctors. Completely different languages and terms are used respectively in each system.

"Another practice in **crystal healing** involves 'chakra balancing' (read chapter 48). The Indian Ayurveda system (read chapter 5) of healing believes that there is a network of subtle energy channels that run through the body. This network said to be composed of a central channel along the spine and which is made up of seven centers of energy called 'chakras'. The seven chakras are proclaimed to be linked to the seven colors of the rainbow, with each chakra being of one of the seven colors. The chakra system is also believed to be influenced by a set of associated symbols, use of sound, color, shape, animal and god forms, as well as the senses. The goal of chakra crystal balancing and healing is to empower each chakra to its optimal function as well as to the system as a whole. The most fundamental chakra balancing act is Hindu-type mediation, but the crystal healer supplements that act with use of his crystals. Choice of crystals for healing is determined by the problems the individual may have, or it may be just to maintain health. Once the chakra felt to be most associated with a health situation is determined, then it is necessary to select more specifically the optimum crystal needed to place over the chakra as therapy. Selection of a color, and mineral type of stone to match the chakra, is done by visualization, intuition (divine inspiration), applied kinesiology (divination by muscle testing), color meditation by visualization, or by dowsing with a pendulum." (Exposing Spiritualistic Practices in Healing, Dr. Edwin A. Noyes M.D. MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

"**Crystal healing**, currently one of the most popular New Age practices, is the use of a supposed "power" inherent within crystals for healing, developing psychic abilities, spirit contact, and other New Age goals. Crystals supposedly

contain the ability to focus and direct psychic energies for healing and other occult pursuits.

“**Crystal work** is a form of animism in which inanimate objects are held to possess spiritual powers that may be contacted, utilized, or directed. But in animism any supernatural power contacted originates from the spirit world. Thus, crystals *per se* have no magical powers and only become an implement behind which spirits may work. When pressed, most crystal healers we have talked with concede that the power behind crystals is spiritistic. The potential problems arising from crystal healing include those of New Age Medicine in general: misdiagnosis, mistreatment, and occultic influence.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-15/>)

“Various **crystals** are supposed to be able to do pretty much everything except cook your dinner. It is claimed that they can stimulate the sex drive, stimulate the third-eye, and connect with the wisdom of your Higher Self.”

(Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/new_age_growth_expansion.html)

“Health therapies that have no scientific basis such as **crystal therapy** and therapeutic astrology, aromatherapy and chromotherapy.”

(*The Lure of Alternative Religions*, Roberta Grillo, <https://www.catholic.org/featured/headline.php?ID=4107>)

New Age

“Clearly the whole practice of **crystal healing** and crystal divination is ‘spiritualism’. What is spiritualism? (Read section J, IX) It consists of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. It is also the belief that the dead can communicate with the living. A spiritualist is one who holds such belief and may practice it as a medium.”

(*Exposing Spiritualistic Practices in Healing*, Dr. Edwin A. Noyes M.D., MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

“A number of ‘New Age’ books state that **crystals** have a hidden intelligence, capable of influencing our lives, and that they teach us to get into contact with their supposed power.”

(Father Paolo Scarafoni, L.C., Rector of the Pontifical University Regina Apostolorum, in *The Church, the New Age Phenomenon and Sects*, Cardinal Dario Castrillón Hoyos, Prefect, Congregation for the Clergy, 27 February 2004, <http://www.clerus.net/clerus/dati/2004-02/28-13/01CNSIn.html>)

“Using **crystals** as healing talismans can indeed bring demonic harassment.”

(Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=239>)

“...New Age covers a wide range of practices as ... **healing by crystals** ... The source of healing is said to be within ourselves, something we reach when we are in touch with our inner energy or cosmic energy.” (JCBWL #2.2.3)

“**Crystals:** are reckoned to vibrate at significant frequencies. Hence they are useful in self-transformation. They are used in various therapies and in meditation, visualisation, ‘astral travel’, or as lucky charms. From the outside looking in, they have no intrinsic power, but are simply beautiful.” (JCBWL #7.2)

“All the writers on the NAM speak of the **crystal** craze as one of the most popular NAM things today, popular even with Christians! The belief in the power of crystals stems from the NAM belief that God is an impersonal force, or energy, which is vibrating in the Universe. If one wants to get into harmony with this energy then one may do so through certain objects that vibrate in harmony with this energy. NAM believes that crystal rocks, with their beautiful crystal shapes and patterns, vibrate with this energy. They believe that if you hold a crystal while meditating this energy will flow into you. One may even go further and focus deeply on a specific crystal in order to release psychic energy for psychic healing, contact with spirit entities, or in developing higher consciousness.

“Elliot Miller says that **crystals** are used in a variety of therapies, such as psychic healing, acupuncture, ‘dream work’, aura and chakra cleansing and balancing. In yogic philosophy the seven centres of spiritual energy in the body are called the chakras. Besides this they are used to enhance meditation, visualisation, astral or ‘soul travel’, channelling and various forms of divination. Crystals are a modern form of using the old-fashioned magic charms and other occultic objects that missionaries found in use when they went to take Christianity to a new country or culture. Of course crystals, of themselves, have no power. They are merely beautiful stones. But when used with occultic ritual people experience power in association with them.”

(*A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, 1994, <https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

“Belief in the ability of **crystals** to store and direct energy is the basis for their use in healing. One method used by crystal healers involves placing stones on various parts of the body, then directing energy from a larger stone known as an “energy source” into the stones on the body. Certain types/colors of stones are used because they are believed to enhance psychic powers, ward off

depression, improve one's love life, help one accept trials, calm the nerves and help one find "clarity, atonement and peace".

To date, there is no scientific evidence to support the efficacy of **crystals** in any of these applications. Scientific studies have found nothing more than a placebo effect as the cause of any supposed healing through the use of crystals. I am in complete agreement with the Irish Theological Commission's conclusion (cited above).

In other words, demons aren't choosy. They're more than willing to operate through any object people believe to have magical power because by doing so, they can lead them away from God and into the dangerous realm of forbidden powers.

All **crystals** to which a New Age use has been subscribed should be discarded immediately. If you are unsure where it's been, throw it away anyway. Better safe than sorry."

(Crystals, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=179>)

Healing by crystals is named (twice) in the JCBWL document. (#2.2.3, #7.2)

Chapter 12

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) and Thought Field Therapy (TFT)

Origins and development

“**Emotional Freedom Technique** was invented by Gary Craig, a Stanford-educated engineer, who kept a tight control of his invention until he suddenly retired some time ago. It is derived from [Roger Callahan’s] **Thought Field Therapy**, which is derived from acupuncture and a chiropractic practice called applied kinesiology, a practice that lacks scientific support based on muscle testing.”

(http://rationalwiki.org/wiki/Emotional_Freedom_Technique)

“**Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)** is a form of alternative psychotherapy that uses tapping on acupuncture points while a patient focuses on a specific traumatic memory. This is said to manipulate an energy field practitioners associate with the human body. Critics have described the theory behind EFT as pseudoscientific and have suggested that any utility stems from its more traditional cognitive components, such as the placebo effect, the distraction from negative thoughts, and the therapeutic benefit of having someone actually listen, rather than from manipulation of meridians.”

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotional_Freedom_Technique)

EFT involves “tapping on energy meridians on the face, upper body and hand in order to clear problems such as phobias, fears and anxiety and other negative emotions, the effects of trauma, stress, depression, and physical symptoms. EFT can also be used as proxy therapy for babies, animals, and people who are unable to carry out the tapping for themselves, and EFT can be used at a distance.”

(<http://spirit-animal.net/eft.htm>)

New Age

“**EFT** is a New Age alternative medical practice that is based on the balancing of an energy form that is not supported by science, and is therefore considered to be a pseudoscience. The only research supporting this technique has been found to be biased in some way or another – either it was funded by EFT promoters or published by pro-alternative medicine journals such as the *International Society for the study of Subtle Energies* and *Energy Medicine Journal*, and *Integrative Medicine*.”

“According to EFT founder Gary Craig, EFT combines two New Age techniques, Mind Body Medicine and acupuncture, which is based on the alleged existence of opposing energy forces known as yin and yang. He calls EFT an ‘emotional version of acupuncture’ wherein certain meridian points are stimulated by tapping on them with the fingertips. He neglects to add that there is no known anatomical or histological basis for the existence of these meridians.

EFT is just another alternative medical practice with a long list of anecdotal evidence – and a short list of credible scientific research – to support its claims. It is generally believed that any healing that may take place as a result of these treatments comes from traditional cognitive components such as the placebo effect, distraction from negative thoughts, rather than from manipulation of meridians, and the therapeutic benefit of having someone actually listen.

The discerning Christian can find many clues to the legitimacy of this practice just by studying its founder, an ordained minister in the Universal Church of God (a non-denominational church that embraces all religions). On his website, he openly admits that he is an avid student of *A Course in Miracles*, an occult-based mind-control program created by a woman who claimed to be channeling Christ.

“But his story gets even worse when we learn that he was mentored by Dr. Roger Callahan, the inventor of **Thought Field Therapy (TFT)**. TFT is also based on the premise that negative emotions cause blockage of subtle energies and if these energies are unblocked then all fears will disappear. TFT also relies on the tapping of acupressure points to relieve the blockage. There are definite spiritual risks for Catholics who wish to use practices such as EFT (and TFT for that matter) because these practices are based on a pantheistic belief in a universal life force which is not compatible with Christianity.

“Practitioners who claim to manipulate or depend upon any kind of “spiritual energy” in their healing techniques are committing the sin of sorcery (See Catechism #2117), even if they are doing so for the purpose of healing. Also, because so many religions consider this universal life force to be a god, putting our faith in a practice which is based upon it could constitute the sin of idolatry (Catechism #2113). It’s also important to point out that unless there is a sound basis for a practice in science as well as faith, then the practice is considered to be superstitious by the Church (Catechism #2110-2111).”

(*Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11462>)

“EFT ... is NOT in any way compatible with our Catholic Faith!! During last month’s radio show (“The New Age Deception” on Catholic Answers Live Radio) someone called in and asked about EFT ... I agreed with Susan

Brinkmann: *it's definitely New Age!!* EFT has A LOT of the New Age teachers involved that were also involved in 'The Secret', 'The Law of Attraction' (read chapter 42) nonsense ... Anyone praising EFT on a Catholic forum probably is a Catholic who simply wants to convince people that it is somehow 'OK' in the same way that so many Catholics want to cling to Reiki or The Enneagram, no matter how many warnings were written about those things. You and I both know they are mistaken!"

(Former New Ager Sharon Lee Giganti, a popular guest speaker on the New Age phenomenon on EWTN, in a 22 March 2011 email to this writer) Ms. Giganti is one of many Catholic authors who have written to me appreciating my work exposing the NAM.

Chapter 13

Homoeopathy

Origins and development

The founder of **homoeopathy**, Dr. Samuel Christian Friedrich Hahnemann was born on 11 April 1755 in the German town of Meissen. He studied medicine in Leipzig, later practicing in Vienna, becoming Doctor of Medicine in 1779.

In 1796, he became convinced that as a first step in the treatment of a sickness, a doctor must know the effects a medicine would have in its pure form on a healthy human being. This was followed by a second principle: One should apply in the disease to be healed that remedy which is able to stimulate another artificially produced disease as similar as possible, and the former will be healed – *Similia Similibus* – Like with Likes. This principle of 'Homoeopathy' (from the Greek *homoios*, similar, and *pathos*, disease), a word coined and used by Hahnemann, was set down in contrast to *Contraria Contrariis*, (healing Opposites by Opposites), the other therapeutic method available at that time, which was called 'allopathy' (*alloios*, meaning different).

He was sure at this stage that the smallness of a dose did not matter. He believed large doses aggravated the disease, because any medicinal substance could cause an adverse reaction unless administered in a proper dose. In 1811, all the work he had done till then culminated in '*The Organon of Rational Healing*', his most important written work. For the title page of the book, he used as his motto the Latin phrase 'Aude Sapere' or '*Dare to be wise*', which incidentally, is the motto of Freemasonry.

He started administering dynamized or potentized drugs, pure substances reduced through a special process of dilution, rubbing and shaking and through the addition of an indifferent substance, dry or fluid to a negligible physical quantity, in the dose which was administered to a sick person.

About the result of potentization, a proponent of alternative medicine says: "It will be realized that the quantity of the original substance left is very minute indeed, and to understand how such a trace can do any good at all, we must understand the basis of **homoeopathic thought**. Homoeopaths believe that once an active substance has been released from its physical manifestations, its spiritual energies are released, and that it is on this level that it will be able to help the patient. It is really the spirit of a substance that is being used."

(*Pathways to Alternative Medicine*, E. G. Bartlett, 1995) Bartlett is an enthusiast of Alternative Medicine

Homoeopaths confess:

“From practical observation, Hahnemann found that the greater the potentization, the greater the power of the medicine in curing the symptoms homoeopathically indicated... In the third potency, the degree of dilution is one-millionth. It may be difficult to imagine that in a dose say of 10,000 potency there would be some medicine left.”

(*Homoeopathic Guide to Family Health*, R. K. Tandon and Dr. V. R. Bajaj M.D, 1989)

“Potencization is not to be confused with simple dilution which does not develop the pure drug into a medicinal dose nor bring out its latent curative energy. It, in the words of Dr. Hahnemann, ‘develops the medicinal powers hidden within and manifests them more and more, or if one may say so, spiritualizes the material substance itself’.”

(*Homoeopathic System of Medicine, An Introduction*)

Another homoeopath is candid about the fact that Hahnemann’s “process of dilution incurred... derision from (his contemporaries in) the medical establishment, who could not explain, and therefore could not accept, how anything so dilute could have any effect.”

(*The Complete Homoeopathy Handbook*, Miranda Castro, F.S. Hom., 1990)

“*The Organon* was reprinted five times (by Hahnemann)*, and in later editions Hahnemann changed his thesis... He had earlier said that medicine should help the body’s self-healing process. Now he began to talk of a ‘vital force’ in the body. This vital force could be called ‘energy’ or ‘consciousness’ or the ‘universal intelligence’ of chiropractors, and Hahnemann said that it was this which gave rise to the body’s immune system and made the body heal itself*... It was the ‘Ch’i’ of acupuncture, the ‘Ki’ of shiatzu (shiatsu). Like the acupuncturist, Hahnemann came to see disease as an imbalance in this vital force, and treatment became a question of restoring that balance. Like all the other alternative therapies, therefore, homoeopathy had a holistic approach. The patient had to be seen as a whole man in his environment, and all factors pertaining to his state, not just his present symptoms had to be considered when dealing with him... In this, they are (like) acupuncturists, who cannot point to the meridians of Ch’i because they are not there in a physical sense, but who know that they must have an existence or their healing system would not work.”

(Op. cit., E. G. Bartlett)

***Possibly no homoeopathy practitioner or patient is aware of those startling facts.**

There’s plenty more confirmation of Hahnemann’s believing in an occult vital force; for example: “**Homoeopathic remedies** are believed to act upon the vital force, stimulating it to heal the body and restore the natural balance.”

(*Brockhampton Reference Guide to Alternative Medicine*, 1996)

“What is frightening is the fact that one homeopathic doctor Withoukka, openly reveals that the real purpose of **homeopathy** is ‘to help open the higher centers (of the brain) for spiritual and celestial influx’, says Jane D. Gumprecht, a Christian doctor, *Holistic Health: A Medical and Biblical Critique of New Age Deception*, Random Press, 1986, page 150.”

(Cited by David L. Brown Ph. D., M. Th., in <http://logosresourcepages.org/NewAge/na-med.htm>)

“In the *Organon*, Dr. Hahnemann laid down the fundamentals of the then-new doctrine of **homoeopathy**. He wrote, ‘Substances ...are medicines only in so far as they possess each its own specific energy to alter the well-being of man... The medicinal properties of those material substances which we call medicines relates only to their energy to call out alterations in the well-being of animal life. Only upon this conceptual principle of life depends their medicinal influence...’”

(Op. cit., Tandon and Bajaj)

The Deputy President of the Indian Homoeopathic Organization with almost 40 years of practice behind him wrote, “**Homoeo drugs** are prepared by a special process of dynamization which retains only the energy relating to the drug in the globules, and not the material.”

(*Homoeopathy For All*, Dr. V. Radha Krishna Murti, 1998)

“Vital Force: A term used by Hahnemann to describe the energy that permeates all living beings.”

(Op. cit., Castro)

“**Homoeopathy** has been attacked again and again on the grounds that the potentised drugs cannot be tested in a laboratory... However laboratory tests have been going on in many countries and certain phenomena not acceptable to conventional science have been observed... On his ‘proving’ trials of the effects of substances on healthy human beings, Hahnemann says, ‘As this natural law of cure manifests itself in every pure experiment, it matters little what may be the scientific explanation of how it takes place’.”

(Op. cit., Tandon and Bajaj)

“**Homoeopaths** have to confess that they do not know how their system works; they can only say that it does.”

(Op. cit., Bartlett)

“Hahnemann made it clear in the *Organon* and elsewhere that he believed his new doctrine was inspired by God...”

(*A Biography of Samuel Hahnemann*, Dr. Richard Haehl, May 1922, cited in Tandon and Bajaj)

But, history records that Hahnemann studied and delighted in the teachings of a Swiss occultic medical philosopher named Paracelsus (1493-1541). They stimulated his thinking and he developed some of his doctrines, including *Similia Similibus*, based on them. He became a Freemason in 1777. He was an ardent follower of ex-Theosophist Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) of Sweden who taught his followers how to enter a state of consciousness that would put them in touch with spirit entities. His views on invisible life energy are shared by Rudolf Steiner, the pioneer of anthroposophy (*wisdom of man*). Hahnemann also adopted the practices of Franz Mesmer (1733-1815), a Swiss-German physician who founded the doctrine of animal magnetism called *mesmerism*. Mesmer used a hypnotic state to heal persons who were sick.

In the *Organon*, Hahnemann compared the similarities between homoeopathy and mesmerism. Consider this quote from the 6th edition of the *Organon*: “I find it yet necessary to allude here to animal magnetism... or rather Mesmerism... It is a marvelous, priceless gift of God.”

Anthroposophy, Swedenborgianism, Mesmerism, and Freemasonry, as well as Rudolf Steiner, Emmanuel Swedenborg, and Franz Mesmer are mentioned in the 2003 JCBWL Vatican Document on the New Age. See section J.

Hahnemann’s ‘vital force’ is the ‘prana’ of yogic philosophy, the monistic ‘universal life force’ or “subtle energy” that many eastern traditions regard as “god”. His predominant strain of pantheism would place God everywhere, in each man, each animal, plant, flower, cell, even in **homeopathic medicine**. As a matter of fact the vocabulary of the *Organon* is esoteric and its ideas are impregnated with oriental philosophies like Confucianism and Hinduism into whose philosophies his biographers have recorded that he delved. For one who claimed divine revelation from God for his principles of homoeopathy, the occult makes a strange bed-fellow. What could be the source of this revelation, when he is known to have spoken derogatorily about the Son of God? [2 Corinthians 4:4] A. Fritsche, his biographer, writes: “He took offence at the arch-enthusiast Jesus of Nazareth who did not lead the enlightened on the straight way to wisdom... In his struggles as a spiritual seeker, in his plight for enlightenment, he is strongly attracted to the East. Confucius is his ideal.”

New Age

The February 3, 2003 Document on the ‘New Age’ Movement, in tracing its origins and background through “ancient occult practices and gnosticism” (#2.4), says that “the essential matrix of New Age thinking is to be found in the esoteric-theosophical tradition which was fairly widely accepted in European

intellectual circles in the 18th and 19th centuries. It was particularly strong in Freemasonry, spiritualism, occultism and Theosophy." (#2.3.1).

It finds that "a focus on hidden spiritual powers or forces in nature has been the backbone of much of what is now recognized as New Age theory." (#1.3).

We find that all of these elements (highlighted in bold font) are intrinsic to Hahnemann and his invention and hence the Document adds, "Advertising connected with New Age covers a wide range of practices as acupuncture, biofeedback... **homeopathy**..." (#2.2.3)

"The activity of Hahnemann to make use of *mesmerism* opened his mind for demonic contacts... The rudiments of **homoeopathy** are Gnostic principles."

(December 2003 Slovak charismatic magazine *Zivy Pramen* (Living Spring), Dr. Vladimir Biba, State Department of Drug Control of the Czech Republic, and Fr. Ales Franc, former member of the Czech Homoeopathic Society.)

"Apart from its scientific questionability, **homoeopathy** is an important carrier of esoteric ideas. If somebody asserts... that homoeopathy has nothing to do with esotericism, then this is factually wrong... We see an introduction of an impersonal force as the life giving principle. This idea is found in Gnostic tradition as well... (In homoeopathic teaching) behind the visible material body of man, there is an energy body (depending on your culture- or in the esoteric sense- on your taste, whether it is called chi, prana, Vis Vitalis ... etc.)" (Op. cit., Dr. Fr. Clemens Pilar COp)

At the February 2004 Asian Seminar on Healing and Deliverance (organized by the National Service Team of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal) in Kaloor, Ernakulam, Kerala, which I attended, Fr. Larry Hogan, Chief Exorcist of the Archdiocese of Vienna, when answering questions raised concerning the nature of homoeopathy, along with Fr. Rufus Pereira, exorcist, said that 'homoeopathy is magic', that he would not recommend anyone to use it, and that in Europe an estimated 80% of homoeopaths use occult practices for the selection, preparation and prescription of remedies. Fr. Hogan repeated this firmly a second time in a subsequent session. Fr. Clemens Pilar COp confirms this statistic in his book (referred above).

Scientific tests are objective. When performed under the same conditions, they follow certain physical laws and produce the same specific results. Homoeopathy is subjective, and does not, as science confirms. Any honest homoeopath will admit to that. In contrast to the prevailing medicine of his day which treated only the disease, Hahnemann sought to treat a person holistically. Homoeopaths enquire into the social, emotional and spiritual life of a patient before prescribing their remedies.

The Christian, seeking to walk in the light and in obedience to his Lord, must not allow himself to be seduced by every brand of the 'in' philosophy and practice, especially when it comes to finding help for his body, the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). That is why it is so important to examine the doctrinal origins and basis of Homoeopathy.

Homeopathy's message to Western medicine is, to put it bluntly, 'Everything you know is wrong!'

Christian and non-Christian alike may be drawn to homeopathy because of its emphasis on the body's efforts to heal itself, and its shunning of drugs and surgery. A few enthusiastic Christians argue that Hahnemann's system is a gift from God, an answer to the medical establishment which they view as steeped in secular humanism. But, despite many claims and alleged parallels to modern medical practices, homeopathy is not a legitimate medical practice. Until it has been categorically and scientifically proved that cure is rooted in a measurable physical reaction or change within the body, one must assume that the power behind homeopathy is spiritual and has side effects.

"Famed paranormal investigator and skeptic James Randi offered one million dollars to any manufacturer of **homeopathic medicines** who could prove whatever claims were posted on their products. He was videotaped downing an entire bottle of homeopathic sleeping pills to show they had no effect."

(Group Conducts Homeopathic Overdose Campaign to Educate Public about Worthlessness of Homeopathic Drugs, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=632>)

Read the transcript of the James Randi challenge and the outcome, **HOMOEOPATHY-BBC-THE TEST**, at my website.

All attempts to win the \$1 million prize have failed. Randi's offer still stands.

"The title of this article is risky - I know, but it's because I'm worried and I have reasons to be so. The drift towards the New Age that a certain number of health professionals are taking is alarming and it's necessary to talk about it ... It's not necessary to look far to be able to notice that there is a certain group within medicine and nursing that has ceased to be professionals in science in order to convert into "healers." Yes, that's what I said: healers. A healer, according to the Spanish Royal Academy Dictionary is: "A person that, without being a doctor, exercises empirical or ritual healing practices." Well with that, unfortunately, we find that certain health professionals are introducing "ritual healing practices," which they are disguising with the name of "non-conventional techniques and therapies" (NCTT), but in reality are actually non-scientific "pseudo-therapies," not supported by medical science. One of these "pseudo-therapies" is **homeopathy**.

"I remember the first time that I listened to someone say that she was following "homeopathic treatment." I asked her what that was. The answer she gave me, with a tone of uncertainty in her voice was: "Well... something like natural medicine." This is what many of its users think, without stopping to reflect too much or investigate further into it. And when a doctor, in the same medical office, proposes a patient the use of homeopathic medicines, a patient trusts in the doctor, who is supposed to have received the proper schooling, formation, and experience that permits you to trust in him. Nevertheless, **homeopathy** is not natural medicine. In reality, it's not even medicine. By entering on this path, it can end up being dangerous on many levels.

"Let's start from the beginning. Sickness and death entered into the world because of sin. But God is a good Father that has not abandoned us to ourselves; rather, in Creation itself, which has been wrought by His hands, He has left us remedies for many of our illnesses. Humanity has worked for centuries at the service of being able to understand illnesses and trying to find remedies against it. The fruit of this effort has been called "medical science," which includes "procedures and pharmaceuticals whose effectiveness has been scientifically proven, for the purpose of curing an illness, alleviating a suffering, or promoting one's overall health." I am citing a text from the Medical Association of Spain (Organización Médica Colegial de España (OMC)), a corporation which represents the medical associates of Spain, and which is also seriously worried about the lack of scientific foundation in the so-called "**homeopathic treatments.**"

What does the Medical Association of Spain specifically say about **homeopathy**? On December 17, 2013, in response to a drafted publication by the order of the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality for the regulation of homeopathic treatments, a "Declaration by the OMC" was published "concerning non-conventional therapies." In it, they affirmed that: "All doctors should have in mind that practices inspired in charlatanism, those lacking a scientific basis and that promise healing to the sick, illusory procedures or those insufficiently tested and proposed to be efficacious, the simulation of medical treatments or surgical interventions and the use of products with an unknown composition, are not ethical (Art. 26.2 CDM)."

"The document is much more extensive, but it's sufficient to mention this excerpt in order to call into question from several perspectives, all **homeopathic practices**, and to show the concern of the Medical Association of Spain. The Vice Secretary of the Association, Dr. Jerónimo Fernández Torrente, affirmed in a debate about Homeopathy, celebrated on November 2, 2015: "When we speak about **homeopathy** and other non-conventional techniques and therapies

(NCTT), we are operating in an uncertain scientific context, with a diversity of professional competencies, a heterogeneousness of the practice, and the scarcity of controls of the quality of their activity.” Juan Esteva de Sagrera, Professor in the Faculty of Pharmacy in the University of Barcelona points out: “The interesting thing about homeopathy is that, being a theory far from all the advances in molecular biology, biochemistry, and pharmacokinetics, it continues to be applied by practicing doctors.”

“And it is not just Spanish physicians that speak this way. The Russian Academy of Sciences declared that **homeopathy** “is a pseudoscience (...) that lacks scientific foundation,” adding that “the principles that direct homeopathy are proper to the proto-scientific stage of physiological development and medicine.” The U.S. Federal Trade Commission recommended to its government that products used in homeopathy ought to be sold with labels informing that “there is no scientific evidence that this product works.” In Australia, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) also opposed **homeopathy** affirming in October of 2013 that: “Whoever chooses homeopathy can place their health in danger.” In the United Kingdom, even though two hospitals of the national public health system offer homeopathy, they declare that “there is no evidence that it is an effective treatment.” Moreover, in 2010, The House of Commons Science and Technology Commission verified that the principles on which homeopathy is based are “scientifically improbable.”

“Up until this point, those who are authorized in the medical community say that there is no scientific evidence that endorses **homeopathy**. In the best of cases, its efficaciousness does not go further than the efficaciousness that a placebo has. It’s true that it’s an industry that has huge benefits – thousands of millions per year – and that’s why there’s interest in maintaining it.

“We know quite a bit now, but that’s not all because, **what is homeopathy?** What does it consist of? What are the active principles of this supposed medicine?

Homeopathy was invented some two hundred years ago by the German physician Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann (1775-1843), that had no problem in declaring himself a mason (Freemason) and occultist who abhorred Jesus Christ. These facts are not stories, and what’s more, they have the same base as the doctrine he elaborates.

“His doctrine was based on the principle that “like cures like.” Indeed, the doctor affirmed having discovered that the substance which caused the illness, infinitesimally dissolved, produces the curing of the symptoms by the so-called “memory of water,” which remembers which substances it has been in

contact with. The most common way of preparing a homeopathic dilution is the following: you take 1 ml of the original substance (known as the “mother tincture”) and you mix it with 99 ml of water. You mix this solution and obtain a dilution of 1 CH (Centesimal Hahnemann). Next, you take 1 ml of this product and repeat the operation. This is how you obtain a dilution of 2 CH. Each time one of these mixtures is made, the original substance becomes a hundred times more diluted in the final preparation. It’s believed that these products are more effective the more diluted they are. A simple calculation allows you to discover that a dilution of 12 CH does not contain any molecule of active ingredient. In other words, it’s simply water. Nevertheless, it is not uncommon to see homeopathic medicines with dilutions up to 30 CH. To know what this means, we can refer to the perfectly well thought out example of Ben Goldacre in his book, *Bad Science*: Imagine a sphere of water with a diameter of 150 million kilometers (the distance that exists between the Earth and the Sun). Imagine a sphere of water of this size with a molecule of a substance dissolved in it: this is a 30 CH dilution. Hahnemann himself confessed in his fundamental book, *Organon* (2:12), that “healing comes from the cosmic power transferred to the remedy through the ritual of potentiation.” The ritual of potentiation from Dr. Hahnemann consisted of a methodical and vigorous mixing of the solution to which he gave the name “succussion” and which the German doctor performed by banging his Bible against the recipient that contained the mixture.

“After this lengthy explanation, the important question to ask is this: if there is no active ingredient which cures, what is it that causes the healing in homeopathy when there is in fact healing? What kind of “healing power” is this “cosmic power transferred to the remedy through the ritual of potentiation”? As believers, we know that we can obtain healing from our infirmities in two ways: healing through an intervention by God; that is, through a miracle; and healing through medicine and pharmacology, which uses resources found in nature. Homeopathy does not fit within either of these two possibilities. Nevertheless, there are patients that confirm that they are healed. Aside from the possible placebo effect, we must have in mind the contacts that Hahnemann had with the occult, and suspect that this method of healing is related to the powers of darkness, confirming what we said at the beginning of this article: that we find ourselves before “ritual healing practices.”

“In this respect, the testimony of Dr. Emilia Vlcková*, who after years of practicing traditional medicine, began to take interest in **homeopathy** and even ended up practicing it on her own children, is of great interest. A priest friend of hers warned her about the relationship between homeopathy and the New Age, but Emilia was enthusiastic about this new therapy and paid

no attention to him. Her complete testimony is available on the internet*, and for that reason I won't enter into detail. For Emilia, the warning bell sounded when her four children began to experience "strange symptoms of psycho-animic deterioration that was eroding their health." Nightmares and night terrors made it impossible for the family to rest. Dr. Vlcková understood that she had to investigate further. In her research, she found a little book entitled: "Concerning Magic and Demonology." It was a pastoral letter from the Bishops in the Italian region of Tuscany, published on February 23, 1997. In the sixth point of the document, the Bishops of Tuscany mention a list of different kinds of magic: "contagious" magic, magic through "spells" ... and "imitative" magic which consists precisely in "like produces like: pouring water on the earth will bring rain, piercing the eyes of a doll will leave blind or even kill the person it represents." The doctor realized that the acting principle of imitative magic was exactly the same fundamental principle of homeopathy: "like cures like." For Dr. Emilia Vlcková the conclusion was evident: "I understood that the principles of homeopathy were based on magic." That is to say, if homeopathy has a healing result, it is due to its relation with magic. Surely, someone will want to give the label of "white magic" to this apparently "good" magic meant to do "the good." However, magic, no matter what color it's painted, is always magic and implies placing oneself in contact with Satan in one way or another. This occurs even when the connection is unknown to us. Obviously, this is a tremendously dangerous path. Why? Because God, when He grants us some benefit, does so because He is good and He loves us. His love is gratuitous and does not ask for anything in return. On the other hand, the devil is not good and is an evil being that does not know love. He is incapable of loving and therefore, does not know gratuitous love. That is why whatever "benefit" he grants us, whatever apparent "favor" he does for us, will always be with interest and will always be "in exchange for." To enter into contact with him can have dire consequences not only on earth, but also in eternity.

In this new paganism in which we live, in which many souls have not received the least Christian formation, for many, it's the same to light a candle for God as it is to light one for the devil. Inasmuch as there is someone to cure and protect them, it matters little to them who it is. However, they must be warned that it is not the same and this must be said with clarity: it's not indifferent who we ask protection from.

"What do we do then, when a doctor proposes that we use **homeopathic "preparations"** (I refuse to call them medications)? Firmly reject this proposal and demand for the doctor to be a doctor; that is, that he place his knowledge of science at the service of our health, leaving aside his "beliefs." And if it's a friend of mine who tells me that they tried it and it helped them? Well then,

perhaps it would be a good idea for you to re-read this article so that you have sufficient information (both on a medical level as well as a historical and supernatural level), to be able to explain to him or her why you don't want to make use of **homeopathic treatments**.

“Obviously, **homeopathy** is not the only pseudo-therapy full of esotericism that has invaded doctors' offices and hospitals. There are many other things that we will have to speak about, beginning with **Reiki**, along with many other practices. It's interesting and good to reflect on for a while. For a long time, the Church was accused of obscurantism and resisting scientific evolution. As a matter of fact, many others continue to accuse the Church of the same thing today. And yet, we have reached the 21st Century – the century with the most scientific medical development – and we find that obscurantism is invading the health world, by way of “health professionals” themselves. Without a doubt, to me, this is the “payment” for the paganism which reigns. There is only one way out of this impasse into which we are immersed: to open wide the doors to Christ and allow His light to penetrate our intelligence and guide us to the truth.”

(Doctors or Healers? - Homeopathy in the Doctor's Office, Sr. Beatriz Liaño, 25 July, 2017, <https://www.familiesfullyalive.com/index.php/en/reasons-for-your-faith/item/1719-homeopathy-doctors-or-healers>)

***Watch this video testimony** 30 March 2019 **“Homeopathy and Magic”** by Catholic Dr. Emilia **Vlcková**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bm2U5WIrudE> 57:01

It is argued that homoeopathy works, people are cured, and so it must be genuine. [Read the section “But they ‘work!’” in the Introduction of this book.] Just because something ‘works’, it is not good enough reason for Christian acceptance.

Astrology, necromancy and divination *work*. Which is why God forbade their use, warning His people that there existed dark powers which they must distance themselves from.

“See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8). Paul is teaching that humanistic thoughts and ideas are not a neutral as we like to imagine. There are spiritual forces at work behind the basic philosophical assumptions upon which man builds his society.

Ignorance, in all cases, is not bliss. As Christians engaged in constant spiritual warfare, we are enjoined by Scripture to increase our knowledge and discern the signs of the times (Hosea 4:6; 1 Chronicles 12:33). Spiritual inquiry is a commendable thing.

If homoeopathy works for someone, the question must be asked: What was it that actually healed them? The cosmic occult vital force in the remedy? The accompanying measures (no smoking, no alcohol, dieting, taking a holiday)? Faith in the healer or his remedies?

About a century ago, the first experiments were conducted with *placebos*, tablets with no active ingredients. The researchers discovered that, more important than the substantial effect of many medications, is the faith (both, of the doctor as well as the patient) in the effect of the remedy. The placebo effect is probably the most important factor in the success of homoeopathic remedies. The least probable factor in a cure is the homoeopathic remedy itself. All genuine clinical trials have determined that the 'cures' are due to either the placebo effect, time itself and the body's self-healing ability, or auto-suggestion.

Additionally, for the Christian, the occult factor is to be weighed.

Read the pages "Why Does Alternative Medicine Seem to Work?" in Section E.

All healings are certainly not the handiwork of God. These include psychic healings, healings by shamans and voodoo doctors, and those of alternative medicines like acupuncture, reiki and pranic healing that too are founded on the 'vital energy' life force principle.

If indeed there were such a thing as the 'vital energy' then it would certainly be recorded by 21st century medical instruments. But no such discovery has been documented. The reader will understand that after potencing and dilution, there is not a molecule left of the original substance selected, and consequently no possibility of using or detecting this non-existent energy.

More importantly, Hahnemann and fellow homoeopaths insist that it is a *spiritual energy*, not a material one, which precludes the possibility of quantification.

In the Biblical revelation of man as a tripartite being of spirit, soul and body (Genesis 2:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:23), there is no evidence of any aspect of him, or of creation, that is spiritual energy.

The *spirit* of Genesis is not the energy that is manipulated for healing in New Age medicine, that was 'divinely revealed' to Hahnemann, and that forms the basis for his philosophies of homoeopathy as set forth in the *Organon*.

Since homoeopathy as a holistic health practice meets all the conditions treated in the referred JCBWL Document, it qualifies as a New Age alternative therapy. In fact, it has been called the 'flagship of holistic health deception among Christians'. When 'physicians' use homeopathy, they actually offer their patients the philosophy and spirituality of the New Age Movement.

Homoeopathy is named in the JCBWL document.

"...New Age covers a wide range of practices such as ... **homeopathy** ..." (JCBWL #2.2.3)

Chapter 14

Iridology (Iris Science, Iriscopy, Irisology or Iris Diagnosis)

Origins and development

“**Iridology** is the study of the iris of the human eye to allegedly diagnose present and even future illness and disease. Similar practices can be seen in ancient Chinese methods related to astrology. Occultist Bernard Jensen is considered the leading U.S. authority.”

(Holistic Health Practices, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-23/>)

“**Iridology** can be traced to ancient Chinese astrological practices. However, according to optometrist Dr. James Carter, the first precursor published on iridology was Philippus Meyens’ *Chiromatica Medica*, (Germany, 1670).

Nevertheless, the credit for developing and promoting modern iridology usually goes to Dr. Ignatz von Peczely of Hungary (1822-1911) and Nils Liljequist, a Swedish homeopath and minister.”

(Iridology, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/iridology-part-1/>)

“Iridologists claim that the eyes can mirror the health condition of the body because the iris allegedly displays in detail the status of every organ system. Supposedly, the iris’s connection with the central nervous system permits detailed information to be sent from the rest of the body back to the iris. Further, according to **iridology** theory, each iris reveals what is happening on its own side of the body, an anatomical impossibility. (Incoming nerve impulses from one side of the body almost always cross to the opposite side on their way to the brain.)

“**Iridology** has been discredited in numerous scientific studies and is, therefore, a form of health fraud. Some of these studies are reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (September 28, 1979), *Australian Journal of Optometry* (July 1982), and *Journal of the American Optometric Association* (October 1984). Despite its lack of credibility, iridology is increasingly accepted, even when used as or in conjunction with psychic diagnosis (read chapter 54) and healing. The problems associated in using iridology include the progression of a serious illness that iridology fails to uncover, personal anxiety and loss of finances from misdiagnosis that a serious illness exists, and spiritual problems from occultic influences in occult forms.”

(Holistic Health Practices, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-23/>)

“How Does It Claim to Work? Iridologists claim that the eyes can “mirror” the health condition of the body because the iris displays in detail the status of every organ system. The iris’s connection with the central nervous system allegedly permits detailed information to be sent from the rest of the body back to the iris. Furthermore, each iris reveals what is happening on its own side of the body. The iridologist claims he is able to diagnose the physical condition of the body through examining the iris, the colored part of the eye. He also claims that he can diagnose the probability of future illnesses and diseases by the same method.

“Iridology is based upon the idea that each organ of the body is represented by a corresponding area within the iris. The left iris represents and is a picture of the left side of the body; the right iris represents and is a picture of the right side of the body. Thus, the head is at the top of the iris, the feet are at the bottom; the areas in between the head and the feet are arranged top to bottom in rough parallel sequence to their arrangement in the human body. Organs that are paired or symmetric, such as the kidneys and nose, are found in both irises.

Iridologists characteristically give scientific sounding descriptions of how iridology allegedly operates...

“The idea that a particular organ of the body, in this case the eye, constitutes a miniature version of the entire body is not new. Throughout its inglorious history, quack medicine has held that many different body organs constitute a miniature representation of the human body. The human body has been “compressed” and inserted into the outer ear, the nose, face, head, and even the anus and other parts or organs of the body. Reflexology does the same with the hand or foot, and homuncular or auricular acupuncture does the same with the outer ear. In its own manner, chiropractic does the same with the human spine.

“Scientific Evaluation: Discredited in numerous scientific tests.

Occultic Potential: Possible psychic diagnosis and healing.

Major Problem: The diagnostic ability of iridology for both present and future illness is a myth.

Biblical/Christian Evaluation: Quack and potentially occultic practices should be avoided.

Potential Dangers: The progression of a serious illness that iridology fails to uncover; personal anxiety and loss of finances from misdiagnosis that a serious illness exists; occult influences.”

(*Iridology*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, Op. Cit.)

“There is no scientific support for iridology. In fact, controlled experiments have proven that there is no correlation between illness in the body and markings or changes in the iris. One test involved Bernard Jensen (1908-2001), the leading American iridologist and two other practitioners who failed to identify kidney disease in patients during a controlled experiment that took place in 1979. Not only did they fail to diagnose the patients who actually had kidney problems, they misdiagnosed 88 percent of the normal patients with one practitioner claiming that 74 percent of them were sick enough to need kidney treatment. Another test, conducted a year later, had a similarly disastrous result. This one involved a leading Australian iridologist who examined photographs of 15 patients who had 33 different health problems. The iridologist did not correctly diagnose any of the problems – not one! And this was the leading iridologist in Australia!

Even though there have been some studies producing positive results, Dr. Edzard Ernst issued a review of all published reports on **iridology** in 2000 and found that none of the tests that produced positive results were properly designed.

“Might iridology be doing any harm? Waste of money and time are two obvious undesired effects,” he concluded. “The possibility of false-positive diagnoses, i.e., diagnosing – and subsequently treating – conditions that did not exist in the first place, seems more serious. The real problem, however, might be false-negative diagnoses: someone may feel unwell, go to an iridologist, and be given a clean bill of health. Subsequently, this person could be found to have a serious disease. In such cases, valuable time for early treatment (and indeed lives) can be lost through the use of iridology”.

(Might Iridology be doing any harm? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=118>)

New Age

“...New Age covers a wide range of practices such as ... **iridology**.” (JCBWL #2.2.3)

“Despite the claims of over-zealous followers, leading iridologist Bernard Jensen is not a scientist, but a popular new age healer, a fact revealed in his various works, such as *Iridology: Science and Practice in the Healing Arts*. In this text, he discusses his belief in reincarnation, astral travel, psychic development,

and other occultic practices and philosophies. He also confesses his great indebtedness to occultist Manly P. Hall, gurus Sai Baba and Jiddu Krishnamurti, homeopath V. G. Rocine, occultist and polarity therapy founder Randolph Stone, and those of similar persuasion. Jensen's new age philosophy is also evident in the section titled "A Deeper Look," giving an extensive bibliography replete with new age texts, several of which originate from the spirit world. Books listed as those "which have helped me" include the standard spirit-inspired theosophical text by medium H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*; new age bible *The Aquarian Conspiracy* by Marilyn Ferguson; parapsychologist Jeffrey Mishlove's *The Roots of Consciousness*; as well as the spiritistically inspired text *A Course in Miracles*."

(*Iridology*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, Op. Cit.)

"**Iridology** is based on the idea that each part of the body is represented by a corresponding part of the iris and that a person's state of health can be diagnosed by the color, texture and location of pigment flecks in the eyes. Dietary supplements and herbal medicines are then used to treat the patient.

"Iridology shares a similar conceptual framework with those of reflexology and acupuncture," the authors of the Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy study (<https://www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/papers/unorthodox-techniques-for-diagnosis-and-treatment#s4>) write. "Studies have shown that iridologists are unable to distinguish patients with disease from healthy subjects, and to give varying diagnoses when examining iris photographs from the same individuals taken a few minutes apart. Furthermore, iris patterns are unique and remain constant throughout life, enabling them to be used for reliable personal ('biometric') identification. This calls into serious question the theoretical basis of iridology'."

(*Watch out for wacky Allergy Treatments*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=30332>)

"Like everything else in new age medicine, **iridology** claims to be a logical, scientific, and natural system of diagnosis. Scientific medicine is based upon consistent and proven methods of medical diagnosis. But a major problem of new age medicine is that, having rejected science, practitioners as a whole rarely agree when it comes to methods of diagnosis. This is illustrated in iridology. For example, there are some twenty *different* iridology charts that a practitioner may choose from in his practice."

(*Iridology*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/iridology-part-2/>)

"Like much new age medicine, **iridology** makes use of the concept of mystical energy. In fact, the pupil of the eye is held to be a repository of sorts for the

body's "energy," according to many iridologists. Iridology is worthless as a diagnostic technique, and it may involve a person in the occult. Whether considered from the perspective of logic, scientific tests, or iridology theory itself, iridology is a pseudoscience of no value. The practice has deceived both practitioner and pat alike."

(*Iridology*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/iridology-part-4/>)

"Iridology, by the way, is quackery. There is no scientific basis for its claims."

(*Homeopathy and Diagnostic Tools*, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=1065>)

"There is no scientific support for **iridology**...

For the Christian, there are more than just physical risks associated with iridology. The connections between this practice and the occult pose serious spiritual risks as well.

Samuel Pfeifer, M.D. author of *Healing at Any Price*, says iridology can ultimately be traced to Chinese astrology practiced 4,000 years ago. "Ancient Chinese astrologers taught that the organs of the big world (macrocosm) of man were reflected in the small world (microcosm) of the eyes," Dr. John Ankerberg writes.

That these beliefs are embraced by modern-day iridologists is evident in Armand Ian Brint, a leading practitioner who writes in *The Holistic Health Handbook*: "In iridology, the macrocosm and microcosm are linked in our eyes. Iridology may be summed as the observation of the change that arises from the interplay of various levels of consciousness and results in one's unique evolution into greater [occult] truth and light."

"But there are other connections between iridology and the New Age and the occult. Many practitioners believe that clues about the "integrity" of the body's "energy" (as in chi) can be found in the eye. When asked how one can diagnose the energy condition of the body based on the energy condition of the eye, practitioners admit that psychic powers and even spirit guides are used. A leading authority on the occult, Dr. Kurt Koch confirms in *The Devil's Alphabet*, "Many of our healers and occult practitioners use eye-diagnosis mediumistically. That means that they are only interested in the iris as a mediumistic contact. In this way the human eye serves as psychometric purpose in much the same way as hand lines do when a fortune teller uses them."

"Even though some practitioners may seem able to diagnose hidden problems, the question we need to ask is how did they come by this information? If science has proven that there is no link between markings in the iris and the body,

what other source are they drawing upon to discover this information? Are they relying on occult powers or just making a few lucky guesses? My advice is to stay away from iridologists, no matter how effective and well-meaning they may appear to be."

(*Might Iridology be doing any harm?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=118>)

Iridology is named in the JCBWL document. (#2.2.3)

Chapter 15

Jin Shin Jyutsu

Origins and development

“**Jin Shin Jyutsu** is a Japanese healing art that balances body, mind and spirit by using our hands.”

(<http://www.jinshininstitute.com/>)

“In 1912, a terminally ill Jiro Murai (1886-1960) “practiced sitting in Zen meditation, breathing and using Mudras associated with Tantric Buddhism to prepare himself for his transmigration. For six days he experienced his body cooling and on the seventh day a tremendous heat enveloped him. When his body returned to normal, he knew he had passed the crisis and he was healed. Jiro’s world had changed and for the next 34 years he dedicated his life to the research, practice and understanding of how Life Energy from Source flows in the human body. He finally named the practice **Jin Shin Jyutsu**.

Jiro continued to standardize his discoveries of the energy flow in the body. Through his studies he revived a many centuries old healing art that had long been forgotten.”

(<http://www.jinshininstitute.com/jin-shin-jyutsu/history>)

“**Jin Shin Jyutsu** claims to be ‘an ancient oriental art of harmonizing life energy within the body’ that is said to predate ‘Buddha and Moses.’ It involves the application of the hands for the purpose of balancing the flow of life energy in the body. But this ‘life energy’ does not pertain to any of the physical energies known to science. Rather, it purports to be an energy that permeates the entire universe. As the Jin Shin Jyutsu website explains, ‘A practitioner of Jin Shin Jyutsu is not the ‘do-er’, s/he simply assists in the flow of an infinite supply of universal energy’.”

(Jin shin Jyutsu, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=81>)

New Age

“During a typical **Jin Shin Jyutsu** session, the practitioner ‘listens’ to the energy pulses in the wrists, then employs a ‘harmonizing sequence’ or ‘flow’ they believe can unblock particular energy pathways and restore the person ‘to the energy rhythm of the universe.’ These are pantheistic beliefs that are not compatible with Christianity.

In fact, in the JCBWL Document, the Pontifical Councils specifically refer to these energies as a ‘New Age god.’ (#4)

Christians, on the other hand, believe God is a personal being who created the universe “in order to share the communion of His life with creaturely persons”.” (Ibid)

Chapter 16

Nambudripad's Allergy Elimination Techniques (NAET)

Origins and development

"Nambudripad's Allergy Elimination Techniques (NAET) are a form of alternative medicine by which practitioners claim to be able to diagnose and treat allergies and supposedly related disorders. The techniques were devised by Devi Nambudripad, a California based chiropractor and acupuncturist, in 1983, drawing on a combination of ideas from kinesiology, acupuncture, acupressure, nutritional management and chiropractic methods. Reviews of the available evidence conclude that the diagnostic techniques used in NAET, primarily a form of applied kinesiology, are ineffective at diagnosing allergies and several medical associations advise against using applied kinesiology in this way.

The few available reviews in the literature that discuss NAET directly, state that it lacks any supporting evidence and that its claims are unsubstantiated. The theoretical basis of NAET has been criticized for lacking scientific rationale and the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy advises against the use of NAET. They have advised against using NAET to treat allergies, criticizing its 'lack of scientific rationale' and describing it as a 'potentially dangerous technique'.

In a critical appraisal of Nambudripad's techniques Dr. Stephen Barrett of Quackwatch writes:

'NAET clashes with the concepts of anatomy, physiology, pathology, physics, and allergy accepted by the scientific community. The story of its 'discovery' is highly implausible. Its core diagnostic approach - muscle testing for 'allergies' - is senseless and is virtually certain to diagnose nonexistent problems. Its recommendations for dietary restrictions based on nonexistent food allergies are likely to place the patient at great risk for nutrient deficiency, and, in the case of children, at risk for social problems and the development of eating disorders'."

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nambudripad's_Allergy_Elimination_Techniques)

To quote the above-mentioned Dr. Barrett directly, "NAET is a bizarre system of diagnosis and treatment based on the notion that allergies are caused by 'energy blockage' that can be diagnosed with muscle-testing and permanently cured with acupressure and/or acupuncture treatments. Its developer, Devi S. Nambudripad, DC, L. Ac, RN, PhD, is described on her website as an

acupuncturist, chiropractor, kinesiologist, and registered nurse who practices in Buena Park, California.”

(<http://www.chirobase.org/06DD/naet.html>)

“Many dubious practitioners claim that food allergies may be responsible for virtually any symptom a person can have. In support of this claim – which is false – they administer various tests purported to identify offending foods. Claims of this type may seem credible because about 25% of people think they are allergic to foods. However, scientific studies have found that only about 6% of children and 1-2% of adults actually have a food allergy, and most people with food allergies are allergic to less than four foods. The following procedure is not valid for managing food allergies: **Nambudripad’s Allergy Elimination Technique (NAET).**”

(<http://www.quackwatch.org/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/Tests/allergytests.html>)

New Age

“Anything that involves ‘energy work’ is New Age, and NAET falls into this category. An easy rule-of-thumb to use when discerning one of these treatment modalities is to check to see if it involves a universal energy known as chi, ki, qi, prana, yin-yang, vital force, etc. If so, it’s not Christian (and not scientific) and should be avoided. Most places do not hide their belief in this energy so it’s usually fairly easy to spot on their websites.

Dr. Devi S. Nambudripad, a chiropractor/ acupuncturist who developed NAET explains it as a ‘non-invasive, drug free, natural solution to eliminate allergies of all types and intensities using a blend of selective energy balancing, testing and treatment procedures from acupuncture, allopathy, chiropractic, nutritional, and kinesiological disciplines of medicine.’

Although she does not describe the types of energy she’s balancing, she is involved in the use of alternative treatments that are based on the manipulation of yin-yang (acupuncture) and vital energy (homeopathy). Her overarching belief is that allergies can best be explained through the principles of Oriental medicine, such as the belief that allergies cause blockages in the body’s meridian energy pathways. She also employs the very New Age muscle testing/applied kinesiology to diagnose specific allergies, then treats them with a combination of spinal stimulation and acupressure. After each treatment, the patient must avoid the offending substance for precisely 25 hours.

The principle diagnostic method of NAET is muscle testing, which is a distinctly New Age treatment. Proponents of muscle testing claim diseases can be evaluated through specific patterns of muscle weakness which they can heal by manipulating or unblocking alleged body energies along meridian pathways, or by infusing energy to produce healing in certain organs.

In the case of NAET, substances are put in the patient's hand and the practitioner tests whether the arm can resist being pulled by the practitioner. If the arm can be pulled, it means the substance causes an allergy. When the testing is complete, the practitioner then 'treats specific acupuncture points on the back using strong acupressure either by hands or with a pressure device while the patient is holding the allergen in their palm, touching the sample with the pads of their fingers,' Dr. Stephen Barrett explains. 'All patients above the age of ten will then also receive acupressure or acupuncture needles on specific points on the front of the body'.

Patients are asked to remain for 15-20 minutes in the office after treatment, after which time they are subjected once again to muscle testing to see if the practitioner can pull the patient's arm while they are holding an allergen in their hand. If not, then the treatment is considered successful. Patients must then avoid all contact with the allergen for 25 hours and are given a Guidebook that helps them to find the foods they are permitted to eat during that period. Full treatment consists of 30-40 visits (usually occurring once or twice a week)."
(NAET: Nambudripad's Allergy Elimination Technique, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=129>)

"NAET is all about balancing a fictitious energy known as 'chi', which is part of a pantheistic belief system that posits the presence of a universal life force energy in all creation. Pantheism is not compatible with Christianity. This fact alone means NAET fails the 'test' and should be avoided by Christians."
(*Can Satan Heal?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1198>)

Chapter 17

Naturopathy or Natural Medicine (and Radionics)

Origins and development

“Dr. Benedict Lust (1872-1945) is considered to be the founder of **naturopathy** in the U.S. In his native Germany, he had been exposed to a wide range of natural healing arts, including that of a Catholic priest named Sebastian Kneipp (1821-1897) who opened up a “water cure” clinic after becoming convinced that he and a fellow student had cured themselves of tuberculosis by bathing in the Danube River. Dr. Lust brought Fr. Kneipp’s hydrotherapy techniques with him to America in 1892. Ten years later, he founded the American School of Naturopathy. Over the course of the next 20 years, naturopathic medicine grew into a holistic system that embraced a variety of alternative healing systems such as homeopathic and herbal methods.”

(*Naturopathy*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=157>)

“**Naturopathy** is a system of therapy and treatment which relies exclusively on natural remedies, such as sunlight, air, water, supplemented with diet and therapies such as massage. However, some naturopaths have been known to prescribe such unnatural treatments as colon hydrotherapy for such diseases as asthma and arthritis. **Naturopathy** is based on the belief that the body is self-healing. The body will repair itself and recover from illness spontaneously if it is in a healthy environment. Naturopaths have many remedies and recommendations for creating a healthy environment so the body can spontaneously heal itself. Naturopaths claim to be holistic, which means they believe that the natural body is joined to a supernatural soul and a non-physical mind and the three must be treated as a unit, whatever that means. **Naturopathy** is fond of such terms as “balance” and “harmony” and “energy.” It is often rooted in mysticism and a metaphysical belief in vitalism (Quackwatch, Dr. Stephen Barrett (link) ... Bastyr University, a leading school of **naturopathy** since 1978, offers instruction in such things as acupuncture and “spirituality”.”

(<http://skepdic.com/natpathy.html>)

“**Naturopathy**, sometimes referred to as “**natural medicine**,” is a largely pseudoscientific approach said to “assist nature”, “support the body’s own innate capacity to achieve optimal health”, and “facilitate the body’s inherent healing mechanisms.” Naturopaths assert that diseases are the body’s effort to purify itself, and that cures result from increasing the patient’s “vital force.” They claim to stimulate the body’s natural healing processes by ridding it of waste products and “toxins.” At first glance, this approach may appear

sensible. However, a close look will show that naturopathy's philosophy is simplistic and that its practices are riddled with quackery.

The notion of a "vital force" or "life force", a nonmaterial force that transcends the laws of chemistry and physics, originated in ancient times. Historians call it the doctrine of vitalism. No scientific evidence supports this doctrine, but a huge body of knowledge, including the entire discipline of organic chemistry, refutes it. Vitalistic practitioners maintain that diseases should be treated by "stimulating the body's ability to heal itself" rather than by "treating symptoms." Homeopaths claim that illness is due to a disturbance of the body's "vital force," which they can correct with special remedies, while acupuncturists claim that disease is due to imbalance in the flow of "life energy" (*chi* or *Qi*), which they can balance by twirling needles in the skin. Many chiropractors claim to assist the body's "Innate Intelligence" by adjusting the patient's spine. **Naturopaths** speak of "Vis Medicatrix Naturae." Ayurvedic physicians refer to "prana." And so on. The "energies" postulated by vitalists cannot be measured by scientific methods."

(<http://www.quackwatch.com/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/Naturopathy/naturopathy.html>)

"**Naturopathy** is based on the central belief that nature has its own healing power (a principle which practitioners call *Vis Medicatrix Naturae*). Naturopaths believe their role is to support this natural healing power and prefer to use treatment approaches they consider to be the most natural and least invasive. Some of these methods include nutrition counseling (such as eating more whole and unprocessed foods), the use of vitamins and other supplements, herbal medicines, homeopathy, hydrotherapy, exercise therapy, massage, fasting, acupuncture, Chinese medicine, and minor surgery."

(*Naturopath could get 37 years for Fake Claims*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=60071>)

"**Naturopathy** is an approach to health and disease which assumes that natural methods of treatment are preferable to synthetic treatments such as drugs and surgery. Naturopathy is based on the idea that illness is due to an accumulation of toxins or waste products in the body. Physical symptoms are the body's attempt to rid itself of these toxins. The basic problem with naturopathy is that its methods are characteristically ineffective when confronting serious illness, and its bias against modern medicine only compounds the problem. Further, the definition of "natural" is frequently subjective; "natural" treatment may include the methods of occultic medicine. Here, naturopathy employs a wide range of New Age treatments having occultic potential such as **radionics**, homeopathy, meditation, and yoga. Thus, naturopathy may inhibit correct diagnosis of a problem, permitting a curable illness to assume

serious or incurable proportions; it may also offer ineffective treatments and involve clients in occultic methods. Nevertheless, with theoretical revision and practical safeguards, naturopathy could function as a commendable model for preventive health care and treatment of minor ailments. However, Christian enthusiasts should exercise caution; naturopathy as a whole is part of New Age medicine.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-28/>)

“**Radionics** is a form of psychometry where the healer is aided by a mechanical apparatus such as Abram’s black box or a pendulum. Medical psychometry consists of methods of psychic diagnosis (read chapter 54) and treatment. These different practices claim to work by teaching healers an alleged psychic sensitivity to “radiations” or mystical energies in objects or people. Such sensitivity supposedly permits one to diagnose a patient’s physical condition and/or prescribe treatment (e.g., use of radionics devices or homeopathic remedies). Homeopathy and **naturopathy** frequently employ these methods, and water dowsing and other forms of dowsing are forms of radionics practice claiming a natural sensitivity to water or various “radiations.” These methods have never been proven to work as claimed. For example, it is scientifically proven that radionic devices such as dowsing rods contain no mysterious powers in themselves. These techniques operate through spiritistic power not a natural human or mechanical sensitivity to strange “radiations.” Psychic development is required for their use and their practices are basically forms of spiritistic, psychic diagnosis and healing. Potential problems include incorrect diagnosis of a serious illness, wrong prescribing of treatment, and occultic influence as revealed in such texts as *Spirit Psychometry*.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-33/>)

New Age

“The things **naturopaths** do that are good are not special, and the things they do that are special are not good.”

(Harriet Hall MD, <http://skepdic.com/natpathy.html>)

“**Naturopathy** is a cornucopia of almost every quackery you can think of. Be it homeopathy, traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurvedic medicine, applied kinesiology, anthroposophical medicine, reflexology, craniosacral therapy, Bowen Technique, and pretty much any other form of unscientific or pseudoscientific medicine that you can imagine, it’s hard to think of a single form of pseudoscientific medicine and quackery that naturopathy doesn’t embrace or at least tolerate.”

(David Gorski, <https://sciencebasedmedicine.org/here-we-go-again-a-bill-licensingnaturopaths-rears-its-ugly-head-in-michigan/>)

JCBWL defines various parameters by which one may decide on whether a treatment, therapy, practice, or system is New Age or not. Some are named. Others are referred to generically, for instance, “various kinds of herbal medicine” (#2.2.3). Still others are not mentioned at all despite their being undeniably New Age. Neither is naturopathy. How then can one be assured that naturopathy is New Age?

The Document describes various criteria that combine in varying permutations and combinations to make a therapy New Age. In the case of naturopathy, if one studies even the rationalistic analysis (skepdic.com) of it above, or the secular opinion (Dr. Stephen Barrett M.D. of Quackwatch) following it, one notes certain key words and phrases that the Document uses to direct one to identifying something as being New Age in character.

“**Naturopathy** is a whole medical system that is based upon a philosophy that emphasizes the healing power of nature and incorporates the New Age belief in a “vital force” or “energy” that supposedly pervades the universe.”

(Naturopathy, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=157>)

“Homeopathic/**Naturopathic medicine** has at its core the idea that the body develops imbalances that must be corrected. The “vital energy” theory is the same as the “universal energy” theory in that they both seek a balance between the “energies” in the body with that if the “vital/universal energy.” Although there are other aspects of Homeopathy, such as considering the whole person and not just the symptom or disease, this fundamental philosophical presumption behind Homeopathic theory is contrary to the facts of science and the body and to the Christian worldview.”

(Naturopathy, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/fs/viewanswer.asp?QID=2205>)

Chapter 18

Polarity Therapy/Massage, Massage Therapy, Orgonomy or Reichian Theory, Rolfing, Somatics, Feldenkrais, Tellington Touch (Ttouch), “Bodywork” and Bioenergetics

Origins and development

“**Polarity Therapy** was developed in the 1940's by Randolph Stone, a chiropractor, osteopath and naturopath, who studied was student of traditional medical practices from India and China.”

(Offering Polarity Therapy in a Parish Setting is a Bad Idea, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1051>)

“Drawing from Western manipulative techniques, naturopathy, Chinese energy medicine and Ayurvedic medicine, Stone formulated his (**Polarity**) **therapy** based on the underlying principle of wireless currents in, around and through the body. According to Stone, it is this subtle energy flow that gives life and through which the soul functions.”

(<https://www.massagetherapy.com/articles/polarity-therapy/>)

“**Polarity Therapy** is the art and science of stimulating and balancing the flow of life energy within the human being. Polarity Therapy concerns itself with the flow of a very subtle high-frequency energy which in the East is called prana or chi, but which is perhaps best referred to in this context as life-energy.”

(<https://polaritycenter.org/polarity-therapy/what-is-polarity/>)

“**Polarity therapy** is the practice of channeling energy from the healer into the client to allegedly restore or balance the body's repository of mystical energy (*chi, prana*) believed to flow between positive and negative “poles” in the body. Founded by occultist Randolph Stone, polarity therapy claims that “sore” spots are first located to determine where *chi* blockage exists; the Polarity Zone Chart then determines the organ or part of the body to which the “sore spot” responds. By channeling psychic energy through the therapist's hands, the flow of *chi* is restored to corresponding body organs. These practices, plus the addition of other methods (e.g., acupressure, **bioenergetics**, yoga, self-hypnosis) and practices (e.g., diet, special exercises, mental affirmations), are believed to maintain physical and spiritual health. The practices of polarity therapy have never been established to work on the basis of their stated principles. Further, as in therapeutic touch, most people have wrongly concluded that this is not an occultic method because of its innocent appearance. Yet polarity therapy

is a form of psychic healing involving energy channeling and, potentially, spiritism. Along with other forms of psychic healing, the potential dangers include misdiagnosis, mistreatment, and occultic influences.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-30/>)

“An imbalance in polarity or blocked energy in the body could either indicate or lead to poor health, stress, and other factors. **Polarity therapy** aims to correct the root issue and restore balance physically, emotionally, and psychologically. Treatment may incorporate approaches such as traditional touch **massage**, light touch, changes in nutrition or diet, communication or thought processing, and stretching or exercise, among others. In the realm of polarity therapy related to **bodywork and massage**, there are three primary levels of touch: Satva, or soft touching, Rajas, or rocking motion, and Tamas, or dispersing movement.” (<https://www.massagetique.com/types/polarity-therapy/>)

“There is absolutely nothing wrong with **massage therapy**, as long as it’s a type of massage that is scientifically sound such as sports massage and other forms of medical massage that involve primarily the use of the hands and fingers to manipulate layers of muscles and connecting tissue. This type of massage has been scientifically proven to be effective for a variety of conditions. However, this field is being rapidly infiltrated with “energy” healers who practice a type of massage that involves the manipulation of so-called subtle or putative energy forces which supposedly permeate the universe. There is no scientific evidence for the existence of this energy, which is why all modalities based upon it have never been proven to work. This includes everything from acupuncture to Reiki, therapeutic touch, touch for health, crystal healing, aroma therapy and many others.”

([Chakra Therapy, Susan Brinkmann, https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=247](https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=247))

New Age

“**Polarity Therapy**, falls under the heading of “energy medicine” because it is based on a perceived need to balance “life energies” which are scientifically unfounded and which the Pontifical document, Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life refers to as the ‘New Age god’. These treatments are problematic on several fronts because; 1) they introduce people to concepts that are part of a pantheistic belief system and, 2) they are scientifically unfounded and therefore have never been determined to be safe. Polarity therapy is a treatment involving manipulation, stretching exercises and diet in order to remove blocks in the flow of ‘life energy’ between the positive (head) and negatives poles (feet) of the body. Polarity therapists use a variety of techniques to clear these paths such as twisting the torso, spinal realignment, curling the toes, rocking

motions and moving the hands or crystals along the body's so-called energy pathways."

(*Offering Polarity Therapy in a Parish Setting is a Bad Idea*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1051>)

"**Bodywork methods**, also known as [somatics, or] the somatic sciences (e.g., **Rolfing**, functional integration, **orgonomy**, **bioenergetics**, the Alexander method, and Arica, read chapter 44) represent diverse methods both in practice and philosophy. Collectively they are used by millions of people. Frequently in these methods the body is used as a tool to help 'enlighten' or otherwise influence the mind. The purpose is to supposedly improve mind-body functioning along a predetermined path or perspective that is in harmony with the underlying philosophy and goals of the particular **bodywork** method – goals which are often Eastern. This Eastern emphasis is documented in texts such as New Medicine authority Dr. Ken Dychtwald's *Bodymind*. The influence of Wilhelm Reich is seen in many bodywork methods, and similarities to yoga, an original bodywork technique, are frequently found. Because the body is usually believed to be a crude layer of mind, 'proper' manipulation of the body may be used to impact the mind toward desired religious, psychological, or occultic goals.

"Scientific testing is sparse although initial research and other considerations suggest that most of these methods do not work on the basis of their stated principles. For example, award-winning medical writer Hank Pizer's *Guide to the New Medicine: What Works, What Doesn't* (1982, p. 90) asserts, 'There is little scientific evidence to support either the theoretical formulations on clinical effectiveness of either **Rolfing** or **Feldenkrais** [functional integration].'

"This is not to say they cannot have dramatic effects on a person's consciousness; they can. This is why many **body-work** methods are used in conjunction with various New Age therapies to help secure New Age goals, such as psychic development, yogic kundalini arousal, development of alleged 'higher' consciousness, etc.

"The problem with **bodywork** discipline is that most of its methods are clinically unevaluated and/or suspect in terms of the claims made. Many have occultic potential such as the dangerous phenomenon of yogic *kundalini* arousal – which seems to be a not infrequent occurrence in many bodywork methods. Further, the New Age religious philosophies underlying many of these methods can condition practitioners along New Age lines."

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-10/>)

“**Somatics** was developed by Thomas Hanna of California who coined the word ‘somatics’. Somatics refers to the soma, or a person’s ‘living body’ as an entity that is capable of self-education and self-regulation. The therapy itself is based on slow, gentle moves aimed at ‘reawakening’ this self-regulatory process.

“I would give **Somatics** a pass for several reasons. First, I can find no convincing scientific studies done about this theory.

The second reason why I have my doubts about this is because of Hanna’s background. He’s not a medical doctor. In fact, his Ph. D is in philosophy and divinity. In 1965, after becoming chairman of the Philosophy department at the University of Florida he decided to study neurology at the medical school. I found no evidence that he ever earned a degree in this field, however. Hanna claims that the combination of study in philosophy, divinity and neuroscience convinced him that all life experiences create physical patterns in the body. In 1969, while living in Guadalajara, he wrote *Bodies in Revolt* in which he gave the Greek word soma a more modern meaning. “Soma does not mean ‘body’: it means ‘Me, the bodily being,’” he wrote.” ... Somas are you and I, always wanting life and wanting it more abundantly.”

“If this sounds a little New Agey to you, it should. By 1973, Hanna had moved to San Francisco, where he became the Director of the graduate school at Humanistic Psychology Institute. For anyone who isn’t familiar with humanistic psychology, this belief in “self-actualization” and emphasis on discovering the potential within the Self, is perhaps the most fundamental belief of the New Age. This would certainly explain why **somatics** is associated with many New Age alternative practices such as Body-Mind Centering®, applied kinesiology, kundalini yoga, craniosacral therapy, SHEN, **bioenergetics**, Touch for Health, Functional Integration, reflexology, resonant kinesiology, rebirthing and many more.

I don’t like where this is coming from, and the absence of anything more than user testimonials as to its effectiveness and safety tells me this is not something I want to be involved with.”

(What does your “Soma” say about you? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=9581>)

“There’s no ‘quick yes or no’ answer to a question about **somatic therapy**. This field is closely associated with all kinds of New Age methods – from kundalini yoga and rebirthing to **Rolfing** and **Feldenkrais**.

“**Somatics** comes from the Greek word, soma, which means ‘living body’ and is a kind of movement therapy that employs “mind-body training” to help

with muscle pain, improve balance and posture and increase ease of motion. Also known as 'the body experienced from within', somatics essentially teaches that muscular aches and pains are often the result of repressed worries and stress and can be relieved when a person becomes aware of these tensions and releases them. People use somatic exercise in place of physical therapy, chiropractic or massage therapy.

Somatic therapy was developed by Thomas Hanna in 1976. Hanna was a follower of Moshe Feldenkrais, a twentieth-century physicist who developed the **Feldenkrais** method based on the philosophy that all movement, thought, speech, and feelings are a reflection of one's self-image. Because the Feldenkrais practitioner believes there is no separation between mind and body, they believe if one learns to move better, they can improve themselves on a variety of levels.

Hanna eventually elaborated on these beliefs and developed somatic therapy, which is based on the philosophy that the body's sensory-motor system responds to the stresses and traumas of daily life with specific muscular reflexes that become involuntary and habitual. These contractions cause stiffness and soreness and eventually result in a person forgetting how muscles are supposed to feel and how to control them. The somatic practitioner attempts to correct this problem by a kind of mind-body re-education system where a person is taught how to recognize, release and change their patterns of pain and movement.

"MassageTherapy101.com, which offers Hanna somatics, explains that it uses a form of neuromuscular education known as assisted pandiculation. 'Pandiculation is the use of slowly performed, structured, full body elongations and contractions of the muscles, which help the mind become aware of and gain control over the movement of the body.' This education involves a combination of stretching, breathwork and movement therapy.

"People claim it has helped them with a variety of complaints such as arthritis, back pain, balance problems, dislocated joints, sciatica foot pain, even frequent urination, headaches and obesity. Somatic education is also taught to combat the decreased ease of motion associated with aging. Unfortunately, the bulk of the research into the effectiveness of somatic therapy has been conducted within the discipline itself, which is why most of the studies showed positive results.

"Hanna founded The Novato Institute for Somatic Research and Training in 1976 which conducts a three-year training program for persons who have training in related fields, such as physicians, chiropractors, physical therapists

and certified massage therapists. However, the field is slow growing with less than 100 certified practitioners worldwide.

“The biggest problem I see with **somatic therapy** is the fact that this field is so closely linked with all kinds of New Age practices. This makes it highly possible that a person will encounter some sort of hybrid version that incorporates ‘universal life force energies’ or the use of spirit guides, etc. I would stay away from any somatic therapist who is not a medical doctor or licensed physical therapist, and be particularly careful with any practitioner involved in massage therapy, a field that is riddled with New Age energy workers.”

(*Somatic Exercises*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=94>)

“**Massage therapy**, as practiced in the United States, is more than massage, as it is based on the belief that certain parts of the body relate to areas of the person’s past and life, and massage supposedly releases old hurts, rejections, anger, etc. This is determined arbitrarily and is based on magical thinking. Massage therapy schools are notoriously New Age in their thinking and training.”

(Marcia Montenegro, http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_Alternative_Healing.html)

“It’s relatively easy to spot New Age **massage techniques** because they claim to be manipulating subtle “life force” energies that supposedly infuse the universe. These energies go by the name of chi, ki, qi, prana, yin yang, universal life force, bioenergetic field, etc. In some techniques, the therapist’s hands never even touch the body. For instance, practitioners of **Therapeutic Touch** (aka **Hands of Light**) hold the hands palm down about two to six inches from a patient, moving them over the subject and supposedly discerning the location of harmful energy. The practitioner then ‘rechannels’ the energy to other areas which they claim results in improvement in the patient’s physical or spiritual condition. Bodywork such as Reflexology, Shiatsu, **Polarity Therapy** and massage involving crystals or stones should also be avoided because these too are based on the manipulation of an alleged energy. Basically, any massage technique that involves channeling or manipulating energy is considered to be New Age.”

(Navigating the Quackery-Infested World of Massage Therapy, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11187>)

“**Bioenergetics or neo-Reichian bodywork** was developed by Alexander Lowen, a disciple of Wilhelm Reich’s **Orgonomy** or **Reichian Therapy**.

“Reich (1897-1957), who dabbled in the occult, wrongly believed that the cause of many physical and mental disorders and illnesses was the inability to achieve a satisfactory orgasm. Thus, supposed sexual dysfunction helps produce “character armor” and a psychological-physical response to the

stresses of the outside world. Character armor could allegedly be loosened through “full orgiastic gratification.” In other words, Reich believed that for a patient to be cured he must be able to achieve gratification in the sexual act. He was convinced that blocking of sexual “bioenergy,” which he called “orgone,” was due to armoring—a condition that results from energy being bound in a muscular contraction and not being allowed to flow through the body. Reich proceeded to explore the therapeutic use of so-called orgone energy, which he also believed was the alleged “life energy” of the universe. In this sense, orgone is similar to other mystical energy concepts within New Age medicine such as *prana* and *chi*.

“While Reich attempted to demonstrate both the reality and healing powers of this orgone energy, Alexander Lowen, a committed student, revised Reich’s theories in accordance with his own findings. Rejecting the theory of orgone, he still accepted the concept behind it of a “life force” based upon mystical energy. Thus ‘**bioenergetics**’ or neo-Reichian therapy involves the study of the human personality in terms of the alleged energetic processes of the body.

“**Bioenergetic therapy** has two aspects. The first part involves the physical bodywork—bioenergetic exercises—in which the individual assumes yoga-like postures and performs breathing exercises in order to allegedly help relieve muscular tension which is obstructing the flow of energy.

“Second, **bioenergetic therapy** utilizes counseling to discuss and analyze the individual’s feelings before or after he has been treated. Bioenergetics is also based upon helping an individual to expand his mental consciousness by supposedly increasing his body consciousness. It attempts to go beyond both mechanical and mystical consciousness to unify mind and body consciousness toward more “awareness.” The goal is to expand consciousness downward bringing a person closer to the “unconscious” in order to produce a new heightened consciousness of the unity and purpose of life. Nevertheless, these bodywork methods can also produce mystical experiences, and many patients seem to have some kind of transcendental experience in the course of therapy.

“The effectiveness of **bioenergetics** has never been established and these therapies may encourage a client toward occult pursuits.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-8/>)

“From its origins in New Thought, New Age assumes that evil is an illusion of the mind. It seeks therefore to eradicate both illness and penury for the individual – at least the evolved individual who comes to understand the almost limitless power of the human brain and its relationship to ultimate

universal energy. For New Age, this translates into the doctrine that we can heal ourselves. Its many Human Potential therapies from **Rolfing**, yoga, Reiki, shiatsu, reflexology, tai chi, gestalt, **bioenergetics**, iridology, est, Zen, Aikido, neo-shamanism, Transactional Analysis and Transcendental Meditation are simply different vehicles through which the New Ager seeks self-healing. In other words, these techniques aim to assist the individual toward actualizing the implicit assumption that the negative is simply a figment of the imagination. As New Age shaman Jonathan Horwitz perceives the healing consequences of the illusory nature of evil, the challenge arises from this to “network nature” and halt the “slaughter of the environment” – using the powers of the universe in the optimum way for the planet and all its inhabitants.

“The Human Potential aspect of New Age (read chapter 62) also relates directly to what could be identified as a fourth New Age belief, namely that we are in charge of our lives. This attitude, along with the belief that the negative or evil of illness and deprivation is an illusion, comprises the singular uniqueness of New Age: its insistence on the positive and utter denial of hindrance. In this sense alone, New Age is an affirmation that demands the world to be as it wishes. Concepts of retribution, original sin and punishment become completely alien in the New Age context, and however I and foolish such an attitude might be judged to be, New Age represents a daringly courageous spirituality that affirms the power of positive thinking as a means to obtaining progressive ends. If there is one spiritual principle that distinguishes New Age from the world’s other major religions, it is probably this. To the degree that the “negative is encountered”, it is seen simply as an “opportunity” for spiritual progress.”

(Michael York, <http://www.michaelyork.co.uk/Domus/CV/confpapers/cp-33.html>)

“**Bioenergetics** comes in many forms. ... Bioenergetics can include elements of **Reichian theory**, meditation techniques, relaxation therapy, **massage**, and other muscle work. It is a New Age concept on the whole as little value... and elements such as Reichian Theory and mind-emptying type meditation (read chapter 72) **MUST** be avoided by Catholics.

Bioenergetics that uses flower water or crystals and other such nonsense is just that – nonsense. Such things also usually carry with it New Age philosophies that are inconsistent with Christianity.

The bottom line: There is an issue of faith, however. To be desperate to try unproven and known ineffectual non-traditional techniques “may” suggest a lack of trust in God’s providence. We need to give our medical health and the medical health of our children to God. He is the Master Physician. God has given us the gift of medicine and the gift of legitimate alternative medicine. But

to pursue alternatives for the sake of doing so when there is no evidence that they will have any effect is a problem. These procedures at best are ineffectual for a medical conditions, and at worse can involve occultic elements either in the procedure itself or with the practitioner who treats your child. It isn't worth the risk."

(Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, http://www.saint-mike.org/Apologetics/QA/Answers/Spiritual_Warfare/s0302240098.html)

"There is definitely a New Age component to **Rolfing** and although the practice is essentially a type of deep tissue massage, which has many physical benefits, there is quite a bit of hoey attached to this practice that needs to be exposed. Let me explain.

Rolfing, otherwise known as **Rolf Structural Integration**, was created by Ida Rolf (1896-1979). She was an American biochemist who studied mathematics, atomic physics, and homeopathy during the 1920s. Frustration with modern medical treatments led her to explore alternative therapies. A few decades later, she developed structural integration out of a combination of other disciplines such as yoga, chiropractic and the Alexander Technique. Rolfing is centered in Boulder, Colorado which is home to the Rolf Institute of Structural Integration founded by Ida Rolf in 1967. **Rolfing** is described as "a system of deep muscular manipulation and movement education" that reduces the "rigidity and tightness of the body's soft tissue," according to *The Bodywork and Massage Sourcebook*. It seeks to realign and balance the body so that the head, shoulders, chest, pelvis, and legs are in a better vertical alignment. Treatment consists of 10 one-hour sessions, preferably given weekly, starting from the head and working down to the feet. The cost of a session is around \$120.

"According to [Medicinenet.com](http://www.medicinenet.com), "The underlying principle of **Rolfing** is that injuries, poor movement habits, and chronic muscle tension from stress, cause the fasciae (thin layers of flexible connective tissue that are wrapped around your muscles and form the tendons that attach the ends of your muscles to your bones) to stiffen. This in turn keeps you from moving freely and easily. The practice of deep tissue massage that Rolf developed more than 50 years ago is designed to loosen the fasciae so that your muscles can move more easily, which lets you unlearn bad patterns of muscle strain and misuse." This sounds all well and good, but that's because this explanation lacks the rest of the story - such as all of the aforementioned New Age hoey that Ida Rolf believed.

"According to [Quackwatch](http://www.quackwatch.com), Rolf once said: "Rolfers make a life study of relating bodies and their fields to the earth and its gravity field, and we so organize the body that the gravity field can reinforce the body's energy field." Her theory posits something called "muscle memory" which is allegedly the recollection

of an incident “held” or “recorded” in a particular part of the body. Rolfers adjust the massage when they supposedly detect areas of “energy imbalance” within the body. Practitioners believe that one’s posture reveals past traumatic experiences, that **Rolfing** effects emotional and “energetic” release, and that this alleged release restores the flow of “vital energy” and integrates mind and body.

“There is plenty of scientific evidence to support the positive effects of deep tissue massage, but nothing to prove that a body can be “balanced in gravity,” that muscles have memory, or that a person’s posture can reveal traumatic experiences which can be “released” through **Rolfing**. And there is absolutely no scientific evidence to support the existence of a “vital energy,” let alone the ability to restore or balance it in the body. This is probably why Aetna includes Rolfing on its [list](#) (link) of alternative medicine interventions that are considered to be experimental and “investigational” because there is inadequate evidence in the peer-reviewed published literature to substantiate its effectiveness. And it’s also why the Pontifical document, *Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life* lists **Rolfing** among many practices connected with the New Age (JCBWL #2.2.3).

“**Rolfing** may not look New Age on the surface, but it’s there none the less, which means there is the risk of practitioners being involved in other New Age practices/beliefs that they may choose to incorporate into their practices.”
(What does Rolfing have to do with the New Age? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1311>)

“Yoga, Reiki, **Rolfing** and a host of other ‘**bodywork**’ therapies are based on the assumption that the body needs alignment of its physical parts and vibrational energies.”
(*Understanding the New Age*, Russell Chandler, Religion writer of the Los Angeles Times, in the chapter on Holistic Health and Healing, Word Publishing, 1988)

In the chapter on Holism, Larson has lumped together in the category of New Age therapies reflexology, **Rolfing**, colour therapy, **polarity therapy**, homeopathy, crystal therapy and many more.
(*Larson’s New Book of Cults*, Bob Larson, Tyndale House Publishers, 1982, pages 243 and 326)

“‘Body awareness’ is a classic New Age term and refers to all kinds of movement techniques such as **massage**, yoga, Pilates, **Feldenkrais**, **Rolfing**, Cranio-sacral therapy...”
(*The Alexander Technique*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=171>)

“I want to share with you the description of a **Feldenkrais** program as it is being billed at a club so you can see what kind of outlandish claims are being made to seduce people into taking these classes:

Fitness – Change your age with the Feldenkrais Method. Use your brain and body to feel younger and fitter. What makes a person old? Some people think it is wrinkles; others think it is stodgy attitudes. But really, the culprit is our habits. When we unlearn these habits and create new ones, we make our bodies and mind younger, stronger and more flexible. In the Feldenkrais class you will be doing several easy-to-learn sequences, designed to de-age your joints, muscles and brain. You may progressively feel younger as you learn to move with greater ease, agility, balance and coordination.”

“Sounds fantastic, doesn’t it?

Unfortunately, the **Feldenkrais Method** is considered alternative medicine which means there is no federal oversight or regulation – and no guarantees. When you participate in one of these fitness modalities, you’re on your own with no protection from fraud, abuse, etc. (Of course they wouldn’t dare put this in their advertisement even though the public has every right to know it!)

“The basic premise of the **Feldenkrais Method** is that body pain and restricted movement aren’t caused by aging but by learned habits and poor use of the body. It employs gentle movement and directed attention to improve movement and “enhance human functioning” as a popular website explains.

“There are two formats for a class or session. One format, called Awareness through Movement (ATM) involves a teacher verbally leading a person through a sequence of movements in basic positions, such as sitting or lying on the floor, and standing or sitting in a chair. Private Feldenkrais lessons, called Functional Integration, involve a teacher guiding a student through the movements with touch.

“A typical lesson might begin with a practitioner asking a student who is sitting in a chair what they are aware of as they sit – what are their legs doing, how their back or neck feels, etc. The object is to help the student become more aware of what their body is doing. As one practitioner describes, “the fact is our whole self is involved in everything we do, but we sense only certain parts of ourselves in our actions and it generally tends to be the same parts. Through a more even distribution of effort and force throughout our whole self, an overall enhancement of movement, action, and thought results.”

“The practitioner might continue the class by instructing the student to come to a standing position without moving the placement of their feet, then to do so again by keeping the feet closer together, or by looking to the right or left while getting up, etc. The object is to observe how different foot placements

or visuals impact their ability to rise. “This process would continue with more variations in order to help the student clarify, inform, and understand how one goes from sitting to standing,” the practitioner states.

“The **Feldenkrais Method** is said to be based upon principles of physics, biomechanics and an understanding of learning and human development. “By expanding the self-image through movement sequences that bring attention to the parts of the self that are out of awareness, the Method enables you to include more of yourself in your functioning movements,” one website claims. “Students become more aware of their habitual neuromuscular patterns and rigidities and expand options for new ways of moving. By increasing sensitivity the Feldenkrais Method assists you to live your life more fully, efficiently and comfortably.”

“The method takes its name from Russian-born Moshe Feldenkrais (1904-1984), a physicist with a black belt in Judo. After suffering crippling knee injuries, Feldenkrais allegedly “used his own body as his laboratory” and merged his acquired knowledge with his deep curiosity about biology, perinatal development, cybernetics, linguistics, and systems theory. He taught himself to walk again and in the process developed a system for “accessing the power of the central nervous system to improve human functioning,” one biography states.

From there, Feldenkrais went on to study psychology, neurophysiology, and other health-related disciplines, and continued to integrate and refine his ideas into the system now known as the **Feldenkrais Method**.

“The main problem with **Feldenkrais** is its connection with the New Age, a link that is best defined in the words of its practitioners, such as in this article entitled “Yoga and the Feldenkrais Method” by Diane Valentine GCFP. “While informed by science, Moshe Feldenkrais’ work parallels the Eastern path of acknowledging the oneness of mind and body, intention and action,” Valentine writes.

It should also be noted that in 1970, Moshe Feldenkrais held his first major training in the United States at the premier New Age hub known as Esalen. The Pontifical document, *Jesus Christ, The Bearer of the Water of Life*, also associates **Feldenkrais** with the New Age.”

(*The Feldenkrais Method*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=123>)

“**Tellington Touch (Ttouch)** is most definitely associated with the New Age. The creator of Ttouch, Linda Tellington-Jones trained in the 1970s with *Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais*, the founder of another New Age healing practice known as the **Feldenkrais Method**, and incorporated his methods into a type of massage

that she has used with great success on animals. Even though Ttouch literature does not talk about manipulating energy, I have come across some dubious descriptions that may or may not be in keeping with the creator's vision. For instance, this description from the University of Minnesota turned up in a James Randi Educational Foundation (JREF) newsletter, sent in by P.Z. Meyers, Ph.D., Division of Science & Math, at the University of Minnesota.

““The foundation of the Ttouch method is based on circular movements of the fingers and hands all over the body. The intent of the Ttouch is to activate the function of the cells and awaken cellular intelligence – a little like ‘turning on the electric lights of the body.’ The Ttouch is done on the entire body, and each circular Ttouch is complete within itself. Therefore it is not necessary to understand anatomy to be successful in speeding up the healing of injuries or ailments, or changing undesirable habits or behavior.”

“There is such a thing as cellular intelligence, a theory described by Georgetown neurobiologist Candace Pert Ph.D. as a kind of “information transfer system” that occurs at the cellular level throughout the body and coordinates physiology, behavior and emotion. But Dr. Pert gives no indication that this transfer is activated by **massage therapy**.

In a 2002 article appearing in the *Holistic Nursing Practice* journal, author M. Cecilia Wendler describes Ttouch as a form of healing communication that consists of four specific components.

“The first is a mindful presence, a state of mental openness and preparedness that is similar to the process of centering. Once centered, the practitioner, using the hands and fingers in a systematic, often circular fashion and using slight to moderate pressure, delivers touch to a particular portion of the body. . . Finally, during the delivery of Ttouch, the practitioner uses breath control and awareness to remain focused.” She goes on to state that there is no manipulation of muscle or bones, or of a universal life energy, “but rather a respect and recognition of the cells’ powerful ability to release “memories of pain and fear” and to “remember the cells’ inherent perfection.” I’m not a scientist, but I question whether or not human body cells have these capabilities. My suspicions seem to be at least partially confirmed by the fact that even after 15 years of use, there is nothing but anecdotal evidence to prove the effectiveness of Ttouch.

“Wendler’s descriptions also highlight several very New Agey concepts that are involved in Ttouch, such as centering and breath control, both of which are commonly used methods of inducing altered states of consciousness.

This is probably why the Pontifical document, *Jesus Christ, Bearer of the Water of Life*, associates “various kinds of ‘bodywork’” such as Ttouch with the New Age. (#2.2.3)”

(*Tellington Touch*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=134>)

Massage Therapy, Orgonomy, Polarity Massage, Rolfing and “Bodywork” are named in the JCBWL document.

“...New Age covers a wide range of practices such as ... **massage and various kinds of “bodywork”** (such as **orgonomy, Feldenkrais ... Rolfing, polarity massage**, etc.)...” (#2.2.3)

Chapter 19

Pranic Healing

What exactly is the “prana” of the Alternative Medicine known as ‘Pranic Healing’? (Read chapter 86, *Pranayama*)

“**Prana** is a putative form of energy (as opposed to veritable energy which are proven energy forms such as monochromatic radiation, light and sound waves, etc.)”

(*Stay Away from Pranic Healing*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=21181>)

Origins and development

Pranic Healing is a ‘no-touch’, ‘no-drug’ therapy that uses ‘cosmic’ or ‘universal life force energy’, known variously as ‘prana’ in Sanskrit, ‘chi’ or ‘qi’ in Chinese, and ‘ki’ in Japanese, for the holistic healing of the human person.

‘Prana’ literally means ‘breath’, but its deeper significance, like that of its Far Eastern counterparts, is its identification with the monistic universal energy that is believed to be in everything, and IS everything.

Because all of the cosmos is the same energy, one may tap sources that are said to be rich in this prana, e.g. crystals, the sun’s rays, water exposed to sunlight, certain trees like the pine, etc.

It is used by pranic healers to heal diseases by treating a person physically, emotionally and spiritually. Its practice, reportedly often accompanied by certain paranormal phenomena, is carried out through the medium of one’s ‘energy body’, ‘health rays’, the ‘aura’ and the psychic ‘chakras’ to treat one’s ‘visible physical body’ where the actual disease is said to exist.

Systems like pranic healing assume that our bodies are visible physical images of our invisible etheric or vital energy bodies, and that disease in our bodies is caused by imbalances of energy in our energy bodies which actually precede our physical bodies at our conception in the womb.

For various reasons, one’s energy levels might be depleted or congested, affecting its free-flow and causing a repercussion which manifests as disease at the physical level. While allopathic medicine treats only the symptoms of a disease, these remedies correct imbalances at the most basic level and ensure permanent good health holistically.

These treatments are touted as inexpensive, non-addictive, and safe, without the side-effects of medical drugs, and are therefore called ‘alternative’ therapies, medicines or remedies.

They are highly popular with promoters of low-cost health care.

Pranic healing is an ingenious blend of ancient Indian (Vedic/Hindu) and ancient Chinese (Taoist/Buddhist) spiritual philosophies. Whereas the latter depend on an understanding of the universe based on the Yin-Yang principle of life and existence of meridians or energy channels in the human body as embodied in the systems of acupuncture and reiki, pranic healing holds that the body has a main spiritual cord called the sushumna, running alongside the spinal column, energy channels called nadis and a hierarchy of minor and major chakras (literally 'wheels') or spinning energy centres, as in yogic teaching, that together with the 'aura' that envelops it, constitute a person's energy body.

While classic Hinduism has taught seven major chakras (located in the front), pranic healing holds that there are an additional four at the back which were clairvoyantly revealed to its founder.

Healing is achieved by the manipulation of pranic energy through these channels and chakras.

The modern 'founder' of pranic healing is Choa Kok Sui, 1952-2007, a Chinese Filipino who, by his own admission, was engaged from his youth in clairvoyance, telepathy, hypnosis, chi kung or qi gong (Taoist yoga), Eastern meditations and mysticism, Freemasonry, Theosophy, etc. He is also credited with being the founder of "arhatic yoga".

Arhatic Yoga claims to safely and rapidly accelerate the evolution of the soul. It comes from *arhat* meaning a highly evolved person and *yoga* which means union. Arhatic Yoga often known as the yoga of synthesis, combines several yogic practices such as Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Karma Yoga into one single practice.

Manila, the Philippines, is the headquarters of the World Pranic Healing Foundation.

Designating himself as Grand Master, he traveled the globe transferring his healing techniques and knowledge through workshops and seminars via a multi-tiered system of international, national and regional Foundations, and selling his many books along with the license to heal.

One might become an accredited pranic healer after paying the required fee and attending these programmes during which one's chakras are opened by a Master who has received his or her enlightenment either directly from, or in a line of authority and transfer of healing power that stretches back to the Grand Master himself.

These codes are strictly maintained. Therapists can practise only under the control of the respective Foundations and are expected to 'tithe' to their regional units. And, as registered pranic healers, they may not practise any

other alternative therapy. The Foundation's twenty books on pranic healing and the allied esoteric sciences are all authored only by Mr. Sui.

The Meditation on Twin Hearts of Arhatic Yoga is an initiation ceremony that is conducted on full moon nights, when, they claim, the occult powers of the universe and new initiations into their fold are at their peak. An advance word of caution is issued by the presiding Master to patients of glaucoma, blood pressure and heart disease as participants have been known to die due to 'excessive energy' generated in their physical bodies during these sessions.

The Twin Hearts are the heart and the crown chakras.

Mr. Sui says that during this meditation "If you experience pervasive darkness or 'The Great Void', this is good". He also describes it as "a feeling of temporary omniscience" (all-pervasive knowledge is an attribute that is God's alone).

Preceded by an introductory talk on the history and potential of pranic healing, attendees are taken through physical exercises accompanied by chanting of 'Om', 'amen' and other *mantras*, and exposed to Mr. Sui's voice on an audiotape that has subliminal messages (operating below the level of consciousness) programmed into it.

During this time the participant sticks his tongue to the roof of his palate to connect the front and rear chakra systems, and when the energy starts to build up, he experiences psychic phenomena and healing.

Believing that some chakras are gateways to higher levels of consciousness, the goal of the meditation is to achieve "cosmic consciousness or illumination".

It must be clarified that, unlike for Christians, the word 'occult' in New Age and Alternative Medicine has good connotations, and mind manipulation using subliminals and hypnosis is not a practice that is to be condemned.

Medical books and authors of Christian works on alternative medicine unanimously agree that there is no scientific basis in therapies like pranic healing. Primarily, there is no scope for proof because they do not operate on the physical level which follows definite physical laws and which alone can be scientifically quantified.

Alternative healers like to make claims based on Kirlian photography, invented by a Russian psychic, that supposedly reveals coloured aura images of living objects, but it has been debunked by scientists.

Pranic healing may fail the science examination, but tops on spirituality. Pranic healing sessions include prayer to 'god', which may be any deity of one's choice. Its founder's books promote a pseudo-Christianity, frequently using Jesus' sayings and other Biblical verses. But these selections are either partially quoted (omitting critical words) to substantiate some of their therapy's more outrageous claims, used in the wrong context, or conveniently misinterpreted.

The Jesus of pranic healing is not Christ, but one of many Lords like Krishna, the Buddha etc.

The Holy Spirit is called "heaven ki or energy".

The existence of demons is firmly denied. Mr. Sui explains that what Jesus exorcised were weak "negative elementals", "thought entities", or "etheric cockroaches" from "psychologically imbalanced persons" and any pranic healer may imitate Jesus and cleanse a patient by an act of will-power, using "violet pranic energy" or throwing the exorcised elements into a salt and water solution to be destroyed.

He further recommends "*Eucharistic healing*, taking the sacred host three times a week or more for as long as necessary. The participant may see his body filled with divine light and may experience illumination." That requires the consecrated Communion host to be spirited out of churches and used sacrilegiously!

The Freemasonic angle

Choa Kok Sui strongly advises that "serious spiritual aspirants" of pranic healing should join several "esoteric" organizations including the Freemasonic society, and reading their publications is "a must".

One such work is C.W. Leadbeater's *The Science of the Sacraments* which is a blasphemy of the Mass and the Eucharist. He is the author of several books, all published by the Theosophical Society, that include *Occult Chemistry* and *Clairvoyance*. He was a 33rd degree Freemason.

His *The Chakras* (1927) is the source of much of Mr. Sui's borrowings.

To quote Leadbeater from this book, "The force of kundalini in our bodies comes from that laboratory of the Holy Ghost deep down in the earth. It belongs to that terrific glowing fire of the underworld." (*The Chakras*, page 27)

"The energy which we find rushing into the chakra is that which is symbolized when it is said in Christian teaching that the Christ is incarnate of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary." (*The Chakras*, page 24)

Major parts of one book, *The 'K.H'. Letters to C.W. Leadbeater*, were dictated to him by a spiritual entity *Koot Hoomi* (K.H.).

Theosophical roots

Mr. Sui also suggests that we read books published by the Theosophical Society for our "spiritual" growth, mentioning titles by leading theosophists Annie Besant and Alice Bailey.

Some of their books, like Leadbeater's were dictated by entities, and like his, penned in "automatic handwriting."

The former co-authored several occult books with Leadbeater. One of her own books is titled *The Masters*.

The source of her guidance was an entity or 'Master' whom she knew as '*The Tibetan*'. Mr. Sui records that Bailey's books are produced by the Lucis Publishing Co. Its original name was 'Lucifer Publishing Company.' Read the section titled "**The New Age: A Luciferic Initiation...**)

Mme. Blavatsky was the founder of the Theosophical Society [and finds mention in the said Vatican Document, #7.2].

Mr. Sui quotes Bailey from her *Education in the New Age*, and strongly recommends our reading her *Esoteric Healing* etc. and the works of Blavatsky whose guiding Master in laying the foundation for Theosophy was the entity 'D.K' or *Djwal Khul*.

Bailey's *The Plan*, widely accepted as the blueprint for a new one-world order, is a major text of the New Age Movement.

The Vatican Document traces the origins of the New Age Movement to "banned secret organizations" like Freemasonry and in "the writings of the founders of the Theosophical Society."

Pranic Healing's other teachings and practices

Choa Kok Sui recommends 27 different books for our reading. All twenty-seven books are on esoteric subjects like kabala, Zen, Hermeticism, magical evocation, yoga [hatha, raja, kriya, kundalini and Tibetan] etc.

In addition to Freemasonry, he suggests that membership of the Theosophical Society, Rosicrucians, the Sufi Order, AMORC, The Arcane Society and other esoteric organizations would be good for our spiritual progress.

As a back-up to pranic healing fitness, he suggests yoga, martial arts, tai chi, Taoist yoga, chi kung, etc.

Apart from the usual corollaries of Alternative Medicine like healing with gems and crystals, and with colours or chromotherapy (read chapter 9), advanced pranic healing uses the New Age monistic mind-matter-energy interconvertibility-of- all-things principle (since 'all is one') to heal from a distance, whether telepathically or telephonically, by thought-projection. The mundane basic stages of facing one hand to the source of energy and the other to the object of transfer, and using sweeping and cleansing, have been transcended.

Pranic healing also employs the entire gamut of occult and New Age psycho-technologies including visualization and affirmation (read chapters 97 and 42). In practising the former, one may "visualize oneself going inside the ajna [forehead] chakra of the patient" or "imagine the patient as an inch tall so as to energize him with prana."

We are instructed in the energizing of holy oils, used in the anointing of the sick, with prana.

One book says that if you pay the pranic healer “generously and in advance”, healing may occur even before one goes to the healer for therapy. Underpaying him may result in little or no healing.

People who have attended just the introductory Twin Hearts session or the basic workshop have attested to experiencing such psychic phenomena and healing. Many of them have never given more than a cursory glance at the books that they were presented with, and have never had an opportunity to examine Mr. Sui’s teachings objectively. There is obviously at work a power that transcends the actual healing practice.

Self-Deification

Advanced pranic healers seek blessings and an infusion of pranic energy daily from large gold-framed photographs of Choa Kok Sui, one hand raised in the classic energy-transfer posture, prominently displayed in their healing centres. Raised to the status of a god, he is offered puja by devotees.

Pranic healing is monistic [all is one], panentheistic [god is in everything] and pantheistic [everything is god].

It rejects the Biblical revelation of man as a being with an immortal spirit, in favour of the energy body principle.

Firmly anchored on the twin doctrines of the Law of Karma and Reincarnation, there is no concept of sin, and judgement for sin; and no need for man to be saved from his condition. In the New Age, man is his own saviour.

In the absence of a personal, transcendent God, distinct from His creation, the inevitable occurs. Mr. Sui teaches one to affirm or “repeat endlessly, ‘I am a divine being. I am That I am’”. Note that he uses a capital ‘T’, and that he has appropriated the words that Yahweh God in Exodus 3:14 uses to reveal his identity and the nature of His being to Moses.

He explains, “All these statements simply mean that you are the divine self within your body. In other words, you are a divine being.”

The practice of New Age Alternative Medicine leads inevitably to man’s deification of himself as god.

Immediate dangers

If the dangers of pranic healing practice are not self-evident to the reader, Choa Kok Sui admits that “It is a common occurrence for pranic psychotherapists to be contaminated with the patient’s psychological ailments and they too soon become psychologically imbalanced... There are healers who have become very sick or have died at a young age due to practising pranic healing to excessiveness [5 or 6 days a week].” (Read “The use of Alternative Medicine can be physically dangerous, even fatal” in Section E.)

We are also cautioned not to apply “too much prana on infants and very young children,” and that “persons below 18 years old should not practise the Meditation on Twin Hearts, since their bodies cannot yet withstand too much subtle energies. Doing so may even manifest as physical paralysis in the long run. However, there are exceptions... many highly evolved souls who have [re-]incarnated and whose bodies are now in the adolescent stage.”

Contradictions

The Foundation’s booklet *Health in your Hands* contradicts itself when it says that “one of the basic qualifications to learn pranic healing is being of 18 years or above,” and immediately thereafter “it can be done by anyone, from school children to those of ripe old age.” There are self-contradictions in other pranic healing books. Choa Kok Sui first says, “There is nothing supernatural or paranormal about pranic healing.” Then he fills his book cover to cover with statements that it is.

His very first book is subtitled “*A Practical Manual on Paranormal Healing*”.

In all his writings, he repeatedly insists that pranic healing is a spiritual healing, and that the experiences are spiritual.

He himself admits that “Science is not able to detect and measure life energy or prana.”

New Age

If pranic healing does not qualify as a New Age practice, then no other alternative/complementary therapy does. It identifies with every category of New Age defined in the 2003 Vatican Document. From its origins through its philosophies and practices to its goals, it screams ‘New Age’.

Writing the foreword for Mr. Sui’s very first pranic healing book, one Dr. Rolando Carbonell introduces a David Spangler whom he describes as a “spokesman for the *New Age*”, while quoting an apparently sterile passage from Spangler’s *Revelation, the Birth of a New Age*. But to the discerning Christian, the passage bristles with New Age catch-phrases like a new world, energies, attuning, higher consciousness etc. Spangler finally encourages readers to “take [a] step into the unknown”. Constance Cumbey in *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*, 1983, page 44, reveals that this book is “treated as a Bible within the New Age Movement”.

David Spangler is repeatedly mentioned under “*Some brief formulations of New Age ideas*”, and again in “*Some New Age books*” in the JCBWL Vatican Document (#7.1 and #9.1).

The Christian's response

Many practising Christians, believing it to be a scientific discipline, have found no problem with adopting pranic healing into their routine. After conducting pranic healing with crystals, Catholic practitioners are known to place the crystal, now containing "dirty energy", on their altars.

Catholics head the Pranic Healing Foundations in some Indian cities, and the head of one State Foundation is a nun.

Their two headquarters in Chennai were established by Orthodox Church adherents and a Roman Catholic family whose only son died in a ghastly road accident.

Holistic Health Centres in Indian cities run by nuns offer regular courses in pranic healing and other New Age alternative therapies. One nun who operates a low-cost holistic health centre, and is a proficient pranic healer and reiki master, uses a picture of Jesus, the Divine Mercy, to explain the red and white rays as coloured pranic energy.

The believer is enjoined, like the Bereans, to study the claims of pranic healers, and to "examine the Scriptures to determine whether these things are so." (Acts 17:11).

Since there are no neutral powers in the spiritual realm, he is also urged to "Test everything" (1 Thessalonians 5:21), and "not trust every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they belong to God" (1 John 4:1), to see if they stand the test of God's Word in Scripture and Church teaching.

Sirach 38: 1-14 is a beautiful description of God's providence for man's physical health through nature and the doctor. As with Isaiah's treatment of King Hezekiah using a poultice (Isaiah 38), God is always the source of the healing. Nowhere in the Bible is there mention of an all-pervading universal energy as conceived by the ancient pre-Christian traditions or New Age alternative medicine. The confession and forgiveness of sin, and prayer are other resources that God has provided for healing (James 5: 14, 15).

True holistic healing is on offer from God, in Jesus Christ alone.

The Bible teaches that man is tri-dimensional: spirit, soul and body (Genesis 2:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:23), not the configuration of body, mind, soul and energy body that the New Age theories propose. It may be significant that Paul places the body last, while New Age order is in reverse.

The believer is exhorted to remain sober, to be alert, to renew his mind, to put on the mind of Christ, to reflect on the Word and to love the Lord with his whole heart and mind (Psalm 119, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 2:16, 1 Corinthians 14:15, 2 Corinthians 10:5, 1 Peter 1:13, Mark 12:30); not to practice dubious or

occult meditations [Mr. Sui admits that Twin Hearts is a form of hypnosis], or to permit his mind to be manipulated or programmed by subliminals.

Our God is a Person, not an energy that can be manipulated. He is transcendent, apart and distinct from his creation, not one with it. Man is fallen creation (Romans 3:23), not god, and can never be god.

Demons exist, whether Mr. Sui likes it or not, and we know that simply because Jesus himself said so.

New Agers can never acknowledge the existence either of God or the devil because if they did, the entire edifice, which is built on a denial of the spirit of God that is in man, will collapse.

Claiming that negative karma causes physiological and psychological disease, Mr. Sui teaches various techniques to cancel the negative karma and accumulate positive karma, using "What you sow, so shall you reap." (Galatians 6:7).

The Bible accepts karmic action, but independent of reincarnation. Man will live once, die once, and be judged by Him for his life's actions (Hebrews 9:27).

Conclusion

Pranic healing's elimination of God, self-deification, belief in future lives through reincarnation, its pursuit of enlightenment and wholeness accompanied by a rejection of the concept of sin, which the Bible teaches is the cause for our diseases, and its equating the Saviour Jesus -- who is God's own solution to man's fallen condition -- with other lords and gods is reminiscent of the **Lie of the Serpent** in Genesis 3:4, 5. (The essence of New Age as well as Yoga. Read it in chapter 31)

Writers on New Age themes point out that knowledgeable practice of pranic healing and other alternative medicines by Christians is a sin against the First Commandment.

Pranic healing is a spiritually dangerous practice, a Luciferic initiation into the New Age through one of its many 'alternative' solutions to the problems of mankind.

With its goal of having "one pranic healer in every family" and its growing acceptance by many Christians, its influence and impact is not to be underestimated. Christians who have in their ignorance been exposed to pranic healing and therapies like it, must repent, confess, abjure the practice, and destroy all paraphernalia connected with it.

Like with other situations where Christians have unwittingly placed themselves in possible bondage to the dark powers, they may require extended sessions of prayer, group support, pastoral care and counseling.

The May 2003 issue of the *Divine Voice* magazine of the Vincentian Fathers carries an article titled "*You can serve only one Master*". It is the testimony of a Catholic lady from Chennai, a personal friend of the writer, who was a highly trained reiki practitioner. She was initiated into Pranic Healing at a Catholic Holistic Healing Centre, and graduated to the senior echelons of the Pranic Healing Foundation after her intense study of Theosophy, yogic meditation, crystal healing, kriya shakti, psychic self-defense, mantra chanting, and the highest form of pranic healing known as Arhatic yoga which is limited to a very few exponents. In her own words, "I was in... diabolical bondage. I could not let go." But she learnt the truth about pranic healing, and found that she could serve only one Master; and let go she did, with His grace, as she reveals in her testimony. "The very same Jesus (Hebrews 13:8) is there for all those who find themselves in a similar situation. The Truth shall set you free" (John 8:32).

Chapter 20

Pyramidology or Pyramid Power

Origins and development

The American Heritage Dictionary states ... "*Abracadabra* was a magic word, the letters of which were arranged in an inverted **pyramid** and worn as an amulet around the neck to protect the wearer against disease or trouble. One fewer letter appeared in each line of the pyramid, until only *a* remained to form the vertex of the triangle. As the letters disappeared, so supposedly did the disease or trouble." The word "*abracadabra*" is associated today with gibberish but it has always been used in magic and conjuring."

"The real history of modern **Pyramidology** began in 1859 when John Taylor, who had never visited the Great Pyramid, "became convinced that its architect was not an Egyptian, but an Israelite acting under divine orders. Perhaps it was Noah himself. 'He who built the ark was, of all men, the most competent to direct the building of the Great Pyramid,' Taylor wrote." Taylor used not only computations compiled by other men interested in the Egyptian pyramids, but "also found a score of passages in both the Old and New Testament which, if wrenched from their contexts, can be interpreted as references to the stone monument."

"Following Taylor, Charles Piazzi Smyth, an astronomer, who in 1864, further developed the **Pyramidology** theory that the Great Pyramid held secrets to understanding Bible prophecy. He explained, "These measurements also embodied in cipher form prophesies relating to the events that would later form the body of the Old Testament, as well as the complete future history of Christendom up to and including the Second Coming of Christ"."

"The **Pyramidology** phenomenon had become so prevalent that it even influenced some of the larger cults of America. One early proponent of Pyramidology who added to its already supernatural mysticism was Theosophist Madame Helena Blavatsky who gave Pyramidology a ritualistic flavor. "According to Madame Blavatsky, the interior of the pyramid was used for the performance of sacred rituals connected with the Egyptian Book of the Dead, and most theosophists today assume there are vast mysteries of some sort connected with the stone monument that are known only to initiates"."

"Charles Taze Russell, founder of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, published his book *The Divine Plan of the Ages* in 1886. Each copy had a large fold-out diagram dissecting a **pyramid** and explaining the biblical events it prophesied. These events stretched from the Genesis flood to the post-millennial reign of Christ. In speaking about this pyramid chart, the 1907

edition states, "As the frontispieces of this volume we give a chart representing the plan of God for the world's salvation. By it we have sought to aid the mind, through the eye, in understanding something of the progressive character of God's plan, and the progressive steps which must be taken by all who ever attain the complete 'change' from the human to the divine nature"."

"Known as the Sleeping Prophet, Edgar Cayce (1877-1945) often announced startling information to his followers while in his trances. Believing in both **Pyramidology** and reincarnation, Cayce cast himself into a most interesting role with regards to the construction of the Great Pyramid."

(Pyramidology and Pyramid Power, Rick Branch, <https://www.watchman.org/profiles/pdf/pyramidologyprofile.pdf>)

"**Pyramidology** was the construct of a French occultist named Antoine Bovis. Popular legend has it that sometime in the 1930s, Bovis discovered the power of pyramids while exploring the so-called Great Pyramid which was built by Pharaoh Khufu (Cheops) during the Fourth Dynasty.

While standing in the King's Chamber of the pyramid, Bovis noticed that an assortment of cats and other small animals that had wandered into the chamber and died did not rot but instead were mummified. This was in spite of the fact that room was very hot and humid. Bovis returned home and recreated a scale model of the Great Pyramid about two and a half feet tall and set it in precisely the same position as the real one. At the point in the recreated pyramid where the King's Chamber would be located, he put a dead cat, which eventually mummified. He decided to try organic matter with high decay rates such as fish only to find that they too became dehydrated and mummified. This led to the conclusion that pyramids had all kinds of power from the ability to preserve foods, and improve health, meditation, and psychic abilities, to increasing the life span of brine shrimp and sharpening razor blades. Even animals such as dogs and cats are said to be magnetically drawn to the pyramids where they supposedly thrive. Others claim that pyramids generate negative ions that supposedly have a balancing effect on the body's electromagnetic field.

"There is a long list of fantastic claims attributed to pyramids, or what many refer to as **pyramidology**, as a result of Bovis' discoveries. Reputable sources have tested these and other outlandish theories about the pyramids and found them to be wanting. Neurologist Terence Hines details in his book, *Pseudoscience and the Paranormal*, that the so-called "pyramid power" is a pseudoscience. The *Discovery Channel's Mythbusters* also aired a show in 2005 where similar tests were conducted and the power of the pyramids failed to materialize."

(So much for Pyramid Power, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=58455>)

New Age

"In the early 1990s, with the epidemic of New Age theology infecting all areas of society, **Pyramidology** has experienced a resurgence in popularity. However, it is no longer simply a technique for predicting future events. Rather, the pyramid shape itself is being seen as a supernatural source of power or energy. The pyramid power has become the primary focus of everything from veterinarian concerns to extraterrestrial messages. One of the most interesting accounts of Pyramid power was cited by Serge King in his book, *Pyramid Energy Handbook*. In this book, King speaks of ways people can help their dogs, cats, fish and fowl. He explains, "One of my researchers recently reported that she placed a pyramid over the cage of an excitable bird. The bird immediately flew to the top of the cage in an apparent attempt to get as close to the pyramid as possible and has since remained far more calm than before."

"Not only do New Age proponents believe pyramid power can help their pets, they also teach, they too can be supercharged. In June Bletzer's *Encyclopedic Psychic Dictionary* a technique known as **Pyramid Meditation** is discussed. In this process the person is to sit under a suspended pyramid or inside a large pyramid for meditation; individuals face the east; some may feel very relaxed and others will be rejuvenated with energy; the energy is not harmful to people but can be overwhelming and, therefore, one must know his or her own limits.

"The danger of over-dosing on **Pyramid power** energy is apparently an acceptable risk for many New Agers. During such periods, some "Pyramid meditators said their psychic faculties opened, and some claimed to communicate with extraterrestrials." While Pyramidology is a self-contained ideology, there are several beliefs that often accompany it.

First, reincarnation is a constant companion with groups in the New Age and Occult who believe in Pyramidology.

Second, many individuals in the areas of Paganism and Egyptian Polytheism also practice Pyramidology because of their theological perspectives.

Finally, the practices of Numerology and Divination are closely linked to Pyramidology due to the necessity of the manipulation of numbers whereby prophecies are determined."

(Pyramidology and Pyramid Power, Rick Branch, <https://www.watchman.org/profiles/pdf/pyramidologyprofile.pdf>)

Chapter 21

Reiki

Origins and development

Reiki is a therapy founded by Mikao Usui (1865–1926, Japan) that, with the laying on of hands, uses ‘universal life force energy’ for the holistic healing of the human person. Like with Pranic Healing (read chapter 19), there is “distance” or “absentee healing” in Reiki, since in the New Age “all is one” (there is no alterity between matter, energy and space).

“Dr. Mikao Usui was the principal of Doshisha Christian University in Kyoto, Japan. Once when he was asked by one of his students as to how Jesus Christ healed his followers, Dr. Usui could not give an answer... Ashamed, he resigned from his [job] and started his quest to discover how Christ had healed.”

(*All You Wanted to Know about Reiki*, Sumeet Sharma, New Dawn, Sterling, 1999)

However, Dr. Richard Blackwell who claims to have discovered and translated some of Usui’s own original notes in 1993, disagrees with the above version. According to him, Usui was neither a Christian nor the dean of a college.

“Usui was born August 15, 1865 in the village of Yago in the Yanagata district of Gifu prefecture, Japan. It is said that he entered a Tendai Buddhist school on or near Mt. Kurama (“Horse Saddle Mountain”) at age four. He also studied *kiko*, the Japanese version of *qigong*, which is a health and healing discipline based on the development and use of life energy. The young Usui found that these healing methods required the practitioner to build up and then deplete his own life energy when giving treatments. He wondered if it were possible to do healing without depleting one’s own energy. He went on to study in Japan, China and Europe, and his curriculum included fortune telling. Usui was also a member of the *Rei Jyutu Ka*, a metaphysical group dedicated to developing psychic abilities. As a sensitive spiritualist, Usui Sensei (Master) had spent much time meditating on the power spots on Mt. Kurama where he had received his early Buddhist training. So he decided to travel to this holy mountain, where he enrolled in *Isyu Guo*, a 21-day course sponsored by the Tendai Buddhist Temple located there, and during this training that the great **Reiki** energy entered his ‘crown chakra’. This greatly enhanced his healing abilities and he realized he had received a wonderful new gift – the ability to give healing to others without depleting his own energy!”

(International Center for Reiki Training website, <http://www.reiki.org/>)

“Rei refers to ghost, spirit, soul, supernatural, miraculous, divine, etc.; while Ki refers to spiritual energy, vital energy, life force, etc. It is the same meaning as

qi, ch'i, prana, mana, vitalism and the other hundred names used to refer to this imagined force.

During the Reiki attunement process, the avenue that is opened within the body to allow Reiki to flow through also opens up the psychic communication centers. This is why many Reiki practitioners report having verbalized channeled communication with the spirit world."

(*Exposing Spiritualistic Practices in Healing*, 2011, Dr. Edwin A. Noyes MD, Chapter 12, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

"Reiki is a process designed not only for psychic healing, but for personal spiritual (occult) transformation as well. In order to become a Reiki instructor, one must be initiated by one of the Reiki 'masters'. During the process of learning the technique, the master injects psychic energy into the student, allegedly opening his psychic centers (*chakras*) and 'activating his life-force'. This process is reminiscent of the Eastern gurus' dramatic transmission of occult power to disciples known as *shaktipat diksha*. It may also be used to assist people in entering 'higher' states of consciousness.

For example, initiation for the First Reiki Degree includes four specific 'attunements'. These secret and solemn ceremonies permit the master to activate the universal life-force in the student. This allegedly enables the initiate to receive and then channel psychic energy. In the Second Reiki Degree, the initiate progresses into absent healing (the psychic healing of individuals at a distance). Reiki is thus an occult technique designed to manipulate occultic energies. Reiki instructors function in a manner indistinguishable from psychic healers who utilize spirit guides.

In Reiki we find the same problem illustrated through therapeutic touch, polarity therapy, and similar methods. The practice appears innocent and many people assume it 'can't hurt'. Unfortunately, occult practices can and do harm and they are anything but innocent."

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-35/>)

New Age

"The practice of **Reiki** is framed within the context of New Age therapies and beliefs. Reiki includes many elements of the occult and magical thinking, which seek to use and control impersonal energies, very different from the Catholic Religion."

(Reiki – A False Spiritual Healing that excludes God, Pablo H. Breijo, https://www.traditioninaction.org/History/G_025_Reiki_1.html)

"Using the paradigm of the 'chakra system' of yoga, the Reiki 'healer' is said to receive an initiation that allows him or her to 'heal'. Similar to acupuncture

and yoga, **Reiki** posits that unseen 'energy' paths exist throughout the body that need only be charged with positive energy to restore each network of pathways and to restore health to the body."

(Reiki and Tantric Magic: Healing or Hell? Clare McGrath Merkle OCDS,
<https://www.ourladyswarriors.org/dissent/reiki.htm>)

"In Croatia, Bosnia, Germany, Austria and Italy, I had clear instances where individuals who were possessed with the powers of darkness cried out I am **Reiki**', 'I am Yoga', identifying themselves to these concepts as persons, while I was conducting prayers of healing for them. I had to pray over them for deliverance to liberate them from the evil possessions."

(Yoga, Fr. James Manjackal MSFS, <http://jmanjackal.net/eng/engyoga.htm>)

Fr. James Manjackal is one of many Catholic authors who have written to me appreciating my work exposing the NAM.

"The U.S. Bishops Conference* explained that Reiki and other New Age techniques are not effective according to the scientific community. But I have seen various cases of devils entering persons through **Reiki** or invocations."

(Reiki opens doors to Evil Spirits, Fr. Salvador Ramon Hernandez, Exorcist,
https://www.traditioninaction.org/History/G_030_Reiki_5.html)

*"**Reiki** therapy finds no support either in the findings of natural science or in Christian belief. For a Catholic to believe in Reiki therapy presents insoluble problems. In terms of caring for one's spiritual health, there are important dangers. To use Reiki one would have to accept at least in an implicit way central elements of the worldview that undergirds Reiki theory, elements that belong neither to Christian faith nor to natural science.

"Without justification either from Christian faith or natural science, however, a Catholic who puts his trust in Reiki would be operating in the realm of superstition, the no-man's-land that is neither faith nor science. Since Reiki therapy is not compatible with either Christian teaching or scientific evidence, it would be inappropriate for Catholic institutions, such as Catholic health care facilities and retreat centers, or persons representing the Church, such as Catholic chaplains, to promote or to provide support for Reiki therapy."

(United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 25 March 2009

http://www.usccb.org/dpp/Evaluation_Guidelines_finaltext_2009-03.pdf)

"Fr. Gareth Leyshon, exorcist, points to practical evidence from the work of diocesan exorcists, who warn that persons subjecting themselves either knowingly or unknowingly to the "healing touch" of **Reiki** can result in the form of a demonic attack known as 'obsession' or 'infestation'."

(*Channeling the Energy in Reiki*, P. J. Ginés, https://www.traditioninaction.org/History/G_031_Reiki_6.html)

“Beware of any claim to mediate beneficial energies (e.g. **reiki**), any courses that promise the peace that Christ promises (e.g. Enneagrams), any alternative therapy with its roots in eastern religion (e.g. acupuncture).”

(Fr. Jeremy Davies, exorcist, <http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2008/aug/08081506.html>)

“Julian Porteous, the auxiliary bishop of Sydney, warns that pursuing such “alternative” relaxation techniques as yoga, **reiki**, massages and tai chi may encourage experimentation with “deep and dark spiritual ideas and traditions”.” (<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/do-twilight-harry-potter-open-door-to-the-devil-20100320-qn74.html>)

Yoga, Tai Chi, Reiki: A Guide for Christians. A book by Br. Max Sculley DLS, 2012, 180 pages

Foreword by Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney, now Archbishop of Hobart, Tasmania, Julian Porteous,

<http://www.christendom-awake.org/pages/book-promotions/yoga-tai-chi&reiki/yoga-tai-chi&reiki.htm>,

Bro. Max Sculley,

https://www.ad2000.com.au/tai_chi_reiki_a_guide_for_all_christians_by_br_max_sculley_fsc_february_2013.html

“The New Age challenge to Christianity – of which Yoga, **Reiki** and Tai Chi are part – is not trivial for committed Catholics.”

Watch the Bro. Max Sculley video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=htK2lg-E6Rk>

“**Reiki** is actually a manifestation of Tantric magic studied by Usui during a prolonged Buddhist retreat and fast during which time he reportedly studied a Buddhist Tantric text. Tantra is a form of Yoga in which sexual ‘energy’ is manipulated for a variety of purposes – from seeking a magical union of lovers to attaining ‘union’ with God or with the ‘Supreme Self’.

In essence Reiki, and the New Age paradigm in general, seeks to change our bodies and minds, which are meant to be temples of the Holy Spirit, into dens which spirit guides may inhabit, control and guide.

What can be done to remove Reiki, the most pervasive of popular occult techniques, from Catholic institutions where it is an established presence?

1. We can ‘tear off the veils’ of deception (Ezekiel 13:21) through dissemination of this kind of literature.

2. We can sponsor true ‘centres of healing’ in hospitals, colleges and retreat houses that include programs in:

the sacrament of reconciliation; Eucharistic adoration; anointing of the sick and prayer for healing; orthodox spiritual direction for those in crisis; restoration of those affected by New Age involvement.”

(*Reiki: Fad or Fidelity*, Errol C. Fernandes, Emmanuel magazine, July-August 2003)

Chapter 22

Siddha Medicine

Origins and development

In India, Siddha is one of the five components of the AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy) package.

Like with Ayurvedic medicine, its origins are in Hinduism.

The Ministry of AYUSH was formed in 9th November 2014 for providing more healthcare to the public. The Department of Indian Medicine and Homeopathy (ISM&H) was created in March 1995 and renamed as Department of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) in November 2003, with a view to providing focused attention to development of Education and Research in Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy systems.

“Ancient schools of medicine believed that the five basic elements of nature (earth, water, fire, air, space or ether) were the raw material that constituted all matter, living or non-living. **Siddha** medicine holds that these elements combine in various levels to form the various aspects of man.”

(http://www.webhealthcentre.com/S_altmedicine/siddha/siddha_elements1.aspx)

“The system of five elements are found in Vedas, especially Ayurveda, the panchamahabhuta, or “five great elements”, of Hinduism are bhūmi (earth), ap or jala (water), tejas or agni (fire), marut, vayu or pavan (air or wind) and vyom or shunya (space or zero) or akash (aether or void).”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_element)

“Treatment is given to the patient for the imbalance of the Tridoshas (read Ayurveda, chapter 5).”

(<http://www.sysrevpharm.org/sites/default/files/2-7.pdf>)

“Three traditional medicinal systems predominate in modern India: Ayurveda, **Siddha**, and Unani. Siddha medicine (Tamil: Citta Vaittiyam) occurs in Tamil Nadu and parts of Kerala. Detailed study of astrology, marma and rasashastra can be considered as strength of Siddha medicine. The principle of Tridoshas and Panchamahabhutas are common in both the systems with some differences in opinions. It would appear that Siddha and Ayurveda share a common theoretic foundation, but differ most strikingly in their respective forms of therapeutics.”

(<https://www.omicsonline.org/proceedings/siddha-system-of-medicine-viz-a-viz-ayurveda-14367.html>)

“The **Siddha** science is a traditional treatment system generated from Dravidian culture. Palm leaf manuscripts say that the Siddha system was first described by Lord Shiva to his wife Parvati. Parvati explained all this knowledge to her son Lord Muruga. He taught all these knowledge to his disciple sage Agasthya. Agasthya taught 18 Siddhars and they spread this knowledge to human beings. Siddha focused to ‘Ashtamahasiddhi’, the eight supernatural power. Those who attained or achieved the above said powers are known as Siddhars. There were 18 important Siddhars in olden days and they developed this system of medicine. Hence, it is called Siddha medicine.”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siddha_medicine)

“A few academics have claimed that Chinese “internal alchemy” (*neidan*) travelled overseas to coastal India and influenced Indian Siddha yoga and **Siddha** medicine.

A few techniques of *hatha yoga* do seem similar to Daoist exercises from China. The influence has been posited but by no means proven. I am willing to consider it probable, but even then it was only an influence on a few exercises in a long-existing native tradition. It is nobody’s case that the Rg-Vedic reference to ‘*munis*’, wandering ascetics with ashes over their naked bodies (still recognizable as the *Naga Sadhus*), or the Upanishadic glorification of the breath as the key to consciousness and self-mastery, or Patañjali’s description of a whole yoga system, is due to foreign influence.”

(*Is Yoga Hindu?* Koenraad Elst, <http://koenraadelst.blogspot.in/2013/07/is-yoga-hindu-court-verdict.html>)

New Age

In the case of **Siddha**, as with most of complementary medicine, the New Age putative “energy” paradigm surfaces:

“Tridosha defines the three fundamental energies or principles which govern the function of our bodies on the physical and emotional level. The three energies are known as vata, pitta, and kapha.”

(http://www.ayurvedacollege.com/articles/drhalpern/Tridosha_Science_Ayurveda)

Apart from the common “energy” paradigm, the systems of Ayurveda and **Siddha** hold that the body has three “humours” named vata, pitta and kapha, together called the tridoshas. This is not scientifically proven or validated for one thing, but what concerns us is that one cannot reconcile either these “energies” or the doshas with the biblical understanding of man.

Chapter 23

Unani (or Yunani) Medicine

Origin and developments

“**Yunani** or **Unani** medicine is the term for Perso-Arabic traditional medicine as practiced in Mughal India and in Muslim culture in South Asia and modern day Central Asia. The term *Yūnānī* means ‘Greek’, as the Perso-Arabic system of medicine was based on the teachings of the Greek physicians Hippocrates and Galen. The Hellenistic origin of Unani medicine is still visible in its being based on the classical four humours: Phlegm (Balgham), Blood (Dam), Yellow bile (Safrā’) and Black bile (Saudā’), but it has also been influenced by Indian and Chinese traditional systems. Unani medicine has similarities to Ayurveda. Both are based on theory of the presence of the elements (in Unani, they are considered to be fire, water, earth and air) in the human body. According to followers of Unani medicine, these elements are present in fluids and their balance leads to health and their imbalance leads to illness.”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yunani_medicine)

In India, Unani is one of the five components of AYUSH. “The Indian Medical Council Act 1956 recognizes seven fields of medicine – allopathy, **ayurveda**, **homeopathy**, naturopathy, **unani**, **siddha** and **yoga**. There are around 106 alternative forms of medicine, like reiki, acupuncture, and pranic healing which are not recognised under the law. Anyone who practices these by conducting surgery, physically examining a patient or giving prescriptions is liable to face legal action.”

([The Asian Age, 20 July 2003](#))

“Prime Minister Modi has, in his cabinet expansion ... created a separate AYUSH portfolio, whose minister will be charged with promoting traditional medicines and practices of Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, **Unani**, Siddha and Homeopathy.”

(**NDTV News**, 10 November 2014, <http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/pm-modi-now-has-a-minister-for-yoga-ayurveda-618896>)

New Age

“**Unani** medicine believes that diseases can be kept at bay by the use of clean and fresh water, breathing clean air and consuming fresh food. Likewise, a balance should be maintained between the mind and the body so that the metabolic process can take place easily and the body waste evacuated. Unani medicine also believes that all life forms have originated from the sea.

According to the unani discipline as it stands today, the human body is composed of seven natural and basic components called 'Umoor e Tabaiyah' which are responsible for maintenance of health. These are:

- Arkan (elements)
- Mizaj (temperament)
- Akhlaat (humours)
- Aaza (organs)
- Arwah (vital forces or neuro)
- Quwa (faculties)
- Afaal (functions)

The loss of any one of these basic components or alteration in their physical state could lead to disease, or even death. It is highly essential to consider all these factors so as to reach the correct diagnosis and consequently the correct line of treatment.

The unani system of addressing whole health considers illness as an event serving to cleanse, purify, and balance us on the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual planes."

(Source: India's leading **New Age** journal Life Positive, <https://www.lifepositive.com/holistic-healing/>)

Unani, like Ayurveda and Siddha, has its origins in a religious philosophy that subscribes to an understanding of God, man, the purpose of his existence, the human body, sin, sickness, salvation, etc. that conflict with Judeo-Christian belief as revealed in the Bible.

Unani can be classified as a Holistic Health treatment and that is one more reason that it is New Age.

F.

MEDITATING IN THE NEW AGE

New Age meditations flow from pre-Christian religions. They are known as Eastern or Oriental systems of meditation.

Some forms of supposedly *Christian* meditation contain integral components of Eastern meditations.

[Remember: A criticism that applies to a particular meditation generally extends to all meditations]

"Bishop Albert De Monleon of Pamiers has warned of the danger of trying to Christianize according the **Eastern (meditation) techniques**. They can so easily lead to syncretism and divert people away from the true faith."

(30 Days, Sept. 1989, cited by Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM,

<http://sine-glossa.blogspot.in/search/label/Missionaries%20Without%20Christ>)

Fr. Finbarr Flanagan is one of many Catholic authors who have written to me appreciating my work exposing the NAM.

“Some elements of New Age teaching are attempts to bridge the gap between a naturalistic science and a supernatural religion... (They use) **meditation techniques** to reduce stress and heighten personal consciousness.”

(What's the Appeal of the New Age Movement? Martin R. De Haan, 1990, pages 3, 18)

“Many people today practice **yoga (meditation)** for health reasons, enroll in a **meditation** course so as to become more calm and collected... These techniques are not always harmless. Often they are vehicles for doctrines that are foreign to Christianity. No reasonable person should hold an irrational world view, in which people can tap magical powers or harness mysterious spirits and the “initiated” have a secret knowledge that is withheld from the ‘ignorant’. In ancient Israel, the surrounding peoples’ beliefs in gods and spirits were exposed as false. God alone is Lord; there is no god besides him. Nor is there any (magical) technique by which one can capture or charm ‘the divine’, force one’s wishes on the universe, or redeem oneself. Much about these esoteric beliefs and practices is superstition or occultism.”

(YOUCAT, the Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2011, #356)

“Some physical exercises automatically produce a feeling of quiet and relaxation, pleasing sensations, perhaps even phenomena of light and of warmth, which resemble spiritual well-being. To take such feelings for the authentic consolations of the Holy Spirit would be a totally erroneous way of conceiving the spiritual life.” (Orationis Formas #28)

“The love of God, the sole object of Christian contemplation, is a reality which cannot be “mastered” by any method or technique. On the contrary, we must always have our sights fixed on Jesus Christ, in whom God’s love went to the cross for us and there assumed even the condition of estrangement from the Father (cf. Mk 13:34).” (Orationis Formas #31)

“...New Age covers a wide range of practices such as ... **meditation** and visualisation ...” (JCBWL #2.2.3)

“New Age thus becomes an experience of personal psycho-spiritual transformation, seen as analogous to religious experience. For some people ... it comes from the use of **meditation** ...” (JCBWL #3.1)

“All **meditation techniques** need to be purged of presumption and pretentiousness. Christian prayer is not an exercise in self-contemplation, stillness and self-emptying, but a dialogue of love, one which ‘implies an attitude of conversion, a flight from ‘self’ to the ‘You’ of God’.” (JCBWL #3.4)

“Prayer and **meditation**: are we talking to ourselves or to God?

“The tendency to confuse psychology and spirituality makes it hard not to insist that many of the meditation techniques now used are not prayer. They are often a good preparation for prayer, but no more, even if they lead to a more pleasant state of mind or bodily comfort. The experiences involved are genuinely intense, but to remain at this level is to remain alone, not yet in the presence of the other. The achievement of silence can confront us with emptiness, rather than the silence of contemplating the beloved. It is also true that techniques for going deeper into one’s own soul are ultimately an appeal to one’s own ability to reach the divine, or even to become divine: if they forget God’s search for the human heart they are still not Christian prayer. Even when it is seen as a link with the Universal Energy, “such an easy ‘relationship’ with God, where God’s function is seen as supplying all our needs, shows the selfishness at the heart of this **New Age**”.

New Age practices are not really prayer, in that they are generally a question of introspection or fusion with cosmic energy, as opposed to the double orientation of Christian prayer, which involves introspection but is essentially also a meeting with God. Far from being a merely human effort, Christian mysticism is essentially a dialogue which “implies an attitude of conversion, a flight from ‘self’ to the ‘you’ of God”.” (JCBWL #4)

The use of Eastern Meditations can be physically dangerous, even fatal

A 2017 study of more than 350 people who attended yoga classes at two studios in New York found “the incidence of pain caused by **yoga** is more than 10 percent per year – which is comparable to the rate of all sports injuries combined among the physically active population. However people consider it to be a very safe activity. This injury rate is up to 10 times higher than has previously been reported. In terms of severity, more than one-third of cases of pain caused by yoga were serious enough to prevent yoga participation and lasted more than 3 months. The study found that most ‘new’ yoga pain was in the upper extremities – shoulder, elbow, wrist, hand – possibly due to downward dog and similar postures that put weight on the upper limbs.”

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/06/28/yogamore-dangerous-previously-thought-scientists-say/>)

“Here is a warning from none other than Carl Jung, from his *Introduction to The Tibetan book of the Dead*:

‘One often hears and reads about the **dangers of Yoga**, particularly of the ill-reputed Kundalini Yoga. The deliberately induced psychotic state, which in certain unstable individuals might easily lead to a real psychosis, is a danger that needs to be taken very seriously indeed. These things really are dangerous

and ought not to be meddled with in our typically Western way. It is a meddling with Fate, which strikes at the very roots of human existence and can let loose a flood of sufferings of which no sane person ever dreamed. These sufferings correspond to the hellish torments of the chönyid state..."

(Prayer with yogic exercise, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/fs/viewanswer.asp?QID=1295>)

"The practices of **yoga and meditation** are not without their dangers. Suicide is high among the instructors, demon possession, psychopathology, psychosis, epileptic seizures, hallucination, blackouts for hours, eyesight problems, extreme stomach cramps, mental confusion, sexual licentiousness, severe nightmares, anti-social behavior, recurrence of psychosomatic symptoms, and depression requiring psychiatric care. *America the Sorcerer's Apprentice* page 51, states so severe and so common are abnormal reactions to meditation and yoga that in 1980 John Hopkins University School of Medicine professor Stanislave Grof (expert in LSD) and his wife Christina (instructor in Hatha Yoga) organized the "Spiritual Emergency Network" (SEN), now at California Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in Menlo Park, California. By 1988 SEN was coordinating 35 regional centers and utilizing 1500 professionals in attempting to handle psychological emergencies resulting from the mind altering practices of meditation and yoga."

(*The Ancient Healing Tradition of India-I*, Dr. Edwin A. Noyes M.D.MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

"The idea that 'real yoga is as safe as mother's milk' is about to be seriously challenged in an upcoming book that details the shocking extent of yoga-related injuries among both yogis and the general population. The New York Times ([link](#)) featured an excerpt from William J. Broad's book, *The Science of Yoga: The Risks and Rewards*, which will be published next month by Simon & Schuster, in which he details the extent of the injuries that occur in yoga studios every day. Broad, a senior science writer at *The Times*, was inspired to research the subject after suffering a yoga related injury of his own. Like so many millions of Americans, he took up the practice after rupturing a disk in his lower back and discovering that certain yoga poses and abdominal exercises minimized the pain – at least until 2007 when a pose hailed as a cure-all for many diseases made his back give way. Broad interviewed a prominent New York yogi named Glenn Black who often teaches at the New Age hub known as The Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, New York. Black is an authority on yoga-related injuries and, after teaching yoga for four decades, has come to the counter-cultural conclusion that "the vast majority of people" should give up yoga altogether because it's too likely to cause them injury.

“Is it possible that the estimated 20 million Americans who regularly practice yoga are heading for a nasty injury? Yes, Black says, and warns that the average urbanite who comes to a yoga studio is just not flexible enough for the postures. For instance, Indian practitioners of yoga typically squat and sit cross-legged in daily life, he says, and yoga poses are an outgrowth of these postures; but Americans are not accustomed to these positions.

Even more concerning to Black are the throngs of sub-par teachers in the U.S. who lack the training necessary to recognize when a student is headed for injury. This is compounded by the fact that there is little or no national or state oversight of yoga instructor certification in the U.S., which leaves safety standards up-for-grabs.

‘Today many schools of yoga are just about pushing people,’ Black said. ‘You can’t believe what’s going on – teachers jumping on people, pushing and pulling and saying, ‘You should be able to do this by now.’ It has to do with their egos.’

In his four decades in the business, he’s seen even the most well-known yoga teachers seriously injure themselves by performing positions that were too strenuous for them.

‘One of the biggest teachers in America had zero movement in her hip joints,’ he told Broad. ‘The sockets had become so degenerated that she had to have hip replacements.’

Others are so injured they have to lie down to teach.

“What makes Black’s testimony so compelling is that a growing body of medical evidence supports his conclusion that a number of even the most commonly taught yoga poses are inherently risky.

As Broad carefully documents, reports of yoga injuries have been published in some of the world’s most respected medical journals, such as the *British Medical Journal (BMJ)* and the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, and detail injuries ranging from mild to permanent disabilities.

One article discussed an injury which comes from sitting upright on the heels in a yoga position known as vajrasana which has become so common it has its own name – ‘yoga foot drop’. The pose can cause the deadening of a peripheral branch of the sciatic, which causes increasing difficulty in walking, running and climbing stairs.

“*The British Medical Journal* published accounts of other yoga postures that caused strokes even in the young and the healthy. Brain injuries can arise from quick movements or excessive extensions of the neck, similar to whiplash, and

some yoga practitioners typically extend the neck much further than they should. Even the famous B. K. S. Iyengar emphasizes this kind of hyperextension of the neck in the cobra pose in which he tells students to arch the head 'as far back as possible'. Iyengar also called the shoulder stand, which is considered to be one of the more dangerous yoga poses, as 'one of the greatest boons conferred on humanity by our ancient sages.' It's also the cause of serious injury. Such extreme motions of the head and neck can wound vertebral arteries, producing clots, swelling, and constriction, and generally wreaking havoc in the brain, according to the *BMJ*.

"Willibald Nagler, a renowned authority on spinal rehabilitation at Cornell University Medical College published a paper on the case of a healthy 28 year-old woman who suffered a stroke while doing a yoga position known as the wheel or upward bow, in which the practitioner lies on her back, then lifts her body into a semicircular arc, balancing on hands and feet. While balanced on her head, her neck bent far backward and the woman 'suddenly felt a severe throbbing headache.' She was unable to get up and was rushed to the hospital. By then, she had lost all sensation on the right side of the body, her eyes kept glancing involuntarily to the left, her eye lid drooped and she exhibited other symptoms known as Horner's syndrome. Doctors found that her yoga poses had caused the narrowing of her left vertebral artery and the arteries feeding her cerebellum had undergone severe displacement. During surgery, doctors discovered that the left hemisphere of her cerebellum had suffered a major failure of blood supply that resulted in dead tissue and left the site steeped in secondary hemorrhages. It took two years of rehabilitation to enable her to walk again, which she is now able to do 'with a broad-based gait.' Unfortunately, Nadler's patient was not an isolated incident, and Broad goes on to detail other tragic cases of perfectly healthy people who suffered serious and sometimes permanently disabling injuries as a result of practicing yoga.

"A New York city team based at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons published a worldwide survey of yoga teachers, therapists and doctors to discover the most serious yoga-related injuries that were disabling or of long duration. Lower back injuries ranked first, followed by shoulder, knee, and neck injuries, with strokes coming in last.

Reformers in the yoga community are finally beginning to address the problem of yoga injuries, such as Carol Krucoff, a yoga instructor and therapist who tore her hamstring and needed a year of rehab before she could fully extend her leg.

The editor of *Yoga Journal*, Kaitlin Quistgaard is also speaking out after reinjuring a torn rotator cuff in class.

Her colleague at the *Journal*, medical editor Timothy McCall, M.D., who suffered thoracic outlet syndrome as a result of doing headstands in yoga class, is speaking out about the move, saying it's too dangerous for general yoga classes.

Swami Gitananda might believe 'real yoga is as safe as mother's milk,' but this belief appears to be far from universal in both the medical and the yoga community itself.

As for Black, he's currently recovering from back surgery that was required after years of extreme backbends and twists led to spinal stenosis, a condition which causes vertebrae to narrow, compressing spinal nerves and causing excruciating pain.

Even though he knows the message he's trying to convey is unpopular, it's necessary: "My message was that 'asana is not a panacea or a cure-all. In fact, if you do it with ego or obsession, you'll end up causing problems.' A lot of people don't like to hear that".

(*New Book Reveals Shocking Extent of Yoga-Related Injuries*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11694>)

For further reading:

- *Can yoga classes kill you? The startling question posed by a leading science writer*
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2098021/Can-yoga-classes-kill-The-startling-question-posed-leading-science-writer.html>
- *Dangerous yoga*
http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Dangerous_yoga/articleshow/2165688.cms
- *Woman Dies on Yogi-Inspired Diet*, Susan Brinkmann
<http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=13963#more-13963>
- *Study: Yoga more dangerous than previously thought*, Susan Brinkmann
<http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=59710>
- *Meditation can be very harmful to you!* Dr. Miguel Farias
<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/features/meditation-is-touted-as-a-cure-for-mental-instability-but-can-it-actually-be-bad-for-you-10268291.html>

Seven common myths about Meditation

“Meditation is becoming increasingly popular, and in recent years there have been calls for **mindfulness (a meditative practice with Buddhist roots)** to be more widely available on the NHS [National Health Service]. Often promoted as a sure-fire way to reduce stress, it’s also being increasingly offered in schools, universities and businesses. For the secularised mind, **meditation** fills a spiritual vacuum; it brings the hope of becoming a better, happier individual in a more peaceful world. However, the fact that **meditation** was primarily designed not to make us happier, but to destroy our sense of individual self – who we feel and think we are most of the time – is often overlooked in the science and media stories about it, which focus almost exclusively on the benefits practitioners can expect.

If you’re considering it, here are seven common beliefs about **meditation** that are not supported by scientific evidence.

“**Myth 1: Meditation** never has adverse or negative effects. It will change you for the better (and only the better).

Fact 1: It’s easy to see why this myth might spring up. After all, sitting in silence and focusing on your breathing would seem like a fairly innocuous activity with little potential for harm. But when you consider how many of us, when worried or facing difficult circumstances, cope by keeping ourselves very busy and with little time to think, it isn’t that much of a surprise to find that sitting without distractions, with only ourselves, might lead to disturbing emotions rising to the surface.

However, many scientists have turned a blind eye to the potential unexpected or harmful consequences of **meditation**. With **Transcendental Meditation**, this is probably because many of those who have researched it have also been personally involved in the movement; with **mindfulness**, the reasons are less clear, because it is presented as a secular technique. Nevertheless, there is emerging scientific evidence from case studies, surveys of meditators’ experience and historical studies to show that **meditation** can be associated with stress, negative effects and mental health problems. For example, one study found that **mindfulness meditation** led to increased cortisol, a biological marker of stress, despite the fact that participants subjectively reported feeling less stressed.

“**Myth 2: Meditation** can benefit everyone.

Fact 2: The idea that **meditation** is a cure-all for all lacks scientific basis.

“One man’s meat is another man’s poison,” the psychologist Arnold Lazarus reminded us in his writings about **meditation**. Although there has been relatively little research into how individual circumstances – such as age,

gender, or personality type – might play a role in the value of **meditation**, there is a growing awareness that **meditation** works differently for each individual. For example, it may provide an effective stress-relief technique for individuals facing serious problems (such as being unemployed), but have little value for low-stressed individuals. Or it may benefit depressed individuals who suffered trauma and abuse in their childhood, but not other depressed people. There is also some evidence that – along with yoga – it can be of particular use to prisoners, for whom it improves psychological wellbeing and, perhaps more importantly, encourages better control over impulsivity. We shouldn't be surprised about **meditation** having variable benefits from person to person. After all, the practice wasn't intended to make us happier or less stressed, but to assist us in diving deep within and challenging who we believe we are.

“Myth 3: If everyone **meditated** the world would be a much better place.

Fact 3: All global religions share the belief that following their particular practices and ideals will make us better individuals.

So far, there is no clear scientific evidence that **meditation** is more effective at making us, for example, more compassionate than other spiritual or psychological practices. Research on this topic has serious methodological and theoretical limitations and biases. Most of the studies have no adequate control groups and generally fail to assess the expectations of participants (i.e., if we expect to benefit from something, we may be more likely to report benefits).

“Myth 4: If you're seeking personal change and growth, **meditating** is as efficient – or more – than having therapy

Fact 4: There is very little evidence that an eight-week **mindfulness-based group programme** has the same benefits as of being in conventional psychological therapy – most studies compare mindfulness to “treatment as usual” (such as seeing your GP), rather than one-to-one therapy. Although mindfulness interventions are group-based and most psychological therapy is conducted on a one-to-one basis, both approaches involve developing an increased awareness of our thoughts, emotions and way of relating to others. But the levels of awareness probably differ. A therapist can encourage us to examine conscious or unconscious patterns within ourselves, whereas these might be difficult to access in a one-size-fits-all group course, or if we were meditating on our own.

“Myth 5: Meditation produces a unique state of consciousness that we can measure scientifically.

Fact 5: Meditation produces states of consciousness that we can indeed measure using various scientific instruments. However, the overall evidence is that these states are not physiologically unique. Furthermore, although

different kinds of **meditation** may have diverse effects on consciousness (and on the brain), there is no scientific consensus about what these effects are.

“**Myth 6:** We can practise **meditation** as a purely scientific technique with no religious or spiritual leanings.

Fact 6: In principle, it’s perfectly possible to meditate and be uninterested in the spiritual background to the practice. However, research shows that **meditation** leads us to become more spiritual, and that this increase in spirituality is partly responsible for the practice’s positive effects. So, even if we set out to ignore the spiritual roots of **meditation**, those roots may nonetheless envelop us, to a greater or lesser degree.

Overall, it is unclear whether secular models of mindfulness **meditation** are fully secular.

“**Myth 7:** Science has unequivocally shown how **meditation** can change us and why.

Fact 7: Meta-analyses show there is moderate evidence that **meditation** affects us in various ways, such as increasing positive emotions and reducing anxiety. However, it is less clear how powerful and long-lasting these changes are.

Some studies show that meditating can have a greater impact than physical relaxation, although other research using a placebo **meditation** contradicts this finding. We need better studies but, perhaps as important, we also need models that explain how **meditation** works. For example, with mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT), we still can’t be sure of the “active” ingredient. Is it the **meditation** itself that causes positive effects, or is it the fact that the participant learns to step back and become aware of his or her thoughts and feelings in a supportive group environment?

There simply is no cohesive, overarching attempt to describe the various psychobiological processes that **meditation** sets in motion. Unless we can clearly map the effects of **meditation** – both the positive and the negative – and identify the processes underpinning the practice, our scientific understanding of **meditation** is precarious and can easily lead to exaggeration and misinterpretation.

“There’s no scientific consensus that **meditation** can cure your mind, body or soul – so don’t swallow the idea that there is a Buddha Pill. Book: *The Buddha Pill: Can Meditation Change You?* Dr. Miguel Farias and Catherine Wikholm.” (Catherine Wikholm, May 22, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/may/22/seven-myths-about-meditation>)

Selected meditations on Meditation

Concerning the practice of **yogic meditation**, leading Theosophist Annie Besant wrote:

“You can learn to control your mind... and thus to reach illumination. One word of warning... maintain throughout an alert attention... If your mind be not in that condition, its mere emptiness is dangerous. It leads to mediumship, to obsession, to possession.”

(*An Introduction to Yoga*, by Annie Besant, Theosophical Society, 1908, page 117)

“Mental prayer is not the Catholic equivalent of mind-blanking. Mind-blanking means exactly that, blanking the mind of all thought, even thoughts of God. Mental prayer, on the other hand, is putting aside all structured prayer and having a simple, heart-to-heart talk with God. Spiritual masters have long counseled the faithful that 30 minutes a day of this kind of prayer can do more for one’s spiritual life than any other form of prayer. As St. Teresa of Avila, the great mystical Doctor of the Church, advises, mental prayer should not be “a torrent of words, much less a strained prepared speech, but rather a relaxed conversation with moments of silence as there must be between friends.”

“As simple as it is, however, many people have trouble with mental prayer because the mind seems more apt to wander in this type of prayer. All of the spiritual masters, including St. Teresa, teach us that distractions are a part of life and we shouldn’t be upset with them. When we get distracted, we simply drop the distraction and return to our prayer.

In the book *Soul of the Apostolate*, Dom Jean-Baptiste Chautard, OCSO writes: “We need to be thoroughly convinced of the fact that all God asks of us, in this conversation, is good will. A soul pestered by distractions, who patiently comes back each day, like a good child, to talk with God, is making first-rate mental prayer. God supplies all our deficiencies.”

“Mental prayer is the front-runner for contemplation, which is an even simpler “gaze of faith” (*Catechism* No. 2715) in which one is content to simply “be” in God’s presence.

(Mind-Blanking and Mental Prayer are Not Synonymous! Susan Brinkmann,

<https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=10814>)

“The Vatican document on New Age Spirituality is subtitled, *Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life – A Christian reflection on the New Age*. It insists that a clear understanding of our own tradition is the best antidote to alien influences that have already led many astray. This is particularly true of the theory and practice of Mystical Theology where ignorance of their own tradition has led “many people to be convinced that there is no harm in ‘borrowing’ from the

wisdom of the East". In the Western Christian tradition, a mystic is a person who not only knows with the eye of faith that God loves them but one who tangibly experiences that love as it rests and then rises within them to degrees of intensity that are totally dependent on the grace of God. The first Mystic was Christ himself. He was continually aware of his Father's love as it possessed every part of his personality. It was this experience that was the source of the inner maturity and security that made him the most loving and loveable person to have walked on the face of this earth. When those who were called to follow him came to know him, they came to know and love the God who possessed him, and who manifested himself through all he said and did. Without this love acting within and working through them, Christ knew that his followers would be incapable of doing anything, let alone live the otherwise impossible standards and ideals that he had taught them to observe for. *Without me, you have no power to do anything*" (John 15:5). Christianity, therefore, is primarily a mysticism because no one can possibly live the moral teaching of the Gospels unless they are given the power to do so. That is why the deep personal prayer that opens a believer to receive and experience the divine life is not only important but essential.

"The second-generation of Christians who did not know Christ in his earthly life learnt from the oral and written memoirs of the first-generation Christians how to come to know and love him as they had done. **The first meditation manual was the Scriptures**, most particularly those texts that introduced them to Christ. When in later years ordinary people were unable to turn to the Scriptures through illiteracy, or because native languages had not developed sufficiently to produce the necessary translation, or because many of the first translations were unacceptable to the Church, alternatives had to be found. Books were written on the life of Christ, **meditation** manuals were composed and devotions were devised like the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, and the exercises of St Ignatius to open to those deprived of reading the sacred texts at first hand, the opportunity of coming to know and love Christ.

"All the great spiritual writers show that it is through prayerful reflection on the life and death of Christ, by whatever means, that knowledge gradually leads to love. Then believers begin to express their love and gratitude in the language of love. Finally, as in human loving, words become less and less necessary as all they want to do is to gaze at the One whose love begins to envelop them. Quoting the Catechism of the Catholic Church (2705-2719), this Vatican document, reiterates that, *"Christian prayer is not an exercise in self-contemplation, stillness and self-emptying, but a dialogue of love."*

At the beginning, this first stage of prayer is often called first fervour because it can be highly emotional and spiritually fulfilling. However, it cannot last. A profound purification must now take place to create a sufficient likeness in believers to prepare them for the union for which they yearn. Sadly, ignorance means that the clear majority give up regular reflective prayer at this stage, but for those who persevere through the ensuing dryness and aridity, a profound experience of God's presence begins to envelop them. [... See David Torkington citation in chapter 72 on "Mantras".]

In the light of this brief résumé it is immediately possible to distinguish authentic Christian prayer from its counterfeit."

(*Christian Mysticism and its Counterfeit*, David Torkington, <http://www.davidtorkington.com/christian-mysticism-and-its-counterfeit/>)

Emptying the mind, creating a mental void, blanketing out thought and reality, and the mindless repetition of mantras are tricks of Satan to divert the Catholic from genuine Christian contemplation, regular mental prayer, and traditional devotions and pieties.

For further reading:

- *Meditation: To think or not to think*, Jessica Smith
<http://www.truthbehindyoga.com/meditation.html>.
- *The New Age Mystic: Different path, Same God?* Randy England
<http://www.ewtn.com/library/newage/nwmystic.htm>.
- AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN MEDITATION IN THE BIBLE (Link. Copy and conduct Google search)
<http://www.flameministries.org/word.htm>
- *Desire for God - True Prayer and its Counterfeits*, Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM
<http://sine-glossa.blogspot.in/search/label/Desire%20for%20God>

Chapter 24

Centering Prayer (CP)

Origins and development

“Though most authors trace its roots to the contemplative prayer of the Desert Fathers of early Christian monasticism, to the *Lectio Divina* tradition of Benedictine monasticism, and to works like *The Cloud of Unknowing* and the writings of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, its origins as part of the ‘**Centering Prayer**’ movement in modern Catholicism and Christianity can be traced to several books published by three Trappist monks of St. Joseph’s Abbey in Spencer, Massachusetts in the 1970s: Fr. William Meninger, Fr. M. Basil Pennington OCSO and Abbot Thomas Keating OCSO.”

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centering_prayer)

“During the twenty years (1961-1981) when Keating was abbot, St. Joseph’s held dialogues with Buddhist and Hindu representatives, and a Zen master gave a week-long (**Centering Prayer**) retreat to the monks. A former Trappist monk who had become a **Transcendental Meditation** (read chapter 29) teacher also gave a session to the monks.”

(The Danger of Centering Prayer, Fr. John D. Dreher, <http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/1997/9711fea1.asp>)

“**Centering prayer**, as taught by Fr. Basil Pennington and Fr. Thomas Keating, is a method of prayer that is supposed to lead a person into contemplation. It is supposed to be done for twenty minutes in the morning and twenty minutes in the evening. The person chooses a sacred word. He tries to ignore all thoughts and feelings, letting them go by as boats going down a stream. When the thoughts keep coming back, the person returns to the sacred word. The goal is to keep practicing until all thoughts and feelings disappear. Fr. Keating says in *Open Mind, Open Heart*: ‘All thoughts pass if you wait long enough’. A person then reaches a state of pure consciousness or a mental void. The thinking process is suspended. This technique is supposed to put them into direct contact with God. The idea is to go to the center of your being to find the True Self. This process is supposed to dismantle the False Self, which is supposedly the result of the emotional baggage we carry.

“In **Centering Prayer**, people are taught to use a prayer word or sacred word to empty the mind (read chapter 72).

(Fr. Keating says it is not a mantra; but if it is used to rid the mind of all thoughts and feelings, then it does the same thing as a mantra). The goal is to reach a mental void or pure consciousness in order to find God at the center.

Pure consciousness is an altered level of consciousness. This is exactly what the Hindus and Buddhists do to reach god-consciousness or pure consciousness.”
(*A Closer Look at Centering Prayer*, Margaret Anne Feaster. <http://www.ourladywarriors.org/dissent/centerprayer.htm>)

Centering Prayer is “a mixture of Buddhist meditative practice (which ensures dissociation of the spirit from the body in order to achieved enlightenment) and kundalini yogic practice (which unleashes the occult magic of Kali, the destroyer goddess). Typical of New Age meditative practice, the soul becomes the “center”, energy replaces grace, God actually becomes a pantheistic energy, and the unleashing of this “energy” leads to chaos and then, mysteriously, an evolution of consciousness (*refer to article on this website on the dangers of unleashing occult power through kundalini yoga*). Legitimacy of this occult technique is sought in pop-psychology, comparing it to seeking insight through bio-feedback or self-hypnosis.”

(*Centering Prayer: Catholic Meditation or Occult Meditation?* <https://www.ourladywarriors.org/dissent/centerprayer.htm>)

“An increasing number of Christians, especially Roman Catholics, are attracted to CP. They do not realize they are adopting a Hindu approach to meditation, which brings with it the Hindu view of reality. The deeper they invest themselves in CP, the farther it leads them away from Christ and the church.

“Christians who are attracted to CP should take note of the following realities:
1. CP is basically similar to Transcendental Meditation, adopting TM’s Hindu view of God and man and of “enlightenment.”

2. This “enlightenment” is not the same as true knowledge of God, but comes from a self-induced altered state of consciousness.

3. Given their lack of discernment about TM and other New Age spiritualities, the proponents of CP are not reliable guides to Christian spirituality.

“Anyone attracted to **Centering Prayer** should pause to consider the credibility of its progenitors, who have made themselves advocates of the Maharishi and of other New Age leaders and trends. Father Pennington has only words of praise for TM’s founder, the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, whom he warmly commends as “a truly spiritual man.” But, in fact, the Maharishi’s morality is that of Hinduism.”

(Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM, Former practitioner of TM and CP, <http://sine-glossa.blogspot.in/search/label/Centering%20prayer%3A%20transcendental%20meditation%20for%20the%20Christian%20market>)

New Age

“Fr. Basil Pennington has not just attended an Erhard Seminars Training (read chapter 58) session but has served on its board. Frs. Keating and Pennington gave endorsements, appearing on the dust jacket, for *Meditations on the Tarot: A Journey in Christian Hermeticism*.”

(Dave Armstrong, <http://socrates58.blogspot.com/2007/11/centering-prayer-fr-m-basil-pennington.html>)

“Fr. Basil Pennington also served on the board for Erhard Seminars Training. est is a New Age awareness program connected to the Human Potential Movement. Erhard promised est participants he would “blow their minds” and raise them to a new level of consciousness.”

(*Hans Urs von Balthasar*: unorthodox theologian, Susan Beckworth, <http://forums.catholic.com/showthread.php?t=137317>)

““Jesus... a master of Tantra.” (Page 173).

““If you are comfortable with the language of chakras, in **Centering Prayer**, you are working directly with the third chakra, the seat of the will” . (Page 176) In her book purporting to be about Christian contemplation, *Bourgeault* quotes numerous NAM writers (George Gurdjieff, Ira Progoff, Matthew Fox, Ken Wilber, Michael Washburn, Eckhart Tolle, Marcus Borg, etc.) and a surfeit of Sufis, even though these NAM writers’ syncretistic and immanent outlook is incompatible with Christianity. The book also quotes from prominent NAM publishers like *Shambhala*, *Element Books*, *Namaste*, etc.”

(*Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*, 2004/*The Heart of Centering Prayer: Nondual Christianity in theory and practice* 2016, Cynthia Bourgeault, cited by Fr Finbarr Flanagan OFM, 2018 <http://sine-glossa.blogspot.co.za/>)

“(Fr. Thomas Keating) specifically said that the sacred word used to empty the mind is not a mantra (read chapter 72). It wasn’t until I read the introduction of Cynthia Bourgeault’s book cited above) that I realised that it really was a mantra, despite what Fr. Keating said.”

(*Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*, R. J. Grigaitis, SFO, <http://grigaitis.net/?doc=weekly/2007/2007-12-14.htm>)

“Fr. Finbarr Flanagan, who was involved in both **Centering Prayer** (CP) and Transcendental Meditation (read chapter 29), says CP is TM in a Christian dress.

He says Fr. Pennington has endorsed TM “. . . without hesitation.”

Let’s look at the similarities:

1. Both CP and TM use a 20-minute meditation.
2. Both CP and TM use a mantra to erase all thoughts and feelings.
3. Both CP and TM teach that in this meditation you pick up vibrations.

4. Both CP and TM claim that this meditation will give you more peace and less tension.
5. Both CP and TM teach you how to reach a mental void or altered level of consciousness.
6. Both CP and TM have the common goal of finding your god-center."

(A Closer Look at Centering Prayer, Margaret Anne Feaster, <http://www.ourladywarriors.org/dissent/centerprayer.htm>)

"The **Centering Prayer** movement has become popular through retreat centers, RCIA programs and even some seminaries. The Vatican document has *linked* centering prayer as New Age. It states Christian prayer is not an exercise in self-contemplation, stillness and self-emptying, but a dialogue of love, one which implies a flight from self to God. A Christian's method of getting closer to God is not based on any technique (JCBWL #2.2.3, #3.4)."

(A Closer Look at the Vatican Document: Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life – A Christian Reflection on the "New Age", Susan Beckworth, <http://www.speroforum.com/site/article.asp?id=7236>)

"Group meetings are often called 'prayer' meetings, which is confusing for the Christian. Each person must discover their 'Higher Self' or their own 'divinity'. They are encouraged to reach out for transcendental experiences in order to reach the new enlightenment – which is the discovery of their own divinity and their own unlimited potential. Any means that works to achieve this end is permitted. One of their catch-phrases is that if a thing works for you, it is for you!

Many of these groups abuse prayer techniques such as '**centering**'. They also use relaxation techniques, or mind control techniques in order to achieve 'peace' or quiet in mind and body.

The centre is the self, not God, therefore there is no prayer. The purpose of achieving this relaxed mind and body is often for material gain in better work output in the market-place, or better health. Sometimes the pray-er wants 'spirituality' in out-of-the-body experiences which they call 'mysticism'. The means used to achieve altered states of consciousness are drugs, tarot cards, crystals, pendulums, yoga, TM, mantras, fasting, isolation, self-hypnosis, séances, and a form of mind control that is meditation on oneself and a programming of the mind."

(*Inside the New Age Nightmare*, Randall N. Baer, page 102. Cited in *A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, 1994 <https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

“**Centering prayer** is essentially a form of self-hypnosis. It makes use of a “mantra,” a word repeated over and over to focus the mind while striving by one’s will to go deep within oneself. The effects are a hypnotic-like state...

“Fr. Pennington approves a Christian’s participation in TM, despite the fact that the introductory ceremony to TM, the Puja, involves worship of a dead Hindu guru and that the mantras given those being initiated are in fact the names of Hindu gods.”

(*Centering Prayer: Catholic Meditation or Occult Meditation?* <https://www.ourladywarriors.org/dissent/centerprayer.htm>)

“In my research on the New Age which I did for the past ten years, I found that it is not Christian contemplation and that this type of prayer is not recommended by Pope John Paul II, Cardinal Ratzinger, The Catechism of the Catholic Church, or St. Teresa of Avila. There have also been warnings from Johnnette Benkovic on EWTN (Mother Angelica’s Network). Johnnette has a program called “Living His Life Abundantly”, and has had a series on the New Age. She has also written a book called, *The New Age Counterfeit*, and devotes one chapter to the problems of **Centering Prayer (CP)**. She identifies it as being the same as Transcendental Meditation which is tied to Hinduism... Reaching a mental void is described in the Catechism as an erroneous notion of prayer (#2726).”

(A Closer Look at Centering Prayer, Margaret Anne Feaster, <http://www.ourladywarriors.org/dissent/centerprayer.htm>)

“If we accept the definitions and teaching of the Church and its Saints and doctors on the matter, ‘**Centering**’ prayer (whatever the claims or beliefs may be) is NOT the same as ‘Contemplation’. It is likely that history will categorize ‘Centering’ prayer (as taught by Keating, Menninger, and Herrington) among the errors of Pelagianism, and Quietism and the challenges of confusing Catholicism with Pantheism. Though many attest that they have benefited from Centering Prayer (and have not necessarily sinned in so doing), those who were influenced by the aforementioned heresies made the same positive claims. *It is also clear that the fundamental desire of many who have fallen into Centering Prayer is an honest search for a deeper relationship with Christ.* However, truth is *not* determined by experience and intention alone, but also by external objective reality – particularly when the magisterium of the Church has spoken on the matter. Accordingly we have also included links from the Vatican and other faithful sources.”

(*Centering Prayer*, Dan Burke <http://rcspiritualdirection.com/blog/topics/church-documents>)

Chapter 25

“Christian Meditation” - The World Community for Christian Meditation or WCCM)

This is another subject on which I can write a small book. I must be brief. My website presents considerable *documentation* in support of all that I state here, and much, much more.

Origins and development

“**Christian Meditation**” was invented by the late Fr. John Main OSB (1926-1982) and taken up by its present protagonist Fr. Laurence Freeman OSB. Its usage incorporates the repetition of a **mantra** (read chapter 72 on Mantras).

It is touted as “The Path of Contemplative Prayer”.

(FAQ, <http://www.wccm.org/sites/default/files/users/PDF/harris.pdf>)

The **WCCM** has no canonical recognition from the Holy See. I have a 29 July 2011, letter to that effect from Msgr. Stefano De Pasquale Ceratti of the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

Neither has this “Christian meditation” received any official recognition in the Church.

According to an August 17, 2011, letter from the Benedictine Abbot Primate Dr. Notker Wolf OSB in my possession, its current leader Laurence Freeman is no longer a Benedictine monk though its proponents continue to use his name with the OSB suffix. He has apparently joined the Benedictine Olivetans of Monte Oliveto Maggiore, Italy, who are ardent promoters of this so-called “Christian Meditation”.

“It seems that the term CHRISTIAN MEDITATION is a wrong terminology. CHRISTIANS MEDITATING would be a more accurate and fitting terminology to describe the prayer methods of the WCCM.”

(What’s in a Word? Catholic evangelist Eddie Russell FMI, 23 September 1998, <http://www.flameministries.org/word.htm>)

“Benedictine monk John Main, who is a pioneer in the field of contemplative spirituality, studied under a Hindu guru.

Main combined Catholic contemplative practices with yoga and in 1975 began founding meditation groups in Catholic monasteries on this principle. These spread outside of the Catholic Church and grew into an ecumenical network called the **World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM)**.

He taught the following method:

“Sit still and upright, close your eyes and repeat your prayer-phrase (**mantra**). Recite your prayer-phrase and gently listen to it as you say it. DO NOT THINK ABOUT ANYTHING. As thoughts come, simply keep returning to your prayer-phrase. In this way, one places everything aside: INSTEAD OF TALKING TO GOD, ONE IS JUST BEING WITH GOD, allowing God’s presence to fill his heart, thus transforming his inner being.” (*The Teaching of Dom John Main: How to Meditate*, Meditation Group of Saint Patrick’s Basilica, Ottawa, Canada)”
(*A Second Pagan Invasion into the Roman Catholic Church*, David Cloud,
https://www.wayoflife.org/database/contemplative_practices_are_a_bridge.html)

New Age

If Centering Prayer (CP) and Zen Meditation are New Age, “**Christian Meditation**” by the same standards is too.

The original WCCM website FAQ page <http://www.wccm.org/item.asp?recordid=faqs33&pagestyle=default> (now inaccessible) admits that there is an “essential harmony” between **Centering Prayer** and their “**Christian Meditation**”.

“Q. Is this the same as Centering Prayer?

There is an essential harmony in these two approaches to **meditation**. Centering Prayer places a different emphasis on the mantra.”

But one can access it still at the brief FAQ page, <http://www.cominghome.org.au/practice/dsp-default-d.cfm@loadref=271.html> wherein the **mantra** word appears four times.

Another WCCM FAQ page <http://www.wccm.org/sites/default/files/users/PDF/harris.pdf> appeals to Buddha and **Zen** Buddhism at least twenty times.

Other WCCM web pages that have been moved to a different location <http://www.cominghome.org.au/practice/dsp-default-d.cfm@loadref=140.html>:

“Q. Why do we use a **mantra**? What is the role of the mantra and how do I choose one?

<http://www.wccm.org/item.asp?recordid=faqs01&pagestyle=default>

The purpose of the mantra is threefold: first, it helps to deal with distractions. The mind needs a point of focus, something for it to be absorbed in so distractions can be ignored. Secondly, it leads to a condition of simplicity. Thirdly and most importantly for us who meditate as Christians, the saying of the mantra is an expression of faith in Christ who lives in our hearts. The mantra is chosen with care. It is an expression of our faith. **Meditation** is Christian because of the faith of the person meditating. The mantra is our expression of this. While it is acceptable to choose your own mantra, in the ideal a teacher

gives the student a mantra. The Spirit is the inner teacher, so the inner teacher can inspire a self-chosen mantra. The mantra that Fr John recommended is the word MARANATHA. It is an Aramaic word, the language Jesus spoke. It means Come Lord Jesus or the Lord comes. As it is not in our own language it does not have any thoughts attached to it and does not encourage us to think. It is a balanced rhythmic word, with the long a sound. It fits well with the rhythm of the breath and it is one of the oldest Christian prayers. Abba or the name of Jesus or the Jesus prayer or part of it or any short phrase of Scripture can be used as a mantra. The 'formula' that John Cassian recommended was the phrase. 'O God come to my aid, O Lord make haste to help me'. Choosing your word is important. Once you have chosen it is important, in this tradition, to always stay with the same word. Thus it becomes rooted in the heart and becomes a way to praying always.

“Q. Is posture important when meditating?

<http://www.wccm.org/item.asp?recordid=faqs05&pagestyle=default>

Yes. The most important rule of posture is to keep the spine upright. If you use a chair, find one of the right height that gives your back the kind of support it needs. If the spine is held erect and relaxed it is possible to stay alert. Slumped posture leads to drowsiness or even sleep. The ideal posture is the **lotus posture** as this keeps the spine automatically in its natural upright position. This is not possible for most of us, but finding a good posture cross-legged on the floor or using a prayer bench can be almost as good. However, the most important thing is that you are upright and alert without being in unnecessary pain or discomfort. A physical practice like **yoga** can help greatly with both posture and breathing. Because **meditation** involves the whole person – body, psyche and spirit – what we do with our body during **meditation** is of very great importance; learning to set well is a vital ingredient in learning to move deeper into the silence, stillness and simplicity of **meditation**.

“Q. When I meditate I get a tingling sensation in my hands or a thumping heart, feelings of heat or cold, or some other physical sensation. Is this all right?

<http://www.wccm.org/item.asp?recordid=faqs09&pagestyle=default>

When we are meditating the integration and harmonising of our whole person is gradually taking place. This is positive. Sometimes the integration takes the form of various physical sensations. These simply need to be ignored and they will pass when they have done their work. These sensations are connected with the movement and flow of energy through our system. The relaxation created by **meditation** allows the energy in us to flow more freely and this can cause physical sensations.

“Q. When I meditate I see colours and this is very pleasant. There might also be sensations of light or of love, peace, etc. Should I just enjoy it?

<http://www.wccm.org/item.asp?recordid=faqs10&pagestyle=default>

The important thing to remember is that none of the experiences we may have along the way are the goal of **meditation**. They are all part of the integration process. The vital thing is not to become attached to these experiences, or desire them, but just allow them to come and go while you continue to pay attention to your mantra.”

This book does not allow me the scope to refute the specious statements of the WCCM or to analyse the New-Agey (occult) phenomena that a meditator is encouraged to experience when praying to Jesus Christ. That is apart from the fact that these meditators have no problems with the repetition of Mantras, Hindu Yoga, Buddhist Zen, and Centering Prayer.

But there’s a lot more. My intensive research revealed that the WCCM promoters are very closely associated with people who are inimical to the Catholic Faith. Fr. Bill Whittaker and Fr. Richard Rohr for instance.

Rohr is founder of a meeting place for heterodox, dissident teachers. Visitors to Rohr’s center include: excommunicated Dominican priest and New Ager Matthew Fox (JCBWL Notes 58), radical feminist Joan Chittister who led the John Main Seminar 2004, and many more.

“Fr. Richard Rohr is deeply involved in the New Age. On the website for his Center for Action and Contemplation (CAC), a “training and formation center” based in Albuquerque, New Mexico that he founded in 1987, he says the purpose of his work is to provide “a faith alternative to the dominant consciousness” (whatever that means).

The CAC was a well-known hub for the Church’s premier dissent group in the U.S., better known as Call to Action (endorses women’s ordination, homosexuality, goddess worship, etc.). He is also involved with the homosexual advocacy group, Soul Force. The website of Soul Force carries a letter written by Fr. Rohr (dated 2000) supporting this organization’s mission of non-violent resistance to the “spiritual violence” perpetrated against “gay”, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons by social and religious groups. Fr. Rohr has also been a long-time teacher of the Enneagram (read chapter 40), an enormously popular New Age gimmick used for discerning one’s personality type.”

(Fr. Richard Rohr, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11460>)

Fr. Bill Whittier of the WCCM organization is a disciple not only of John Main and Bede Griffiths, but also influenced by the teachings of the Zen Buddhist Thich Nhat Hanh, the world’s leading New Ager Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (JCBWL Notes 15), Trappist monk Thomas Merton who was actually a proponent and Master of Zen meditation (JCBWL Notes 15), etc.

Several WCCM leaders have close links with Saccidananda Ashram, with the late New Ager Fr. Bede Griffiths OSB, the Bede Griffiths Sangha and the Buddhist Christian Vedanta Network, New Age groups which are again associated with the seditious New Age Ashrams movement (read chapter 48) and with overtly New Age groups. "Fr." Freeman's retreats include Buddhist meditators.

WCCM meditators worldwide train with New Age Jungian techniques (read chapter 36). Jung (JCBWL #2.3.2, #2.4, #3.5, #6.1) is world leading New Ager number two (JCBWL Notes 15).

Their Indian counterparts celebrate Hindu festivals like Janmashtami, the birth of Krishna, and Ganeshotsav.

An August 12, 2009, email from their Indian centre said in part, "The physical discipline of Yoga breathing and exercise is sometimes offered to those who want it ... at Seminars and programmes."

From the 21 May 2014 blog of one of their Indian protagonists, after the conclusion of a yoga session to a group of enthusiasts, he intoned. "Bow your head before the God of your understanding," and "sing the "Sarma Dharma Prarthana" prayer with invocations to Jesus, Buddha, Vishnu, Jahve..."

Apparently it does not really matter which "god" one prays to/meditates on. There is a lot of hardcore New Age to be found on the WCCM website blended with Christian mysticism. One example: *The Blissful Brain* <https://www.wccm.org/content/meditation-readings-17102014>.

Two eminent crusaders against the New Age as well as the dangers of WCCM's "**Christian Meditation**" are Anette Ignatowicz (USA) <http://newagemess.blogspot.in/2011/07/world-community-for-christian.html>, and Daphne McLeod (UK) www.proecclesia.com, both of whom have been in close communication with this ministry by email for years.

"John Main OSB teaches a mantra-based style of **meditation** similar to Centering Prayer that he learned from his Hindu teacher, Swami Satyananda. Main alleges that this technique was also taught by St. John Cassian and the anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. (These are the same Catholic sources claimed by the centering prayer folks and which are very much disputed by experts on the Catholic contemplative tradition.) Much of what has been said about Centering Prayer can be said about John Main's technique.

"Main describes his idea of the practice of **meditation** as follows:

"Sit down. Sit still with your back straight. Close your eyes lightly. Then interiorly, silently begin to recite a single word – a prayer word or mantra. We recommend the ancient Christian prayer-word 'Maranatha'. Say it as four equal syllables. Breathe normally and give your full attention to the word as you say it, silently, gently,

*faithfully and above all – simply. The essence of **meditation** is simplicity. Stay with the same word during the whole **meditation** and from day to day. Don't visualise but listen to the word as you say it. Let go of all thoughts (even good thoughts), images and other words. Don't fight your distractions but let them go by saying your word faithfully, gently and attentively and returning to it immediately that you realise you have stopped saying or it or when your attention is wandering."*
(<http://www.wccm.org/content/what-meditation>)

"A worldwide movement designed to spread John Main's idea of prayer was begun in 1991. Called the **World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM)**, it calls itself a "global spiritual community." According to *Catholic Culture*, a Catholic resource center that is faithful to the Magisterium, the community is directed by Laurence Freeman, OSB, a student of John Main... The WCCM exists in over a hundred countries with its spiritual foundation based on local **meditation** groups which meet weekly in homes, parishes, offices, hospitals, prisons, schools and colleges. "The World Community is ecumenical and serves a universal 'catholic' unity in its dialogue both with Christian churches and other faiths," *Catholic Culture* writes.

"It is very important to note that the WCCM is associated with dissenting speakers such as [Richard Rohr](#) (link) and [Joan Chittister](#) (link), promotes religious syncretism, and issues a newsletter that contains questionable material.

For instance, this statement attempting to redefine original sin by Freeman appeared in the September 2005 newsletter: "Mythically, we explain it by some kind of 'Fall', a primal disobedience or transgression whose consequences get passed down the line forever. But in the light of modern knowledge about history and psychology we read these myths differently, less literally. Perhaps it is not so much a fall as a faltering ascent which explains our predicament and the disorderly pattern of human development. Maybe we are slowly climbing a ladder of consciousness."

In the same issue, Freeman treats Jesus as just another teacher. "How have humanity's great teachers – Jesus, the Buddha, Lao Tse, the author of the Gita, the Hebrew prophets – as well as the greatest artists and scientists, understood the whole picture so clearly and been so far 'ahead of their time'?"

(*John Main's Christian Meditation technique: Just another mind blanking exercise*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=879>)

"There is absolutely no excuse for Catholics to use meditative techniques borrowed from Hinduism, Buddhism, or other Eastern Philosophies and Religions. Such techniques are based on a worldview and cosmology that is uttered inconsistent with Christianity. Anything in these Eastern techniques

that can be co-opted into Catholic meditation and prayer has already been done by the Eastern Catholic monks some 1500 years ago. Their experiences and practices have been tested by time and the Church to ensure that any techniques used are in fact Catholic.

“While some techniques may look very similar to Eastern/Oriental meditation practices the test of time and the Church has filtered out those elements not consistent with Christianity.

Therefore, all that the Eastern religions and philosophies can offer us that can be consistent with Catholicism has already been co-opted. Modern people who try to co-opt ideas from the East today do so without 1500 years of testing and vetting. And, predictably their techniques developed contain contaminations. Keating and Pennington’s so-called “**Centering Prayer**” is among the most popular of this false co-opting and contamination.

Because of these meditation movements the Vatican has issued a document concerning this subject: [On Certain Aspects of Christian Meditation](#) (link to *Orationis Formas*).

Also helpful in understanding these issues is the article: [The Dangers of Centering Prayer](#) (link) by Father John Dreher.

“An ancient form of Christian meditation that appears very similar to Eastern meditation is Hesychasm. This is the technique that uses the “Jesus Prayer”: the person prays, “O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God”, as he breathes in deeply; and then when saying, “Have mercy on me, a sinner” as he exhales. This is not a mantra though it may look similar.

Hesychasm has a controversial history in the Orthodox Church and Eastern Catholic Church. You can read about that from the [1917 Catholic Encyclopedia](#) (link). As this form of prayer can be easily misused and misinterpreted it should not be attempted without a loyal Catholic Spiritual Director who is familiar with this form of contemplation.”

(John Main, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=255>)

“Much of what I read about the **World Community for Christian Meditation**, keeping in mind I only glanced over the material, it is clear that this organization is not Catholic, but multi-cultural, multi-faith, multi-tradition in its approach, sounds about the same as “Centering Prayer.” Given that, the likelihood that its teachings will be fully consistent with Catholic teaching, tradition, and worldview is, in my opinion, about non-existent. There is no indication at all that this organization and its teaching have any approbation from the Church despite a few bishops who are “patrons”.

Personally, I would not involve myself with this organization or its teachings.”

(*World Community for Christian Meditation*, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=1170>)

“From looking over the material of Fr. Laurence Freeman OSB and his **WCCM** organization I find it almost identical to Hindu Transcendental Meditation – same techniques, same/similar language. These people cleverly avoid their own questions in their FAQ about how they are not oriental mediation. They basically think, it seems, that any meditation is okay as long as we apply our Christian faith. This is false. In addition, the meditation taught by these people includes the emptying of the mind (read chapter 72). This is NEVER to be done. They call it silence. The mantra is used is exactly the same way as in oriental mediation as it can cause an altered state of consciousness to “transcend ourselves” or “turn in to ourselves”. They talk about meditation making contact with “enlightenment”. Ah, enlightenment comes from the Holy Spirit through prayer, not through meditation. Christian mediation is prayer, not a hypnotic mantra-technique. Inserting the trappings and language of Christianity does not make this Christian.

“I would say that no Christian ought to be involved with this “**World Community for Christian Meditation**”. Any parish that sponsors an event from these people ought to be horse-whipped.

Bottom line: Do not walk, but run away from this so-called, “**World Community for Christian Meditation**”. At best this is nonsense, at worse it can cause spiritual harm and open oneself up to darkness.”

(*World Community for Christian Meditation*, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/fs/viewanswer.asp?QID=1601>)

This so-called “**Christian Meditation**” is not Christian but a Hindu-Christian-Buddhist-ecumenical-New Age hybrid.

Chapter 26

Green Religion. Earth-centred Retreats/Meditations, Eco-spirituality/Green Spirituality/Creation Spirituality, Eco-feminism, and Deep or Depth Ecology: The worship of Mother Earth or Gaia

Retreat houses in archdioceses in India, as in the West, have begun offering earth-centered meditations, workshops and retreats to Catholics. Some of the sessions conducted at these “retreats” where creation is exalted include “tuning the body exercises”, yoga asanas and meditation. No brief study on this subject can do full justice to it.

Origins and development

“Trends such as **nature-centeredness** and *woman-centeredness or feminism* (read chapter 59) are of neo-pagan origin and part of the New Age... ‘Holistic spirituality’, ‘gender-free’ inclusive language (read chapter 59) in the liturgy and ‘**eco-spirituality**’ are very much in the agenda of feminism and with their own definition and interpretation.”

(*Feminism and Faith*, Dr. Fr. Jose Aymanathil SDB, Catechetics India, May-July 2007)

Catholic writer on New Age themes Susan Brinkmann says that the New Age movement has repackaged primitive earth worship into a thriving new “green religion”, and an “**exaggerated environmentalism**” has invaded the Church. These eco-spirituality programmes are one of the fruits of a radical feminist theology and are influenced by a pagan Jungian psychology (read chapter 36). JCBWL lists Carl Jung as the second most powerful influencer of New Age thought.

“There are several movements in the New Age “tent” – one of which is neopaganism, and it is from here that the link to **environmentalism** enters the picture. The belief that deities embody the forces of nature is as old as history itself.

However, these beliefs are making a comeback in today’s neopaganism where it has become known as **eco-spirituality**.

Eco-spirituality is practiced by both New Age and Neo-pagan groups as well as environmentalists and a variety of “**green religions**” around the globe. The basic theory behind **eco-spirituality** is that the divine is present in all creation – which is known as panentheism – and that we are to expand our love of ‘neighbor’ to include the entire cosmos and all creatures, plants, trees, etc. The

New Age version of eco-spirituality fosters a religious worship of nature known as pantheism, which is based on the belief that the cosmos is animated by one spirit or is guided by a universal consciousness of which man is merely one more participant. This vision of the relationship between man and the planet is often referred to as “**depth ecology**.” It denies the basic difference between human and non-human existence. It speaks of a bio-centric equality, whereby a mountain, a flower or a turtle would have the same rights to its own fulfillment as would a human being.

““It fosters a religious worship of nature or of **mother earth** as if it were a divine reality,” writes Archbishop Norberto Carrera in [A Call to Vigilance: A Pastoral Instruction on the New Age](#) (link). “It ends up labeling man as an intruder and considers him a curse for the cosmos. At the heart of the radical ‘**green**’ **movement**, it pressures governments for legislation that would cut back human population and limit technological development in order to heal the planet.”

“Another thread that winds through the study of eco-spirituality is a theory held by many environmental enthusiasts of all persuasions. It is called the **Gaia Hypothesis**, a theory first articulated by a British atmospheric chemist named James Lovelock. This theory contends that the Earth is a self-regulating, self-sustaining entity which continually adjusts its environment to support life... Although the Gaia hypothesis may seem wacky to many, its adherents have managed to project their theories onto the world stage in frightening ways. According to Samantha Smith in [The Pagan Roots of Environmentalism](#) (link), “**Gaia worship** is at the very heart of today’s environmental policy. The Endangered Species Act, the United Nation’s Biodiversity Treaty and the President’s Council on Sustainable Development are all offspring of the Gaia hypothesis of saving ‘**Mother Earth**’.”

“The infamous Matthew Fox, an excommunicated Dominican priest, is pushing his own version of eco-spirituality called **Creation Spirituality**. As Archbishop Carrera writes, “It loses the notion of a personal God, really distinct and superior to the created world, in favor of an impersonal divine force that is everything and is in everything,” Archbishop Carrera writes. “This return to naturalistic pantheism, which was definitively overcome by the event of Christian revelation, finds support in many new religious movements coming from the east and in a return to pagan religions”.”

(*The Link between Environmentalism and New Age*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=58968>)

“The notion of the universe being a single dynamic whole into which humankind is imbedded is a pagan concept wholly embraced by today’s New Age and/or neopagan ‘eco-theologians’ and their corresponding **green religions**. The New Age version fosters a religious worship of nature known as pantheism, which is based on the belief that the cosmos is animated by one spirit or is guided by a universal consciousness of which man is merely one more participant. This vision of the relationship between man and the planet is often referred to as ‘**depth ecology**’.”

(*Ayurvedic Medicine*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=132>)

“*Vatican Radio* accused the film *Avatar* (read chapter 77) of “being a wink towards the pseudo-doctrines which have made **ecology** the religion of the millennium”. The film is also receiving criticism from Christian leaders such as Dr. Alex McFarland, President of Southern Evangelical Seminary who says the movie’s pantheistic worldview makes it “new-age friendly.” “*Avatar*’s storyline presents us with a world of pantheistic monism,” he said.”

(*Vatican News sources pan “Avatar”*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=3729>)

“Undermining Catholic morality: Subsets of Jungian spirituality include **eco-spirituality, eco-feminism, Earth (or Gaia) worship**. Jungians look to the trees, the cycles of the moon, planets, seasons, and animals to inform their ‘body-prayer’, ‘psycho-drama’, and ‘mime’.”

(*Jungian Psychology as Catholic Theology: What is Carl Gustav Jung doing in the Church?* St. Catherine Review, May-June 1997 issue, <http://www.aquinas-multimedia.com/catherine/jungcult.html>)

“The Jungian understanding of creation is principally pantheistic. All creation is part of God, it comes from ‘God stuff.’ This helps explain why trees, cycles of the moon and planets, seasons, animals, and insects are on the same plane of life as ‘humankind.’ Body-prayer, psycho-drama, mime, and the Jungian approach to liturgy follow from this understanding. **Eco-feminism, eco-spirituality, and Gaia worship** are also significant subsets of Jungian spirituality.”

(*Jungians believe traditional Catholics impede “renewal”*, Paul Likoudis, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/NEWAGE/JUNGBELI.TXT>)

New Age

The 2003 JCBWL Document on the New Age truly has plenty to say on this issue, and only a part of it is furnished here.

“What has been successful is the generalisation of ecology as a fascination with nature and resacralisation of the earth, **Mother Earth or Gaia**, with the missionary zeal characteristic of **Green politics**. The Earth’s executive agent is the human race as a whole, and the *harmony and understanding* required for

responsible governance is increasingly understood to be a global government, with a global ethical framework. The warmth of Mother Earth, whose divinity pervades the whole of creation, is held to bridge the gap between creation and the transcendent Father-God of Judaism and Christianity, and removes the prospect of being judged by such a Being. In such a vision of a closed universe that contains 'God' and other spiritual beings along with ourselves, we recognize here an implicit pantheism. This is a fundamental point which pervades all *New Age* thought and practice, and conditions in advance any otherwise positive assessment where we might be in favor of one or another aspect of its spirituality. As Christians, we believe on the contrary that 'man is essentially a creature and remains so for all eternity, so that an absorption of the human I in the divine I will never be possible'." (JCBWL #2.3.1)

"*New Age* has a marked preference for Eastern or pre-Christian religions, which are reckoned to be uncontaminated by Judaeo-Christian distortions. Hence great respect is given to ancient agricultural rites and to fertility cults. '**Gaia**', **Mother Earth**, is offered as an alternative to God the Father, whose image is seen to be linked to a patriarchal conception of male domination of women. There is talk of God, but it is not a personal God; the God of which *New Age* speaks is neither personal nor transcendent." (JCBWL #2.3.4.2)

"James Lovelock's book on the **Gaia Hypothesis** claims that 'the entire range of living matter on earth, from whales to viruses, and from oaks to algae, could be regarded as constituting a single living entity, capable of manipulating the Earth's atmosphere to suit its overall needs and endowed with faculties and powers far beyond those of its constituent parts'. To some, the Gaia hypothesis is 'a strange synthesis of individualism and collectivism. It all happens as if *New Age*, having plucked people out of fragmentary politics, cannot wait to throw them into the great cauldron of the global mind'.

The global brain needs institutions with which to rule, in other words, a world government. "To deal with today's problems *New Age* dreams of a spiritual aristocracy in the style of Plato's *Republic*, run by secret societies..." This may be an exaggerated way of stating the case, but there is much evidence that gnostic élitism and global governance coincide on many issues in international politics." (JCBWL #2.3.4.3)

"*New Age* shares with a number of internationally influential groups the goal of superseding or transcending particular religions in order to create space for a universal religion which could unite humanity. Closely related to this is a very concerted effort on the part of many institutions to invent a *Global Ethic*, an ethical framework which would reflect the global nature of contemporary culture, economics and politics. Further, the politicisation of ecological

questions certainly colours the whole question of **the Gaia hypothesis** or worship of **mother earth.**" (JCBWL #2.5)

"Christian groups which promote *care for the earth as God's creation* also need to be given due recognition. The question of respect for creation is one which could also be approached creatively in Catholic schools. A great deal of what is proposed by the more radical elements of the ecological movement is difficult to reconcile with Catholic faith. Care for the environment in general terms is a timely sign of a fresh concern for what God has given us, perhaps a necessary mark of Christian stewardship of creation, but '**deep ecology**' is often based on pantheistic and occasionally gnostic principles." (JCBWL #6.2)

"Some brief formulations of *New Age* ideas.

David Spangler is quoted in *Actualité des religions n° 8, Septembre 1999, p. 43, on the principal characteristics of the New Age vision, which is:*

- holistic (globalising, because there is one single reality-energy);
- ecological (**earth-Gaia is our mother**; each of us is a neurone of earth's central nervous system)." (JCBWL #7.1)

"Holism: a key concept in the 'new paradigm', claiming to provide a theoretical frame integrating the entire worldview of modern man. In contrast with an experience of increasing fragmentation in science and everyday life, 'wholeness' is put forward as a central methodological and ontological concept. Humanity fits into the universe as part of a single living organism, a harmonious network of dynamic relationships. The classic distinction between subject and object, for which Descartes and Newton are typically blamed, is challenged by various scientists who offer a bridge between science and religion. Humanity is part of a universal network (eco-system, family) of nature and world, and must seek harmony with every element of this quasi-transcendent authority. When one understands one's place in nature, in the cosmos which is also divine, one also understands that 'wholeness' and 'holiness' are one and the same thing. The clearest articulation of the concept of holism is in **the 'Gaia' hypothesis.**" (JCBWL #7.2)

"Planetary Consciousness: this world-view developed in the 1980s to foster loyalty to the community of humanity rather than to nations, tribes or other established social groups. It can be seen as the heir to movements in the early 20th century that promoted a world government. The consciousness of the unity of humanity sits well with **the Gaia hypothesis.**" (JCBWL #7.2)

"While many of these environmental groups are involved in questionable programs, such as those aimed at cutting 'carbon footprints' through population

control measures, there is nothing wrong with participating in moral 'green initiatives'.

In fact, Pope Benedict XVI has been very vocal on the need to care for the environment. During an address for World Peace Day in 2006, he said: 'The destruction of the environment, its improper or selfish use, and the violent hoarding of the Earth's resources cause grievances, conflicts and wars, precisely because they are the consequences of an inhumane concept of development'.

Two years ago, the Vatican listed pollution as one of seven 'social' sins. Bishop Gianfranco Girotti, head of the Apostolic Penitentiary, said: 'You offend God not only by stealing, taking the Lord's name in vain or coveting your neighbor's wife but also by wrecking the environment.'

Embracing the cause of a greener planet is a good thing, so long as organizations involved in these areas respect the right to life and the divinity of our Creator - which many of them don't.

Watch out for 'red flags' such as references to Gaia or the **Gaia hypothesis**, **creation spirituality**, **Mother Earth**, the '**Cosmic Christ**'. Avoid the writings of former Catholic priest, Matthew Fox, as well as Fr. Thomas Berry, both of whom subscribe to a New Age concept of environmentalism."

(*Is Earth Hour New Age?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=71>)

Matthew Fox is an excommunicated Dominican priest, New Ager and promoter of **Creation-Centred Spirituality**. The errors of his book *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ, The Healing of Mother Earth and the Birth of a Global Renaissance*, are noted in the JCBWL Document, #3.3.

"Father Thomas Berry was a leading spokesman for the **Gaia earth religion** who once wrote that we should 'rethink our ideas about God' and "place less emphasis on Christ as a person and redeemer'."

(*"The New Cosmology" and Environmental Extremism*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1068>)

"The worship of a pagan goddess known as **Gaia** is neopaganism... Gaia is 'the Great Mother who gives birth to all life. She was known as the limitless power and source of fertility in the Universe. We know Her as **Mother Earth**. She provides us with everything: food, shelter, clothing, the beauty of Nature and the unceasing cycles of life. Gaia's love for Her children is unconditional.' Those who follow an 'earth-based spiritual path that includes **the Divine Feminine**' come together in a 'sacred space' to learn about the Goddess and take time for 'introspection and prayer'.

Goddess worship is a manifestation of one of the most fundamental components of New Age ideology, which is to celebrate the feminine while moving away from a male dominated society. Also known as goddess spirituality, **the**

sacred feminine, or the feminine divine, it has particular appeal to women who feel marginalized by male dominated churches. Gaia, also known as **Mother Earth**, is a form of goddess worship that appeals to those with a strong interest in ecology and nature.

“According to the American Policy Center, ‘**Gaia worship** is at the very heart of today’s environmental policy. The Endangered Species Act, the United Nation’s Biodiversity Treaty and the President’s Council on Sustainable Development are all offspring of the Gaia hypothesis of saving

“**Mother Earth**.’ The Vatican confirms this terrifying reality in the Pontifical document, *Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life*.”

(*Worshipping at the Temple of Gaia*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=90>)

“Missa **Gaia**... is a so-called ‘Earth Mass’, a musical performance that has been referred to in some Catholic publications as a ‘contemporary liturgy’ that ‘celebrates the whole earth as a sacred space by integrating recorded sounds such as the calls of wolves, whales, eagles and seals.’ (The Tidings – Southern California’s Catholic weekly)

One reporter, writing for The Spokesman-Review in Spokane, Washington, described what he saw when he attended a performance at St. John’s (Episcopal) Cathedral in downtown Spokane. ‘The Kyrie eleison was launched by the recorded call of an Alaskan tundra wolf. Humpback whales introduced the Sanctus and Benedictus. And the Agnus Dei? How about harp seals. This was a communion not with wafers and wine, but with nature.’

This is all presented very innocently to churches, often as a way of celebrating the feast of St. Francis of Assisi in October.

That Missa Gaia is named after a Greek goddess and is based on **New Age eco-spirituality** should certainly raise a few flags at the pastoral level. And the fact that it is so popular among ‘progressive’ New Agers in the Catholic Church is another proof that the reason it appeals to New Agers is because it IS New Age.”

(*Sunship Earth and New Age Environmental Programs for Children*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=168>)

“An even more obvious sign of the New Age in an environment program is any teaching that encourages students to connect with the earth’s “life force” – a nonexistent energy known by various names such as chi, ki, qi, prana, vital force, universal energy, etc.

Many New Age environmentalists like to incorporate aspects of ancient nature religions and shamanism into their eco-belief system. These beliefs encourage

the use of magic to contact various nature spirits. The most common of these spirits is a 'horned god' known as Pan who is usually paired with the goddess Artemis. Another red flag will be any mention of Gaia, a so-called earth goddess. References to the 'four elements' – earth, air, water, and fire – are also common in neopagan earth worship...

All of the above-mentioned examples of New Age **eco-spirituality** represent a belief system that is not compatible with Christianity because it posits a kind of planetary spirituality that desires to 'ensoul' the entire cosmos and to bestow on creation some kind of magical power...

"But this doesn't mean Christians can do whatever they want to the environment. The seventh commandment, 'Thou shall not steal,' compels us to respect the integrity of creation.

'Animals, like plants and inanimate beings, are by nature destined for the common good of past, present and future humanity. Use of the mineral, vegetable and animal resources of the universe cannot be divorced from respect for moral imperatives.' (Catechism #2415)

Pope Benedict XVI, frequently referred to as the "green Pope" because of his great love for the environment, explained these moral imperatives earlier this year when addressing the Vatican diplomatic corps. He said protection of the environment must be connected to the protection of human life, not associated with the various anti-human ideologies so prevalent in today's environmental movement. 'If we wish to build true peace, how can we separate, or even set at odds, the protection of the environment and the protection of human life, including the life of the unborn?' he asked. The Holy Father is also calling for a 'great program of education' that would promote a change of thinking and 'new lifestyles'. But these programs should not be about worshiping false gods, attributing magical or otherwise unnatural powers to lower life forms, or cutting back on the number of humans to save resources. They must be about ensuring that 'selfishness does not lead some to hoard the goods which are intended for all,' he said, and about reforming unjust political systems and making self-centered and materialistic ways of thinking a thing of the past. The bottom line, according to Pope Benedict XVI, is that our environmental problems are essentially moral problems.

To prove his point, he once used the atheistic regimes of the former Soviet bloc on eastern Europe as an example of how godlessness destroys both man and environment. 'Was it not easy to see the great harm which an economic system lacking any reference to the truth about man had done not only to the dignity and freedom of individuals and peoples, but to nature itself, by polluting soil, water and air?' he asked. 'The denial of God distorts the freedom of the human person, yet it also devastates creation'."

(*Missa Gaia*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=149>)

“The prevailing ‘**green agenda**’ – and its accompanying socialism and **eco-spirituality** – is far more threatening to our way of life than most people realize...

Agenda 21 is a 40-chapter document that lays out a global plan to change the way we eat, live, learn and communicate because we need to “save the earth”. It was created by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development, as a sustainability agenda which some experts say is “an amalgamation of socialism and extreme environmentalism brushed with anti-American, anti-capitalist overtones.”

“The **Earth Charter** was written by the same crowd that brought us Agenda 21 and is another example of environmental extremism on steroids, but this one has a much more overt spiritual agenda. It seeks to achieve these laudable goals by establishing “sustainable ways of living” that will eradicate poverty and see to equitable economic development (read “redistribution of wealth”), protect the environment, and bring about respect for human rights, democracy and peace.

Couched in the usual “who could find anything wrong with this” banalities, what is hidden behind the rhetoric are supporters who believe religions are the main obstacle to peaceful coexistence and sustainable living.

“However, they don’t want to do away with these religions; they want to create a new one. This was revealed during a 2002 United Nations meeting at which religious and spiritual leaders were called upon to move “from an exclusive preoccupation with Divine-human relations and human-human relations to renew human–Earth relations.”

“In other words, Earth worship should replace any belief in a divine being,” explains Contender Ministries’ Jennifer Rast.

“They envision for the religions of the world ‘a major transformation from their theological and anthropological phase to their ecological and cosmological phase.’ Following one of the major themes of the New Age Movement, humanity is spiritually evolving from being worshipers of God to being gods ourselves.”

“The same players who are involved in Agenda 21 and The Earth Charter are active in **Green Cross International**

We all need to be aware of the fact that the environmental movement, while it embraces many good causes that we as Christians must embrace, such as concern and care for the earth, it is infused with a godless ideology that it seeks to impose on the masses. What makes it so dangerous is that the movers and shakers in this movement are very powerful and influential people.

I highly recommend the book *False Dawn* by Lee Penn as a great place to start in familiarizing yourself with the quest for One World Government and One World Religion, and how integral a role the New Age plays in this global power grab."

(*Agenda 21, The Earth Charter (Gaia Hypothesis)*, *Green Cross International*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=194>)

"The Socialist, Michael Gorbachev, ex-Soviet leader, founded the **Green Cross International**, ostensibly to save the environment. Phyllis Schlafly says of the Gorbachev Green Cross, that it "is an atheist's attempt to confuse Christian beliefs with a **new 'green' religion**". (Eagle Forum, Report 4/12/2008). How ironic also that Earth Day is Lenin's birthday!"

(*Karl Marx Satanist*, Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM, <http://sine-glossa.blogspot.in/search/label/Karl%20Marx%20Satanist>)

"Contemporary **radical ecology** has divinized nature and relegated human beings to a secondary role, participants at a symposium on original sin were told. 'The sin in contemporary radical environmentalism consists in divinizing nature, in suffocating the importance of the human being as custodian of creation, and in forgetting God as author of man's natural surroundings,'" said Joan Andreu Rocha Scarpetta, professor of theology of religions at the Regina Apostolorum Pontifical University. The institution sponsored the symposium. Rocha's address, entitled '*Radical Ecology and Original Sin*,' was one of the addresses delivered at the March 3-4 symposium, whose theme was 'Original Sin: An Interdisciplinary Perspective.' Archbishop Angelo Amato, secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, opened the event. 'Contemporary radical environmentalism has forgotten divine transcendence; it has placed man on the same level or below nature' and, in forgetting the created character of nature, 'has given it a magical, almost divine value,' said Rocha... Rocha added: 'When God's creative action is forgotten, man is placed at the same level as the rest of creation, or a transcendent or magical character is attributed to created nature'."

(*Divinization of Nature as Ecological Sin*, Rome, 9 March 2005, <https://zenit.org/articles/divinization-of-nature-as-ecological-sin/>)

"Addressing a Lenten retreat for the Pope and top Vatican officials, Italian Cardinal Giacomo Biffi has cited a Russian philosopher's 'prophetic' warning that 'the Antichrist presents himself as a pacifist, **ecologist** and ecumenist'. "Cardinal Biffi, who has been leading this week's retreat for the Pope, cited the warning ... about the modern guises of the Antichrist, according to a *Catholic News Service* report. The retired Cardinal says Christians tempted to set aside

their belief in Christ as the only saviour in order to promote dialogue with others are being tempted by the Antichrist.”

(Antichrist tempts Christians to place dialogue above Jesus, Cardinal says at Vatican retreat, Catholic News Service, <http://cathnews.com/cathnews/12563-antichrist-is-pacifist-ecologist-cardinal-tells-pope>)

“A Vatican official warned against idolizing the environment and losing sight of the dignity of the human person, in the wake of a conference on climate change and development. Cardinal Renato Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, said this Friday, at the end of the dicastery’s two-day conference... ‘Nature is for the human person and the human person is for God,’ Cardinal Martino said. ‘In considering the problems associated with climate change, one must look to the social doctrine of the Church,’ which ‘neither supports the absolutization of nature, nor the reduction of nature to a mere instrument.’ ‘The person has an indisputable superiority over creation and, in virtue of his personhood and being gifted with an immortal soul, cannot be placed on an equal plane with other living beings, nor can he be considered a disturbing element in the natural ecological equilibrium,’ the 74-year-old cardinal said. He continued: ‘The person does not have an absolute right over nature but rather a mandate to conserve and develop it in light of the universal destination of the earth’s goods which is one of the fundamental principles of the social doctrine of the Church.’

“The president of the Vatican dicastery noted the problems associated with climate change, and said that ‘the social doctrine of the Church must deal with the many modern forms of idolatry of nature that lose sight of the person.’ ‘Similar views of ecology emerge in the debate on demographic problems and on the relationship between peoples, environment and development,’ he added...

The cardinal recalled that ‘according to the concept of human **ecology** developed by Pope John Paul II, ecology is not only a natural emergency, but an anthropological emergency, in which what is valued is man’s relationship with himself and above all his relationship with God.’ ‘An anthropological error is therefore a theological error,’ underlined Cardinal Martino. ‘When the person wants to take God’s place, he loses sight of himself and his responsibility to govern nature’.”

(Official Warns against Idolizing Nature, <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/official-warns-against-idolizing-nature>)

Note: People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Greenpeace, and the Green Party are New Age-oriented organisations.

“Describing animal rights campaigner group **PETA** as ‘occult’, Bombala priest Fr. Mick McAndrew has given his blessing to the act of sheep mulesing. The *Bombala Times* reports Fr McAndrew is on a one man ‘mission’ to protect his flock from the pro-vegetarian, anti-mulesing group **People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)**. The preacher has blessed the act of removing skin around a sheep’s tail to guard against flesh eating parasites.”

(*Priest attacks “occult” PETA*, <http://cathnews.com/cathnews/11144-priest-attacks-quotoccult-quot-peta>)

“In general there are three basic principles that guide the neopagan. First, there is an intense focus on and reverence towards the natural world (Pagan Federation; Robinson). The so-called **green-movement** or **deep ecology** is an integral part of the ecological orientation of neopaganism (Albanese 19). Nature is venerated and in many cases seen as god-like itself, leading to tendencies towards pantheism. Neopagans tend to blame current ecological problems on the Judeo-Christian worldview. They believe that:

...the problems of the modern world, particularly the ecological crisis, are... a direct result of the loss of pagan wisdom about man’s relationship to the natural world, and a recovery of this wisdom is regarded not only as desirable but as urgently needed. (Hanegraaff, New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism 77)

“Often times this attitude is expressed through participation in ecological movements that seek to protect natural resources, endangered species, and as of yet untouched pristine areas of wilderness. Involvement in radical environmental groups such as **Earth First**, the **Animal Liberation Front** and **Greenpeace** are not uncommon but not all neopagans are radical environmentalists and not all environmentalists are neopagans. Many would agree that environmentalism is a good thing. However, participation and ecological conservation are not necessarily done by neopagans because they are good *per se* but because nature itself is composed of divine beings in their own right who are threatened by humanity’s destruction of the earth. Often, neopagans will refer to the entire planet as one living, divine organism known as **Gaia**. While not known to be originally expressed by neopagans, a number of scientists have formulated the hypothesis that the earth itself is one giant living organism in which the different aspects of the natural world, from viruses to whales, are its constituent parts, in many ways like the different components of a cell. Known as the **Gaia Hypothesis**, it is believed that the ecosystem dynamically acts and reacts to changes much in the same way that plants and animals adapt to changes in their own environment. It is believed, though, that humanity’s impact of the environment is outpacing the adaptability of Gaia which is causing major damage to the ecosystem worldwide. It is argued that if

humanity does not recognize its place within the system, as just one constituent part, then the prospects for the earth's survival is grim (Scharper 207ff)."

(*A Pastoral Approach to the New Age...* Robert D. Fath, Jr. 2006, <http://www.sacredheartak.org/NewAgeSpirituality.pdf>)

"A row has erupted after Cardinal George Pell of the Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia criticized the **Green Party**, which supports abortion, euthanasia, and same-sex 'marriage', as sweet camouflaged poison that represents an anti-Christian point of view...

The prelate also pointed out that Green leader Robert Brown helped author a book in which it was claimed that 'humans are simply another smarter animal, so that humans and animals are on the same or similar levels depending on their level of consciousness.' The book was coauthored by Princeton University philosopher Peter Singer, a notorious supporter of infanticide and euthanasia. 'This Green ethic is designed to replace Judaeo-Christianity,' Pell warned."

(*Cardinal Pell Says Green Party Like Watermelons: Green Outside, Red Inside*, <http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/archive//ldn/2010/aug/10081106>)

"Now I want to say a brief word about retreats. In previous presentations about the New Age I have drawn attention to retreat programmes which are not based on the teachings of the Catholic Church. Sadly, things are no better today than they were in the 1990's. In the programme of the Retreat Association for 2002 of the 217 centres listed 65 are shown as Roman Catholic or Roman Catholic/Ecumenical. Looking at the Catholic centres, still in evidence are such topics as: The Enneagram; **Eco-Spirituality**; Tai Chi; Yoga; Buddhist Meditation; **Green Spirituality**; Massage; Reiki; and Circle Dancing. All of these activities incorporate New Age beliefs and practices – some of which are more spiritually dangerous than others. If such activities are advertised in your parish newsletter the attention of the parish priest should be drawn to the dangers they represent."

(*Spiritual Anarchy – The New Age Threat*, Michael Akerman, http://catholicassociates.com/leaflets/Spiritual%20Anarchy_Rev1.pdf)

Chapter 27

Mindfulness Meditation, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)

Origins and development

Mindfulness is exclusively a Buddhist concept which can be found in the (Buddhist) meditations of Vipassana and Zen.

“Buddhist meditation (also called “**mindfulness**”) ... is usually related to Tibetan Buddhism or to Zen Buddhism, an atheistic/agnostic religion. The goal is to empty the mind (read chapter 72) and become detached from feeling and thought, eventually realizing there is no individual self.”

(Marcia Montenegro, http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_Meditation.html)

“Buddhism is strong on ... **mindfulness**, centred on protracted practice of meditation.”

(<http://www.catholicaustralia.com.au/page.php?pg=faithlife-australianspirit1>)

“**Mindfulness meditation** is the brainchild of Jon Kabat-Zinn, a biomedical scientist and founder of the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. In 1979, he developed something called “**Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)**” which is an 8-week course combining meditation and Hatha yoga to help patients cope with stress, pain, and illness through moment-to-moment awareness. It is very similar to transcendental meditation in that it is practiced for about 20 minutes twice a day and relies on certain postures, breathing techniques and concentration to effect an **altered state of consciousness** (read chapter 43).”

(*Mindfulness Meditation*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=15>)

“Jon Kabat-Zinn was a student of Zen Master Seung Sahn and has integrated the practice of yoga and his studies of Buddhism into what he calls (**MBSR**), an 8-week course combining meditation and Hatha yoga to help patients cope with stress, pain, and illness through moment-to-moment awareness. Eastern techniques such as MBSR are mental exercises designed to bring one into an altered state of consciousness.”

(*Do Christians need Buddhist Meditation Techniques to Handle Stress?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1044>)

“**Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)** was developed by Zindel Segal, Mark Williams and John Teasdale, based on Jon Kabat-Zinn’s Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction programme.” (<http://mbct.co.uk/>)

“**MBCT** courses are proliferating ... but research in the US found some who practised some types of Buddhist meditation were assailed by traumatic memories and impairment in social relationships.”

(<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/aug/25/mental-health-meditation>)

“**Mindfulness** is associated with distress in cancer patients.”

(https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315818554_A_Brief_Mindfulness_Intervention_Is_Associated_with_Negative_Outcomes_in_a_Randomised_Controlled_Trial_Among_Chemotherapy_Patients)

“As my book, *A Catholic Guide to Mindfulness*, points out, a 1992 study by David Shapiro, a professor at the University of California, Irvine, found that 63 percent of the group he studied, who had varying degrees of experience in meditation, including **mindfulness meditation**, had suffered at least one negative effect from meditation retreats.”

(*Experts Caution about Meditation Risks*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=60979>)

New Age

“**Mindfulness**... is based on a combination of cognitive therapy (which is a biblically sound method) and Buddhists meditative techniques (which Christians are to avoid).”

(Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=1492>)

“Its roots lie in religious and philosophical views which are the antithesis of a Christian worldview.”

(<http://www.satsonline.org/userfiles/Mindfulness%20and%20the%20brain.pdf>)

“The inventor of modern-day **mindfulness**, Jon Kabat-Zinn, a practicing Buddhist, spent years trying to cover up the Buddhist roots of the practice he invented which is known as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) for fear of being branded as “New Age”.”

(*My Doctor says Mindfulness isn’t Buddhist*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=61811>)

Mindfulness meditation is today as popular in the West as Yoga ever was.

Chapter 28

Taoist Yoga – Chi Kung, Qi Gong or Ki Gong

“**Chi Kung**, more widely known as **qi gong**, is a form of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) that has been made popular – along with other energy-based healing modalities – by the New Age.

““**Qigong** comes from the Chinese words “Qi” meaning “Energy” and “Gong”, which means “work” or “practice”. It is a Chinese exercise system the focuses on cultivating and attracting “qi” or “life force” energies from the universe (a non-Christian belief.

“Practitioners believe **qigong** can be used to regulate the body’s “qi” through posture, and in the mind through meditation and breathing techniques.

“As traditional Chinese practitioners explain, **qigong** involves a wide range of exercises and styles, such as “tuna” which emphasizes the practice of breath; “still” qigong, which stresses meditation and relaxation; “standing stance” qigong, which emphasizes the exercise of the body by relaxed and motionless standing posture; “moving” and “dao-yin” qigong, which emphasizes external movement combined with internal quiet and control of the mind. “Soft qigong” refers to exercises which enhance spiritual, mental and physical health with meditation and gentle exercises while “hard qigong” refers to exercises done in martial arts that are designed to strengthen the body and protect it from injury. Meditation is an important component of **qigong** but this is eastern meditation which is more aptly described as a concentration exercise rather than what Christians know as traditional meditation (such as reflecting on a Gospel passage).

“The kind of meditation practiced in **qigong** involves quieting the mind in order to enter into an altered state of consciousness (read chapter 43). The Pontifical document, *JCBWL*, warns that these states “create an atmosphere of psychic weakness (and vulnerability)” (#4).

“In their 1994 book, *A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomena*, the Irish Theological Commission elaborates further by saying that in these altered states “people are open to spirit influences without being in control, for they have surrendered to this ‘consciousness’.” And yet this kind of “meditation” is vitally important to the practice of **qigong**, according to practitioners. “Much of the success of Qigong practice depends on the level of peace and quietness one can attain,” one website explains. “This ‘entering a quiet state’ refers to a settled and peaceful state of mind not disturbed by extraneous thoughts, the

mind concentrated on one point such as the “Dantian” (about one inch below the navel) or on the very act of breathing. All awareness to external stimuli (such as sound and light) is thereby reduced, even to the point that the practitioner’s sense of position and weight are lost, until one reaches a state in which they are conscious yet not conscious, aware yet not aware. In this way, the cerebral cortex enters a quiescent state.”

“Last, it’s important to understand that the practice of **qigong** belongs to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) which has its own unique view of the world – a view that is not compatible with Christianity. TCM is based on the ancient Chinese perception of humans as microcosms of the surrounding universe with everyone and everything in nature interconnected and subject to its forces. Central to TCM is the yin-yang theory – which is the concept of two opposing forces that shape the world and all of life. It also believes in a life force called qi which allegedly circulates in the body through a system of pathways called meridians; health is obtained by maintaining balance and harmony in the circulation of qi.

“None of these are Christian beliefs and participation in these practices expose a person to a variety of problems from the temptation to adopt non-Christian beliefs to placing our faith in false gods such as universal energy forces.”

(*Chi Kung (Qi Gong)*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=86>)

Falun Dafa/Falun Gong

“This movement **Falun Dafa** (www.falundafa.org) is a cult and although the Chinese government is to be condemned for its vicious persecution of the millions of its followers in that country, its teachings are very bizarre and not at all compatible with Christianity.

“According to an extensive article on **Falun Gong** appearing in the February 2002 issue of *Christianity Today* ([link](#)), Falun Dafa is a spiritual movement based on the great law of the wheel of Dharma (Buddhist teaching on the path to enlightenment) that has become better known in recent years by the name of its prescribed exercises – Falun Gong. Falun Dafa originally grew out the Chinese practice of **qi gong** which consists of breathing exercises and meditation.

“An in-house book cover describes it as ‘A Traditional Self-Cultivation Practice to Improve Mind and Body’ – Truthfulness, Compassion Forbearance.

“The founder of **Falun Dafa** is Li Hongzhi who claims that a superior power sent him to Earth to introduce this spirituality to the world. In an interview with *Time Asia* in 1999, this former grain store clerk and trumpet player, Hongzhi said: “You can think of me as a human being. I don’t wish to talk about myself at a higher level. People wouldn’t understand it.”

Hongzhi teaches that the **Falun Gong** symbol, called the law wheel which is supposedly a spinning mini-replica of the universe, is placed in each practitioner's lower abdomen. (He is the only person who can put the wheel into a practitioner's belly.) As the wheel spins inside them, it absorbs the universe's energy. Access to one's law wheel is gained by practicing Falun Gong.

"There are five sets of **Falun Gong** movements which consist of lotus postures and hand movement exercises set to Chinese music. According to an article in the April 2001 *International Religious Freedom Report*, the purpose of Falun Gong is "to cultivate a person's higher energy or 'gong'. This is done not only through physical exercise but more importantly through the development of a person's xinxing (or mind nature). It is this emphasis ... on a non-material energy that differentiates Falun Gong from other forms of qigong."

"Among his numerous outlandish claims, Hongzhi says he can heal diseases, fly, and even stop speeding cars just by using the powers of his teachings. As if this is not problematic enough, Christians must also be aware that Hongzhi does not permit practitioners to practice other religions. He is the only acceptable teacher and his Zhaun Falun is the only acceptable text. He calls other spiritual leaders "deceitful masters" and warns followers that many of them are demons.

Stay as far away from **Falun Gong** and **Falun Dafa** as you can manage."

(*Falun Dafa/Falun Gong*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=266>)

Chapter 29

Transcendental Meditation (TM) or the Science of Creative Intelligence (SCI)

Study the *Orationis Formas* and *JCBWL* citations in the meditation systems analysed both above and below this chapter.

“The ever more frequent contact with other religions and with their different styles and methods of prayer has, in recent decades, led many of the faithful to ask themselves what value non-Christian forms of meditation might have for Christians. Above all, the question concerns eastern methods. Some people today turn to these methods for therapeutic reasons.

The expression ‘eastern methods’ is used to refer to methods which are inspired by Hinduism and Buddhism, such as ‘Zen,’ ‘**Transcendental Meditation**’ or ‘Yoga’. Thus it indicates methods of meditation of the non-Christian Far East which today are not infrequently adopted by some Christians also in their meditation. The orientation of the principles and methods contained in this present document is intended to serve as a reference point not just for this problem, but also, in a more general way for the different forms of prayer practiced nowadays in ecclesial organizations, particularly in associations, movements and groups.”

(Vatican Document *Orationis Formas*, signed by Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 15 October 1989, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/curia/cdfmed.htm>)

Origins and development

“The **Transcendental Meditation technique** or **TM** is a form of silent mantra meditation, developed by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in the early 1960s. The meditation practice involves the use of a mantra and is practiced for 15–20 minutes twice per day while sitting with one’s eyes closed. In 1970 the **Science of Creative Intelligence**, described as “modern science with ancient Vedic science” became the theoretical basis for the Transcendental Meditation technique. The Science of Creative Intelligence is a pseudoscience.”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcendental_Meditation_technique)

“As a teacher and practitioner of **Transcendental Meditation**, I saw things from the inside of the movement which disturbed me, namely the fact that we were told to present the technique of TM as a simple scientific method, while every teacher I knew realized that the teachings and practices of TM were blatantly Hindu. At the teacher training in Fiuggi, Italy along with about 2,000 others from around the world, Maharishi presented his “World Plan”. This troubled many of us because it seemed to point towards the formation of a

world spiritual system that would, by definition, have a *problem* with exclusive or fundamentalist religions such as Christianity and Judaism. After Maharishi's announcement, I overheard one teacher trainee lamenting, "This World Plan had better be right or we're all in BIG trouble!"

One of the main claims of the proponents of TM is that it releases tension and stress in a process they call "unstressing." At the teacher training course, my stress level seemed to be magnified a hundred times. Some of my symptoms of unstressing were undoubtedly the deep sense that something was fundamentally amiss. I had an increasing sense of spiritual emptiness, and the feeling that there was a real lack of love among meditators. There were suicides and divorces among TM meditators and teachers, something rarely discussed." (Former TM Practitioner and teacher Vail Carruth, <http://www.thetruelight.net/personalstories/carruth.htm>)

New Age

"The "God" of the Maharishi is impersonal, as opposed to the God manifested in Christian revelation where God is a personal God who loves each human person in an intimate way. By denying the Creator as Supreme and teaching that "All is One," Maharishi removes the distinction between the Creator and the creature. This directly leads to, or is an equivalent form of, pantheism.

"The "mantras" (read chapter 72) given to the followers of the Maharishi have been discovered to be invocations, in most of the cases, to deities of the Hindu pantheon, thus in a real sense denying the oneness of God and fostering polytheism.

"Man is considered capable of attaining unlimited perfection, of being totally liberated from all pain and suffering through the instrumentality of **Transcendental Meditation** practiced in the Maharishi way. Similarly through this, TM, man can find solution to all human problems ranging from control of the elements to the attainment of indestructibility and immortality.

"Two flaws, among others, appear clearly in this doctrine: (a) It does not accept the immortality of the soul, nor life beyond, as belonging to the nature of the soul; (b) ignores completely the existence of original sin, a Christian dogma, and the consequences for the realities of life.

"As for **Transcendental Meditation**, it may be considered as doctrine (content) or as technique (method). From this point of view of doctrine it is not acceptable to a Catholic, or a Christian at that. As for TM as technique, in the way the Maharishi group presents it, it is not acceptable either because of its intrinsic connections with the doctrine."

(*Pastoral Statement* of His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila, 1984, <https://www.ewtn.com/library/NEWAGE/SINMAHAR.TXT>)

“In a few words, I would say what is essential of **transcendental meditation** is that man divests himself of his own “I”; he unites with the universal essence of the world; therefore, he remains a bit depersonalized. In Christian meditation, on the contrary, I do not lose my personality; I enter a personal relation with the person of Christ. I enter into relation with the “you” of Christ, and in this way this “I” is not lost; it maintains its identity and responsibility. At the same time it opens, enters a more profound unity, which is the unity of love that does not destroy. Therefore, in a few words, I would say, simplifying a bit, that transcendental meditation is impersonal and, in this sense, “depersonalizing.” Christian meditation, meanwhile, is “personalizing” and opens to a profound union that is born of love and not of the dissolution of the “I”.” (*Relativism...*, Cardinal Ratzinger,

<https://zenit.org/articles/cardinal-ratzinger-calls-relativism-the-new-face-of-intolerance/>)

“Psychology is used to explain mind expansion as “mystical” experiences. Yoga, Zen, **transcendental meditation** and tantric exercises lead to an experience of self-fulfilment or enlightenment.” (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)

“The point of *New Age* techniques is to reproduce mystical states at will, as if it were a matter of laboratory material. Rebirth, biofeedback, sensory isolation, holotropic breathing, hypnosis, mantras, fasting, sleep deprivation and **transcendental meditation** are attempts to control these states and to experience them continuously.” (JCBWL #4)

“Many people are convinced that there is no harm in ‘borrowing’ from the wisdom of the East, but the example of **Transcendental Meditation** should make Christians cautious about the prospect of committing themselves unknowingly to another religion (in this case, Hinduism), despite what TM’s promoters claim about its religious neutrality. There is no problem with learning how to meditate, but the object or content of the exercise clearly determines whether it relates to the God revealed by Jesus Christ, to some other revelation, or simply to the hidden depths of the self.” (JCBWL #6.2)

Transcendental Meditation is named in the JCBWL document. Thrice. (#2.3.4.1, #4, #6.2)

Chapter 30

Vipassana Meditation

Origins and development

“**Vipassana** is a Buddhist form of meditation known as ‘insight’ meditation. Vipassana is a direct awareness of reality, and it can arise spontaneously without the practice of meditation, but is more usually gained as a result of long concentration and meditational discipline. This is based upon the careful practice of mindfulness... of four things: the body, feelings, states of mind, and the mental processes or *dharmas*. The ultimate goal and result of insight meditation is to see into the impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactory nature (*duhkha*) and lack of self or substance (*anatman*) in all things.”

(*Wordsworth Dictionary of Beliefs and Religions*, 1995)

“In spite of the fact that the Indian founder, Satya Narayan Goenka, rejects any claim that **Vipassana meditation** has any connection with Buddhism ... Vipassana belongs to Theravada Buddhism (also called Hinayana or ‘small vehicle’).”

(Erika Gibello, Roma Segreteria, International Association of Exorcists, May 1999)

Goenka claims that his system of meditation is unrelated to Buddhism. In his 1987 book “*The Discourse Summaries*”, he emphasises that **Vipassana** is a non-religious form of meditation. The idea is not to convert a person from a religion to another, but from “unhappiness to happiness”, from “ignorance to knowledge”, from “slavery to freedom”.

“**Vipassana** is an introspective meditation that involves slowing the thought processes in order to achieve heightened self-awareness. ... Persons interested in this technique attend a 10 day training course during which time all worship, exercise, and outside communication is forbidden.”

(*Why Would Any Catholic Publication Advertise Helen Russ?* Susan Brinkmann,

<https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1418>)

New Age

“**Vipassana** is a meditation technique rooted in Buddhism. Like most eastern thought, it does not recognise revelation of truth, but seeks to “achieve” truth through “enlightenment”. This is in stark contrast to Christianity, which sees the need for revelation of divine truth because God is infinite and beyond the reach of human ability. What results is a logical progression to replacing God with human wisdom and effort.

“A basic rule of the **Vipassana Centre** is that all religious observances and practices must be left outside when one attends a programme. Crosses/ crucifixes, medals and scapulars may not be worn or carried, Bibles may not be brought, even personal prayer is not permitted. As for priests, there can be no reading of the Breviary and no celebration of Mass.

All this for the duration of the programme, usually 10 days (which includes at least one Sunday).”

(What is Vipassana? Is it compatible with Christianity? Errol C. Fernandes in Emmanuel magazine, Mumbai, March-April 2003)

An extract from the e-mailed testimony of an Indian Catholic who attended a **Vipassana** “retreat” with her husband:

“I could sense the occult presence in that course though it was covered up and I could not name it or place it. I felt I was trapped into a realm of spirits and I was terrorised and lived in total fear. After breaking that course halfway and coming off, I found it difficult to keep my mind under my control. There was extreme pressure on every faculty of mind – thoughts, memory, imagination, intuition everything was pushed to its limits to take paths I wanted to avoid. I could not concentrate on one thing even for a few seconds. I felt as if, conscious, unconscious and subconscious minds were all mixed up. (That is what they said – “it is going to be a surgery of the mind, at no cost, you should leave in the middle of the course as it would damage your mind”). Many of the philosophies you have mentioned under New Age were coming to my mind without any previous exposure to it.

“These courses seem to me as if to counter the activity of Christian retreat centres; only a different spirit is invoked and it is done without the participants’ knowledge. On the third day something like this sentence was slipped in: “Some people believe they can receive salvation by believing in ‘one person’.” Meditation and chanting (through audio/video) was used. The same chanting was repeated each day for all four sessions. We were asked not to eat or drink anything that is not provided at the venue and by them. Each person was cut off from the neighbour who is only one or two feet away physically and every possibility of comparison or warning or assistance was cut off.

I could sense the so called ‘energy’ trying to overpower me.

On the third day, a Sunday, when the actual initiation was to take place, (always the course starts on a Friday, and the first two days they say are only preparation), both of us could feel something like a moving spiral entering our heads thru the crown area. Afterwards, for months, my head always used to feel sore and under a lot of pressure at the crown area.

For weeks and months afterwards, I experienced some external power or force exerting great pressure on my mind. I was repeatedly forced to think that God has abandoned me leading to utter hopelessness.

“At the meditation course, we were asked to keep our minds completely empty of all thoughts (read chapter 72) and focus our attention on the tip of our nose, and later, on our breathing. If the mind wandered, we were asked to cajole it back to nose tip/breath.

This is supposed to be the Zen part of the course which no one dares to question.

On close listening I could catch words like ‘nag’, ‘kali’ etc. My request for a translation of the prayer was turned down...

It was at this stage, the warning bells rang loud and clear for me and I could see thru the LIE.

On the [withheld] day we escaped from the centre with great difficulty.

On thinking back, it is clear the video discourse of the guru of this course was very much on the NAM philosophies.”

“Megan Vogt, a 25 year-old Pennsylvania woman committed suicide after attending an intense 10-day meditation retreat at the Dhamma **Vipassana** Meditation Center in Claymont, Delaware that left her psychotic and suicidal.

“Someone from the center called to say they needed to come and get Megan because she was ‘confused’ and in no condition to drive. Her parents and sister undertook the 90-minute drive to the center where they found Megan in an incoherent state. She refused to make eye contact with them and kept telling her sister, Jordan, that she wasn’t physically there, but just ‘a projection.’ ‘You could tell she didn’t know what was real,’ Jordan Vogt said. Megan tried to bolt back into the center to find a knife to kill herself. The family managed to get her into their car and, with her father following behind in Megan’s truck, began the long drive home. During the trip, Megan repeatedly tried to kill herself by throwing herself out of the car. As a result, her parents drove her straight to the mental ward of a hospital where Megan stayed for more than a week. She was given a 30-day prescription for psychosis and sent home. She seemed to be doing better at times, but was still not herself, the family said. She was withdrawn during social events and got lost at a relative’s house even though she had been very familiar with it. During this time, she would also remember bits and pieces of what happened at the retreat. ‘She was trying to piece everything together,’ Jordan said. ‘But she couldn’t get a coherent story. She didn’t know the meaning or connections.’ Megan said she remembered having problems about halfway through the retreat and yet no one intervened. By day seven, she no longer knew who she was or why she was there. Instead of calling her parents and sending her home, she was assigned a volunteer to

watch her as she meditated for the last three days of her stay. In the weeks after the retreat, Megan regularly saw a therapist, including the night before she died. But nothing seemed to work. She just couldn't snap out of it. Ten weeks after the retreat, she leaped from the Norman Wood Bridge, falling 120 feet to her death. 'Please forgive me for doing this,' she wrote in a final note to her boyfriend Brian Dorsey that was jotted on a piece of mail. 'I remember what I did at the retreat. I finally got that memory. I can't live with me.'

"Researchers at Brown University conducted [research](#) (link) in which they documented the experiences of 100 meditators who used Buddhist meditation techniques from the Theravada, Zen and Tibetan traditions. Based upon their interviews with participants, they developed a list of 59 experiences involving emotions, moods, motivation, will, bodily sensations and other 'influencing factors'. ... Whenever we employ a mental technique that requires us to either blank the mind or employ an excessive fixation on a single point, we risk putting ourselves into an altered state of consciousness which is physically, mentally, and spiritually dangerous. These dangers are so real, in fact, that some meditation centers are now insisting that teachers have PhD's in clinical psychology."

(*Meditation Retreat Blamed for Woman's Death*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=59797>)

Chapter 31

Yoga Meditation

Read this chapter in conjunction with “Pranayama” which has been treated in detail in chapter 86.

Study the *Orationis Formas* and JCBWL citations in the meditation systems analysed both above and below this chapter.

The system of **yoga** is not simply a group of physical exercises as most people would like to believe. It is an eight-staged process that commences at the physical level (*asanas* or postures), moves through the mental level (*meditation*), and culminates at the spiritual level (self-realization/god-realization).

Yoga is a system of meditation that is spiritual. If yoga is not a spiritual discipline, why would it be discussed in not one but two Vatican Documents? One of them, directed to the Bishops of the Church, was specific to meditation systems; the other, a pastoral warning, was on New Age spiritual dangers.

Origins and development

“Different Eastern or mystical religions practice different forms of **yoga**. Even in a given religion, there are various schools depending on the emphasis. In Hinduism, we find Hatha (physical), Raja (mental), Bhakti (devotional or emotional), Jnana (knowledge or spiritual), Siddha (psychic powers), Karma (action or social responsibility), Laya (sound), Mantra, and other yogas. Kundalini may be labeled as a separate yoga; however, it should be observed that *all* yoga may arouse kundalini. Although the emphasis may vary, the basic goal is similar: union with ultimate reality, however defined. In Hinduism this would be union of the individual self (*atman*) with the supreme Self (*paramatman*), union or becoming one with Brahman, the highest impersonal Hindu god. In Buddhism it would incorporate union with *nirvana*, etc. Whatever its goal, yoga is characteristically a pagan, occultic practice.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-41/>)

One of the major developers of Yoga was Patanjali (circa 400 AD), the compiler of the classical Raja yoga text *Yogasutra*.

The Hindu discipline of yoga is based on the philosophy of “monism”, or “all is one”: Creator and creation are one. There is no alterity (distinction) between the two. This is the opposite of what the Bible teaches. The stated goal of Yoga (yoking) is a monistic union with the “divine” in which there is the loss of individual identity.

Individuals begin with basic physical exercises (asanas) and breathing (pranayama), and when they find themselves in better mental and physical condition from workouts and good breathing techniques, they tend to explore further and eventually subscribe to some of yoga's ancient anti-Christian philosophies, thus going beyond the physiological and psychological levels to the spiritual realm. It must be realized that the philosophical underpinnings of Yoga are spiritual.

In yoga, everything has a spiritual background, a meaning, an objective, a purpose. No propagator of yoga, Hindu or Catholic, has ever been able to circumvent them, or to successfully disassociate from them, either in theory or in practice, if reading their books is any indication of the truth, as in the case of those who promote "Christian Yoga".

What are thought of as "breathing exercises" in Yoga is *prana-yama* - not a moving of atmospheric air, but of *prana*, the esoteric 'life force' or 'vital' energy which the JCBWL Document elaborates on. "Yama" means "control". Prana-yama: "control of prana". The *padma-asana* or lotus posture is adopted to facilitate the arousal of the psychic or occult *kundalini* power or female *shakti* energy and to channel it upwards from its supposed location in the *muladhara chakra* at the base of the spine, through five other alleged chakras in the spiritual cord called the *sushumna*, to unite in cosmic orgasm with the energy of a male deity in the crown chakra leading to enlightenment, which is oneness with the *Brahman*.

Having achieved that, the realized yogi can say *aham brahmasmi* or 'I am Brahman', and look at another and proclaim *tatvam asi* or 'Thou art that.' He has *realized* that we are all one, divine.

"The control of the vital energy (*prana*) by way of breathing, like also *asana*, is not merely a physical exercise, but is accompanied by certain psychomental phenomena. In other words, all techniques falling under the heading of *asana* and *pranayama* as, for example, the *mudras* and *bandhas* (physical positions or symbolic bodily gestures utilizing *pranayama* and concentration for physical or spiritual purposes) of **Hatha yoga**, are *psychosomatic* (body-mind) exercises. This point, unfortunately, is little understood by Western practitioners."

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/yoga-theory-and-practice-separable-part-1/>)

Isn't hatha yoga a set of harmless physical exercises? No. It isn't. Given its inalienable religious background, hatha yoga must not be understood as a mere harmless physical training as is often claimed. The foremost writing of this school, the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* [1,2] clearly states that it has to be taught only in order to reach the *Raja yoga* level which is "the integration of mind in a state

where the subject-object duality does not exist” [4,77], in other words, only for merging the self with the Absolute, which is monism. The attention given to the body in the *asanas* has a single purpose – a spiritual goal: getting total control over the mind and thus liberating itself, and uniting one’s individual consciousness to the ‘cosmic consciousness’. The steps to be followed to attain liberation are similar to the *Ashtanga* [eight-stage] *yoga* of Patanjali.

Yoga cannot be reduced to a mere form of psycho-physical therapy. It has always been considered a path towards self-realization or ‘transcendence’, a way of surpassing the world of illusion and reaching the Ultimate Reality. Its character, content and aspirations were and will always be religious. This aspect has never been doubted by its Eastern practitioners.

Despite Western modifications, its goal has never changed. It still aims to annihilate man’s psycho-mental life and anything that can define personhood.

Concepts in Hindu philosophy have no accurate parallels in Christian theology, though futile attempts are ever made to reconcile them. *Moksha* (salvation) which is a liberation from the human condition and a flight into nothingness can be obtained by one’s own efforts, through doing good works or attaining enlightenment through the various *margas* or *yogas* which preclude the need for a personal Saviour in Jesus Christ. Christian salvation on the other hand starts in the here and now. It is the overcoming of sin, reconciliation with a personal God, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

Yoga is salvation by works or self-salvation which the Bible says is impossible for one to achieve. Again, the yoga aspirant has to subscribe to the theories of *karma* and reincarnation. The goal of the ancients was to find a solution to *samsara*, the eternal cycle of birth-death-rebirth, which they believed operated as a consequence of the *Law of Karma* (repaying the debts of one’s actions in past lives through successive purgative reincarnations). Believing that the answer to this problem could be provided by man himself, they sought *Mukti* or *Moksha*, liberation, and in the search for this common goal, many different forms of *yoga* or *margas* (paths) evolved: kundalini/laya/gnana/karma/mantra/bhakti, and raja yoga.

Yoga meditation requires the suspension of one’s will and the emptying of the mind (read chapter 72) [Yoga Sutra 1, 1-3].

But the Word of God exhorts us to “have the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:16). The Christian is enjoined to “be transformed by the renewal of your mind that you may prove what is the will of God” (Romans 12:2), to “gird up the loins of his mind” (1 Peter 1:13), and “sing [God’s] praises with the mind” (1 Corinthians 14:15).

The Bible also belies the doctrines of karma and reincarnation (read chapter 89): “For it is appointed unto men to die once, and after this, the judgement.” (Hebrews 9:27)

The objective of yoga, as we have seen, is the liberation and consequent deification of man. When Hindu mystics talk about ‘becoming one’ with *Brahman*, they are describing experiences very different than those of Christian mystics lost in God.

And, in yogic thought/Hinduism, there is no objective understanding of sin as with Christians.

The dualistic theism of Biblical Christianity (Creator-creation distinction) is diametrically opposed to the advaitic monism of yogic philosophy which, significantly, like the ideologies of New Age, embodies the ‘Lie of the serpent’ (Genesis 3:4, 5):

(When you eat of the forbidden fruit of the tree “in the middle of the garden”), “You shall not surely die [reincarnation] ... then your eyes shall be opened [enlightenment] ... you shall be as gods [self-deification] ... you will know good from evil [gnosis, the subjectivity of right and wrong, and the consequent rejection of the reality of sin].”

New Age

“One of the most authoritative texts on yoga theory within the Hindu perspective is Patanjali’s text on raja Yoga titled *Yoga Sutras*. In this text, he puts forth the traditional eight “limbs,” or parts, of yoga. These are defined within the context of a basic Hindu worldview (reincarnation, *karma*, and *moksha*, or liberation) and intended to support and reinforce Hindu beliefs. Each “limb” has a spiritual goal and together they form a unit.

These eight limbs are:

- *Yama* (self-control, restraint, devotion to the gods [e.g., Krishna] or the final impersonal God [e.g., Brahman])
- *Niyama* (religious duties, prohibitions, observances)
- *Asana* (proper postures for yoga practices; these represent the first stage in the isolation of consciousness and are vital components for “transcending the human condition”)
- *Pranayama* (the control and directing of the breath and the alleged divine energy within the human body [*prana*] to promote health and spiritual [occult] consciousness and evolution)
- *Pratyahara* (sensory control or deprivation, i.e., withdrawal of the senses from attachment to external objects)
- *Dharana* (deeper concentration, or mind control)
- *Dhyana* (deep contemplation from occult meditation)

- *Samadhi* (occult enlightenment or “God [Brahman] realization” i.e., “union” of the “individual” with God).

“Because the eight steps are interdependent, the steps of ‘postures’ and ‘breathing’ cannot logically be separated from the others. Thus, the interdependence of all eight steps reveals why the physical exercises of yoga are *designed* to prepare the body for the spiritual (occult) changes that will allegedly help one realize godhood status.

“The concept of prana (“breath”) is a key to the process. *Pranayama* refers to the knowledge and control of *prana*, or mystical energy, not merely to the control of one’s physical breath. *Prana* is believed to be universal divine energy residing behind the material world (*akasa*). Prana is said to have five forms, and all energy is thought to be a manifestation of it. Swami Nikhilananada describes it in his *Vivekananda – The Yogas and Other Works* as “the infinite, omnipresent manifesting power of this universe.” Perfect control of *prana* makes one God. One can have ‘infinite knowledge, infinite power, now’:

What power on earth would not be his? He would be able to move the sun and stars out of their places, to control everything in the universe from the atoms to the biggest suns. This is the end and aim of pranayama. When the yogi becomes perfect there will be nothing in nature not under his control. If he orders the gods or the souls of the departed to come, they will come at his bidding. All the forces of nature will obey him as slaves.... He who has controlled prana has controlled his own mind and all the minds... and all the bodies that exist...

“The aim of *pranayama* is also to arouse the coiled-up power in the *muladhara* chakra called *kundalini*:

Then the whole of nature will begin to change and the door of [psychic] knowledge will open. No more will you need to go to books for knowledge; your own mind will have become your book, containing infinite knowledge.

According to Vivekananda, all occult manifestations are accomplished through yogic control of *prana*:

We see in every country sects that attempted the control of prana. In this country there are mind-healers, spiritualists, Christian Scientists, hypnotists, and so on. If we examine these different sects, we shall find at the back of each is the control of prana, whether they know it or not. If you boil all the theories down, the residuum will be that. It is one and the same force they are manipulating... Thus we see that pranayama includes all that is true even of spiritualism. Similarly, you will find that wherever any sect or body of people is trying to discover anything occult, mysterious, or hidden, they are really

practicing some sort of **yoga** to control their prana. You will find that wherever there is any extraordinary display of power, it is the manifestation of prana. In other words, *prana*, God, and occult energy are all one and the same. The one who practices yogic breathing (*pranayama*) is by definition attempting to manipulate occult (“divine”) energy.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/yoga-theory-and-practice-separable-part-1/>)

“Many people today practice **yoga** for health reasons, enroll in a meditation course so as to become more calm and collected, or attend dance workshops so as to experience their bodies in a new way. These techniques are not always harmless. Often they are vehicles for doctrines that are foreign to Christianity.” (YouCat #356)

“The purpose of sitting in the lotus position is to facilitate the serpent power of **kundalini** at the base of the spine that it may climb upwards and illuminate the brain so as to develop occult or psychic powers which are vigorously condemned in the (Old Testament).”

(Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM, <http://sine-glossa.blogspot.in/search/label/Israel%20and%20the%20New%20Age>)

“The expression ‘eastern methods’ is used to refer to methods which are inspired by Hinduism and Buddhism, such as ‘Zen,’ ‘Transcendental Meditation’ or ‘**Yoga.**’ Thus it indicates methods of meditation of the non-Christian Far East which today are not infrequently adopted by some Christians also in their meditation. The orientation of the principles and methods contained in this present document is intended to serve as a reference point not just for this problem, but also, in a more general way for the different forms of prayer practiced nowadays in ecclesial organizations, particularly in associations, movements and groups.”

(*Orationis Formas*, signed by Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, October 15, 1989, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/curia/cdfmed.htm>)

In 2003 and 2004, Australian Broadcasting, New York Times, Times of India, etc. reported about the Croatian government being forced to abandon the introduction of **yoga** in schools “after the Roman Catholic Church accused it of trying to sneak Hinduism into schools.” The Croatian Council of Bishops “slammed such physical exercises as heretical.” “Hindu religious practice will be brought into the schools under the guise of exercises”, the Bishops said.

“In August 2016, the Catholic Church in Croatia issued a [statement](#) (link) in which it opposed the inclusion of yoga in a sports program to take place in the city of Slavonski Brod, warning that yoga is an “anti-Catholic cult.” The Catholic

Church in Croatia has been trying for some time to educate the faithful about the dangers of **yoga** and it has had some success. For example, the Croatian Bishops' Conference blocked a 2003 proposal of the former Social Democratic government to implement yoga in school sports activities. An esotericism expert named (Fr.) Clemens Pilar writes: Yoga is a "psycho spiritual technique of self-transcendence," designed to help a person "ascend to the divine and the final liberation from the cycle of rebirths through enlightenment (Samadhi) gain ... Only on the surface does Yoga appear neutral. In its essence, it is an integral part of Eastern religions". "

(*Croatian Bishops warn about Yoga*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=52859>)

Between 1997 & 2004, there were several reports on the dangers of yoga and Zen from the Korean Bishops' Committee for the Doctrine of the Faith which issued two documents on the "new spirituality movements."

They were greatly concerned about, and we quote: "the increasing popularity of methods such as **yoga**, Zen and 'ki' ('chi') energy training among Koreans, Catholics included, who say these techniques help them achieve soundness of body and mind. The Korean bishops have warned Catholics about such new spirituality movements. According to the bishops, such movements are in serious conflict with 'the essence of Christianity' on matters such as the understanding of God, Christology and ecclesiology. The committee noted that, since the 1970s, meditation, **yoga**, Zen, Ki-gong and breathing techniques have been widely practiced among Koreans, with the danger for Catholics of practicing them as religions or objects of faith."

(1 November 2004,

<http://www.ucanews.com/search/show.php?q=yoga&page=archives/english/2004/11/w1/mon/KO7047Rg.txt>)

A UCAN report of December 15, 2004 quotes Malaysian Jesuit bishop Paul Tan Chee Ing of Melakor-Johor as saying, "The new world [New Age] movement is a typical example of an agglomeration of Catholics who, while claiming to be Catholics, have assimilated Buddhists ideas, practice **Hindu yoga and meditation**, and toy with esoteric mysticism."

The Catholic News Agency report of February 14, 2007 reports that the Archdiocese of Burgos in Spain as ordering that "no Catholic facilities would be allowed to be used by pseudo-religious sects associated with movements and philosophies such as the New Age, **Yoga**, transcendental meditation, Reiki, Dianetics, and others."

"**Yoga** is not a medium to attain divine experience ... according to the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church.

'The God in whom we believe is a personal God. God is not someone who can be reached through a particular posture,' said the circular signed by the Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, Cardinal George Alencherry.

In its circular to its priests and laity in January this year (2017), the Church said 'It is not quite right to think that the experience of God and the personal encounter with the Lord is possible through Yoga.'

It said those who hold different opinions other than that of the Church in this regard are not to be encouraged.

'In this context, each one should take utmost care to avoid getting into those prayer groups and spiritual movements which are against the Catholic faith and do not recognise the official teachings of the Church,' the circular said."

(April 4, 2017, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/yoga-not-medium-to-attain-divine-experience-church-in-kerala/story-EfqSE3Z0mq3qxdSWdVCCVN.html>)

"**Yoga** is not a way to reach the God. It is not right to believe that it will be helpful to experience God or to have a personal encounter with the almighty. Yoga doesn't bring about any improvement in any person ... The RSS and other Sangh Parivar groups are trying to promote yoga all over India. So, the laity should be more vigilant about the practice ... The laity and church heads should take care to avoid paying attention to yoga and other spiritual movements, which are totally against the Catholic faith. Yoga and other anti-Christian practices do not encourage the official teachings of the Church."

(In a report approved by the Syro Malabar church synod, Mar Joseph Kallarangattu, Bishop of Palai, Chairman, Doctrinal Commission of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, April 5, 2018, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kochi/yoga-doesnt-lead-to-god-says-kerala-church-report/articleshow/63620922.cms>)

"The popularization of **yoga** as merely a method of physical exercise is altogether misleading. First of all, we must be aware of the fact that yoga is a part of the Hindu religion. It is not merely a method of physical exercise, or a system of stretching techniques. Yoga postures have both occult and psycho-somatic meanings and significance... This does not mean, of course, that someone who practices yoga is participating in a Satanic rite, and is in immediate danger of being possessed by the devil. But it does mean, though, that the performing of yoga exercises can open up a person to greater demonic attack, influence, and temptation."

(Opus Sanctorum Angelorum, (OSA) founded by Father William Wagner and under the direction of the Order of the Canons Regular of the Holy Cross, http://www.opusangelorum.org/membership/questions_answers.html)

“In response to a decision by a local Catholic college to discontinue offering yoga classes on campus, the Archbishop of Kansas City says **yoga** is more than just exercise and Catholics should be alerted to its dangers.

The statement was made by the Archdiocese in response to a decision by Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas to stop offering academic and recreational yoga classes after the spring semester 2017. The decision was made at the request of Kansas City’s Archbishop Joseph Naumann and Abbot James Albers after a growing number of students, alumni and faculty expressed concerns over the practice. When contacted by The Kansas City Star about the college’s decision, the archdiocese sent the following statement from its chancellor, the Rev. John Riley:

*“Many people do not realize that **yoga** ... is intended to be more than a series of exercises coupled with deliberative breathing and meditation,” Riley said in an emailed statement. “It is a mind and body practice developed under Hinduism, the goal of which is spiritual purification that will lead to a higher level of understanding and eventually union with the divine. Although the Catholic Church teaches that much good can be found in other religions, Catholics believe it is only brought to fullness in Christ. ... It is for these reasons that Catholics are alerted to the dangers of the practice of yoga and are encouraged to look for other exercise alternatives that do not incorporate a spiritual dimension.” “*

(Archbishop Alerts Catholics to Dangers of Yoga, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=58184>)

Watch this video of Fr. Rufus Pereira, exorcist: *Yoga – An open door to the occult* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiMo_Gyn70Y (21:30)

In 1994 he was elected as Vice-president of the newly-started International Association of Exorcists (AIE), Rome and in 1995 initiated the International Association for the Ministry of Deliverance (IAD).

Yoga, Tai Chi, Reiki: A Guide for Christians. A book by Br. Max Sculley DLS, 2012, 180 pages*

Foreword by Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney, now Archbishop of Hobart, Tasmania, Julian Porteous,

<http://www.christendom-awake.org/pages/book-promotions/yoga-tai-chi&reiki/yoga-tai-chi&reiki.htm>,

Bro. Max Sculley,

https://www.ad2000.com.au/tai_chi_reiki_a_guide_for_all_christians_by_br_max_sculley_fsc_february_2013.html

“The New Age challenge to Christianity – of which **Yoga**, Reiki and Tai Chi are part – is not trivial for committed Catholics.”

Watch the Bro. Max Sculley video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=htK2lg-E6Rk>

***Yoga and Christianity: More than what meets the eye - New Book Warns of Possible Dangers**

<http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/yoga-and-christianity-more-than-what-meets-the-eye> By Father John Flynn, LC, November 30, 2012

“Yogic exercises are dangerous! Among Hindus, a student is not permitted to practice **Hatha Yoga** until he has mastered the mental, moral and physical prerequisites. To do otherwise is to invite illness, both mental and physical... The Hatha Yoga exercises arouse Kundalini from her sleep... All practicing yogis recognize that releasing *Kundalini* is extremely dangerous. Pain, illness and insanity sometimes await those who practice this form of Yoga. At least one Hindu yogi is convinced that most schizophrenics and manic depressives are victims of Kundalini; another yogi reports that death has occurred when the unprepared attempted Yoga. An innocent act as prematurely exhausting breath (pranayama) is said to be potentially fatal. Hatha yoga is not merely a relaxation exercise!”

(*The Lucifer Connection*, Joseph Carr, Huntington House, 1987, pages 126, 127)

What if you're “just doing the exercises?” Read *But I'm Not Worshipping Other Gods!* A sub-titled section in my *Introduction* to this book, for a discussion of the subtle dangers inherent in these practices regardless of one's intent.

Yoga is named in the JCBWL document. Twice.

“Some of the traditions which flow into *New Age* are: ancient Egyptian occult practices, Cabbalism, early Christian gnosticism, Sufism, the lore of the Druids, Celtic Christianity, mediaeval alchemy, Renaissance hermeticism, **Zen Buddhism**, Yoga and so on.” (JCBWL #2.1)

“Psychology is used to explain mind expansion as “mystical” experiences. **Yoga**, Zen, transcendental meditation and tantric exercises lead to an experience of self-fulfillment or enlightenment.” (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)

Is Yoga any better as a physical exercise than other workout alternatives?

For those who regard yoga as uniquely beneficial: In a 2015 study at the UT Health Science Center in San Antonio, Texas, “some people did **yoga**, others did gym workouts and a third group was just asked to be active in some way consistently for an hour a day. All three arms were found to be just as effective in terms of body fat, fitness and physical function.” (<http://www.youandthemat.com/yoga-vs-the-traditional-gym-workout-a-debate-with-a-false-premise/>)

“Many people who want to avoid the religious baggage of **yoga** and are searching for non-yoga based exercises ask me what is the difference between isometric exercise and yoga.

‘Isometric exercises, also known as static strength training, involve muscular actions in which the length of the muscle does not change and there is no visible movement at the joint,’ [Sports Fitness Advisor](#) (link) explains. ‘Isometric exercises can be used for general strength conditioning and for rehabilitation where strengthening the muscles without placing undue stress on the joint is warranted.’

For those who don’t want to practice **yoga**, the good news is that you don’t need yoga in order to get a good isometric workout. People have been getting exceptional isometric workouts for general health and/or for therapeutic purposes (think Charles Atlas) long before today’s yoga craze came about.”

(How is Isometrics Different from Yoga? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=60924>)

Chapter 32

Zen Meditation or Zazen

Study the *Orationis Formas* and *JCBWL* citations in the meditation systems analysed both above and below this chapter.

Origins and development

“The founder of **Zen** is popularly considered to be Bodhidharma (perhaps a legend), who is said to have brought Zen to China around 520 A.D. Zen’s lengthy historical evolution makes its origin difficult to trace. However, the controversial theories of Buddhist monks such as Tao-Sheng (360-434 A.D.) clearly contributed to its development. (Some believe Tao-Sheng was ‘Zen’s actual founder.’) Its purpose is escaping duality by **zazen** (meditation) and the attainment of *satori* (enlightenment).”

(Dr. Ankerberg and Dr. Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-weldon-2/an-introduction-to-zen/>)

“There are two principal schools of Buddhism: the Hinayana, or Theravada (usually considered the earliest tradition and therefore the most accurate), and the Mahayana, generally thought to be a later tradition which ‘deified’ the Buddha and which represents a more mystical approach, hence one closer to **Zen**. (Many scholars accept Tibetan Buddhism as a third school.) Most scholars regard Zen as Mahayanist, some as Hinayanist, while a few consider it apart from all schools. Zen could also be said to represent a blend of both major schools with additional elements originated during its diverse geographical and historical development.

Zen claims to be the ‘true’ Buddhism, but since no one can prove what true (original) Buddhism is, the claim means little.

In the end, Zen is simply one of innumerable conflicting schools of Buddhism, no more no less. Even within its own ranks there are many sub-schools claiming that they alone constitute the ‘highest truth’ of Zen, and some even claim that conventional Zen cannot offer true enlightenment (such as Zenmar’s so-called ‘Dark Zen’).”

(Dr. Ankerberg and Dr. Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-weldon-2/an-introduction-to-zen/>)

“There are five schools of **Zen**; however, the two most prominent are the Rinzai and the Soto. The others are the Ummon, the Ikkyo and the Hogen schools. The Rinzai stresses very sudden illumination, the use of koans and various ‘teaching’ methods of the Rōshi, such as striking a novice. The Soto school of Dogen stresses gradual enlightenment, ‘no’ use of koans and is gentler.”

(Dr. Ankerberg and Dr. Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/zen-enlightenment/>)

Like the Absolute of Hinduism, whom they define as “not this, not that” (“*neti, neti*”), **Zen** is beyond all definition.

“Zen masters, in fact, look upon mere definitions and explanations as dry and lifeless, and as ultimately misleading because they are inherently limited”.

(*The Three Pillars of Zen*, Philip Kapleau, ed., page 67)

“It is sometimes argued that **zazen** is *not* meditation, although it clearly is. The student sits still in an erect posture, utilizes proper breathing techniques and chants Buddhist sutras while concentrating to induce mental and spiritual transformation. Occult powers are often the eventual result. (Yasutani Roshi, *Theory and Practice of Zazen*, in Kapleau, page 43.) Zazen does not create Buddhahood; it merely uncovers the eternally existing Buddha nature or Reality (Only Mind): Thus breathing becomes a vehicle of spiritual experience, the mediator between body and mind. It is the first step towards the transformation of the body from the state of a more or less passively and unconsciously functioning physical organ into a vehicle or tool of a perfectly developed and enlightened mind... The process of breathing is the connecting link between conscious and subconscious, gross material and fine-material, volitional and non-volitional functions... The uniqueness of zazen lies in this: that the mind is freed from bondage to *all* thought-forms, visions, objects, and imaginings, however sacred or elevating, and brought to a state of absolute emptiness, from which alone it may one day perceive its own true nature, or the nature of the universe. (Kapleau, pages 11-13)

Zazen stresses the awakening experience (*satori*) and its integration into daily life. Because it is about the ‘state of absolute emptiness’ it is accorded absolute value. ‘Zazen is more than just a means to enlightenment or a technique for sustaining and enlarging it, but it is the *actualization* of our True-nature. Hence it has absolute value.’ (Kapleau, pages 11-13)

Zen practice also involves lectures by the Master (*jodo*) and personal interviews with him (*sanzen*). Roshis also supervise meditation periods. While many novices are at first excited to be on the path of enlightenment, few indeed realize what will be required of them. As with non-biblical forms of religious meditation generally, Zen meditation can be costly.”

(*Enlightenment*, Dr. Ankerberg and Dr. Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/zen-enlightenment/>)

The reader must also be apprised of the nonsense riddles or *koans* given by the *Roshi* or Zen Master to the adept.

“Koans are nonsense riddles or stories whose goal involves the restructuring of mental perception to open the mind to ‘truth’ to help it achieve satori. Koans are designed to ‘attack’ the mind, to dismantle its reason, logic, history, ordinary consciousness and duality until it finally ‘breaks down’ and perceives an alternate reality, the monistic perception that Zen considers reality. ‘Koans are so phrased that they deliberately throw sand into our eyes to force us to open our Mind’s eye and see the world and everything in it without distortion... The import of every koan is the same; that the world is one interdependent Whole and that each separate one of us is that Whole’. An example:

Q. What is Buddha?

A. The cat is climbing the post.”

(Dr. Ankerberg and Dr. Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/zen-enlightenment/>)

New Age

“The ever more frequent contact with other religions and with their different styles and methods of prayer has, in recent decades, led many of the faithful to ask themselves what value non-Christian forms of meditation might have for Christians.

Above all, the question concerns eastern methods. Some people today turn to these methods for therapeutic reasons. The spiritual restlessness arising from a life subjected to the driving pace of a technologically advanced society also brings a certain number of Christians to seek in these methods of prayer a path to interior peace and psychic balance. This psychological aspect is not dealt with in the present letter, which instead emphasizes the theological and spiritual implications of the question. Other Christians, caught up in the movement towards openness and exchanges between various religions and cultures, are of the opinion that their prayer has much to gain from these methods. Observing that in recent times many traditional methods of meditation, especially Christian ones, have fallen into disuse, they wonder whether it might not now be possible, by a new training in prayer, to enrich our heritage by incorporating what has until now been foreign to it.

“With the present diffusion of eastern methods of meditation in the Christian world and in ecclesial communities, we find ourselves faced with a pointed renewal of an attempt, which is not free from dangers and errors, “to fuse Christian meditation with that which is non-Christian.” Proposals in this direction are numerous and radical to a greater or lesser extent. Some use

eastern methods solely as a psycho-physical preparation for a truly Christian contemplation; others go further and, using different techniques, try to generate spiritual experiences similar to those described in the writings of certain Catholic mystics. Still others do not hesitate to place that absolute without image or concepts, which is proper to Buddhist theory, on the same level as the majesty of God revealed in Christ, which towers above finite reality. To this end, they make use of a “negative theology,” which transcends every affirmation seeking to express what God is, and denies that the things of this world can offer traces of the infinity of God. Thus they propose abandoning not only meditation on the salvific works accomplished in history by the God of the Old and New Covenant, but also the very idea of the One and Triune God, who is Love, in favor of an immersion “in the indeterminate abyss of the divinity.” These and similar proposals to harmonize Christian meditation with eastern techniques need to have their contents and methods ever subjected to a thorough-going examination so as to avoid the danger of falling into syncretism.

“The expression ‘eastern methods’ is used to refer to methods which are inspired by Hinduism and Buddhism, such as ‘Zen,’ ‘Transcendental Meditation’ or ‘Yoga’. Thus it indicates methods of meditation of the non-Christian Far East which today are not infrequently adopted by some Christians also in their meditation. The orientation of the principles and methods contained in this present document is intended to serve as a reference point not just for this problem, but also, in a more general way for the different forms of prayer practiced nowadays in ecclesial organizations, particularly in associations, movements and groups.”

(Vatican Document *Orationis Formas*, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, October 15, 1989, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/curia/cdfmed.htm>)

“The Vatican, in a letter approved by Pope John Paul II, warned Christians Thursday against spiritual dangers deriving from Eastern methods of contemplative meditation used in yoga and **Zen Buddhism**. It said the symbolism and body postures in such meditation ‘can even become an idol and thus an obstacle to the raising up of the spirit of God.’ It warned that to give ‘a symbolic significance typical of the mystical experience’ to sensations of well-being from meditation can lead to ‘a kind of mental schizophrenia which could also lead to psychic disturbance and, at times, to moral deviations.’ The warnings were contained in a 25-page paper, titled *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of Christian Meditation*, issued by the Vatican Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith with the full approval of the pope.” (<http://www.forumgarden.com/forums/eastern-religions/18932-yoga-against-christianity-2.html>)

Zen Buddhist Meditation is named in the JCBWL document. Twice.

“Some of the traditions which flow into *New Age* are: ancient Egyptian occult practices, Cabbalism, early Christian gnosticism, Sufism, the lore of the Druids, Celtic Christianity, mediaeval alchemy, Renaissance hermeticism, **Zen Buddhism**, Yoga and so on.” (#2.1)

“Psychology (read Section G) is used to explain mind expansion as “mystical” experiences. Yoga, **Zen**, transcendental meditation and tantric exercises lead to an experience of self-fulfilment or enlightenment.” (#2.3.4.1)

G.

NEW AGE PSYCHOLOGY, PSYCHOANALYSIS, PSYCHOTHERAPY AND PSYCHO-SPIRITUALITY. PSYCHOHERESY

In the 2003 JCBWL Document, of the world’s 7 leading New Agers or “Aquarian Conspirators”, 4 are psychologists (rankings 2, 3, 4 and 6). (At number 1 is Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, 1881-1951, a Jesuit priest!) Carl Jung is at number 2!!

Most significantly, 8 psychologists’ names are listed in Document on the New Age: Abraham Maslow, Carl Gustav Jung, Carl Rogers, Erich Fromm, Hermann Hesse, Robert Assagioli, William James, and Sigmund Freud.

There were different stages of psychological development created by names like Sigmund Freud, Albert Ellis, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow and C.G. Jung that have paved the way for taking psychology into the New Age.

What they have created and absorbed – the human potential movement of the 1960’s, transpersonal psychology, depth psychology and Eastern mysticism – all blend smoothly into the New Age Movement and create a brand of pseudo-spirituality and psycho-spirituality that is today a wolf in sheep’s skin in the Catholic Church.

The Trojan Horse in the Church

“If ever there was the perfect *Trojan Horse* – something that could undermine the church and turn its thinking from a Biblical to a humanistic base, this is it. We opened the doors of our churches, our Bible Schools and Seminaries and embraced it. We tried to integrate it with Biblical teachings and came up with the greatest, newest, most improved way of ever dealing with the human condition – and we call it ‘*Christian Psychology*’! I could take a survey of solid evangelical Christians and ask them what they think of ‘Christian’ psychology, and I am sure I would get a positive response from 99 out of 100. It would be even higher among pastors. So, are they right or am I just tilting at windmills?

“A true science deals with data. It can predict and control. But the foundations of psychotherapy are not scientific but philosophical. If we look at the founders of modern **psychology**, we see Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Abraham Maslow, William James, Alfred Adler, Erich Fromm, Carl Rogers, F. B. Skinner, etc., there is not a godly man among them. This list is a Who’s Who in humanism! Their view of man is totally humanistic and their psychological views are nothing more than humanistic religion at its worst. They not only get into occultism and Eastern Religion, it springs from New Age thought. The focus is self – self-actualization, self-image, self-fulfillment, self-esteem, self-worth, self-improvement, in short the God of ‘SELF’. This is a religion of self-worship. It is self-centered and self-inflated. Contrary to what Christian psychologists say, man has no problem loving himself and he is therefore urged to love God first and then his neighbor as himself. The so called human potential movement leads right to the deification of man.

“The so-called science of **psychology** claims it is based upon the observation of human behavior. But human behavior is far too difficult to isolate and study as you would microbes under a microscope. There are just too many variables. The result is some one’s interpretation of what determines human behavior. It is not science. Freud, for example, traced everything back to a child’s relationship to his mother and father, often couching things in disgusting sexual terms such as his stages of development – anal, oral, phallic and genital. Maslow defined a hierarchy of needs in an effort to explain behavior. These are all no more than theories. There is no scientific proof. Anyone can devise a system for explaining human behavior and then interpret it in terms of his own explanation. The fact is **psychology** is not science but opinion and philosophy – even a humanistic religion.

“Further, psychotherapy does not work. Research indicates there is an inverse relationship between the amount of training a therapist has and their success rate. “Pop” **psychology** theories such as right and left brained differences and birth order that have been completely discredited but are promulgated by “Christian” psychologists such as Gary Smalley. None of this is science – but merely unproved opinions, observations and brilliant ideas.

“As noted above, modern psychology has its roots in secular humanist thought where man is viewed as inherently good. **Psychology** teaches that man’s problems stem mainly from his environment and the way he was raised, not from the sinful nature he is born with. We see this humanistic orientation in every aspect of psychology. An elementary course in Psychology will tell you that psychology is not a true science. Human behavior can be described, but it can’t be studied with the same predictability and replicability of a science.

There is no clear cause and effect. Further, psychology has developed over 500 different approaches and thousands of techniques. Many are conflicting. Many have come and gone. Transactional analysis (read chapter 38) was hot in Christian circles twenty years ago and is forgotten today. Was this “God’s truth” as those who believe we should take the best of psychology would say? Did it change? The question is, when we mix the Bible with psychology because “all truth is God’s truth” – as those who propose the evil mixture say – are we glorifying God or the world? Is our standard the shifting sands of psychological truth or the Word of God?”

(*Psychology – The Trojan Horse*, http://www.the-tribulation-network.com/denemcgriff/Apostasy/recognizing_deception_and_apostasy_chapter_5.htm)

“Psychology is one of the natural sciences ... It is necessary to avoid two extremes in the use of psychological material: first, a “psychologism” that would reduce all religious phenomena to a state of consciousness and thus deny the possible intervention of the supernatural; second, a “syncretism” that would classify all religious experience as identical, thereby obliterating the distinction between Christian spirituality and the religious experiences of non-Christians.

Psychology provides much important data for the study of the spiritual life, but it cannot make the ultimate judgment; that is the function of theology, which proceeds from the truths of faith and acknowledges authentic religious experience as a supernatural reality.”

(*Spiritual Theology*, Fr. Jordan Aumann OP, <http://www.domcentral.org/study/aumann/st/st01.htm>)

“Recently I had a client in my office who after revealing a mortal sin to me felt she did not need to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. She felt relieved and had unburdened herself by sharing her actions with me. I explained that she needed to receive the Lord’s forgiveness and graces. She seemed baffled and did not understand why she would have to repeat all of it to someone she did not know. How sad for the one who was waiting to receive her confession is the one who knows her better than herself. Jesus Himself.

Catholic therapists are indeed valuable on the road to health, and depending on the emotional struggle they are sometimes indispensable. Sharing your experience with a trained professional is helpful. But the Sacrament of Reconciliation offers a particular encounter with God and with ourselves that cannot be duplicated elsewhere.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church No. 987, “In the forgiveness of sins, both priests and sacraments are instruments which our Lord Jesus Christ, the only author and liberal giver of salvation, wills to use in order to efface our sins and give us the grace of justification. Catholic therapist should encourage the practice

of Reconciliation because without it we are denying our clients the gift of healing. "The spiritual effects of the Sacrament of Penance are:

- reconciliation with God by which the penitent recovers grace;
- reconciliation with the Church;
- remission of the eternal punishment incurred by mortal sins;
- remission, at least in part, of temporal punishments resulting from sin;
- peace and serenity of conscience, and spiritual consolation;
- an increase of spiritual strength for the Christian battle." (Catechism of the Catholic Church No. 1496).

If you are struggling with emotions, feelings or personal obstacles it would be wise to choose a priest with whom you feel comfortable. When you have found a priest you feel you can trust, ask him if you could schedule Reconciliation at least once a month. Gradually, share with him information about your difficulties. Tell the priest what makes you feel guilty, ashamed, depressed, confused, angry, anxious, etc. It is important to return to the same priest because he will understand your particular circumstances. The regular celebration of Reconciliation while also working with a Catholic therapist can bring the gentle healing gift of grace that is essential for acquiring emotional health.

Many of the confessionals are empty while the therapist sofa is occupied. We must not replace venting for confessing. Catholic therapists must be aware of their limits. We are not priests and if we do not direct our clients to the Sacrament of Penance we may hinder them from receiving forgiveness and freedom."

(*Reconciliation*, Mary Camejo, <http://www.catholictherapists.com/Sacraments-and-Spirituality/Reconciliation.html>)

"Sin vs. Symptom:

Psychology needs to examine the role of sin in mental health, in the light of Christian anthropology, says Catholic therapist Andrew Sodergren, on psychology's tendency to "medicalize" human behavior and the implication for society.

"Q: What do you mean when you say that modern man and society have lost a sense of sin? How have secularism and **secular psychology** in particular contributed to this?

Sodergren: We have been hearing a great deal recently from the Holy Father, various Church leaders and commentators about the growth of relativism ... Without a healthy sense of sin, man's conscience becomes clouded, and he easily goes astray. When this happens on a large scale, it can be disastrous for society. Indeed, many writers have commented that "sin" has all but dropped out of modern discourse. Pope John Paul II in "Reconciliatio et Paenitentia"

analyzed this situation and concluded that modern society has indeed lost its sense of sin for which he largely blames secularism. I believe that **secular psychology** has also had a particularly important role in diminishing the sense of sin. Indeed, John Paul II himself identified **secular psychology** among other human sciences as contributing to this loss...

“Q: What is it in the content of certain **secular psychology** theories that denies the sense of sin?

Sodergren: **Secular psychology** has produced many theories of personality. These theories have contributed to the loss of the sense of sin in two ways: by their secular view of the person and by their misconceptions regarding human freedom.

Dr. Paul Vitz has noted many times that all of the major **theories of personality in psychology** are secular in nature. In other words, they attempt to give an explanation of human existence, development, fulfillment, and obstacles to that fulfillment without any reference to divine or sacred realities. These theories focus on the immanent happiness of the individual without any reference to the transcendent or to objective truth. They portray a humanism totally without God. Thus, these secular theories of the person reduce one’s sense of God.

“As John Paul II and others have pointed out, the sense of God is closely related to the sense of sin. When the former withers, so does the latter. The other way in which these theories of personality undermine the sense of sin relates to how they conceive of human freedom. Many **psychological theories** conceive of the human person in a deterministic fashion. That is, they regard the human person and his actions as pre-determined results of his childhood experiences, his genes, his neural circuitry, the pressures of environmental reinforcements and punishments, and so on. Within a deterministic framework, human freedom soon disappears, and if man lacks freedom, moral notions such as sin likewise become meaningless. Other psychological theories absolutize human freedom conceived as autonomous choice. These theories deny the reality of original sin stating that the human self already possesses everything it needs to be self-actualized. It only needs to be freed from any constraints placed on it by external forces. The problem with these theories is that they embrace an ethical subjectivism that denies the existence of moral absolutes other than, perhaps, the “commandment” to self-actualize. Obligations toward others are secondary at best. With this mindset, any sense of sin quickly vanishes.

“Q: How does **secular psychology** define mental illness, and how can this be related to the reality of sin? Is it significant that psychology’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) has been rapidly expanding as the sense of sin has been diminishing?

Sodergren: This is a very subtle and complicated but important issue. The application of a purely secular disease model to the realm of mental disorder and its treatment has served to undermine the sense of sin. How could this be the case? John Paul II again points us in the right direction: "Another reason for the disappearance of the sense of sin in contemporary society is to be found in the errors made in evaluating certain findings of the human sciences.

Thus on the basis of certain affirmations of **psychology**, concern to avoid creating feelings of guilt or to place limits on freedom leads to a refusal ever to admit any shortcoming." Many scholars from psychiatrist Thomas Szasz to sociologists P. Conrad and W.S. Schneider to psychologist O.H. Mowrer and more have observed that as the field of **clinical psychology** with its classifications of mental disorders has grown, so has the tendency to "medicalize" human behavior. My faults and foibles, my internal or interpersonal struggles, my bad habits and the like are no longer my responsibility but rather symptoms of an illness that needs medical treatment. As the notion of "mental disorder" has gained prominence, it has been stretched to include more and more areas of human thought, feeling and acting...

It may surprise some that **modern psychology and psychiatry** do not have a settled vision of what mental health is. With this lack of a clear norm, how can a valid system of mental illness be constructed?

This is a problem of which **John Paul II** was well aware: "The difficulty which the experts themselves in the field of psychology and psychiatry experience in defining satisfactorily for everybody the concept of normality is well known. In any case, whatever may be the definition given by the psychiatric and psychological sciences, it must always be examined in the light of the concepts of Christian anthropology."

Not only has the sense of sin subtly been undermined by this emphasis of **clinical psychology**, but at times it has also been forthrightly attacked. As the reasoning goes, if this medicalized view of human behavior is correct, then any residual guilt feelings regarding my own condition or that of someone close to me must themselves be symptoms of psychological disturbance. Despite the attempts of a few marginal thinkers to restore a sense of moral responsibility and thus a sense of sin to the psychotherapeutic milieu, the psychiatric establishment has largely been unaffected. Thus, the sense of sin continues to wither under the powerful influences of **psychology**.

"Guilt and Mental Disorder:

A sound **psychology** must rekindle man's innate spirituality by taking sin seriously, contends Andrew Sodergren. He shares his views of an integrated psychology that is true to human nature and acknowledges human freedom

. “Q: How can a sense of sin and vice contribute to the field of **psychology**? Sodergren: In 1995, **Pope John Paul II** said in an [address](#) (link) to the Roman Rota, “Only a Christian anthropology, enriched by the contribution of indisputable scientific data, including that of modern psychology and psychiatry, can offer a complete and thus realistic vision of humans.” Any psychology that is going to be true to human nature must take into account the revealed knowledge present in the Catholic faith as well as two millennia of theological and philosophical reflection of the human person. Such an account takes seriously human freedom and necessarily contains the concepts of sin and vice. Unfortunately, the present age seems to be one in which the sense of sin has been lost due to the effects of secularism and secular psychology. And this loss of the sense of sin has detrimental effects not only on individuals but on the social development of the world.

“Q: What then is the answer to this state of affairs, specifically for those seeking to propose a psychology grounded in Catholic anthropology?”

Sodergren: First, as John Paul II continually warned, we must not fall into the trap of giving an account of the human person limited to this temporal sphere. Rather, he said, a **psychology** integrated with Catholic anthropology “considers the human person, under every aspect -- terrestrial and eternal, natural and transcendent. In accordance with this integrated vision, humans, in their historical existence, appear internally wounded by sin, and at the same time redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ.” Thus, in our academic and clinical psychologies, we must strive to rekindle man’s innate “religious awareness,” that is, the inner longing of the human heart for God, which St. Augustine so eloquently articulated and has been echoed in the Church for centuries.

“Secondly, we need to recover an authentic understanding of human freedom: one that underscores the fundamental connection between freedom and truth, the ability for man to shape himself through his free choices, and neither takes an overly pessimistic view nor an exaggeratedly optimistic view of the power of freedom in the face of human weakness.

Such a notion of freedom, springing from our Catholic anthropology, must penetrate both theoretical and clinical aspects of a renewed **psychology**. Thirdly, as Robert George said in his 2002 commencement address to the Institute for the Psychological Sciences, “A sound **psychology** takes sin seriously.” We need to adopt a rich understanding of the dynamics of sin. That is not to say that Catholic psychologists should begin blaming their patients for their own troubles as some authors would suggest. On the contrary, our anthropology impels us to the highest level of compassion and gentleness. Nor should we go to the extremes taken by people like Szasz who deconstruct mental illness altogether.

When someone comes for psychotherapy, there really is “something” wrong for which they need some form of treatment. The question is, “How is that ‘something’ to be understood?” This is where the work of integration must be done.

We must strive to parse the relationship between sin and mental illness. Presently, I see three ways of construing this relationship, although there are probably more. One view is that sin and mental illness are two mutually exclusive ways of conceptualizing the same phenomenon. In that perspective, to the extent that one wishes to begin from a Catholic anthropology, one must reject modern understandings of psychopathology. Though there is some truth to this, I think it would be foolish to discard this whole area of the discipline. A second view of the relationship is to see them as entirely separate domains: sin and vice pertaining to the moral domain and mental disorder pertaining to the medical domain with no intrinsic connection between them. This view must absolutely be rejected. No patient arrives at the psychotherapist’s office unaffected by original, actual and social sin. Nor have they been unaffected by the call of grace, and these have the utmost bearing on the human person’s psychic and interpersonal life. The third perspective is to recognize that sin and mental illness are not exactly the same thing, but they are closely related. Current standards for identifying and classifying mental disorders use a descriptive approach based on observable signs, symptoms, course and onset. This approach makes few if any claims regarding etiology. What a rich concept of sin provides is a sure grounding for speculation regarding the etiology of mental disorder. Simply put, there is no clinical disorder whose genesis cannot be accounted for through the dynamic interplay of original, actual and social sin. These do not however, provide much detail about the concrete manifestations of such a disorder. Here modern psychopathology offers us a genuine service through systematic observation and data collection. However, such procedures on their own cannot give a complete account of the phenomenon of psychic and/or interpersonal suffering.

In a sense, the two perspectives need each other. An authentic **psychology** that successfully integrates these concepts will be poised to give the clearest, most comprehensive explanations of human phenomena and offer forms of treatment that will truly help the human person overcome the effects of sin, become more human, and progress toward his ultimate end.

“Q: In light of this discussion, is guilt a good thing -- or it is something to be resolved by the psychologist?

Sodergren: First, there is such a thing as neurotic guilt, i.e., guilt that is unfounded and misguided.

In such a situation, the task of the therapist would be to examine why the patient is inappropriately taking this guilt upon himself. Often, underlying such guilt is an experience of rejection and utter shamefulness. A related problem is when the patient is Catholic and has been sacramentally absolved of a given sin but continues to feel profound guilt over it. In such a case there could be two things happening. First, the person, through their prior relationship experiences -- going all the way back to infancy -- may have developed an interpersonal style in which he or she cannot accept the mercy, beneficence or care of another. This internalized view of self and other can prevent the objective fact of forgiveness from taking hold.

Second, a person who has committed a particular grave sin for which he or she is embarrassed and ashamed may have difficulty separating this experience from the sense of self. In other words, the experience of having done X, even though X has now been forgiven, overpowers the person's sense of self, leaving feelings of guilt and shame. The goal here is to help the patient engage in positive behaviors that will strengthen the self-image that is currently being overshadowed by X. These patients may need to identify further ways to do "penance" for their sins that allow them to "pay the debt" of their misdeeds. Rather than fixating on the morbid nature of their misdeeds, patients in this way can use the experience of their past sinfulness as a motivation to do good. On the other hand, guilt is not always a bad thing and indeed, is an important part of the moral life. Because of the sanctity of the human conscience and the tendency of psychology to diminish the sense of sin, psychologists must be extremely careful when dealing with patient guilt. In most cases, it is not the place of the therapist to absolve patients of guilt. This should be worked out between the patient, God, a confessor and perhaps a spiritual director. Rather, the therapist can help the patient to identify the underlying causes of his difficulties, which led to the guilt, and work together to resolve them. When a therapist attempts to absolve a patient's guilt feelings, he steps into the arena of conscience, a sanctuary that one ought not to trespass upon lightly. When thinking about their patients' guilt feelings, it is important for therapists to keep in mind how subtly human beings can affect each other, often without a conscious awareness that it is happening, as well as how one's actions shape one's character, tuning the cognitive, affective and volitional powers of the person in a particular way. With these dynamics in mind, how can the therapist be absolutely certain that a given patient has no reason whatsoever to feel guilt for something?

"Q: How does a sound **psychology**, which takes sin seriously, relate to understanding the concepts of forgiveness and a God of mercy?

Sodergren: In his encyclical “Dives in Misericordia” about the Father who is rich in mercy, John Paul II noted that the “present-day mentality, more perhaps than that of people in the past, seems opposed to a God of mercy, and in fact tends to exclude from life and to remove from the human heart the very idea of mercy.

“The word and concept of ‘mercy’ seem to cause uneasiness in man.” Without a sense of sin, the need for mercy and the possibility of giving and receiving mercy are impossible. This places a horrible limitation on humanity for as John Paul taught, mercy is the form that love takes in the face of sin, i.e., in a fallen world. Without a sense of sin, then, it is impossible to fully love.

A sound psychology does not restrict itself in this way. Recognizing that self-giving love involving the whole person is the goal of human existence, a goal of such a psychology will be the ability to give and receive forgiveness. Psychotherapeutic interventions based on such a psychology will seek to help patients forgive others who have wounded them and to grow in the ability to seek and accept forgiveness for one’s own misdeeds. In regard to the latter, this means also taking responsibility for one’s condition and using the gift of freedom in positive ways in accord with the Truth. In the early stages, the patient’s freedom will likely be fairly impaired, requiring much assistance from the therapist and others to counteract the habitual patterns of thinking, feeling and acting that have developed over time. In the end, the patient will hopefully embrace these goals for themselves and continue to pursue them with the full force of their humanity. A patient, who has been helped to give and receive forgiveness with other human beings, will be more able to accept the overwhelmingly profound fact of God’s love.

As St. John explains, the measure of our love of God is our love for one another. The psychologist who can help his patients to love others more authentically, which necessarily requires the recognition of sin and the need for forgiveness, will do his patients a great service indeed.”

(*The lost sense of Sin in Psychology*, Andrew Sodergren, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/HUMANITY/zsinpsych.HTM>)

Watch these videos:

- *The Failure of Modern Psychology*, Fr. Chad Ripperger
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnVG5yiaO7k> 38:17
- *How Modern Psychology undermines Morality*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAmJzc-IXFo> 57:47

Chapter 33

Gestalt Therapy

Origins and development

Gestalt Therapy is a psychotherapeutic approach developed by Fritz Perls (1893–1970), born in Berlin. It focuses on insight into gestalts in patients and their relations to the world, and often uses role playing to aid the resolution of past conflicts. He was a resident of the Esalen New Age centre in Big Sur, California. He and his wife Laura founded the first Gestalt Institute in 1952 in New York where he and began training practitioners and wrote his second book, *Gestalt Therapy*, with the assistance of Paul Goodman. One of Perls' students Dick Price was the founder of the Esalen Institute.

New Age

"Few fields have been as susceptible to manipulation by New Age as psychology and biology. Starting from the research of the father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), and the theories of the "collective unconscious" and of archetypes propounded by his disciple Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), there has been a varied succession of currents of thought in psychology that are connected to a greater or lesser degree with New Age's ideas and therapies. In particular, so-called transpersonal psychology, founded by the Italian psychologist Roberto Assagioli (1888-1974), attempts to go beyond the individual's psychic experience in search of a superior collective consciousness that would be the door to discovering a "divine principle" lying at the core of every human being. This gives rise to a multitude of New Age's typical techniques: biofeedback, hypnosis, rebirthing, **Gestalt therapy**, and the provocation of altered states of consciousness, including the use of hallucinogenic drugs."

(*A Call to Vigilance (Pastoral Instruction on New Age)*, Archbishop Norberto Rivera Carrera, Primate of Mexico, 7 January 1996, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/acall.htm>)

"**Gestalt therapy**, at least the kind that survives today, is very much associated with the New Age. Gestalt is a form of psychotherapy based on the experiential ideal of the "here and now," and relationships with others and the world.

According to *Gestalt Therapy: A Guide to Contemporary Practice* by P. Brownell, it focuses on process (what is actually happening) as well as on content (what is being talked about). The emphasis is on what is being done, thought, and felt at the present moment (the phenomenality of both client and therapist), rather than on what was, might be, could be, or should have been. The purported aim of Gestalt therapy, which includes dreamwork (read chapter 55), is to help clients achieve wholeness. This therapy was co-founded by Fritz Perls, Laura

Perls and Paul Goodman in the 1940s-1950s and was forged from various influences upon their lives at the time such as Eastern religions, the new physics and the prevailing psychoanalysis. In 1960, he began to offer workshops at the New Age Esalen Institute and became interested in Zen (read chapter 32) and began incorporating the idea of mini-satori (a Zen Buddhist term which refers to a flash of sudden awareness) into the practice.

“When Perls left New York and took up residence at Esalen, a split occurred in **Gestalt Therapy** between those who saw it as a therapeutic approach similar to psychoanalysis and those who viewed it through the more New Age lens of Perls who saw it as a way of life. This schism resulted in “East Coast Gestalt” as opposed to Perls’ “West Coast Gestalt” variety. The split continues to this day, with the West Coast Gestalt still flourishing while the East Coast variety has since been replaced by Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

“Another version, known as **Gestalt Practice**, combines Gestalt methods with meditation practices into a unified program of human development. It was developed by Dick Price, a veteran of the 1960's Beat Generation and co-founder of Esalen. A student of Perls', Price's version is still being practiced today and Esalen continues to offer it in workshops.”

(How is Gestalt Therapy Connected to the New Age? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=9576>)

Chapter 34

Healing the “Inner Child”

“We have had questions from readers wondering about the ‘find your **inner child**’ craze that is sweeping through many areas of mental health and whether or not it is connected with the New Age. The short answer is yes, it is definitely connected with the New Age.

The ‘inner child’ is a concept in popular psychology that refers to the part of an adult’s personality that maintains child-like behaviors, memories, emotions, and thought patterns. ‘It is generally seen as an autonomous sub-personality with its own needs, desires, issues and goals. In this sense, the inner child functions independently, and sometimes in opposition to, the more mature parts of the adult personality,’ an article explains.

A person’s **inner child** might exhibit one or more characteristics such as that of the abandoned child who feels lonely, insecure and unwanted, and who craves attention. Many people who are overly busy, divorced or separated often harbor this ‘child’ within them. The neglected child never experienced much love while growing up and manifests itself as a depressed, lonesome and withdrawn adult who believes he or she is unworthy of love. The fearful child received a lot of criticism from caregivers and grew up needing continuous affirmation and encouragement. The list goes on and on.

Psychologists who embrace this concept encourage their patients to listen closely to their inner child and to accept, validate and value all the feelings that might emerge when doing so. ‘Trust yourself and allow the adult to be guided by the inner child’s voice,’ the site recommends. ‘Continue to engage the inner child daily or regularly as it might take a while for her [him] to trust you completely.’

“It’s important to understand that this concept originated with Carl Jung (read chapter 35), who referred to it as the Divine Child. Jung’s teachings were heavily influenced by Gnosticism, monism, pantheism and occultism.

This could explain why the concept of the **inner child** is considered to be a part of the popular psychology movement, which includes the New Age’s Human Potential Movement (read chapter 62) and its league of self-help gurus (read chapter 95) and motivational speakers. The term ‘pop psychology’ is used to describe a variety of people from authors to entertainers and is generally used in a pejorative fashion to describe psychological concepts.

It has long been known that childhood experiences can impact adult behavior and some psychologists may use the popular ‘inner child’ theme to explore those areas. If it is used in conjunction with established practice, there is no

problem with it. But if it ventures beyond psychology and introduces other New Age concepts and beliefs, then it should be avoided."

(*Is the "Inner Child" a New Age Concept?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=54382>)

Chapter 35

Homeostasis Reality Therapy (HRT), Clinical Counseling, and the Brain Wave Synchronizer. **Intuition: Left brain rational thinking and Right brain intuitive thinking. Theta Healing.**

"HRT is a system of clinical counseling and psychotherapy to deal with mental and emotional problems. This system is researched and devised in India by Dr. Berkman Koyickal, Indian Clinical Psychologist who has done his study in USA. HRT is an innovative dynamic oriental system. It is a drugless, holistic treatment in which counseling and therapy are incorporated. Diagnosis is done with clinical tests in which high intensity symptoms and events of Fear, Loss, Anger and Guilt (FLAG emotions) are identified. The tests provide personal awareness and insight about the root causes of the problem as well. Based on the principles of laterisation of the brain, the inequilibrium experienced in the left and right hemispheres of the brain** due to high intensity events in the clients' life from childhood to the present are diffused through counseling and therapeutic procedures. The **brainwave synchronizer** is effectively used for therapy. During the therapy the **ALFA, BETA, DELTA, THETA*** brain waves** are modulated with light and sound in the machine and the memory intensity of the event is reduced, thereby the problem/illness is healed."

"The client who has no belief in the system, non-cooperative, non-communicative, violent, out of reality, blind or deaf and those who have had shock treatment (ECT) will not get the desired result from this treatment."*

(The Medical Mission Sisters [MMS] of Ayushya Health Clinic, Kottayam, and Holistic Health Centre, Bibwewadi, Pune, <http://www.ayushyamms.org/htmls/Holistic.htm>)

*The above caveat comes in handy for when the pseudo-therapy doesn't "work". From the MMS nuns' site, it is clear that this holistic, non-drug treatment using pseudo-scientific jargon and dubious "scientific" instruments, is subjective -- the patient has got to "believe" in the system -- whereas allopathic treatment is objective and scientific and it works because under specific conditions two plus two always equals four. If one does not "believe" in HRT, the therapy will give no result!

It may be added that most alternative therapies are subjective, since they aim at holistically treating the mind and spirit of the human person, not just the body alone which is the case with allopathy.

“**Counseling** is often seen as enabling a person to handle psychological problems. Today, counseling has wider meaning. It is to help people to see the value systems they hold. **Counseling** enables one to become an integrated person and build good relationship between individuals and families. Stress and strain have become an unavoidable psychological reality due to the fluctuating economy, social pressure, comparisons and consumeristic values.” (Ibidem, <http://www.ayushyamms.org/htmls/Holistic.htm>)

This ministry has posted several articles on its website that compare worldly psychological counseling -- which is not just lacking in substance but also potentially harmful -- with Catholic pastoral counseling that combines spiritual wisdom from the Bible which is God’s own revelation for man’s total well-being, and the Sacraments of the Church. The series of articles explains Christian stress management and Christian treatment of sickness through counseling. Since New Age psycho-spiritual techniques completely ignore the reality of sin and its negative effects on a person’s physical, mental and spiritual wellness and his social relationships (=holistic health), they are not just inadequate or falling woefully short of a solution to the patient’s problems, they even point the patient away from the truth of his condition, and therefore from the Christian solution to it. And so they must be strongly condemned.

New Age

I found that my independent conclusion on the psychology-sin angle is confirmed in JCBWL:

“Are we tempted to deny sin or do we accept that there is such a thing? In *New Age* there is no real concept of sin, but rather one of imperfect knowledge; what is needed is enlightenment, which can be reached through **particular psycho-physical techniques**. Those who take part in *New Age* activities will not be told what to believe, what to do or what not to do, but: “There are a thousand ways of exploring inner reality. Go where your intelligence and **intuition** lead you. Trust yourself”. (William Bloom, *The New Age. An Anthology of Essential Writings*, London (Rider) 1991, p. xvi.) Authority has shifted from a theistic location to within the self. The most serious problem perceived in *New Age* thinking is alienation from the whole cosmos, rather than personal failure or sin.” (#4)

******The left-brain/right-brain matter is referred to in the Vatican Document JCBWL. It is an important parameter of New Age philosophy. The **left brain** is said to be responsible for logical, rational and scientific thought and the **right brain** is said to be **the centre of intuition**. New Agers commonly tend to emphasise intuitive thinking over a rational approach.

“(In New Age there is a shift) from modernity’s exaltation of reason to an appreciation of feeling... often described as a switch from **left brain rational thinking** to **right brain intuitive thinking**.” (#2.1)

“New Age has become immensely popular as a loose set of beliefs, therapies and practices, which are often selected and combined at will, irrespective of the incompatibilities and inconsistencies this may imply. But this is obviously to be expected in a world- view self-consciously based on “**right-brain**” **intuitive thinking**. And that is precisely why it is important to discover and recognise the fundamental characteristics of *New Age* ideas.” (#2.5)

Homeostasis Reality Therapy (HRT), aka “**Counseling and Brain Wave Therapy**”, was promoted by the late Clinical Psychologist Dr. Berkman Koyickal at the HRT Psychotherapeutic Foundation, Trivandrum, Kerala. It is also offered by some religious congregations and individuals.

What is meant by “**homeostasis**”?

“Bastyr University, a leading school of naturopathy (read chapter 17) since 1978, offers instruction in such things as acupuncture (read chapter 1) and “spirituality.” Much of the advice of naturopaths is sound: exercise, quit smoking, eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, practice good nutrition. Claims that these and practices such as colonic irrigation or coffee enemas “detoxify” the body or enhance the immune system or promote “**homeostasis**,” “harmony,” “balance,” “vitality,” and the like are exaggerated and not backed up by sound research.”

(*Naturopathy*, <http://skepdic.com/natpathy.html>, <http://www.skepdic.com/natpathy.html>)

“Reiki only seeks the highest healing good of a human person, and that brings a person’s frequency or auric field and state of being into balance and perfect health which we call **homeostasis**.”

(Reiki healer Jasper T. Suquila, Manila, info@christianreiki.org)

“Restores equilibrium (**homeostasis**) to body tissues and fluids.”

(<http://www.quackwatch.org/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/Cancer/twofeathers.html>)

From a site that exposes this “brain wave” business as quackery and New Age: “Several companies have marketed gadgets that deliver flashing lights and sounds through modified eyeglasses and headphones. The devices are hazardous because flashing lights can trigger epileptic seizures in susceptible individuals, including some with no prior history of seizures. In 1992 the FDA received a complaint that a device of this type (the “Relaxman Synchroenergizer”) had caused a 21-year-old woman to have her first seizure. The device had been

marketed with unsubstantiated claims that it could improve digestion and sexual function and control pain, habits, and addictions.

In 1993 the FDA initiated a seizure of the manufacturer's entire supply, which a judge subsequently ordered destroyed. The FDA also stopped the marketing of "InnerQuest **Brain Wave Synchronizer**," which had been claimed to provide diet control, stress relief, pain relief, and increased mental capacity.

The FTC and four state attorneys general recently settled complaints against Zygon International, Inc., which had claimed that users of "The Learning Machine" would learn foreign languages overnight, quadruple their reading speed, expand their psychic powers, build self-esteem, and replace bad habits with good ones.

There is no scientific evidence that any device can help people by synchronizing the two sides of the brain or increasing the frequency of alpha waves (a type of **brain wave**)".

("Brain Wave Synchronizers", in Questionable "Self-Help" Products, Dr. Stephen Barrett MD, <http://www.quackwatch.org/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/mentprod.html#brainwave>)

*****Four Levels of Brain-Wave Activity**

"In the 1920's, Dr. Hans Berger, a German psychiatrist, uncovered some interesting insights about the activity of the brain during various stages of human consciousness. By hooking-up patients to an electro-encephalograph, he discovered that the brain of the person actively using his or her five senses emits between 13 and 18 vibrations per second. He referred to these as "beta" rhythms. During sleep, the brain emitted between five to eight rhythms, or what he called "theta." The vibrations below five, found in the deep sleep of infants, he termed "delta" rhythms. The **brain waves** emitted between "beta" and "theta," the state of consciousness between normal mental activity and sleep, when the brain is emitting between eight to 13 vibrations per second, Berger termed "alpha" rhythms.

In the words of another researcher... The four levels of brain-wave activity with corresponding Greek letters to designate each: beta, alpha, theta, and delta.

The Beta Level defines our normal waking consciousness. 75% of waking consciousness is consumed with monitoring the body's physical functions. The other 25% of the Beta State deals with the thinking and planning state of the mind. The brain waves range from 14 to 27 cycles per second.

The Alpha State is the "resting state" of the brain. It is a passive state where one is non-critical and non-analytical. Listening to music and relaxing is reflexive of this state. One is aware of stimuli. Mystical states of consciousness happen in the alpha state and they usually occur prior to and just after sleep. The Alpha State also occurs voluntarily during light hypnosis, meditation, biofeedback

(read chapter 8), day dreaming, hypnogogic and hypnapompic states. The brain waves activity range from 8 to 13 cycles per second.

The Theta State is the “Reverie State” of conscious that is open to intuition and inspiration. Now stimuli are often ignored in this state. Theta occurs during light sleep. It is accessible during biofeedback (read chapter 8) and meditation. During this level, one is unaware of one’s surroundings. The brain wave-activity ranges from 4 to 8 cycles per second.

The Delta State is the lowest level of brain activity. In this state the individual is unreceptive to any stimuli. The Delta State usually occurs during a deep sleep. These four levels of brain-wave activity enable science to understand the various components of consciousness.

““When we go to bed and read for a few minutes before attempting sleep, we are likely to be in low beta. When we put the book down, turn off the lights and close our eyes, our brainwaves will descend from beta, to alpha, to theta and finally, when we fall asleep, to delta”.”

(*Contemplating the Alternative*, Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/contemplating_the_alternative.html)

“...And where does Lorin Roche Ph. D., a meditation teacher (*Meditation Has Enormous Mental and Physical Benefits*), get his information from? His Master’s and Doctoral research were based on...

“... an 8-year period in which he sought out meditators of all types: Zen, Christian, Buddhist, Vipassana, Kundalini, TM, Sikh, Hindu, Tibetan, Jewish, Kabbalah, Wicca, Native American, Theosophist, Arcana, Agni Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, **Brain Wave Biofeedback**, Autogenic Training, Neurolinguistic Programming, Eriksonian Hypnosis, Gestalt, Charlotte Selver Sensory Awareness, Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement, Shamanism, and others”.”

(*Ibidem*)

“**Theta Healing** was created by Vianna Stibal in 1995 after she was allegedly healed of a cancerous tumor. Stibal, who has no medical training, discovered that “emotions and beliefs affect us on a core, genetic, history and soul level” and went on to develop a technique that “takes the brain to a deep brain theta state instantaneously” where instantaneous healing can occur. This is because in this state a person can “reestablish their connection with Creator” in order to facilitate physical, mental and emotional changes that lead to better health. When she speaks about a Creator, it’s important to note that she’s not talking about the same God as ours but a kind of interchangeable life force that can be twisted into whatever you want it to be – which in turn makes her method compatible with all religions (according to her). “The Creator is the spirit that

intertwines and binds all things in existence,” she explains on her [site](#) (link). In other words, it’s the New Age god – a scientifically unsubstantiated universal life force known by its various names of chi, ki, prana, vital force etc.

A theta state is one of the five main frequency brain waves and the one used in hypnosis and during REM sleep. In the **theta state, brainwaves** are slowed to a frequency of 4-7 cycles per second compared to 14 to 28 in Beta and 7 to 14 in Alpha. The website states that Vianna “believes that when you’re in a state-Gamma theta you are in a state favorable for instant healing.” And her proof is? User testimonials.

She goes on to say that her technique “allows us to work with the Creator to help attain harmony in our mind, body and spirit. We are best known for the 7 Planes of Existence. Using this concept, the practitioner uses the meditation technique to connect with a higher spiritual power of his/her own belief and commands a change as requested by that individual.”

For us, this would mean commanding God to act according to the will of the individual – which is precisely the opposite of what we were taught by Jesus in the Our Father – “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

According to [this article](#) (link) appearing on Australia’s *ABCTheDrum*, once the patient is in a theta state, the theta practitioner then utilizes yet another bogus New Age technique known as “applied kinesiology” – aka muscle testing (read chapter 3) – to determine the illness. When the diagnosis is made, now it’s time for “[DNA activation](#)” (link) which means “waking up our DNA to its highest potential.”

Theta healing is nothing more than another variation of New Age “science” – medically unsubstantiated and not worth the web space this bunk is printed on.”

(A New Age “science” known as *Theta healing*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=48306>)

Chapter 36

Jungianism. Jungian Psychology/ Jungian Therapy and Techniques. Depth Psychology

Origins and development

“According to the book *The Jung Cult: Origins of a Charismatic Movement* by historian and psychologist Richard Noll, every Christian needs to be aware of the fact that the main motivating force behind Jung’s work was a desire to overthrow the Catholic Church whose religious teachings he believed were the cause of all of the neuroses that afflicted Western man.

Jung was a Swiss psychiatrist and psychologist who graduated from the University of Zurich in 1902. Early in his professional career he was a disciple of Sigmund Freud but broke away from him because he disagreed with Freud’s emphasis on sexuality. Instead, Jung believed that psychological wholeness lay in understanding the unconscious mind.

‘He claimed that a person is a myriad of opposites,’ writes Johnnette Benkovic in *The New Age Counterfeit*. ‘The unconscious mind attempts to reconcile these opposite tendencies, thereby bringing mental health and wholeness.’

Jung called this process ‘individuation’ and believed the only way to bring harmony between these tendencies was for the conscious mind to embrace the negative tendencies or the dark side of our person.

“**Jung** was also a big believer in dreams, which he saw as a method of communication between the conscious and unconscious mind and that the key to understanding our negative tendencies lay in our dreams.

He also attached psychological referents to religious beliefs such as the soul, evil, the sacred, and God – which makes sense, because of his background and the culture in which he was raised.

He was born on July 26, 1875 to a Protestant minister who doubted the divinity of Jesus Christ and to a mother, Emilie, who was the daughter of a medium. Described as an eccentric and depressed woman, she behaved normally during the day but became strange and mysterious at night when she claimed spirits visited her. Jung claimed he once saw a luminous figure emerge from her room one night with its head detached and floating in the air in front of the body.

Not surprisingly, he grew up with an intense interest in the occult and felt that he had two personalities. One of these personalities was that of a wise old man whom Jung always believed was guiding him in life. He also experienced paranormal activities such as precognition, clairvoyance, psychokinesis and hauntings.

His father's spiritual struggles with the divinity of Christ were not lost on Jung, who was quoted in Noll's book as asking: 'What then is so special about Christ, that he should be the motivational force? Why not another model-Paul or Buddha or Confucius or Zoroaster? ... If we view Christ as a human being, then it makes absolutely no sense to regard him, in any way, as a compelling model for our actions.'

Instead, Jung saw Jesus Christ as nothing more than a psychological symbol for the self.

"In his book, *Catholics and the New Age*, Fr. Mitch Pacwa SJ outlines several other areas of **Jung's** theories that are incompatible with Christianity – such as how he regarded faith as a sin that became a block between the believer and true wholeness. He also espoused the dangerous practice of favoring personal experience of God over doctrine – which directly contradicts the warnings of St. John to test every spirit (1 John 4).

Unfortunately, Jung's teachings, which are heavily influenced by Gnosticism, monism, pantheism and occultism, have been making their way into Catholic parishes, seminars and retreat houses where they are being widely disseminated among the population.

Perhaps this is why Noll said that "Jung poses the greatest threat to the Catholic Church since Julian the Apostate."

"As Johnette advises in her book, while there is value in coming to know the various areas of our personality that make us think and act in certain ways, we must be careful not to let our Christian view of God be distorted in the process. Nor should we be encouraged to develop an unhealthy fascination with dreams because this can distract us from hearing God's voice in Scripture and the teachings of the Church.

'Finally, because Jung's psychology and belief system are tainted by mythic interpretation and occult experiences, we must be careful that we do not inadvertently become influenced by these same beliefs and practices'.

This is a brief synopsis of the most important personal aspects of the infamous **Carl Jung** and the belief system he invented which explains why he's considered to be the father of the New Age."

(*The Strange Psychology of Carl Jung*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=53473>)

To **Carl Jung** is ascribed the following paradigms which have become integral to New Age psychology: *synchronicity*, discovering the "god within" (JCBWL #2.3.2, #3.4, #3.5, and #4), the *collective unconscious* (JCBWL #2.3.2), *creating one's own reality* (JCBWL #2.3.4.1, #6.1), *journaling*, the *inner child* or *the child within*, etc. some of them will be touched upon briefly in this book.

Jung's legacy and Jungian theory have also influenced the development of therapies like dreamwork (read chapter 55) personality-typing tools like the Enneagram (read chapter 40), Myers Briggs Temperament Indicator (read chapter 41), etc.

“Carl Jung is often quoted as having psychokinetic powers e.g. in a discussion with the arch-sceptic, Sigmund Freud, Jung was annoyed at Freud's rejection of psychical phenomena. Jung predicted and seemed to initiate loud noises in a bookcase that shocked Freud. (Colin Wilson, *The Occult*, Mayflower, 1973, p. 627f.) But as Wilson shows in his book on Jung: *C.G. Jung – Lord of the Underworld*, Jung was another great dabbler in the occult, especially astrology. Carl Jung's mother, grandmother and grandfather, as well as his cousin, Helen, were all spirit mediums.”

(*Demons, curses, deliverance and spiritual warfare*, Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM, <http://sine-glossa.blogspot.in/search/label/Demons%20-%20Incubi%20Succubi%20etc>)

“Carl Jung felt that psychotherapy was too narrow in focus – and his ideas were based on personal experience. Jung had ‘spirit guides’, one of whom was named ‘Philemon’. Jung observed that ‘Philemon and other figures of my fantasies brought home to me the crucial insight that there are things in the psyche which I do not produce, but which produce themselves and have their own life. Philemon represented a force that was not myself. In my fantasies I held conversations with him, and he said things which I had not consciously thought. [...] Psychologically, Philemon represented superior insight.’ To anyone else, Philemon might be a figment of Jung's imagination, or evidence of his madness. But Jung felt that Philemon was real – yet somehow dead, and somehow ‘talking’ to Jung – to Jung's mind. Jung spoke to a ‘highly cultivated elderly Indian’, who told Jung that his experience was identical to many mystics. In his case, his ‘spirit guide’ or guru had been a commentator on the Vedas who had died centuries ago. Rather than be mad, Jung felt that he had stepped into the same shoes as the ancient priests and others thought have experienced the divine. In 1916, Jung received the best-documented help from demons: *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos*, or ‘The Seven sermons to the dead written by Basilides in Alexandria’, ‘transcribed by Carl Gustav Jung’...

“Basilides was a real person, born in Syria, teaching in Alexandria during the years 133-155 AD. Whereas most channelled material is often nothing better than that which can be found in gossip columns, Jung's text has been labelled a ‘core text in depth psychology’.

Jung had received this document via automatic writing. The list of other guides also included one ‘Salome’.”

(*The Automatic Writings of Jung*, Philip Coppens, <http://www.philipcoppens.com/jung.html>)

“Something few people know is that **Carl Jung**, the founder of analytical psychology, was heavily involved in the occult. In *The Jung Cult* (1994), clinical psychologist Richard Noll documents Jung’s immersion in the paganism and occultism of German culture near the turn of the last century. Jung totally rejected Christianity and our view that God transcends creation. Instead, he embraced pantheism and its ‘god within’.

Jung also claimed to have contacted various spirit entities through his process of “active imagination”, or directed visualization. One of these entities was named Philemon, who he described as ‘a force which is not myself’. Noll writes that Philemon became Jung’s ‘spirit guide’ who helped shape the whole pattern of his theoretical work. Noll also reports that in 1913, Jung claimed to have become a god through an extended visualization exercise involving initiation rituals of ancient mystery religions such as Mithraism. Noll comments that it ‘is clear that Jung believed he had undergone a direct initiation into the ancient Hellenistic mysteries and had even experienced deification in doing so’.”

(*Occult psychologist*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=181>)

“Swiss psychoanalyst, **Carl Gustav Jung**, reared a Lutheran, abandoned the Christianity of his parents for the occult. Jung’s entire life and work were motivated by his detestation of the Catholic Church, whose religious doctrines and moral teachings he considered to be the source of all the neuroses which afflicted Western man. In his 1912 book, *New Paths in Psychology*, Jung wrote that the only way to overthrow the neuroses inducing Judeo-Christian religion and its “sex-fixated ethics” was to establish a new religion—the religion of psychoanalysis.

“**Jung’s** drive to formulate a ‘better’ religion was the result of his trying to justify his own sins. What Jung was increasingly concerned with was justifying sexual libertinism, and his efforts extended not merely to reviving the lost gods of paganism, but in transforming Christ and Christianity to serve his own purposes. His search was for a ‘scientific’ justification for incest, patricide, sodomy, sun-worship and phallus worship; and what support he could not find in the works of his contemporary neopagan archaeologists, he sought to find by plumbing the unconscious through Eastern meditation techniques and ancient pagan rituals. Jung appreciated faith and ritual, but only of the occult variety: hypnotism, spiritism, séances, cults of Mithras and Dionysus, ‘liturgies’ that unlocked the powers of darkness...”

One cannot, however, be both ‘Catholic’ and ‘Jungian’. They are mutually exclusive adjectives...

Jungianism in the Church poses a threat to the orthodox believer. Those who subscribe to a traditional notion of Catholic spirituality are regarded

by Jungians as naïve believers locked into some past culture's mythical story of God. That is why inclusive language (read chapter 59) carries such import with them. Traditional English and traditional liturgy is denounced as 'sexist', as 'patriarchal' (read chapter 59), as 'dysfunctional'. Sister Barbara Fiand's notion of an 'androgynous' God (who is both masculine and feminine) is an example of just how far Jungians will go in their efforts to redefine traditional language. The notion of an androgynous God leads Jungians to view both men and women as neither male nor female. Jungians operating as Catholics are fond of reinterpreting Catholic concepts. Jesus Christ, for instance, is understood as a man who spent His life discovering his own spirituality, discovering His 'God Within'. He becomes, therefore, the prototypical example of one who understands his own Godhead. They insist there is no place for the Tabernacle in a Catholic Church since God is already with us...

"Since divine revelation is understood as the living experiences of the universe through all religions, peoples, animals and plants, **Jungians** rely on dream interpretation, the enneagram (personality typing), I Ching, tarot cards, and other methods of divination."

(Jungian Psychology as Catholic Theology: What is Carl Gustav Jung doing in the Church?
<http://www.aquinas-multimedia.com/catherine/jungcult.html>)

"*Synchronicity* is the belief, usually ascribed to **Carl Jung**, but popularized by James Redfield's *The Celestine Prophecy*, that nothing happens by coincidence and that one can be led to truths through the messages implicit in events that seem to happen or be connected randomly. According to astrologer Stephen Arroyo, synchronicity (a basic principle in astrology) is what Jung believed was an 'a-causal connecting principle' that something born at a certain moment 'bears the qualities of that moment,' (Arroyo, 40; also Guiley, 595-97). In other words, every person or event that comes to be is magically connected to the moment when it comes into being."

(The Occult: Brief explanations of various terms and concepts, Marcia Montenegro,
http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_OccultTerms4.html)

"It's certainly one of the most bizarre developments in 20th-century Catholicism that Carl Gustav Jung, dedicated to the destruction of the Catholic Church and the establishment of an anti-Church based on psychoanalysis, should have become the premier spiritual guide in the Church throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe over the last three decades.

"But that's the case. Walk into a typical Catholic bookstore and browse in the 'spirituality' section, and you'll see the best-selling books of such popularizers

of the Jung Cult as priests Basil Pennington, Richard Rohr, and Thomas Keating. Read the listings for 'spirituality' programs and retreats in many diocesan newspapers. You will see that programs on Jungian dream analysis, discovering the child within (inner child), contacting your 'god/goddess,' or similar such Jungian therapy programs predominate, even though they have nothing to do with Catholic spirituality and are inherently antithetical to it.

Forty years ago, the great Catholic psychiatrist Karl Stern in "*The Third Revolution*" (Harcourt Brace & Co.. 1954), wrote that most Catholic scholars recognized that Jung and Catholicism are incompatible-irreconcilable and he warned that the Jungian who begins viewing religion as existing on the same plane as psychology ends up viewing all religions as equally irrelevant. In the years since, however, Catholic scholars, priests, religious, and laity have gone over to Jung with the fervor of Athenians flocking to the Oracle at Delphi.

One of the most important landmarks in the history of the establishment of the Jung Cult in the Catholic Church was the publication of "*Jung and Religion*", as a special feature of "New Catholic World", published by Paulist Press in March/April 1984. The special feature showed not only how far the Jung Cult had infiltrated Church structures, but now it was being mass-marketed for ordinary parishioners bored with the contemporary state of Catholic spirituality."

(*Jung replaces Jesus in Catholic spirituality*, Paul Likoudis, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/NEWAGE/JUNGCUL2.TXT>)

"The underlining tragedy of this situation is that psychology has replaced theology as the instrument of counsel.

Freud, (John B.) Watson, and Jung became the source of spiritual comfort, not Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John."

(*Designer Religion – The New American religion of choice*, William A. Borst, Ph. D., Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation, <http://www.mindszenty.org/report/2006/MAR06.pdf>)

New Age

"Swiss psychiatrist **Carl Jung** (1875-1961), (was) the first person to use the term "New Age."

(*Dreamwork*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1253>)

References to Carl Gustav Jung are found throughout the JCBWL Document; such has been his impact on the NAM.

"In late 1977, (New Ager) Marilyn Ferguson sent a questionnaire to 210 'persons engaged in social transformation', whom she also calls 'Aquarian Conspirators'. The following is interesting: 'When respondents were asked to name individuals whose ideas had influenced them, either through personal contact or through their writings, those most often named, in order of frequency,

were Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, **C.G. Jung**, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Aldous Huxley, Robert Assagioli, and J. Krishnamurti'."

(Notes #15) The list continues from there and includes many more personalities.

"Marilyn Ferguson devoted a chapter of *The Aquarian Conspiracy* to the precursors of the Age of Aquarius, those who had woven the threads of a transforming vision based on the expansion of consciousness and the experience of self-transcendence. Two of those she mentioned were the American psychologist William James and the Swiss psychiatrist **Carl Gustav Jung**. James defined religion as experience, not dogma, and he taught that human beings can change their mental attitudes in such a way that they are able to become architects of their own destiny. Jung emphasized the transcendent character of consciousness and introduced the idea of the *collective unconscious*, a kind of store for symbols and memories shared with people from various different ages and cultures. According to Wouter Hanegraaff, both of these men contributed to a "sacralisation of psychology", something that has become an important element of *New Age* thought and practice. Jung, indeed, "not only psychologized esotericism but he also sacralized psychology, by filling it with the contents of esoteric speculation. The result was a body of theories which enabled people to talk about God while really meaning their own psyche, and about their own psyche while really meaning the divine. If the psyche is 'mind', and God is 'mind' as well, then to discuss one must mean to discuss the other". His response to the accusation that he had "psychologised" Christianity was that "psychology is the modern myth and only in terms of the current myth can we understand the faith". It is certainly true that Jung's psychology sheds light on many aspects of the Christian faith, particularly on the need to face the reality of evil, but his religious convictions are so different at different stages of his life that one is left with a confused image of God. A central element in his thought is the cult of the sun, where God is the vital energy (libido) within a person.

As he himself said, "This comparison is no mere play of words". This is "the god within" to which Jung refers, the essential divinity he believed to be in every human being. The path to the inner universe is through the unconscious. The inner world's correspondence to the outer one is in the *collective unconscious*.

"The tendency to interchange psychology and spirituality was firmly embedded in the Human Potential Movement as it developed towards the end of the 1960s at the Esalen Institute in California. Transpersonal psychology, strongly influenced by Eastern religions and by **Jung**, offers a contemplative journey where science meets mysticism. The stress laid on bodiliness, the search for ways of expanding consciousness and the cultivation of the myths of the

collective unconscious were all encouragements to search for “the God within” oneself. To realise one’s potential, one had to go beyond one’s *ego* in order to become the god that one is, deep down. This could be done by choosing the appropriate therapy – meditation, parapsychological experiences, (and) the use of hallucinogenic drugs. These were all ways of achieving “peak experiences”, “mystical” experiences of fusion with God and with the cosmos.” (The essential matrix of New Age thinking, #2.3.2)

“The rejection of tradition in the form of patriarchal, hierarchical social or ecclesial organisation implies the search for an alternative form of society, one that is clearly inspired by the modern notion of the self.

Many *New Age* writings argue that one can do nothing (directly) to change the world, but everything to change oneself; changing individual consciousness is understood to be the (indirect) way to change the world. The most important instrument for social change is personal example. Worldwide recognition of these personal examples will steadily lead to the transformation of the collective mind and such a transformation will be the major achievement of our time. This is clearly part of the holistic paradigm, and a re-statement of the classical philosophical question of the one and the many. It is also linked to **Jung**’s espousal of the theory of correspondence and his rejection of causality.” (*“Inhabitants of myth rather than history”?* New Age and culture, #2.4)

“Here is a key point of contrast between *New Age* and Christianity. So much *New Age* literature is shot through with the conviction that there is no divine being “out there”, or in any real way distinct from the rest of reality. From **Jung**’s time onwards there has been a stream of people professing belief in “the god within”. Our problem, in a *New Age* perspective, is our inability to recognise our own divinity, an inability which can be overcome with the help of guidance and the use of a whole variety of techniques for unlocking our hidden (divine) potential. The fundamental idea is that ‘God’ is deep within ourselves. We are gods, and we discover the unlimited power within us by peeling off layers of inauthenticity.⁽⁶³⁾ The more this potential is recognised, the more it is realised, and in this sense the *New Age* has its own idea of *theosis*, becoming divine or, more precisely, recognising and accepting that we are divine. We are said by some to be living in “an age in which our understanding of God has to be interiorised: from the Almighty God out there to God the dynamic, creative power within the very centre of all being: God as Spirit”. (The “god within” and “theosis”, #3.5)

“The widespread *New Age* conviction that one creates one’s own reality is appealing, but illusory. It is crystallised in **Jung**’s theory that the human being is a gateway from the outer world into an inner world of infinite dimensions,

where each person is Abraxas, who gives birth to his own world or devours it. The star that shines in this infinite inner world is man's God and goal." (Create your own reality, #6.1)

"Depth Psychology: the school of psychology founded by **C.G. Jung**, a former disciple of Freud. Jung recognised that religion and spiritual matters were important for wholeness and health. The interpretation of dreams (read chapter 55) and the analysis of archetypes were key elements in his method. Archetypes are forms which belong to the inherited structure of the human psyche; they appear in the recurrent motifs or images in dreams, fantasies, myths and fairy tales." (#7.2)

Catholics and the New Age: How Good People Are Being Drawn into **Jungian Psychology**, the Enneagram, and the Age of Aquarius (link) Father Mitch Pacwa S.J., Servant Publications, 1992. (*Bibliography* #8)

"New Age inner work involves turning inward to seek the 'wisdom' of alleged inner guides, 'sanctified' or empowered imagination, the power of the unconscious mind, 'archetypes', and other information sources. Concepts from **Jungian psychology** in particular are employed in New Age inner work.

For New Agers, every person has a divine 'inner core' or 'higher self' that can be contacted by the proper methods (meditation, visualization, dream work, yoga, **Jungian** active imagination, shamanistic practice, and so on). This inner core is said to be a reservoir of wisdom and information on any number of subjects."

(*New Age "Inner Work"*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/new-age-inner-work/>)

"New Age does not consider original sin and tends not to consider man's sin and, therefore, not to make man responsible for his actions,' Fr. Scarafoni explains in this interview with ZENIT. 'New Age is nourished by **Jung's psychology, whose approach is clearly anti-Christian'."**

(*Responding to the Lure of New Age – Interview with Father Paolo Scarafoni of the Academy of Theology*, 27 February 2004 worldwide video conference on "The Church, New Age and Sects," <https://zenit.org/articles/responding-to-the-lure-of-new-age/>)

Chapter 37

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is highly controversial, unscientific and its claims of effectiveness are unsubstantiated.

It is categorized as New Age by both Christians as well as secular agencies.

Origins and development

“Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) is a controversial approach to psychotherapy and organisational change based on ‘a model of interpersonal communication chiefly concerned with the relationship between successful patterns of behaviour and the subjective experiences (esp. patterns of thought) underlying them’ and ‘a system of alternative therapy based on this which seeks to educate people in self-awareness and effective communication, and to change their patterns of mental and emotional behaviour’.

“The co-founders, Richard Bandler and linguist John Grinder, claimed it would be instrumental in ‘finding ways to help people have better, fuller and richer lives’. They coined the title to denote their belief in a connection between neurological processes (‘neuro’), language (‘linguistic’) and behavioral patterns that have been learned through experience (‘programming’) and that can be organised to achieve specific goals in life.

It was originally promoted by its co-founders in the 1970s as an effective and rapid form of psychological therapy, capable of addressing the full range of problems which psychologists are likely to encounter, such as phobias, depression, habit disorder, psychosomatic illnesses, learning disorders. It also espoused the potential for self-determination through overcoming learned limitations and emphasized well-being and healthy functioning. Later, it was promoted as a ‘science of excellence’, derived from the study or ‘modeling’ of how successful or outstanding people in different fields obtain their results. It was claimed that these skills can be learned by anyone to improve their effectiveness both personally and professionally.

“NLP has been largely ignored by conventional social science because of issues of professional credibility and insufficient empirical evidence to substantiate its models and claimed effectiveness. It appears to have little impact on academic psychology, and limited impact on mainstream psychotherapy and counseling. However, it had some influence among private psychotherapists, including hypnotherapists, to the extent that some claim to be trained in NLP and apply it to their practice. NLP had greater influence in management training, life coaching, and the self-help (read chapter 95) industry.”

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neuro-linguistic_programming)

“Critics say **NLP** is simply a half-baked conflation of pop psychology and pseudoscience that uses jargon to disguise the fact that it is based on a set of banal, if not incorrect, presuppositions. NLP has been criticized by clinical psychologists, management scholars, linguists, psychotherapists and cult awareness groups, concerning ineffectiveness, pseudoscientific explanation of linguistics and neurology, ethically questionable, cult-like characteristics and promotion by exaggerated claims. Critics say that **NLP** often associates itself with “science of communication” in order to raise its own prestige and anthropologists such as Winkin consider such promotion to be intellectually fraudulent. Furthermore, some critics assert that NLP’s association with science is as distant as astrology’s association to astronomy.”

(*Neuro-linguistic programming - Criticism* http://www.experiencefestival.com/a/Neuro-linguistic_programming_-_Criticism/id/5327715)

“**NLP** is dangerous because it gives the NLP practitioner the power to put another person in a hypnotic trance state and make compulsory suggestions to that person regarding beliefs or actions... The only way to really get out of NLP hypnosis is to transcend the level at which you have been hypnotized... If you are not a Critical Thomist, to correct the problem you will probably have to be placed in a deep trance state by a hypnotherapist and deprogrammed.”

(*Disinformation and the Dangers of Neurolinguistic Programming*, Anthony J. Fejfar, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/344884/Disinformation-and-the-Dangers-of-Neurolinguistic-Programming>)

New Age

Without question, today many ‘new agers’ use and promote Neuro-Linguistic Programming. This is observed when one reads the advertisements and articles in NLP publications... The New Age Movement has successfully synthesized NLP with other systems.

“What has brought this about? **NLP** proffers no theories, let alone any metaphysical beliefs or systems. How then has it come about that many today associate the two?

In addition to the very fallible qualities of the founders, NLP training seminars and trainers have made it their policy to require no prerequisites for those wanting to study to become practitioners. I believe that this policy itself has opened the door to all those ‘whackos’ from the left and ‘new agers’. For them, this provided a quick and easy way to become ‘certified’ in a form of therapy which they could then use to promote their metaphysics. And they did.

“As centers for **NLP** training began springing up throughout the United States and internationally, the policy of no prerequisites like a college education or

graduate studies continued. Accordingly, today in the various journals and publications within the NLP community, you can find all kinds of individuals running trainings and integrating NLP with their 'New Age' beliefs and practices."

(*How NLP opened the Door to 'New Age' Ideology and Practice*, L. Michael Hall, Ph.D. and Carl Lloyd, Ph.D., <http://www.renewingyourmind.com/Articles/NewAge.htm>)

"In recent years, several New Age groups have entered the realm of the business world under various guises. One of the most widespread is **Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)**. This organization is very prevalent among the medical and legal professions. According to the *Seminars and Certification Trainings* manual, produced by NLP, 'Neuro-Linguistic Programming is a practical application of how people think. Described as 'software for your brain,' NLP allows you to automatically tap into the kind of experiences you want to have.' Keeping this relatively simple and unassuming definition in mind, the following information will demonstrate why NLP should be classified as a New Age philosophy.

"Influential Sources: 'In the early 1970's Dr. Richard Bandler and Dr. John Grinder through careful study of acknowledged masters of communication and change such as Drs. Milton Erickson, Virginia Satir, Gregory Bateson and Fritz Perls, discovered what made these individuals so effective and in the process developed the field of **Neuro-Linguistic Programming**,' (*The New Age Catalogue*, 1988 ed., page 85).

"One of the models for NLP was Dr. Milton Erickson who heads the Milton Erickson Foundation in Phoenix, Arizona. This man was the founder of the technique known as Ericksonian Hypnosis. In this type of hypnosis (read chapter 63), Erickson teaches the students how to, 'communicate with the whole person by utilizing conscious and *unconscious* levels. Dr. Erickson also taught us (his pupils) how to utilize and *bypass client resistance by embedding* therapeutic interventions in seemingly casual conversation.' (*Ibid*) These techniques, which the NLP freely admits adopting to its purposes, are the same processes that radio stations once used and television stations are still allowed to use. That is, subliminal messages, or the act of tapping into the unconscious mind apart from the person's conscious knowledge. This act of 'planting' an idea in someone's unconscious mind is both unethical and unbiblical.

"The example for Christians should be that of Jesus Christ who said 'I spake openly to the world; I even taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? Ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said,' (John 18:20-21).

“Another of the NLP’s primary role models was Fritz Perls (read chapter 33, Gestalt Therapy). Dr. Perls has a long career of New Age teachings. “In 1961 Michael Murphy and Richard Price opened a new residential community which came to be known as Esalen.” [Esalen, leading New Age commune: Vatican Document on the New Age #2.2.3, 2.3.2, 7.2, 7.3]

“Located in California’s Big Sur area, Esalen ‘helped mid-wife much of what came to be known as the human-potential movement. Seminar leaders in Esalen’s first three years included Gerald Heard, Alan Watts, Arnold Toynbee, Linus Pauling, Norman O. Brown, Carl Rogers, Paul Tillich, Rollo May, and a young graduate student named Carlos Castaneda, (*The Aquarian Conspiracy*, page 137).’ [The Aquarian Conspiracy: Vatican Document on the New Age #2.3.2, 9.1; Carl Rogers, Paul Tillich, Gregory Bateson, Alan Watts are leading New Agers listed in the Document.]

“It was here at Esalen that ‘...Fritz Perls came to live...’ in the 1960’s. This new community, of which Perls was a part, was ‘...seeking ways the insights of this new human-potential movement could be applied to the larger society,’ (*Ibid*, p. 139). Thus the very foundation for Bandler and Grinder’s NLP is based in the New Age motif.

“However, it can be argued that because a group has its origins in a non-Christian movement, that does not, by necessity, cause the new group to be non-Christian also. For that reason, it is categorically imperative that the practices and teachings of the new group be equally scrutinized.

“Advertising Policy: Much insight can be quickly gained by the advertising policies a group maintains. That is, where does the group advertise its product? If a determination can be made as to the characteristics of a group by where they place their advertising dollar, and with what other advertisers they associate, then it becomes critical that NLP’s policies be observed. In the January/February 1989 issue of the *New Age Journal*, the NLP printed the following Box Ad: ‘Reach Your Potential – NLP is a method for enhancing human development and creating change gracefully. Discover effective tools for the *New Age*,’ (page 96).

“In another periodical which caters to a large extent to New Age promotion, this ad appeared:

‘NLP – The Magic of Communication. Through presentation, demonstration, games and exercises, you will learn how to... learn the ‘magic’ of personal power,’ (*Fun Ed*, Fall 1989, page 15). In the same magazine are ads for Tarot Card readings, Yoga, Palm Reading and Developing Your Psychic Powers.

Few advertisers who honestly attempt to sell a product will target an audience they feel will not be receptive.

“NLP Doctrine: Up to this point the historical influences and groups with which the NLP associates have been discussed. It is now time to allow the publication of the NLP to speak for itself. The following quotes are taken from the *Seminars and Certification Trainings* (Fall 1989-1990 Spring) manual.

In the Master Practitioner Training, ‘You will learn: Submodality Patterns (such as) Change core beliefs.... Rapidly re-imprint formative experiences...’ (Page 5). While there is nothing inherently wrong with the act of changing a core belief, it is the process whereby that belief is changed that must be called into question. Every person who has become a Christian has had their core beliefs changed. For contrary to Man’s natural belief, is the recognition that Man is a sinner, separated from God, and deserving of nothing but death (Romans 3:23, 6:23). In an NLP 6-day Advanced Andreas Intensive one learns ‘...of guilt and shame, and how to change them easily and elegantly into positive resources that enhance self-esteem,’ (page 6).

It must be pointed out that while guilt and shame in the form of self-recrimination can be taken to a dangerous extreme, they do serve a valuable emotional and theological purpose.

“Throughout the Bible these and other emotions are said to be ways in which God draws Man unto Himself. These are used to exhibit Man’s depravity and God’s righteousness. To reinterpret, minimize or dismiss entirely these emotions are to tamper with God’s creation and His purpose for our lives. (John 16:8-11, Acts 2:37-40 and Romans 2:14-15).

“In a seven-part VHS series, Tape #4, *Perceptual Grids*, NLP teaches how a ‘Trance... can make old problem behaviors seem unfamiliar and ridiculous, and refocus attention on desired outcomes,’ (page 8).

The act of entering a trance is accomplished by shutting down the conscious mind and allowing the unconscious or sub-conscious mind to take over. This action is a very dangerous process. For it is at this open moment that the defense system, the conscious mind, which God created in Man, is turned off.

“As Dick Sutphen, expert in Subliminal programming explained, if a suggestion or command is given during this time, ‘...the suggestions are not challenged by your conscious mind, they are accepted by your subconscious, which begins to create the circumstance necessary to change your life so it will match your new beliefs,’ (*Body Mind Spirit*, May/June 1989, p. 41).

Both Sutphen and the periodical *Body Mind Spirit* are pro-New Age.

“Finally under the heading *Who Takes NLP Training?* The following information is found:

‘People taking **NLP** training often report unanticipated desirable changes in themselves and their abilities from participating in the various exercises that make up more than a third of trainings. They describe improving their ability to learn and *developing new levels of awareness*. The benefits of NLP are being able to tap your own undeveloped potential and being able to respectfully learn the skill and talents of others. We are on the threshold of a *quantum leap in human capacities*, with no end in sight,’ (page 14).

“Contrary to NLP’s claims, Man has only one potential. That potential is to sin and it is that sinful nature which sent the Son of God to the cross. With reference to a new level of awareness, Man only reaches a new plateau by casting all his trust on the one who can forgive sin, our mediator between God the Father and Man – Christ Jesus. (Romans 5:8, Ephesians 2:8-10, 1 Timothy 2:5). To anyone who has ever read either a Christian book, magazine or article on the pantheistic nature of the New Age, all of these statements found in one of NLP’s official publications rings true to the New Age philosophy.

“Conclusion: One final argument against the claims of **NLP**, interestingly enough, does not come from a Biblical perspective. Rather, it comes from a government study completed by the U.S. Army.

The study, conducted by the National Research Council (NRC), completed in 1988, and entitled Enhancing Human Performance, under the commission of the U.S. Army, examined the claims of the NLP.

‘The NRC researchers checked out other frontiers of human potential as well, including accelerated learning, biofeedback, and neuro-linguistic programming (NLP). NLP which postulates connection between behavior and neurology and claims to train students to ‘read’ others by noting their eye position and choice of language, was also dismissed as having a social rather than a neurological basis,” (*The Fringes of Reason, A Whole Earth Catalog: A Field Guide to New Age Frontiers, Unusual Beliefs & Eccentric Sciences*, 1989 ed., page 196).

“Thus, from both a Biblical and a secular perspective, Neuro-Linguistic Programming fails to fulfill its claims.”

(*Mind Control in the 1990’s: Neurolinguistic Programming*, Rick Branch, <http://www.watchman.org/na/nlpexpo.htm>)

“The various **NLP** teachings, techniques, and tools are used by countless psychotherapists, other psychologically-trained mental health workers, life coaches, group leaders, pastors, and church leaders. These things are taught in counseling classes at both secular and Christian colleges and universities. NLP teachings, techniques, and tools are also used in various forms of inner healing

and regressive therapy. And, they contribute to the manipulative tactics of group dynamics.

One can see, from the NLP practices described above, that there are serious dangers in the use of NLP. Christians need to beware of what is lurking behind the promises of NLP: another gospel—a gospel of works, self-effort, manipulation, hypnosis, and other occult practices. Through the enticement of NLP purveyors, Christians are drawn away from dependence on the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit and deceived into using a fleshly shortcut to spiritual transformation. NLP ends up being one of Satan’s counterfeits for spiritual growth, which nourishes the flesh and starves the spirit. Indeed it is a deception of the enemy which will lead people away from God even as they think they are growing spiritually.

“Finally, people put themselves in a spiritually vulnerable position to the occult forces of evil. Rather than using the spiritual armor God has given, they are letting down their guard and not using the Word of God to resist what is being said, and they are failing to bring every thought captive to Christ. That takes conscious thought, not the passivity of a trance. Beware of those who mix the wisdom of men, about which God has warned His people, with Scripture and entice Christians with promises of spiritual transformation through techniques, methodologies, and formulas.”

(*Neuro-Linguistic Programming & Psychoheresy*, <http://www.psychoheresy-aware.org/nlp-ph.html>)

The 2003 Pontifical document does not mention NLP but speaks of New Age as being “a modern revival of pagan religions with a mixture of influences from both eastern religions and also from modern psychology (read “The Trojan Horse in the Church”, above), philosophy, science, and the counterculture that developed in the 1950s and 1960s.” (JCBWL #2.1)

It adds, “According to Wouter Hanegraaff, (American psychologist William James and the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung) contributed to a “sacralisation of psychology”, something that has become an important element of *New Age* thought and practice”, and: “The tendency to interchange psychology and spirituality was firmly embedded in the Human Potential Movement as it developed towards the end of the 1960s at the Esalen Institute in California.” (#2.3.2)

The Document elaborates on transpersonal and other psychologies, naming psychologists Carl Jung, Abraham Maslow, Erich Fromm, Carl Rogers, and Robert Assagioli as leading New Agers.

Chapter 38

Transactional Analysis (TA), and Reparenting

Origins and development

“**Transactional analysis**, commonly known as TA to its adherents, is an integrative approach to the theory of psychology and psychotherapy. It is described as integrative because it has elements of psychoanalytic, humanist and cognitive approaches. TA was developed by Canadian-born US psychiatrist, Eric Berne, during the late 1950s.

“According to the International **Transactional Analysis** Association, TA “is a theory of personality and a systematic psychotherapy for personal growth and personal change”.

1. As a theory of personality, TA describes how people are structured psychologically. It uses what is perhaps its best known model, the ego-state (Parent-Adult-Child) model, to do this. This same model helps explain how people function and express their personality in their behavior.
2. It is a theory of communication that can be extended to the analysis of systems and organisations.
3. It offers a theory for child development by explaining how our adult patterns of life originated in childhood. This explanation is based on the idea of a “Life (or Childhood) Script”: the assumption that we continue to re-play childhood strategies, even when this results in pain or defeat. Thus it claims to offer a theory of psychopathology.
4. In practical application, it can be used in the diagnosis and treatment of many types of psychological disorders and provides a method of therapy for individuals, couples, families and groups.
5. Outside the therapeutic field, it has been used in education to help teachers remain in clear communication at an appropriate level, in counselling and consultancy, in management and communications training and by other bodies.

“Philosophy:

- People are OK; thus each person has validity, importance, equality of respect.
- Everyone (with only few exceptions, such as the severely brain-damaged) has the capacity to think.
- People decide their story and destiny, therefore these decisions can be changed.

Freedom from historical maladaptations embedded in the childhood script is required in order to become free of inappropriate, inauthentic and displaced emotions which are not a fair and honest reflection of here-and-now life (such as echoes of childhood suffering, pity-me and other mind games, compulsive behavior and repetitive dysfunctional life patterns). The aim of change under TA is to move toward autonomy (freedom from childhood script), spontaneity, intimacy, problem *solving* as opposed to *avoidance* or *passivity*, cure as an ideal rather than merely making progress and learning new choices.

“TA is a neo-Freudian theory of personality. Berne’s ego states are heavily influenced by Freud’s id, ego and superego, although they do not precisely correspond with them. A primary difference between Berne and Freud is the former’s treatment of the observable transactions known as “games”. A number of books popularized TA in the general public but did little to gain acceptance in the conventional psychoanalytic community. TA is considered by its adherents to be a more user-friendly and accessible model than the conventional psychoanalytic model. A number of modern-day TA practitioners emphasize the similarities with cognitive-behaviorist models while others emphasize different models.

“Eric Berne’s ability to express the ideas of TA in common language and his popularisation of the concepts in mass-market books inspired a boom of popular TA texts.

Some TA texts simplify TA concepts to a deleterious degree. One example is a caricature of the structural model, where it is made out that the Parent judges, the Adult thinks and the Child feels. Most serious TA texts, including those aimed at the mass market rather than professionals, avoid this degree of oversimplification.

Thomas Harris’ highly successful popular work from the late 1960s, *I’m OK, You’re OK* is largely based on **Transactional Analysis**. A fundamental divergence, however, between Harris and Berne is that Berne postulates that everyone starts life in the “I’m OK” position, whereas Harris believes that life starts out “I’m not OK, you’re OK”.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transactional_analysis)

Eric Berne [1910-1970] wrote eight major books in his lifetime:

The Mind in Action (1947);

A Layman’s Guide to Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis (1957);

Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy (1961);

Structure and Dynamics of Organizations and Groups (1963);

Games People Play (1964);

Principles Group Treatment (1966);

Sex in Human Loving (1970); and
What Do You Say After You Say Hello? (1971).

Eric Berne, the inventor of Transactional Analysis and 'expert' in psychoanalyzing others had all three of his own marriages ending in divorce. Writes Fr. D. John Antony OFM Cap., the founder-director of ANUGRAHA Capuchin Institute for Counselling, Psychotherapy and Research, Dindigul in Tamil Nadu in his book, "His personal life reflected extreme paradoxes of his personality. The reason for the failure of Berne's three marriages remain unclear. He 'died of a broken heart', having not been able to sustain love and to allow himself to be loved by others." (*Psychotherapies in Counselling*, Anugraha Publications, 2003) Is this the profile of an individual whose psychoanalytical guidelines may be considered suitable for Catholics or anyone for that matter?

New Age

"The New Age movement can be divided into two principal groups: (1) human potential, and (2) the occult, with some overlapping between the two. The human potential side uses Primal Therapy, biofeedback, **transactional analysis**, sensory awareness, Gestalt awareness, etc."

(*False gods*, Michael Whelton, <http://www.reginaorthodoxpress.com/falsegods.html>)

"The New Age Movement, as it is known today, had its start in California in the '60s with the spread of Eastern philosophies, especially Buddhism, which was popular among middle class Americans disillusioned with the Vietnam War. This movement, as we know it today has its roots in a number of religious practices and disciplines, philosophical and Theosophical..."

Chapter 2 Appendix [Going alphabetically, the Archbishop has listed New Age personalities, organizations and therapies in this fairly long document. The following are under the alphabets "P" and "T"]

"...parapsychology, humanistic and transpersonal psychology (read chapter 39), [...]

"...**transactional analysis**, transpersonal psychology [...]"

(*Pastoral Instruction on New Age, Concise and thorough study about the characteristics, practices and philosophies of the New Era*, Archbishop Edward Anthony McCarthy of Miami, November 1991, <http://es.catholic.net/catequistasyevangelizadores/90/1915/articulo.php?id=32065>)

Skepticism about TA:

"*The Etiology of a Social Epidemic*" by Pat Crossman LCSW <http://www.skepticreport.com/sr/?p=563> attempts to trace the origins of the "attachment therapy" and "rebirthing" movements to ancient exorcism rites, and demonstrates a connection to **TA** via the "**reparenting**" movement.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transactional_analysis)

“Although I’m not a psycho-therapist and can only offer an opinion as a layperson, I can say that there are definitely problems associated with **Transactional Analysis (TA)** which mostly concern the fact that it got mixed up with **reparenting**. Reparenting is a quack therapy invented by Jacqui Schiff, author of “All My Children” which involves taking patients back to their childhood and “reparenting” them in order to cure them of various problems and phobias. These methods are considered to be pseudoscientific, but they do incorporate some elements of TA. In fact, Schiff was a member of the International Transactional Analysis Association where her views were accepted. This allegiance led to a split among the ranks of TA practitioners, those who support reparenting and those who do not.

“**Transactional Analysis** is a psychotherapy modality with roots in psychoanalytic, humanist and cognitive therapies. It was developed in the late 1950’s by a psychiatrist named Eric Berne who made the approach widely known through his book, “Games People Play – The Psychology of Human Relationships” in 1964. Although its popularity waned in the U.S. in the 1980’s, it can still be found in a variety of self-help programs used in business, education and the communications fields. According to the International Transactional Analysis Association, TA ‘is a theory of personality and a systematic psychotherapy for personal growth and personal change’.

As a [theory of personality](#) (link), TA describes how people are structured psychologically, using its best known model, the ego-state (Parent-Adult-Child) model, to do this. This same model helps explain how people function and express their personality in their behavior. For instance, it offers a theory for child development by explaining how our adult patterns of life originated in childhood and that we continue to re-play childhood strategies even when they result in pain or failure. TA is used in the diagnosis and treatment of many types of psychological disorders.

“As I said, it was initially very popular and promising in the field of psychology until it became mixed up with **reparenting** – something that can best be described in just one word – bizarre.

“**Reparenting** grew out of the work of two therapists, Marguerite Secheyaye and John Rosen during World War II, who experimented with schizophrenic patients who combined regression techniques with authoritarian control to cure the condition. For instance, Secheyaye once took in a 21 year-old schizophrenic woman named Rene who she fed and parented for 10 years. The girl called her “mama” and she would sometimes be fed while lying against Secheyaye’s breast to symbolize breast feeding.

As odd as this sounds, later versions of reparenting became even more overt such as in the case of Jacqui Schiff (<http://www.skepticreport.com/pseudoscience/attachmenttherapy.htm>), a Virginia social worker who turned her home into a care facility for severely disturbed young adults. Her theory about reparenting was born when one of the patients, a young man named Dennis, grew very upset, curled himself into a fetal position on Schiff's lap and attempted to nurse. She began to mother Dennis, and plenty of other patients, referring to them as "our babies" and saying in her book that she "put all our babies in diapers and feed them from bottles and let them sleep as much as they like." (I'm not making this up.) The authorities in Virginia, USA, closed the place down in 1971, saying that "it endangered the health, safety, welfare, and lives of the patients."

"But this didn't stop Schiff. She merely moved to Alama, California and opened up another home where one of her patients died after being scalded in a very hot bath. Her adopted son, Aaron (the same young man once known as Dennis who climbed into her lap) pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of involuntary manslaughter in the case.

I could go on and on, but I think this should give you a good idea why TA eventually fell from grace in the U.S., even though the International Transactional Analysis Association eventually disavowed reparenting after Schiff refused to submit her work for peer review. Unfortunately, it was too late and TA was never able to gain back its former momentum, nor did it ever gain much traction among professionals in the field. But it remains popular elsewhere, such as in India where MP [Michael Prabhu] tells us it is being offered in the context of Catholic inner healing services.

Personally, I would not become involved in TA no matter where it's being offered, not because it's New Age, but because many of its practitioners are aligned with reparenting and a later, and even more extreme version known as rebirthing. It is also incorporated into many of the self-help programs associated with the Human Potential Movement which are imbued with New Age philosophies."

(The Bizarre World of Reparenting, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1323>)

[The above article was written in response to a question from this writer. Both, Susan Brinkmann and Johnnette Benkovic of the *Women of Grace* blog, have engaged in mutually beneficial correspondence with this writer over the years.]

Chapter 39

Transpersonal Psychology

Origins and development

“Transpersonal: In the New Age world, a term describing levels of consciousness above and beyond the strictly personal. Often associated with New Age *spiritual* disciplines and practices and the *intuitive*.

Transpersonal Psychology: A vast and bewildering constellation of psychological practices and therapies that incorporate spirituality into counselling. They would include their own blends of *syncretism* from influences such as Zen Buddhism, Sufism, Transcendental Meditation, hypnotism, Gnosticism, Taoism, mysticism and much more.”

(*Wise as a Serpent, Harmless as a Dove*, Charles Strohmmer, 1994, page 405)

“It was at New Age mecca, Esalen, in the Big Sur south of San Francisco, that Stanislav Grof met Abraham Maslow and Anthony Sutich, with whom he founded the new field of **Transpersonal Psychology**.

“Christina (instructor in Hatha Yoga) and Stanislav Grof (John Hopkins University School of Medicine professor), the founders of The Spiritual Emergency Network – SEN, 1980, co-edited a book titled *Spiritual Emergency: When Personal Transformation Becomes a Crisis*. Instead of suggesting that there must be something greatly amiss with any transformation that causes a “crisis,” the book contains fourteen papers by doctors and other experts on the following types of spiritual crises:

1. The shamanic crisis;
2. Awakening of kundalini;
3. Episodes of unitive consciousness (“peak experiences”);
4. Psychological renewal through return to the center;
5. The crisis of psychic opening;
6. Past-life experiences;
7. Communications with spirit guides and “channeling”;
8. Near-death experiences;
9. Experiences of close encounters with UFOs;
10. Possession states.

“Surely, any practice that leads to “possession states” ought to be avoided! But **transpersonal psychologists** today treat all these and other “crises” as normal occurrences along the journey to “psychic opening and personal spiritual growth.”

Yoga is supposedly a shortcut to this goal. Clearly, something is radically wrong!

Promoting their book, the Grofs' website declares: "Spiritual experience can feel like bliss, but it can also feel like hell. It can cause hallucinations, seizures, pain, panic attacks, mania, severe depression—all the symptoms of physical and mental illness. When people suffer this way, they may feel like they're going crazy, and their doctors may agree. But the authors of this book think that in many cases, such a diagnosis is mistaken. They urge the adoption of a new category of clinical diagnosis, spiritual emergency."

"Incredibly, it doesn't seem to occur to these people that yoga itself and related Eastern mystical practices are the *cause* of these horrifying "spiritual emergencies."

...Those ancient Hindus knew nothing of Christianity and the deliverance it brings from sin and Satan, but today's psychologists, raised in the West where the gospel of Jesus Christ is openly proclaimed, have no excuse."

(*Yoga's Kundalini "Serpent Power" – Chapter 7 of the Book "Yoga and the body of Christ"*, Dave Hunt, http://www.fmh-child.org/Yoga_And_The_Body_Of_Christ.pdf)

New Age

"The so-called **transpersonal psychology**, founded by the Italian psychologist Roberto Assagioli [named in JCBWL, Notes #15] (1888-1974), attempts to go beyond the individual's psychic experience in search of a superior collective consciousness that would be the door to discovering a 'divine principle' lying at the core of every human being. This gives rise to a multitude of New Age's typical techniques..."

(*A Call to Vigilance (Pastoral Instruction on New Age)*, Archbishop Norberto Rivera Carrera, Primate of Mexico, 7 January 1996, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/acall.htm>)

"Abraham Maslow [named in JCBWL, Notes #15] (1908-1970) coined the term "the third force" for humanistic psychology. But Maslow quickly came to see that there was something on the horizon which he called the fourth force. It has since come to be known as **transpersonal psychology**. It's the fastest growing field of psychology; but it is primarily New Ageism, because it doesn't want to endorse traditional religious faith. It is psychology trying to be religion, because it understands that humanistic orientation is inadequate."

(*"We overcame their traditions, we overcame their faith"*, Catholic ex-psychologist Dr. William Coulson, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/PRIESTS/COULSON.TXT>)

"New Age notables would include New Age theorist and **transpersonal psychologist** Ken Wilber, the 'Einstein of consciousness research.' Transpersonal psychology seeks to blend Eastern religion with modern psychology."

(*The Facts on the New Age Movement*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, 1988, page 10)

“Ken Wilber, a leading New Age exponent traces the stages of psychological growth through fourteen levels which mirror the seven yogic chakras of Eastern mysticism. At the ‘most realized state’ he maintains, a person experiences higher consciousness, the goal of mystics through the ages... and the apex of **transpersonal psychology**. At this stage, says Wilber, ‘we are in touch with the divine; we become enlightened’.

“Wilber, a major architect of New Age thought, turns the biblical message of the Fall in the Garden of Eden upside down in his book *‘Up from Eden’*. Actually, he says, ‘the Fall’ was an ‘evolutionary advance and perfect growth, but it was experienced as a fall because it necessarily carried an increase in guilt...’

By eating from the Tree of Knowledge ‘men... realized that they had to leave Eden’s subconsciousness and begin the actual life of true self-conscious responsibility on the way to superconsciousness, or Actual Return to godhead. They did not get thrown out of the Garden of Eden; they grew up and walked out.’ The theological Fall, or original sin, Wilber contends, marked the ‘illusory separation of all things from Spirit.’ ...Evolution, then, is a labored return toward Spirit, toward Source. Hence the title of his book *‘Up from Eden’*: men and women are ‘up from the beasts and on their way to the gods.’”

(*Understanding the New Age*, Russell Chandler, 1988, pages 175, 191, 274, 275)

“Paul Davies, another **transpersonal psychologist** went so far as to write ‘It may seem odd, but I feel that science paves the way to God with greater certainty than religion.’”

(*Reasons to Believe Today in Christ*, Fr. John Martinetti, 1996, page 21)

“**Transpersonal psychology** pertains to experiences reaching beyond the limits of the personality and personal consciousness. During such experiences, the person sacrifices his independent personality, and allows himself to be ruled and manipulated by the psychotechnician in order to ‘regress into prior lives’ or ‘submerge into other worlds’.”

(*New Age from a Biblical Viewpoint*, Basilea Schlink, Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary, 1988, page 31)

“[Writing about] the new ‘Systems Age God’ of the Age of Aquarius, internationally acclaimed management consultant Russell Ackoff encapsulates the essence of this contemporary view when he says that the New Age ‘God’ “cannot be individualized or personified, and cannot be thought of as the Creator... In this holistic view of things, man is taken as part of God just as his heart is taken as part of man”. **Transpersonal psychologist** Scott Peck says pretty much the same thing: ‘If you desire wisdom greater than your own, you

can find it inside you... To put it plainly, our unconscious is God... It is for the individual to become totally, wholly God'."

(*What is the New Age saying to the Church?* John Drane, Marshall Pickering, 1991, pages 70-72)

"Servite Sister Joyce Rupp is a popular author and retreat director... Her second master's degree is in **transpersonal psychology** from the notorious Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in Palo Alto, California. This is the branch of psychology that the Pontifical Councils for Culture and for Interreligious Dialogue identified as "the classic approach in New Age" (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)... Simply put, **transpersonal psychology**, which is inimical to Christianity, is poisoning the whole of her work. Sr. Rupp's work is a masterpiece of implication and omission. Most of what she says is vague enough to be interpreted in a Catholic way, particularly if one is not familiar with the system – transpersonal psychology – that undergirds her presentation. The gravest errors – her definition of the soul and comments on salvation – though obviously flawed, are touched on lightly, leaving the majority of the implications unstated. These errors are surrounded by apparent supporting evidence, such as the implication that Sr. Rupp and St. Teresa agree in their assessment of the soul. To someone unfamiliar with St. Teresa, this is convincing support for the Catholicity of Sr. Rupp's ideas.

As St. Thomas Aquinas reminds us (*Summa Theologica*, II-II Q.5, A.3), when one denies even a single article of the Creed, one has lost the faith. That Christ died for our salvation is an article of the faith, stated in the Creed. To come to believe with Sr. Rupp that our souls have no need of salvation is to lose what is essential to Christianity, to lose the faith – and that is the spiritual equivalent of swallowing poison. It is a poison that Sr. Joyce Rupp should not be permitted to spread."

(*Exercises in Transpersonal Psychology, On Retreat with Sister Rupp*, Ginger Hutton, convert to Catholicism, <http://www.newoxfordreview.org/article.jsp?did=0608-hutton>)

H.

PERSONALITY-TYPING DEVICES

“A major deception in the church today is the so-called spiritual application of pseudo-psychological temperament theory for individual **personality assessment**, which in actuality is derived from pagan and occultic philosophies. (The ‘temperament’ can be defined as the unique mental and emotional disposition identifiable as the personality.)

The study of the temperaments, which are man-centered, self-oriented, and psycho-paganistic, are being offered to the unwitting as a sophisticated, almost magical way to understand our deepest natures and our personality type.

In actuality, Christians could be unknowingly lured into the occult by practicing the temperaments and other New Age **personality typologies**.

The underlying basis for the four temperament types (Sanguine, Choleric, Phlegmatic, and Melancholy) is in ancient astrology, which is defined by the Bible as divination...

The casual observance of **temperament/personality types** brings to memory a time 20 years ago when the most popular question to ask was, ‘What’s your sign?’ Now the question is, ‘What’s your temperament type?’

Psychological systems for explaining and understanding man’s essence tend to replace relationship with the Lord Jesus with formulas and techniques. Because of the system’s pagan nature and the errors involved, a Christian may come into the bondage of trying to fix himself up through modifying his weaknesses and exercising his strengths, rather than allowing the Holy Spirit to work in His way.

Whatever the label Christians will give to the latest fad in New Age **personality** systems, its origins can be traced to ancient pagan philosophy or occult religions, not the Bible.”

(<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/temper.htm>)

Chapter 40

The Enneagram

Origins and development

The front cover of *The Nine Faces of God* by Fr. Peter Hannan SJ, 2001, depicts nine doves symbolizing the Holy Spirit superimposed on a model of the enneagram.

The Enneagram – A Christian Perspective is authored by Franciscan Fr. Richard Rohr and Lutheran minister Andreas Ebert (1989, Claretian Publications, Bangalore, 2001), a new version of *Discovering the Enneagram* authored by them “a decade earlier... at [which] time it was believed that the enneagram had its roots in Sufi mysticism. But in the later edition... Rohr and Ebert suggest that the enneagram is genuinely Christian, dating at least to the desert Fathers, with pre-Christian sources.” (Back cover) The authors now say that the enneagram is “a very ancient Christian tool”.

In *Nine Prayer Spaces: The Enneagram and Christian Meditation* (Claretian Publications) by Fr. Gerry Pierse CSsR, and endorsed by a fellow priest, the author admits that the enneagram is indeed part of the New Age movement, but which he has adapted into Christian meditation. Sr. Suzanne Zuercher, OSB, director of enneagram workshops and retreats is the author of *Enneagram Spirituality* (1992) and *Enneagram Compulsions* (1993), both Ave Maria Press publications.

The authors of all the enneagram books that I pick up in the store are either nuns or priests usually – and deceptively – filed under the psychology, counseling or self-improvement categories. Some of them are ex-Jesuit priest Don Richard Riso, Fr. Eddie Fitzgerald SDB, Sr. Eilis Bergin PBVM, Fr. Gerry Pierse CSsR, Sr. Maria Beesing OP, Fr. Patrick O’Leary SJ, Fr. Peter Hannan SJ, the notorious Fr. Richard Rohr (read chapter 18), Fr. Robert Nogosek CSC, Sr. Suzanne Zuercher OSB, Fr. B. Tickerhoof TOR, etc. Riso is founder of the Enneagram Institute in New York with worldwide branches.

Former enneagram teacher Fr. Mitchell Pacwa SJ (author of *Tell me who I am O Enneagram*) on its Sufi origins:

“(The Enneagram) is a circle (with points numbered 1 to 9), meant to symbolise the cosmos and the ‘one-ness’ that comes from a monist perspective. The Sufis are monists, believing that we are all one with each other and with the universe, and at the same time pantheists, believing that the universe is god. Inside the circle is a triangle and it connects up the points of the 9, the 3 and the 6; and it symbolizes God. We should notice right away that it’s God inside the cosmos, not the cosmos inside God.”

(*The Enneagram: Spirituality it is Not*, Fr. Mitch Pacwa SJ,
<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=2622>)

In *Our Sunday Visitor* of 5^h July 1992 Fr. Pacwa said that according to his research, the 'ancient' origin theory is incorrect. Also, Sufism is a mystical sect of Islam which itself dates from around 600 AD. He dates the diagram to the 14th or 15th century. Jesuit priest Fr. Bob Ochs brought the enneagram methodology from the Esalen New Age centre to the Jesuit seminaries.

New Age

The Vatican Document JCBWL on the New Age included the Enneagram in its list of New Age psycho-spiritualities. In fact, it speaks more about the enneagram than it does about any other individual New Age motif. According to the Document, "**Enneagram** (from the Greek *ennea*=nine + *gramma*=sign) refers to a diagram composed of a circle with nine points on its circumference, connected within the circle by a triangle and a hexangle. It was originally used for divination, but has become known as the symbol for a system of personality typology consisting of nine standard character types. The Enneagram became popular after the publication of Helen Palmer's (1989) book *The Enneagram*, but she recognizes her indebtedness to the Russian esoteric thinker and practitioner G. I. Gurdjieff, the Chilean psychologist Claudio Naranjo and author Oscar Ichazo, founder of Arica (read chapter 44). The origin of the enneagram remains shrouded in mystery, but some maintain that it comes from Sufi mysticism." (JCBWL #7.2)

Under the caption "The New Age and the Catholic Faith", the Document states, "Even if it can be admitted that *New Age* religiosity in some way responds to the legitimate spiritual longing of human nature, it must be acknowledged that its attempts to do so run counter to Christian revelation. In Western culture in particular, the appeal of 'alternative' approaches to spirituality is very strong. On the one hand, new forms of psychological affirmation have become very popular among Catholics, even in retreat-houses, seminaries, and institutes of formation for religious. At the same time, there is increasing nostalgia and curiosity for the wisdom and ritual of long ago, which is one of the reasons for the remarkable growth in the popularity of esotericism and Gnosticism [...]"

"John Paul II (in *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 1994) warns with regard to the 'return of ancient gnostic ideas under the guise of the so-called New Age. We cannot delude ourselves that this will lead to a renewal of religion. It is only a new way of practicing [the long condemned heresy of] gnosticism- that attitude of the spirit that, in the name of a profound knowledge of God, results

in distorting His Word and replacing it with purely human words... in distinct, if not declared conflict with all that is essentially Christian’.

“An example of this can be seen in the **enneagram**, the nine-type tool for character analysis, which when used as a means of spiritual growth produces an ambiguity in the doctrine and the life of the Christian faith.” (JCBWL # 1.4)

JCBWL provides a list of major New Age influencers that includes Oscar Ichazo, and, naming it as a ‘key New Age place’ has this to say about the *Esalen Institute* which played a major role in establishing the popularity of the **Enneagram**:

“A community founded in Big Sur, California in 1962 by Michael Murphy and Richard Price, whose main aim was to arrive at a self-realization of being through nudism and visions... It has become one of the most important centres of the Human Potential Movement, and has spread ideas about holistic medicine... This has been done through courses in comparative religion, mythology, mysticism, meditation, psychotherapy, expansion of consciousness and so on. Along with Findhorn, Esalen is seen as a key place in the growth of Aquarian (New Age) consciousness.” (JCBWL #7.3)

In its Bibliography, the Vatican Document includes the 1992 book by Fr. Mitch Pacwa, “*Catholics and the New Age. How Good People are being drawn into Jungian Psychology, the Enneagram and the New Age of Aquarius*”.

The Document could hardly be more explicit: the enneagram is New Age, has its roots in esotericism and pagan mysticism, is a modern form of Gnosticism and its use as a spiritual tool is, as we shall see, a distortion of the Word of God which is the basis of all Christian faith and living.

Since the Enneagram as a popular New Age practice is largely a ‘Catholic’ phenomenon as the Document admits, a majority of the exposes of its origins and rebuttals of its practice are written by Catholics, mostly priests.

The most referred-to such work is *Catholics and the New Age* by Fr. Pacwa. He should know. Introduced to enneagram spirituality in the Jesuit theologate by Fr. Bob Ochs SJ in 1972, in a workshop that included “yoga, Zen and Sufi meditation techniques” (*New Covenant, February 1991*), and having himself once been a promoter and given enneagram “retreats”, he finally abjured the practice when he “discovered the truth about it”. He has since hosted a series of shows exposing the Enneagram and the NAM on Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN).

In *The Enneagram: Spirituality it is Not*, Fr. Pacwa states that the basic assumptions of enneagram typology are backed by absolutely no evidence, “except Oscar Ichazo and his spirit (guide) Metatron say so”.

Fr. Pacwa criticizes enneagrams as “a psychological system that hasn’t been tested by professional psychologists, theological nonsense suffused with gnostic ideas and self-salvation through a man-made technique, not by God’s grace”. “It is incompatible with Christianity... I quit teaching it because it didn’t work. It is neither theologically correct nor psychologically effective,” says he. “**Enneagram** teachers will almost always claim that they have nothing to do with the New Age Movement. It is important to note that many are honest, but uninformed. They don’t understand the origins of the enneagram,” he added.

“Instead of turning to Jungian archetypes, astrology or enneagram personality descriptions, the New Testament shows us ways to see ourselves before God... One man heard one of my lectures on the **enneagram** and read my New Covenant magazine articles about it. When his parish was about to sponsor an enneagram workshop, he distributed the articles to parish council members so they could rethink the issue in the light of more information. The seminars were not held.”

(When the New Age comes to your Parish, Fr. Mitch Pacwa S.J., New Covenant magazine, March 1992)

“I believe that the **enneagram**’s occultic origins cannot be ignored. Knowing about them can keep us on guard so we can prevent them from infecting our faith in Christ Jesus and leading us into sin.”

(Fr. Pacwa in New Covenant, February 1991)

In a *New Covenant* July/ August 1991 article Fr. Pacwa mentioned witnessing the use of channeling spirits, I Ching, horoscopes, meditating to remove sins and drugs in enneagram workshops.

Ichazo’s whose instructing “higher entity was ‘Metatron, the prince of the archangels”, was “in contact with all the previous masters of the esoteric school, including those who have died”, and his group was “helped and guided by a master called the Green Qu’Tub who makes himself known when a student reaches a sufficiently high stage of development”, reveals Fr. Pacwa. Ichazo, whose studies won him a United Nations award, is quoted by Mary Jo Anderson as stating that he worked closely with “Theosophists and esoteric Rosicrucians”, both groups noted in the JCBWL Document as influencers of the New Age Movement, and that “all the ideas proposed by (his mentors) Gurdjieff and Piotr Dimetri Ouspensky (a disciple of Gurdjieff) could be traced to certain forms of Gnosticism and to specific doctrines of the Stoics, the Epicureans and the Manichaeans.”

“Although a good deal has been written about the fraudulence of **the enneagram** and it’s Theory of Personality, this system of typology continues

to be enthusiastically embraced by not a few Catholic institutions. It is taught by faculty members at [seminaries], is commonly used in retreats, is promoted in Catholic high schools, and is discussed in official parish and diocesan publications. Clearly the appearance is given that the Church endorses, even embraces, this 'spiritual way'. However, there are issues surrounding the origins, practice and conclusiveness of the enneagram which render the Church's endorsement a distinct impossibility". "

(*The Enneagram Theory of Personality: Why its use is incompatible with Christianity*, Michael Rose, <http://www.aquinas-multimedia.com/catherine/enneagram.html>)

"Pope John Paul II said on Nov. 1st, 1982: 'Any method of prayer is valid insofar as it is inspired by Christ and leads to Christ who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6).' The enneagram is not the Way, nor is it the Truth, and on those bases not truly compatible with, much less essential to, the Life in Christ."

(*Enneagram*, Msgr. William B. Smith, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=1005>)

Writing in the March, 1993 issue of *Homiletic & Pastoral Review*, Msgr. Smith is quoted by James J. Drummey in "Catholic Replies", February 2, 1995 issue of *The Wanderer* as saying:

"The basic premise that there are nine and only nine personality types is simply given as true, it is nowhere demonstrated as proven. To my knowledge, there are no scientific studies... The more you read about it, the more it begins to resemble a college-educated horoscope; and that is not compatible with Catholic doctrine or practice... As a tool for spiritual direction, it seems to me most deficient, even dangerous. The **enneagram** is really built on an ideology of self-renewal and self-regeneration that is a far cry from (perhaps contradiction of) the Gospel."

"St. Paul instructs us, 'Test everything; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil' (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21). When we test the **enneagram**, we use the gospel of Jesus Christ as the norm by which we judge it. We do not use the enneagram to test the truth of the gospel."

(*Catholics and the New Age*, Fr. Mitch Pacwa SJ, 1992)

Catholic writer on New Age themes Mary Jo Anderson says, "Pacwa is unequivocal in his warning: 'No Jesuit from my class, except myself, who took the **enneagram** typing, is still a Jesuit today. All have left the priesthood'."

"Beware of any claim to mediate beneficial energies (e.g. reiki), any courses that promise the peace that Christ promises (e.g. **Enneagrams**), any alternative therapy with its roots in eastern religion (e.g. acupuncture)."

(Fr. Jeremy Davies, exorcist, <http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2008/aug/08081506.html>)

“Anglican bishop Robert Innes describes Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator (read chapter 41) and the **Enneagram** as ‘the two indicators most widely used by Christian groups...’ Baron and Wagele hold that ‘Many of the variations within the nine (enneagram) types can be explained by relating the highly respected Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to the Enneagram.’”

(http://www3.bc.sympatico.ca/st_simons/arm04.htm)

“The **Enneagram** redefines sin, among other fundamental concepts, by simply associating faults with **personality types**, which is particularly tempting in a cultural climate of irresponsibility and narcissism. It encourages an unhealthy self-absorption about one’s own “type,” so that the type is at fault rather than the person. This gives rise to a deterministic mindset at odds with Christian freedom.”

(Anna Abbott, <https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2012/01/31/a-dangerous-practice/>)

“As the **Enneagram** continues to seep its way into Catholic parishes, it’s interesting to read a document prepared by the U.S. bishops in 2000 which condemned the use of this typing system. The document can be found at http://www.natcath.org/NCR_Online/documents/ennea2.htm.

Christopher Rees, author of *The Enneagram and Catholic Personalism*, which was published in the April, 2001 issue of the prestigious *Homiletics and Pastoral Review*, explains the intrigues that surrounded the drafting of this document, which was never formally promulgated. See

<http://www.reesnet.com/theology/enneagram/index.htm>.”

(Document by U.S. Bishops in 2000 said *Enneagram* “not credible”, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=524>)

An excellent Catholic criticism of the enneagram is *A Closer Look at the Enneagram* by Dorothy Ranaghan, Southbend, Greenlawn Press, 1989.

For those who would continue to propagate the occult enneagram, the spiritual danger is real.

The **Enneagram** is named in the JCBWL document. Four times. (#1.4, #7.2, #7.3, Bibliography)

Chapter 41

The Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator (MBTI)

The “T” in MBTI is sometimes expanded as “Type”

Origins and development

“Beware of all types of **personality and temperament assessment** tests... The most popular of all, the **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator**, was created in the 1940's by a Pennsylvania housewife who thought it could bring about world peace. (I'm not making this up.) The test is administered by 89 of Fortune 100 companies today even though as many as three-quarters of test takers achieve a *different personality type* when tested again. Perhaps this is because the sixteen so-called ‘types’ described by Myers-Briggs have no scientific basis.

“Scott E. Provost, who reviewed the excellent book by Annie Murphy Paul entitled *The Cult of Personality: How Personality Tests are Leading us to Miseducate our Children, Mismanage our Companies and Misunderstand Ourselves* says, “Most, if not all, ordinary individuals who are subjected to **personality tests** either as a condition of employment or as mandated by court order are powerless to protect themselves from the damage of being condemned to a one-dimensional label. Despite the evidence that many personality tests lack reliability and validity, they are unlikely to disappear from use in corporations, courts, schools, and other institutions in the near future. The take-home point, therefore, is *caveat emptor* (buyer beware).

As the Pontifical Document, *Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life*, warns about the Enneagram, ‘...when used as a means of spiritual growth, introduces an ambiguity in the doctrine and the life of the Christian faith.’ (Sec. 1.4)”

(*Beware of Personality and Temperament assessment Tests*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=459>)

New Age

The **MBTI** was at one time extensively used by the Anglican Church in Canada to “type” the personalities of individuals.

Recalls the Rev. Ed Hird, the former Chairman of the Anglican Renewal Ministries (ARM):

“Through listening to the tapes by Leanne Payne and Dr. Jeffrey Satinover from the 1995 Kelowna Prayer Conference, I came across some new data that challenged me to do some rethinking about the Jungian nature of the **MBTI** used in the current ARM Canada Leadership Training Institutes. Dr. Jeffrey Satinover’s critique of Jungianism came with unique credibility, given his background as an eminent Jungian scholar, analyst, and past President of the

C.G. Jung Foundation. I began to do some reading on Carl Jung, and mailed each ARM Board member a copy of the two audio tapes by Payne and Satinover. The ARM Board at our April 1996 meeting took an initial look at the Jungian nature of the MBTI, and whether we should continue to use the MBTI in our LTIs. Our Board agreed to do some investigating on this topic and report back with some information to discuss at the November 1996 Board meeting. Currently approximately two and a half million people are 'initiated' each year into the MBTI process. According to Peter B. Myers, it is now the most extensively used **personality instrument** in history.

One of the key questions for the ARM Board to settle was whether the **MBTI** is an integral part of Jungian neo-gnosticism, or alternately, that it may be a detachable benevolent portion of Jung's philosophy in an otherwise suspect context. To use a visual picture, is the MBTI the 'marijuana', the low-level entry drug that potentially opens the door to the more hard-core Jungian involvement, or is it just a harmless sugar tablet?"

(Carl Jung, Neo-Gnosticism, and the Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator, <https://edhird.com/tag/dr-jeffrey-satinover/>)

The Anglican Renewal Ministries, Canada, decided in November 1997 after much prayer and reflection to no longer use the MBTI in the Clergy and Lay Leadership Training Institutes.

"The **MBTI** is similar to the Enneagram (read chapter 40) in that it is derived from Jungian psychology.

To quote from a MBTI website: *Personality Type or Psychological Type are terms most commonly associated with the model of personality development created by Isabel Briggs Myers, the author of the world's most widely used personality inventory, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Myers' and her mother, Katharine Briggs, developed their model and inventory around the ideas and theories of psychologist Carl Jung, a contemporary of Sigmund Freud and a leading exponent of Gestalt personality theory (read chapter 33).*

"Beginning in the early 1940's, Briggs & Myers extended Jung's model with the initial development of the **MBTI**. They put Jung's concepts into language that could be understood and used by the average person. Isabel Myers' book "*Gifts Differing*", published posthumously in 1980, provided a comprehensive introduction to the Jung/Myers theory. Myers' book and her philosophy of celebrating human diversity anticipated the workplace diversity movement. Jungian psychology, in general, needs to always be suspect for a Catholic given Jung's person philosophies that included and occult influence and other cosmologies and worldviews inconsistent with Catholicism."

(Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=180>)

“The (U.S.) National Conference of Catholic Bishops’ belated recognition that the enneagram is a threat to sound Catholic spiritual formation opens up the possibility that the American bishops will have to undertake a similar, if not harder, and more comprehensive, examination of the vast influence of Carl Jung in supposedly Catholic spirituality programs. As a Canadian Anglican, the Rev. Ed Hird, past national chairman of Anglican Renewal Ministries in Canada, wrote in March 1998, Jung, the enneagram, and the **Myers-Briggs personality test** – which almost all dioceses use to evaluate potential seminarians and ‘pastoral leaders’ – are all connected, the latter two intimately connected to Jung’s work to deconstruct traditional Christianity.”

(<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=3341>)

“A most helpful resource in analyzing the **MBTI** is the booklet by Rev. Robert Innes, of St. John’s College, Durham, entitled *Personality Indicators and the Spiritual Life*. Innes focused on “the two indicators most widely used by Christian groups – Myers-Briggs and the Enneagram.

“In Isabel Briggs-Myers’ book *Introduction to Type* (1983), she comments that the MBTI is ‘based on Jung’s theory of psychological types.’ In the book *People Types and Tiger Stripes* written by Jungian practitioner Dr. Gordon Lawrence, he states that ‘The (MBTI) Indicator was developed specifically to carry Carl Jung’s theory of type into practical application.’

In the book on **personality indicators**, Robert Innes comments that ‘Carl Jung’s psychology lies behind...the MBTI’.

The Buros Mental Measurement YearBook (1989, 10th Edition) notes that the **MBTI** ‘...is a construct-oriented test that is inextricably linked with Jung’s (1923) theory of psychological types.’ Mario Bergner of Pastoral Care Ministries observed that ‘of all the different types of psychological testing, forced choice tests (such as the MBTI) are considered the least valid.’ More specifically, Bergner noted that ‘the validity of the MBTI is at zero because the test is based on a Jungian understanding of the soul which cannot be measured for good or bad’.

The MBTI conceptually leads to Taoism... Consistently Jung teaches about reconciliation of opposites, even of good and evil. Being influenced as well by the Yin-Yang of Taoism, Jung believed that ‘Everything requires for its existence its opposite, or it fades into nothingness’.

“It would not be too far off to describe Jung as a gnostic Taoist. In *Psychological Types*, Jung comments that ‘The Indian (Brahman-Atman teaching) conception teaches liberation from the opposites, by which every sort of affective style and emotional hold to the object is understood... Yoga is a method by which the libido is systematically ‘drawn in’ and thereby released from the bondage of opposites’. Jung was also a strong promoter of the occultic mandala (read

chapter 71)... Sun worship, as personified in the mandala, is perhaps the key to fully understanding Jung. Jung taught that the mandala was 'the simplest model of a concept of wholeness, and one which spontaneously arises in the mind as a representation of the struggle and reconciliation of opposites.'

"In conclusion, to endorse the **MBTI** is to endorse Jung's book *Psychological Types*, since the MBTI proponents consistently say that the MBTI 'was developed specifically to carry Carl Jung's theory of types into practical application'.

Symbolically, the MBTI can be thought of as a "freeze-dried" version of Jung's *Psychological Types* (1921). Since PT teaches extensively about Jung's archetypes and collective unconscious, it seems clear to me that to endorse the 'freeze-dried' MBTI is ultimately to endorse Jung's archetypal, occultic philosophy."

(*Carl Jung, Neo-Gnosticism, and the Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator*, Rev. Ed Hird, <https://edhird.com/tag/dr-jeffrey-satinover/>)

"The overwhelming majority of Christians have probably never heard of C. G. Jung, but his influence in the church is vast and affects sermons, books, and activities, such as the prolific use of the **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator** by seminaries and missionary organizations. Christians need to learn enough about Jung and his teachings to be warned and wary.

"Jung's legacy to 'Christian psychology' is both direct and indirect. Some professing Christians, who have been influenced by Jung's teachings, integrate aspects of Jungian theory into their own practice of psychotherapy. They may incorporate his notions regarding **personality types**, the personal unconscious, dream analysis (read chapter 55), and various archetypes in their own attempt to understand and counsel their clients. Other Christians have been influenced more indirectly as they have engaged in inner healing, followed 12-step programs (read chapter 95), or taken the MBTI, which is based on Jung's **personality types** and incorporates his theories of introversion and extroversion. Because Jung turned psychoanalysis into a type of religion, he is also considered to be a transpersonal psychologist as well as a psychoanalytical theorist. He delved deeply into the occult, practiced necromancy, and had daily contact with disembodied spirits, which he called archetypes. Much of what he wrote was inspired by such entities. Jung had his own familiar spirit whom he called Philemon. At first he thought Philemon was part of his own psyche, but later on he found that Philemon was more than an expression of his own inner self... One can see why Jung is so very popular among New Ager."

(<http://www.psychoheresy-aware.org/jungleg.html>)

Both, the Enneagram and **MBTI**, are "Jungian" and have occult associations. Keep in mind that Carl Jung is ranked as New Ager number 2 in the 2003 Pontifical Document on the New Age. (JCBWL Notes 15)

I

MISCELLANEOUS

Chapter 42

Affirmation techniques and Positive Thinking. The Law of Attraction.

Origins and Development

“**Affirmations** in New Thought and New Age terminology refer primarily to the practice of positive thinking and self-empowerment – fostering a belief that “a **positive mental attitude** supported by **affirmations** will achieve success in anything.” More specifically, an affirmation is a carefully formatted statement that should be repeated to one’s self and written down frequently. For affirmations to be effective, it is said that they need to be present tense, positive, personal and specific. A related belief is that a certain critical mass of people with a highly spiritual consciousness will bring about a sudden change in the whole population. And that humans have a responsibility to take part in positive creative activity and to work to heal ourselves, each other and the Earth.

“The New Thought movement is not part of New Age but does share certain practices. This concept has grown popular due to Rhonda Byrne’s *The Secret* (also a 2006 film). These books and teachers express similar ideas to Napoleon Hill’s book *Think and Grow Rich*. Byrne was inspired in particular by Wallace D. Wattles’ 1910 book *The Science of Getting Rich*. **Affirmations** are also referred to in Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) (read chapter 37), Neuro Associative Conditioning “NAC” as popularized by Anthony Robbins, and hypnosis (read chapter 63). In 1984, Louise Hay a Religious Science Practitioner published *You Can Heal Your Life*, a guide to changing thoughts and beliefs. Hay’s **affirmations** are designed to help the user re-program their thought patterns, the intention being that harmful underlying beliefs which Hay believes psychologically support illness will be replaced with healing beliefs, and thus remove a barrier to healing.

“Esther Hicks, author of the *Law of Attraction* series, advocates using **affirmations** when one is already in a state of happiness and peace.

“New-Age **affirmations** come in different forms: spiritual talks, lectures, classes, affirmative images, affirmative words, affirmative videos, and mantra chants (read chapter 72). Proponents of New-Age **affirmations** say that with our thoughts, desires and emotions, we create our world. According to Brendan

Baker, founder of *The Start of Happiness*, **affirmations** work best when they encompass three elements: visualisation of the affirmation in one's life, feeling the affirmation in one's physiology, vocalizing the affirmation in a way that one is already congruent with that affirmation."

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affirmations_\(New_Age\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affirmations_(New_Age)))

"Essentially speaking the *Law of Attraction* is a metaphysical law which states that we attract to ourselves whatever we desire. If we wish for good health we attract it, if we want to find our soul mate we can attract him or her, even if we want some extra money we can attract it. However a negative thought pattern can make it extremely difficult to work well with the *Law of Attraction*. In the *Heal Your Life* Workshops we learn about **affirmations**, which are positive thoughts that we turn into regular thought patterns in our lives to attract what we want. Before this can happen we need to address the negative thoughts in our system and eliminate them. Here's how the process works"

(Lightworker [read chapter 69] blog, Evelet Sequeira <http://rainbowlightworkers.blogspot.in/>)

"**Affirmations** are spoken resolutions, which when used properly, align the physical, mental and spiritual energies. The ancient Hindu Vedas claimed that the spoken words *I Am* or *Aum* set up a **vibrational frequency** in the body and mind that align the individual with his or her higher self, and thus with the god-source. The word God in any language carries the highest vibrational frequency of any word in the language. Therefore if one says audibly *I Am God*, the sound vibrations (read chapter 72) literally align the energies of the body to a higher attunement. You can use *I Am God* or *I Am That I Am* as Christ often did, or you can extend the affirmation to fit your own needs.' Miss MacLaine's message is rank blasphemy: blasphemy in the suggestion that Christ used 'I am God' as a chanted mantra, and blasphemy in encouraging us to say that we are God. The way most of us act each day - as if we WERE God - our morning mantra probably ought to be 'I am not God, I am not God, I am not God'."

(*Crystal Lies - Choices in the New Age*, F. LaGard Smith, Ann Arbor, Vine Books, 1989. Reproduced in 'New Age Prayer' in the American charismatic periodical *New Covenant*, issue of June 1989, page 12)

"**Affirmations** are employed in the practice of several alternative therapies, Pranic Healing and reiki for instance.

Affirmations change our thought patterns, and therefore our lives, according to Reiki Grand Master Indira. If there is any part of us that does not 'buy into' the **affirmation**, then change may not occur at all or may be incomplete.

One such suggested affirmation: *From the Lord God of my being to the Lord God of the Universe, I release any vows of poverty, chastity and sins of my ancestors that I have taken in this or any other lifetime, so be it and so it is!"*

(Reiki, Grand Master T. N. Indira)

“In the hypnotic state, if Reiki is beamed with strong **affirmations**, the recovery is faster.”

(*All you wanted to know about Reiki*, Sumeet Sharma, 1999, page 172)

“**Affirmation:** I invoke the healing Buddha and the master spirits of Reiki.”
(<https://thereikipage.com/>)

Pranic Healing Founder Choa Kok Sui also teaches one to **affirm** or “repeat endlessly, ‘I am a divine being. I am That I am’”. Note that he uses a capital ‘T’, and that he has appropriated the words that God in Exodus 3:14 uses to reveal his identity and the nature of His being to Moses.

Mr. Sui explains, “All these statements simply mean that you are the divine self within your body. In other words, you are a divine being.”

New Age

“The Divinity of Man – those who subscribe to this philosophy deify man, teaching that all men have a divine essence, giving rise to **affirmations** like, “I am God. You are God. We are all God.” The problem with this point of view is simple: in ascribing divinity to man, the next step is necessarily ascribing evil, darkness and sinfulness to God ... Most New Agers tend to believe that reality is subjective not objective, that any person can create his or her own reality by the embracing of certain beliefs, or by making certain **affirmations**, declarations or confessions.”

(*What is meant by the term, “The New Age Movement”?* Mike Shreve,
<http://www.thetruelight.net/booksections/articles/newage.htm>)

“There is a kind of **affirmation** in use that is completely New Age and is based on the practice of positive thinking – a belief that just by thinking positive thoughts you will attract all kinds of positive outcomes, people, etc. The New Age practice of **affirmations** involves the constant repetition of these statements, writing them down frequently, etc.

“They’re often used in conjunction with visualization techniques (imagining or visualizing the positive outcome) (Read chapter 97) ... The problem with New Age-style **affirmations** is that they are based on a human-centered psychology that is based on the belief that a person is in complete control of their destiny.”

(*Affirmations*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=238>)

Also check out *Christian vs. New Age Thought Control*, Susan Brinkmann,
<https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=126>.

“Q: I have been using for some time **autosuggestion, positive affirmations, related visualization techniques, maintaining a positive mental attitude** etc. (in a Christian way, so to say). Are they demonic? There is a reason behind this question. Recently I incorporated some of the principles of Napoleon Hill (not for growing rich -- but only to streamline my life). But, soon I started having

couple of dreams where elephants were seen in a demonic way. Please help.
–Francis

A: To begin with, you need to totally abandon this quack Napoleon Hill and all others in that “**positive thinking**” cult.

Autosuggestion is a hypnotic technique. Any form of hypnosis can be dangerous not only psychologically, but especially spiritually. Visualizations and affirmations can be valuable, but ... these need to be 100% Christian. Most of us do not fully realize who we are in Christ. For positive affirmations try this one that is 100% Christian: [Who You Are in Christ](#) (link).

For healing visualizations I recommend Deacon Frank O’Connell and his [At the Water’s Edge](#) (link) ministry. The focus of any visualization or affirmation needs to be Christ-centered. Do not under any circumstance use New Age techniques.

Run far away from Napoleon Hill (author of *Think and Grow Rich*) and his positive thinking groupies, this includes Norman Vincent Peale (read chapter 80), and the Positive Confession preachers like Kenneth Copeland.”

(*Is autosuggestion, positive affirmation etc., demonic?* Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=1852>)

Napoleon Hill, Louise Hay, Rhonda Byrne and Anthony Robbins, whose names appear in the wiki citation at the top of this chapter, are leading New Age authors. Their names occur in other chapters as well, in this book.

There is the oft-repeated story of leading New Ager Shirley MacLaine standing on the seashore arms outstretched affirming aloud, “I am God... I am God...”

“In *Dancing in the Light*, New Age guru Shirley MacLaine explains the use of ‘Aum’ (‘Om’), which instead of a mantra she prefers to call an **affirmation**.”

(F. LaGard Smith, Op. Cit.)

New Age Affirmations are, to say the least, occult, and grievously violate the First Commandment.

The New Age Bible ‘*A Course in Miracles*’ also employs affirmatory ejaculations by the dozen (read about it in section C.)

Chapter 43

Altered States of Consciousness (ASCs)

Hypnosis (read chapter 63) is one practice that may induce an Altered State of Consciousness (ASC).

“We are frequently asked, “What’s the harm in going into an altered state in order to pray? Isn’t God protecting me?”

First of all, the premise of the question, that an altered state is prayer and therefore protected by God, is erroneous. Nowhere in Scripture are we taught that it is necessary to enter into an **altered state of consciousness** in order to communicate with God in prayer. God may have spoken to people, such as the prophet Daniel while he was asleep and dreaming – which is an altered state of consciousness – but this wasn’t *required* of Daniel. He simply went to sleep one night and God chose to communicate with him. This is far different from deliberately chanting ourselves into an altered state and expecting God to respond to us. Not only is this presumptuous, it’s also dangerous. Why? Because being in an altered state leaves us vulnerable to spiritual influences the same way that we’re vulnerable to suggestion while in a hypnotic trance.

“Hypnotists use a variety of tactics to get us into this trance, such as asking us to use guided imagery (read chapter 97) and imagine ourselves into a “happy place”, to speak in a soothing voice that is timed to the patient’s breathing, and to use repetitive words or phrases (Affirmations, read chapter 42) to bring a person into a trance.

“All of these methods are used in popular “prayer” forms today such as mindfulness meditation, transcendental meditation, guided imagery, Centering prayer, and a host of other eastern-style meditation techniques. And just as the hypnotized person is left open to suggestion by the hypnotist, so they are left open to the suggestions of Satan and his minions. This is because a person’s will is suspended during an altered state and they are unable to defend themselves.

“This could explain why there is such a long list of negative post-hypnotic reactions that accompany hypnosis, such as psychotic-like delusional thinking, panic attacks, personality changes, antisocial acting out, loss of concentration, confusion, depression, to name a few. In fact, this is precisely why stage hypnosis has been banned in so many countries.

“In fact, even the Church condemns these trivial uses for hypnosis. While hypnosis is not morally forbidden to Catholics, this is only if the hypnosis used “does not tend to an illicit end or one which may be in any manner evil.”

What most people don't know is that all of these symptoms can occur in the wake of any kind of induced **altered state**, not just hypnosis. With the rapid influx of so many new prayer gimmicks, especially methods that encourage people to "blank the mind", it's a good idea to take stock of just what techniques you're using to enter into prayer with God. Is it with the humility of Moses who simply went away to a place of solitude and beseeched the Lord to help him, or are we pridefully putting ourselves into trances with the hopes of "connecting" with Him via our own resources? "

(What's so dangerous about an Altered State? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=28844>)

New Age

"**Altered states of consciousness** are a product of the deliberate cultivation of abnormal states of consciousness – states not normally experienced apart from a specific technique or program (usually occultic), used to develop them.

Millions of proponents claim that altered states allegedly produce a "higher" state of consciousness or "being," including dramatic spiritistic (occultic) revelations, psychic powers, personality alteration, and a "positive" restructuring of the participant's worldview along Eastern/occultic lines. Altered states are used for psychic diagnosis and psychic healing (read chapter 87), and are frequently encountered as part of meditation programs which accompany many New Age therapies.

Scientific research in this area is a mixture of investigating normal, marginally altered consciousness (e.g., dreams) and occultic and parapsychological exploration of mystical, occultic states.

"Cultivating **altered states** can be dangerous both emotionally and spiritually. Many cases of temporary and permanent insanity, spirit contact, occult transformation, and spirit possession have resulted. Incredibly, the temporary insanity is frequently interpreted as an indication of spiritual "enlightenment." Even spirit-possession itself is increasingly interpreted as an altered state of consciousness – allegedly a more evolved condition of existence."

(*Holistic Health Practices*, John Ankerberg and John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-3/>)

"Most New Age practices or techniques (e.g. yoga, meditation, crystal work), and New Age supernatural experiences (e.g. channeling) generally claim to trigger or induce **ASCs** by stilling the mind, regulating psychic energy, or by voluntary spirit possession. Proponents believe these altered states of consciousness produce a "higher" and/or monistic state of consciousness or

“being” (e.g. the perception that “all is one”) leading to dramatic spiritual revelations and a positive restructuring of the participant’s worldview.”

(*Altered States of Consciousness*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/altered-states-of-consciousness/>)

JCBWL warns against using “other techniques for reaching **altered states of consciousness**” (#2.2.1).

“Developing our human potential will put us in touch with our inner divinity, and with those parts of our selves which have been alienated and suppressed. This is revealed above all in **Altered States of Consciousness**, which are induced either by drugs or by various mind-expanding techniques, particularly in the context of ‘transpersonal psychology’.” (#2.2.3)

“The point of *New Age* techniques is to reproduce **mystical states** at will, as if it were a matter of laboratory material. Rebirthing, biofeedback, sensory isolation, holotropic breathing, hypnosis, mantras, fasting, sleep deprivation and transcendental meditation are attempts to control these states and to experience them continuously”. These practices all create an atmosphere of psychic weakness (and vulnerability).” (#4)

Chapter 44

Arica Institute and Arica Training

Origins and development

In an article in *Our Sunday Visitor* of 5 July 1992 Fr. Mitch Pacwa SJ dates the Enneagram (read chapter 40) diagram to the 14th or 15th century. It was, he said, discovered in the 1890s by a Greek-Armenian occultist and gnostic, George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff who lived in Russia from 1877 to 1947 and who got it from a secret brotherhood of Sufis called the Naqshbandi, who were using it for numerological fortune-telling. He died in 1949 but left followers. Piotr Dimetri Ouspensky was a disciple of Gurdjieff. Oscar Ichazo, a Chilean who claimed to have had out-of-body experiences since childhood and studied all sorts of psychic practices, learned the enneagram from such a group. New Age centre *Esalen Institute* psychologist Claudio Naranjo, another admirer of Gurdjieff, collaborated with him. Naranjo spread the enneagram through *Esalen* classes.

In *Tell Me Who I Am, O Enneagram* (Christian Research Institute Journal, Fall 1991) by Fr. Mitch Pacwa SJ he says:

“Many different Gurdjieff groups formed after his death, such as Gurdjieff-Ouspensky Centres, Robert Burton’s Fellowship of Friends, the Theater of All Possibilities, and the Institute for the Development of the Harmonious Human Being. The one most influential in the spread of the enneagram of personality is the **Arica training** (named for a city in northern Chile), a “human potential” program (read chapter 62) founded by Oscar Ichazo.

“At age six Ichazo became disillusioned with the Catholic church because its teachings contradicted what he learned through occultic out-of-body experiences. He rejected what his Jesuit teachers said about heaven and hell, claiming to have been there and learned more about it than Christ and the church. He came to believe that living in one’s subjectivity was the real hell, but people could become free of it. He then studied Oriental martial arts, Zen, yoga, shamanism, hypnotism, and psychology, and experimented with Andes Indian psychedelic drugs, to learn techniques to free himself from hellish subjectivity. Students of his **Arica** training are helped and guided by an interior master, the Green Qu’Tub, who makes himself known when a student reaches a sufficiently high stage of development (Lilly, John C., and Joseph E. Hart. “*The Arica Training*” in *Transpersonal Psychologies*, Harper and Row, 1975, page 341). Apparently it is the same as Qutb I Zaman, the spirit in charge of the hierarchy that speaks through other spirits, as taught by Gurdjieff.

“Ichazo moved his base to New York by 1971, founding the **Arica Institute**. Since that time Arica schools have opened worldwide. Arica claims to teach the deepest states of Protoanalysis, or the nine Divine Gnozes. The Arica school represents the founding of modern enneagrammatic practice, and is one of its two main branches. Its followers hint it is the only uncorrupted Enneagram teaching available. Arica training and rituals include: Black Earth of Perfect Harmony Ceremony; Chua Ka; Psychocalisthenics, and The Nine Ways of Zhikr. A description of The Nine Ways of Zhikr is instructive: To Zhikr is to repeat the name of God. In the Arica Zhikr, Toham Kum Rah, the internal mantrum of the Divine, is repeated to specific patterns of music, movements, and breathing to produce a state of mystical, ecstasy and union with the Divine.”

(*The Enneagram: Psychic Babble*, Mary Jo Anderson, <https://www.crisismagazine.com/1997/the-enneagram-psychic-babble>)

“Ichazo claimed to have discovered the personality type meaning of the enneagram while in some kind of ecstatic state or trance under the influence of some spirit or angelic being: the Archangel Gabriel, the “Green Qu’Tub,” or Metatron, the prince of the archangels (the accounts vary). The training offered at Ichazo’s **Arica Institute** includes preparation for and means of contacting various higher beings, such as Metatron, with whom Ichazo himself has been in contact. One of the aims of training offered at Ichazo’s Arica Institute is to put the advanced student into contact with an interior master, the “Green Qu’Tub,” which is expected to occur at some point in their development.”

(A Brief Report on the Origins of the Enneagram, U.S. bishops’ Secretariat for Doctrine and Pastoral Practices, http://www.natcath.com/NCR_Online/documents/index.htm)

New Age

The 2003 Vatican Document JCBWL tells us about Helen Palmer’s book (*The Enneagram*, New York, Harper-Row, 1989) – that popularised the occult personality typing tool the Enneagram – in which “she recognises her indebtedness to the Russian esoteric thinker and practitioner G.I. Gurdjieff, the Chilean psychologist Claudio Naranjo and author Oscar Ichazo, founder of *Arica*.” (#7.2)

Chapter 45

Astrology and the New Age of Aquarius

Origins and development

There are different schools of **astrology**: Chinese, Indian and western. Most Christians are aware that indulging in the practice of astrology, which is a form of divination, is against the First Commandment of God, and it is one of the most commonly written about New Age phenomena in Catholic literature. Still, many consult the books of astrologers like Linda Goodman and the daily “What the Stars Foretell” horoscopes column in their newspaper to “read” their futures.

But astrology also enjoys a unique role in the development of New Age theory and so, in this chapter, we will examine what the Vatican Document JCBWL and other Christians have to say about this lesser-known aspect of astrology.

“Many modern (especially “Christian”) astrologers agree that God condemns *worshiping* the stars, as that would be idolatry, but they claim that they are not advocating worship of the stars; rather, they are simply taking advantage of the help and information God has made available through the stars. Let’s examine this view. In Exodus 20, the Ten Commandments are listed. **Astrology** violates the commandment: “You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not bow down to them or worship them.” Throughout history, astrologers have actually bowed down to the stars and worshiped them, and even today this occurs in various non-Western nations. But those astrologers who do not literally bow down before the stars nevertheless serve them. Many astrologers are pantheists, people who believe the universe is living and that it is divine. The stars and planets are revered as part of the larger divine universe. The alleged power of the stars and planets over their lives evokes feelings of religious awe and devotion. To serve means “to perform duties for, to give obedience and reverent honor to, to wait upon.” All astrologers serve the heavens in this manner. That is, the positions of the stars are dutifully recorded and the information derived from them is carefully analyzed and religiously obeyed. The heavens are honored for their power as the obedient astrologer trustingly waits upon their “advice.” And as the apostle Paul tells us, we become a slave to the thing we obey (Romans 6:16).”

(*Astrology*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/astrology/astrology-alleged-biblical-evidence-for-astrology/>)

The ‘New Age’ of Aquarius

“Christ had all seven ancient planets... all conjunct in Pisces... so he was the supreme, the ultimate Pisces... and so he initiated the Age of Pisces which is

now coming to an end with the dawning of the **Age of Aquarius**, which is initiated by the second coming of the Christ Life in all of us... In the Age of Aquarius everyone is the avatar, everyone is tuned in to their higher self..."
(*Astrology for the New Age: An Intuitive Approach*, Marcus Allen, astrologer, 1979, page 117)

Anthony Stone came to India in 1956, was in Bengal and Kerala, and on the staff of St. Stephen's College, Delhi when he wrote *A Christian Looks at Astrology* in 1973. New Ager Marilyn Ferguson published her pioneering work *The Aquarian Conspiracy* in 1980. So, Stone in India was very far ahead of his time when he correlated astrology with the emerging New Age in the West when he wrote, "The coming of Jesus and the rise of Christianity are connected with the entry of the vernal equinox into sidereal Pisces. Current interest is focused on '**the Age of Aquarius**' (vernal equinox in sidereal Aquarius) which is considered to be a time of spontaneity ...and movement towards universal brotherhood". Devoting several pages to a study of the different views of history, distinguishing the cyclic one of Hinduism from the linear one of Christianity, he shows that in Christian history the different periods occur only once, are discerned only by faith, and have nothing to do with the stars. Avoiding the relation between time and eternity, they are: before creation, from creation to Christ, from Christ to His second coming, and the age to follow. The uniqueness of the periods follows from the central fact that the death of Christ is unique in time. "The modern attempt to connect the coming of Jesus with the entry of the vernal equinox into sidereal Pisces, as also the current interest in the Age of Aquarius, is completely unbiblical," says Stone. (Pages 80, 82)

At the 2004 International Theological Video Conference, Cardinal Georges Cottier OP said:

"According to astrologers we are currently in the age of Pisces dominated by Christianity; this era is about to leave space to a new era, the **age of Aquarius** which will be marked by a universal religion in which all religious differences will vanish... Inspiration provided by esotericism and Gnosticism, as well as theosophy, anthropology and spiritism are clear."

(*The Declaration on the 'New Age', The Church, New Age and Sects*, 27 February 2004, <http://www.clerus.net/clerus/dati/2004-02/28-13/01CNSIn.html>)

New Age

"It is worth recalling the lyrics of this song, which quickly imprinted themselves on to the minds of a whole generation in... America and... Europe: 'When the Moon is in the Seventh House, and Jupiter aligns with Mars, then Peace will guide the Planets, and Love will steer the Stars. This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius... Harmony and understanding, sympathy and trust abounding;

no more falsehoods or derision – golden living, dreams of visions, mystic crystal revelation, and the mind’s true liberation. Aquarius’.” (JCBWL, Notes 20) The above note is a reference to “the first symbols” of the NAM, the theme song ‘Aquarius’ of the musical ‘Hair’ (JCBWL #2.1). *Hair* was written by a rock group called *The Fifth Dimension* in 1968.

There have been a number of rock songs with lyrics that look forward to the destruction of Christianity. One of them is Nina Hagen’s 1985 album ‘*Ekstasy*’. It had a record titled ‘*Gods of Aquarius*’ which is deceptively Christian, but, like most of her evil music, actually looks to the coming of the antichrist: “The gods of Aquarius are coming with UFOs... The good old communication with Holy Spirits, Of God’s creation, is true but our church denies it... What I want is automatic writing... The Golden Age of Aquarius, The Second Coming of the glorious...”

“The beginning of the Third Millennium comes not only two thousand years after the birth of Christ, but also at a time when astrologers believe that the Age of Pisces- known to them as the Christian age- is drawing to a close. These reflections are about the New Age which takes its name from the imminent astrological **Age of Aquarius**.” (JCBWL #1.1)

“For many people, the term *New Age* clearly refers to a momentous turning-point in history. According to astrologers, we live in the Age of Pisces, which has been dominated by Christianity. But the current Age of Pisces is to be replaced by the **New Age of Aquarius** early in the third Millennium. The Age of Aquarius has such a high profile in the *New Age* movement largely because of the influence of theosophy (read section G), spiritualism (read section G) and anthroposophy (read section G), and their esoteric (read section G) antecedents ... Here is what is “new” about *New Age*. It is a “syncretism of esoteric and secular elements”. They link into a widely-held perception that the time is ripe for a fundamental change in individuals, in society and in the world.” (JCBWL #2.1).

Marilyn Ferguson, author of pioneering New Age best-seller *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, 1980 “devoted a chapter of [it] to the precursors of the **Age of Aquarius**.” (JCBWL #2.3.2)

So, **the NAM is a spiritual movement** (many Christians now even describe it as a new ‘religion’) **which owes its very name and description to an astrological conspiracy** whose aim is that “Christianity has to be eliminated and give way to a global religion and a new world order.” (JCBWL # 4)

“The New Age Movement draws its beliefs and practices from eastern mysticism and the occult, with an emphasis on psychic phenomena, **astrology** and **spiritism**.”

(*Cult Proofing Your Kids*, Dr. Paul Martin, AbeBooks, 1993, page 97)

Astrology is named in several places in different contexts in the JCBWL document (including #2.3.2)

The **Age of Aquarius** is mentioned no less than twelve times in the JCBWL document. “**Aquarius**” by itself appears another ten times.

Chapter 46

Attitudinal Healing or Attitudinal Therapy

Origins and Development

“**Attitudinal healing** was founded by psychiatrist Jerry Jampolsky, M.D., and his wife, Diane Circincione, Ph.D. who opened the Center for Attitudinal Healing in 1975.”

(*Attitudinal Healing & A Course in Miracles: What's the Connection?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=20585>)

New Age

“**Attitudinal healing** is an important component of the New Medicine that in various forms is practiced by millions of people. It involves the alleged regulation or maintenance of physical, mental, and/or spiritual health by learning supposedly ‘proper’ (i.e., occultic) mental attitudes. Attitudinal healing claims to work because the spirit, mind, and body are interrelated; therefore, proper mental attitudes may influence the entire person toward desired physical, psychological, and/or spiritual goals. Although the health claims of New Age attitudinal healing have never been demonstrated, their occultic potential is clear; the common forms of practice are typically occultic, incorporating New Age philosophy and spiritistic revelations and contacts. Occult texts frequently promote attitudinal healing ... The danger of attitudinal healing is found in the adoption of occult philosophy and practice in the mistaken assumption it will bring physical, mental, and spiritual ‘health’.”

(*Attitudinal Healing*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-5/>)

“**Attitudinal “therapy”** is an important but often overlooked practice within New Age psychology and medicine. It reminds us such psychology and medicine are concerned with more than mere emotional or physical health; they are also concerned with a particular spiritual worldview and its practices. For example, New Age philosophy teaches that the attainment of genuine health is “holistic” – incorporating complementary spiritual beliefs or practices, mental attitudes, and physical therapies. Attitudinal therapy illustrates what the New Age Movement views as the importance of both mental and spiritual belief to health and wellness.

“In one sense, **attitudinal therapy** encompasses a broad variety of groups and methods, which claim that a particular mental attitude or worldview is important to physical or spiritual health. These would include the Mind Sciences, such as Religious Science (Science of Mind), Unity School of Christianity, Christian Science, and various New Thought religions, which we critiqued in

The Facts on the Mind Sciences. (Eugene OR, Harvest House Publishers, 1994) There are also schools of psychotherapy (especially the transpersonal school) and numerous New Age seminars and fringe psychotherapies or practices, such as Landmark Education's The Forum (formerly est/The Forum), Silva Mind Control, yoga, meditation, and Buddhist psychology, which teach the connection between attitude and health.

One particular form of attitudinal therapy is common to the New Age Movement. Its basic goal reflects the New Age belief that man is inwardly divine. Therefore, being one essence with God, he powerfully molds and creates his own reality. This is also a fundamental premise of much Western magic, and also Eastern religion and occultism. Man's greatest problem, therefore, is not sin but ignorance. So he must learn how to manipulate his consciousness in order to perceive "true" reality and mold it according to his wishes. **Attitudinal therapy or "healing"** provides one key approach to this.

Two of the most popular modern texts on attitudinal therapy were both dictated from the spirit world: Jane Roberts' best-selling *The Nature of Personal Reality: A Seth Book* and Helen Schucman's best-selling *A Course in Miracles*."

(Attitudinal Therapy, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/attitudinal-therapy/>)

"Attitudinal healing is the perfect example of why one must never judge a book by its cover. Although it's full of lovely platitudes that would sound terrific to any Christian – such as being based on the power of unconditional love and forgiveness – it's actually based on the work of Dr. Helen Schucman, the prominent clinical psychologist whose book *A Course in Miracles* (aka the New Age bible) (read section C) was supposedly written while she was channeling Jesus. The purpose of the *Course* 'is to train your mind in a systematic way to a different perception of everyone and everything in the world.' For example, this new way of thinking involves believing that we all live in heaven with God and that our lives on earth are just a bad dream from which we simply have to wake up. There's no such thing as sin, suffering, guilt, death, judgment, etc. and we need to be rid of these ideas and concepts because they stand in the way of our realizing our true divine nature. In order to do this, we need to develop a new attitude, and this is what the *Course* attempts to accomplish over the course of a year.

"These attitudes are 1) the rejection of biblical understandings about such issues as sin, guilt, atonement and 2) the acceptance of New Age occult teachings such as pantheism (All is God, God is All) and psychic development.

People who take the *Course* are put through a kind of systematic brainwashing program in which they are called upon to repeat statements such as 'Nothing I

see in this room [on this street, from this window, in this place] means anything' for a few minutes in the morning and at night. Although it might sound silly, by lesson 96, students are being taught that 'Salvation comes from my one self.' Lesson number 303 teaches that, 'The holy Christ is born in me today.' In other words, this *Course*, which was supposedly received from Jesus Himself, goes way off the rails.

"Founder Jerry Jampolsky does not hide his links to the *Course*. In his book, *Good-Bye to Guilt: Releasing Fear Through Forgiveness*, New York, Bantam, 1985, he writes: 'I began to change my way of looking at the world in 1975 ... Because of the profound effect the course had on my life, I decided to apply its principles in working with catastrophically ill children. My inner guidance led me to help establish The Center for **Attitudinal Healing** ... to fulfill that function.'

This explains why so many Attitudinal Healing Centers also offer *A Course in Miracles*.

A Course in Miracles (read section C) is so dangerous for Christians that we have devoted an entire booklet in our Learn to Discern series to presenting the evidence against this practice."

(*Attitudinal Healing & A Course in Miracles: What's the Connection?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=20585>)

Chapter 47

Brahmakumaris or Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University

Origins and Development

“The **Brahma Kumaris** World Spiritual University, headquartered since 1950 in Mount Abu, Rajasthan, is a spiritual movement that originated in Hyderabad, Sindh, in today’s Pakistan in 1936. It was originally named “Om Mandali”. It received this name because members would chant “Om” together, before having discourse on spiritual matters in the traditional satsang style. The original discourses were closely connected to the Bhagavad Gita.

The Brahma Kumaris movement was founded by Lekhraj Kripalani who became known in the group as “Om Baba”. The organisation is affiliated with the United Nations since 1980 and is known for the prominent role that women play in the movement. In 1983 the Brahma Kumaris achieved consultative status with the Economic and Social Council at the U.N.

“The **Brahma Kumaris** see humans as being made up of two parts; an external or visible body and a subtle energy of the soul. The group teaches that the soul is an infinitesimal point of spiritual light residing in the forehead of the body it occupies, and that all souls originally existed with God in a “Soul World”, a world of infinite light, peace and silence. They teach that souls enter bodies to take birth in order to experience life and give expression to their personality. Unlike other Eastern traditions, the Brahma Kumaris do not believe that the human soul can transmigrate into other species.

“The **Brahma Kumaris** use the term “Supreme Soul” to refer to God. They believe God’s purpose is to be the spiritual re-awakening of humanity and the removal of all sorrow, evil and negativity. They do not regard him as the creator of matter, as they consider matter to be eternal. The Brahma Kumaris believe that every action performed by a soul will create a return accordingly, and that the destiny of the soul’s next body depends on how it acts and behaves in this life. Through meditation, by transforming thinking patterns and eventually actions, the Brahma Kumaris believe that people can purify their “karmic account” and lead a better life in the present and next birth.

“The **Brahma Kumaris** teaches a form of meditation that may be done by sitting tranquilly, then making affirmations regarding the eternal nature of the soul, the original purity of one’s nature, and the nature of God. The aim of the meditation is also to learn to hold meditative states while being engaged in everyday life. For this reason meditation is usually taught and practiced with

open eyes. Their meditation focuses on identity as souls, as opposed to bodies. They believe that all souls are intrinsically good and that God is the source of all goodness. The university teaches to transcend labels associated with the body, such as race, nationality, religion, and gender, and it aspires to establish a global culture based on what it calls “soul-consciousness”.

“**Brahma Kumaris**’ students study the *murlis* which literally translates as “flute”. It is an oral study, read to the class early each morning in most Brahma Kumari centres over the world. The murlis are derived from mediumship and spirit possession. There are two types of murlis:

Sakar Murlis refer to the original orations that Brahma Kumaris believe to be the Supreme Soul speaking through Brahma Baba. *Avyakt* Murlis are spoken by BapDada. Brahma Kumaris believe BapDada is God and the soul of their deceased founder. BapDada (God) is believed to speak to the Brahma Kumaris through a senior Brahma Kumari medium, Dadi Gulzar.

Avyakt murlis are still being spoken at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in India. Students must complete the Brahma Kumaris foundation course and start by attending morning Murli class before visiting the headquarters.

In 2008, the movement claimed to have more than 825,000 regular students, with over 8,500 centres in 100 countries.”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brahma_Kumaris)

“During meditation, **Brahma Kumari** sisters give drishti*, a spiritually-charged gaze which is beneficial to the recipient. Shiv Baba himself gives drishti when he appears through the medium.”

(Brahma Kumaris, <http://brahmakumaris.info/w/index.php?title=Drishti>)

*Drishti is a point of focus where the gaze rests during asana and meditation practice. In Ashtanga Yoga’s Downward Facing Dog, the drishti is your navel. Source: <http://yoga.about.com/od/howtospeakyoga/g/drishti.htm>.

New Age

The **Brahmakumaris** or **Brahma Kumaris** is an occult, New Age organization. It is also recognised as a New Religious Movement or NRM, and as an elitist (only 900,000 will be saved) end-of-the-world doomsday cult. The Brahma Kumaris propagate the form of yoga that is called Raja Yoga. Brahmakumaris is pro-abortion and enforces total sexual celibacy of cult members and therefore an enemy of the Catholic Church’s *culture of life* stand. Its teachings are controlled and guided by a “medium” or “channelled entity” the Brahma Kumaris “believe is God”. The doctrines of karma and reincarnation are intrinsic to its teachings. The psychic meditations that it promotes are dangerous. Its “World

Spiritual University” is NOT an academic institution but the name of its New Age religion.

“**Brahma Kumaris** is one of the many Indian Hindu sects. There is no way it is compatible with Christianity. Further, the meditation taught in this “BK” is also incompatible with Christianity... In addition, the BK teaches heresy. They believe that God the Father shares a body with Brahma Baba (a.k.a. Lekh Raj Kripalani born in 1876), in the same way they believe Christ had entered the body of Jesus. The groups says it was Jesus who suffered on the cross, not Christ, the pure Son of God, but that “Christ” left the body early and went to take rebirth to help guide his fledgling religion into maturity. They claim that many more secrets about Christ revealed by this so-called Baba.”

(*Brahma Kumaris*, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=380>)

“**Q:** Does New Age speak about changing the world?

A: A pamphlet of the Indian **Brahma Kumaris movement** says: “Something is going to happen ... You can make it happen by associating at the same time with millions of others, gathered in a type of new communion of saints, who by their strength and intrinsic creativity have the force capable of tipping the world over to the side of righteousness.”

But will thought be enough to change the world? The way proposed to us by Jesus Christ is far more exacting and fascinating: it is the one of reciprocal love, that is translated into concrete works and creates living communities that build a new world.”

(*Christianity Refutes the New Age – Interview with Teresa Osorio of the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue* <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/christianity-refutes-the-new-age>)

For further reading:

- *What **Brahma Kumaris** don't want you to know,* <http://hiddendoctrine.wordpress.com/2010/01/29/about-brahma-kumaris/>.
- *What the **Brahma Kumaris** don't want the United Nations to know: How “Shiv Shakti Army” seeks to “conquer over the world, 3 square feet at a time”,* https://www.griess.st1.at/gsk/fecris/pisa/BK_EN.htm.
- *The **Brahma Kumaris** in a Nutshell – The Truth about the **Brahma Kumaris** World Spiritual University,* <http://brahmakumaris.info/>.
- ***Brahma Kumaris: A New Religion?** Reender Kranenborg, CESNUR, Center for Studies on New Religions* http://www.cesnur.org/testi/bryn/br_kranenborg.htm.
- *The Hidden Face of **Brahmakumaris** – A beginner's guide to the **Brahma Kumaris** World Spiritual University* <http://www.scribd.com/doc/17344482/The-Hidden-Face-of-Brahmakumaris>”

Chapter 48

Catholic Ashrams Movement, Saccidananda Ashram and Fr. Bede Griffiths OSB – New Ager

“Formerly a monk of Prinknash Abbey and Prior of Farnborough Abbey in England, **Bede Griffiths** went to India in 1955 and assisted in the foundation of **Kurisumala Ashram**, a monastery of the Syrian rite in Kerala. In 1968 he came with two monks from Kurisumala to **Saccidananda Ashram, Shantivanam**, in Tamil Nadu. This ashram had been founded in 1950 by two Frenchmen, (Fr.) Jules Monchanin and (Fr.) Henri Le Saux. It was the first Christian community in India that followed the customs of an Indian ashram and adapted itself to Hindu beliefs and practices.

“**Bede Griffiths’** autobiography *The Golden String* – written prior to his departure for India in 1955 – is a beautiful and moving book which made a big impression on me many years ago when I was a novice. Since *The Golden String* he has produced a number of books and each one seems to move further away from the Biblical worldview. In his book *Christian Ashram*, published in 1966, he says ‘the danger in the encounter with Hinduism is always that of a superficial syncretism which would regard all religions as “essentially” the same and only differing in their “accidental” characteristics’. Living so long in a totally Hindu world, Fr Bede seems to be in danger of this as well.

“For example, in *Christian Ashram* he mentions Aldous Huxley’s *Perennial Philosophy* and says: ‘It shows how far the fusion of eastern and western thought has already gone.’ But adds: ‘Mr Huxley’s conception ... is of course not satisfactory from a Christian point of view’. But then **Fr Bede** goes on to *praise* the perennial philosophy unreservedly in subsequent books like *Return to the Centre* and *The Universal Christ*. In these books he talks approvingly of the perennial philosophy, or the eternal religion, and that this ‘eternal religion cannot be discovered now exclusively in any one religion’.

“Bit by bit the uniqueness of Jesus and his body, the Church, disappears until we come to **Fr. Bede’s** latest book *A New Vision of Reality* which is so eclectic that it can be found in the popular New Age section in many bookshops. In England it is published by the leading New Age publishing house, Element Books, and in the U.S.A. by Amity House, who also published *Meditations on the Tarot*, a hodgepodge of occult, theosophical, alchemical, esoteric, astrological and reincarnational ideas stirred together with Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Sufism.

“In his earlier books **Fr Bede** warns of the dangers of the encounter with Hinduism: ‘Of a superficial syncretism which would regard all religions as “essentially” the same, and only differing in their “accidental” characteristics’. He says the Christian faith is always in danger of simply being absorbed into Hinduism, just as in the early centuries Christ was in danger of becoming one of the gods of the Roman empire, because ‘the Hindu has very little sense of religious differences’.

But gradually in **Fr Bede**’s later books the uniqueness of Jesus Christ and the unique claims of his Body, the Church, get watered down. So much so that later books like *River of Compassion* and *A New Vision of Reality* are perfectly acceptable to New Age publishers who have no time for the scandal of particularity which is Christ and his Church. In fact, in *A New Vision of Reality*, Fr Bede demands, as so many New Age books have done, that Christianity give up its ‘exclusive claims’ and recognise the limited character of its original revelation, coming as it did from within a Semitic culture in the limited world and thought-forms of the ancient Near East.

“**Fr Bede** refers to the occult world in many of his books, but unfortunately he does not adhere to the clear Biblical guidelines on this subject, mixing up the Hindu and Biblical cosmologies in a confusing way. This is particularly true in his latest books where he sees demons and devils as unconscious projections and as products of the collective unconscious.

The Bible makes it very clear that there is an unseen, but real world of angels and demons, and that we are not permitted to contact the latter or to consult the dead or mediums (cf. Deut. 18:9f). But in his books **Fr Bede** talks favourably of the New Age centre, Findhorn in Scotland, with which David Spangler was associated. This is a place where a medium is used to contact spirits and enlist their co-operation. The medium also ‘consults the trees and plants as to what they want and where they would like to be planted, and as a medium she interprets these messages as coming to her from angels’.

“*A New Vision of Reality* is heavily influenced by the whole New Age world with its theosophy, cabbalism, alchemy, channelling and other paranormal ideas ... Sadly it shows that **Fr Bede** has really moved into this strange esoteric occult world, which is not surprising as it is an intrinsic part of Hinduism since the Vedas, the ancient scriptures of India...

The psychic faculty, Fr. Bede maintains, can give rise to all sorts of visionary experiences of angels, gods, fairies, elves, goblins, nymphs and dryads etc. Fr Bede says that westerners today have largely lost these psychic powers whereas all ancient peoples, in India and elsewhere, lived to a large extent in that psychic world – perhaps demonic world would be a better term! He

mentions some of these psychic powers such as telepathy, palmistry, astrology, astral travel and that these powers are latent in all of us and can be developed ... Fr Bede states that these latent powers in man can be realised when man is freed from sin and transformed by the 'indwelling spirit'. But what is this 'sin' and what 'indwelling spirit' does **Fr Bede** refer to? He defines sin as 'the refusal to recognise our own nothingness' which is not the Biblical definition. The latter defines sin as missing the mark (*hamartia*) set by God's plan which is revealed in the Bible.

"**Fr Bede** is fascinated with New Age science writers like Fritjof Capra, Rupert Sheldrake and Ken Wilber, whose books, incidentally, are published by the Theosophical Press. New Age scientists have talked of how scientific theories have become mystical realities and how this pointed up the wisdom of the ancient masters, yogis and gurus of the Far East...

New Agers from a wide variety of disciplines and backgrounds would very much like to "match-make" a union of science and eastern, occultic religion. Not only would such a marriage vindicate the mystical worldview in their own minds, it would offer powerful propagandistic leverage in a culture where science speaks almost *ex cathedra*'. In this context one should look at Fr Bede's *Marriage of East and West*. In *The Golden String* Fr Bede says he thought, 'the source of all evil to which we are opposed was to be found in the scientific mind' ... So it is not surprising that Fr Bede, in his Foreword to *A New Vision of Reality*, states how much he is indebted to the New Age scientists Ken Wilber and Fritjof Capra."

(*Bede Griffiths Quo Vadis?* Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM, <http://sine-glossa.blogspot.in/search/label/Bede%20Griffiths%20-%20Quo%20Vadis>)

I will expand on the inputs of Fr. Finbarr Flanagan who I cited above from his lengthy and scholarly thesis on the downslide of Fr. Bede Griffiths from dedicated Benedictine monk to peddler of the New Age Movement in the Indian Church.

During the entire year 2005, I had studied, researched on, documented and written about, and visited ashrams of the Catholic Ashrams movement. In my reports, I had concluded that the Ashrams movement was both, heretical and New Age. The focus of my study was the **Saccidananda Ashram, Shantivanam**, at Thaneerpalli that Fr. Flanagan referred to.

The two priests who founded the ashram took Hindu names even as they Hinduised and syncretised the Holy Mass and the liturgy. Fr. Jules Monchanin became Swami Parama Arubi Anandam and Fr. Henri Le Saux became Swami Abhishiktananda. Fr. Bede took the name Swami Dayananda, but it never stuck. I call them the "unholy triumvirate".

Prominent New Agers from the West came to his ashram and he visited them in Europe and his later writings were greatly influenced by them. Rupert Sheldrake, was a frequent visitor to Bede's ashram. Ashram records reveal to me that Sheldrake stayed here from 26 February to 1 March 2004 (I visited for a week in December the same year). In the ashram library, I found an autographed ("To Fr. Bede, with many thanks, Rupert") copy of Sheldrake's, *A New Science of Life*, 1981. It is dedicated "To Dom Bede Griffiths, OSB". Its jacket states this about Sheldrake: "He lived for a year and a half at a Christian ashram in South India where the present book was completed."

"*New Science*" is a euphemism for "New Age" where religion and science fuse together and become one. The books of proponents of "new thought" or "new science" like Werner Heisenberg, David Bohm, Fritjof Capra, Paul Davies, Ken Wilber, Rupert Sheldrake and E.F. Schumacher are very much part of the Shantivanam library. I located a copy of the classic New Age bible *A Course in Miracles*, 1975 (read section C) in the "occult" section.

Sheldrake's *The Presence of the Past*, 1988, is again personally autographed "For Fr. Bede, a teacher to whom this book is dedicated. With gratitude and appreciation, Rupert."

His *Seven Experiments that could change the World*, 1994, is autographed "For the Shantivanam community, with unending gratitude for the happiness and inspiration I experienced in that blessed place".

Fr. Bede wrote to Jyoti Sahi of the Art Ashram, Bangalore, in November 1982 soon after returning from a long trip to Europe: "I think that we are in an age of transition. The old model of the Church, and also of society is breaking down, and a new model is emerging - a contemplative, intuistic, holistic model as opposed to our scientific, rational, mechanistic, analytical model*. But I am afraid that our present system will have to break down more or less violently before a **new world*** can emerge. So we have to do what we can in the limited circumstances ... I have been very much influenced by the work of Fritjof Capra (*The Tao of Physics*) especially *The Turning Point* (see JCBWL #9.1). We are having a conference here on December 28 to January 3 at which Capra and also my friend Rupert Sheldrake will be present, on '*Religion in the Light of the New Vision of Reality*.' Could you come? We shall be discussing it from the point of view of physics (Capra), biology (Sheldrake), psychology, and philosophy-you could add art?"

*For those of you who haven't yet been able to figure it out, that's all New Age. If my memory is good, the letter is reproduced on page 75 in the Shantivanam golden jubilee souvenir *Saccidanandaya Namah*.

According to Fr. Thomas Matus OSB, Sheldrake attended another conference at Shantivanam in 1984 (page 161).

In the library, I could not locate a Bible, the Lives of the Saints, Vatican documents, encyclicals, or the Catechism but found a fair number of titles from the Theosophical Publishing House, and a number of books on Hinduism and Hindu scriptures, by babas, gurus, godmen and women. And plenty of tomes on Jungian psychology, esotericism, the occult and New Age.

Located in the "Psychology" section:

Psychology and the East, C. G. Jung, 1978.

A selection of reading from the "Occult" section:

The Secret Science behind Miracles, Max Long; *Trance, A Natural History of Altered States of Mind*, Brian Inglis; *Quantum Healing, Exploring the Frontiers of Mind-Body Medicine*, Deepak Chopra; *The Splendour of Tripheret, The Teaching of the Universal Great White Brotherhood*, Omraam Mikhael Aivanhov; *The Esoteric Teachings*, Dr. Stylianos Atteshli; *The I that is We, Awakening to Higher Energies*, Richard Moss; *Triadic Mysticism*, P. Murphy, Deepak Chopra's *How to Know God*, *The Tao of Physics*, Fritjof Capra; *A Vision of the Aquarian Age*, George Trevelyan, 1977, one of the more pioneering New Age works, etc. A close friend of Sir George Trevelyan wrote the following book which I also found in the library:

A Christian in the New Age, Peter Spink, 1991. Canon of Coventry Cathedral, Rev. Spink founded the [New Age] Omega Order which takes inspiration from the writings of two leading New Agers, F.C. Happold and Teilhard de Chardin (read chapter 94. Spink is the editor of *The Universal Christ: Daily Readings with Bede Griffiths*, 1990. This Anglican New Age clergyman is also the editor of *Bede Griffiths*, 1994 which is sold through the Camaldoli Benedictine website.

The occult and the New Age is the new normal at Saccidananda Ashram.

Dr. Fr. Lourdu Anandam, in *The Western Lover of the East - A Theological Enquiry into Bede Griffiths' Contribution to Christology*, 1998, pages 234, 244-248, writes:

"**Bede** derives inspiration from... East and West, and supports his arguments with the findings of the New Science, and the statements of modern theologians like Teilhard de Chardin (read chapter 94) and sages like Sri Aurobindo.

In his late years, he was also influenced by the New Age Movement (NAM)...

All his writings from 1982 are much loaded with the concepts and terms and thinking patterns of the NAM. Therefore it becomes important from the Catholic theological point of view to make an inquiry into the theology of Griffiths...

The New Age has fore-runners... in the form of the Theosophical Society since 1875. It may be irritating to come across NAM terms often (sometimes too often) in the later writings of **Griffiths**. First and foremost it must be said that he is not the first one among Catholic theologians to be sympathetic towards the NAM. 'When the New Age is branded as something evil by German and Anglo-Protestantism, it is much praised by the Catholics,' writes Hans Joachim Turk, *New Age und christlicher Glaube*, 1988, page 667. Turk makes... theologians

such as Teilhard de Chardin... responsible for the fact that the Spirit of God is identified with the Spirit of the New Age in the Catholic Church.

“**Bede’s** later writings are pregnant with the terms and concepts of the New Age. The primacy of intuition as means of the right knowledge as opposed to reason, the complementarity of the masculine and the feminine, the insistence of the new consciousness that... reality is a whole in which every part is united with the whole... became the important concepts and thoughts of Griffiths. The impact of New Age thinking begins to be shown for the first time in his book *The Marriage of East and West* in 1982. In this book ... his skepticism of the intellectual concepts and dogmatic formulations of the Church are given expression. But the usage of New Age terminologies as such are to be recognized without ambiguity in *A New Vision of Reality*, published in 1989. Then, all the later writings, to which a bulk of the unpublished materials belong, use New Age terminologies as well as New Age thinking and there is a clarion call of the New Age. The final aim of the New Age is a sort of *monism* and *pantheism* identifying everything of the created reality with the divine and seeing the oneness of everything.

“If **Griffiths** had also the same understanding and vision, then he fails to be recognized anymore as a Catholic theologian... As we have seen, he has deliberately used New Age terminologies and he was sympathetic to certain ways of thinking and the proponents of the New Age. Besides, he was also united in friendship with some of the proponents like Fritjof Capra and Rupert Sheldrake. They were regular visitors to his Saccidananda Ashram. I think that we can come to the conclusion that these scientists of the so-called ‘new science’ who substantiate their discoveries with those of the philosophies of Eastern religions saw in Griffiths a good example of a Christian monk and theologian through whom their proposals and ‘visions’ could be confirmed. And thus they could win the sympathy and the support of Christians especially in the West... They gave him material to read, reflect and share his opinions on the subjects for which they were supposedly seeking clarifications. Like that, he was slowly influenced by the intellectual New Age Movement.

“In the foreword for his book of *A New Vision of Reality*, page 7, **Bede** acknowledges this in the following words:

There is no need for me to say how much this book owes to Fritjof Capra, whose *The Tao of Physics* gave me an insight into the new movement in science today, and from whose book *The Turning Point* the title of this book is taken. So also my debt to Ken Wilber, who has opened up Western psychology to the insights of Eastern wisdom, is no less evident. But I owe special thanks to Rupert Sheldrake...”

In an interview on 12th and 13th October, 1991, at Shantivanam, to the question put to **Bede** by Fr. Lourdu Anandam, "Do you share the views of the New Age Movement?" **Bede Griffiths** replies:

"Yes, I do. Incidentally, I am invited next year to a conference in Winchester, England where the leaders of this movement are meeting for several years... When eternal physics is giving way to Quantum theory and relativity, we see the universe as a field of energies. The whole idea of solid bodies moving in space and time gives way to a field of energies with different frequencies. And that brings us much nearer to the Indian and Eastern traditions. Fritjof Capra shows in his book *The Tao of Physics* that the *new physics* is very near to the ancient Indian and Chinese Oriental vision of the universe. The universe is the field of energies permeated by consciousness... The 'new science' says that there is no world outside this consciousness... Thus we come close to the Vedic tradition... of the universe."

To the question "Do you think that modern science will soon accept the findings of the 'new science' and thus a convergence is taking place between science and spirituality?" **Griffiths** says:

"Yes... Many leading scientists today like Fritjof Capra, Rupert Sheldrake and David Bohm, all belonging to that school, are discovering the spiritual dimension of the universe... There is a real convergence taking place between the more historic revelation of Christianity and the more spiritual revelations of India and the East... I think we are on the verge of a new theology, a new understanding of the Church."

"In the interview with me", says Fr. Lourdu Anandam, "he approved his alliance with the New Age Movement, that he shared its views and that he was associated with the leaders of the movement. Griffiths found support in the findings or proposals of the 'scientists of the New Science' for the unified vision of the universe of the Eastern mystic religions."

Wrote Dr. Fr. Clive Hurley SDB, *The New Leader*, issue of February 16-29, 2000: "Fr. Lourdu Anandam criticizes the support that **Fr. Bede** lends to the New Age Movement, and his later writings as approaching a pluralistic theology of religion."

From my continued personal observation, experience and research, I confirm that the present leadership of Shantivanam -- and to some extent other "Catholic" ashrams -- perpetuates the theological positions of Bede Griffiths and his New Age consorts. Under the present acharya-guru Sahajananda, Shantivanam discourses or satsangs are on Adi Shankaracharya's non-duality,

advaita, “all is one”, the doctrine of monism which is the core philosophy of the New Age Movement (NAM).

At Shantivanam what you get is syncretism, a whole lot of *advaita* garnished with New Age ideologies, a railing against all forms of dogmatism and organized religion (read as ‘the Catholic Church’), and a rejection of accepted teaching on Biblical revelation which is itself skillfully re-interpreted, and presented as a “*New Vision of Christianity for the next Millennium.*”

One has simply to go to the Internet for the volumes of revolutionary anti-Catholic and New Age material posted on websites and personalities connected with Fr. Bede Griffiths’ legacy -- the Bede Griffiths Sangha, Russill Paul, Sr. Pascaline Coff OSB, Wayne Teasdale, the New Monk Project, the Camaldoli monastery, the Sangha newsletters, and many others.

There’s the U.K.-based New Age organization called the “**Bede Griffiths Sangha**” www.bede-griffiths-sangha.org.uk. The Sangha (=a Buddhist community of believers) describes itself as a loose community of men and women whose lives have been inspired by the life and work of Father Bede. The meditations they use are the New Age “Christian Meditation” promoted by the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) (read chapter 25).

Visit my web site and read my study titled **IS SAT-CIT-ANANDA THE EQUIVALENT OF THE HOLY TRINITY?** which counters the lie of Griffiths and his ilk that the Hindu “**Saccidananda**” in the name of the ashram is the same principle as the Christians’ Holy Trinity.

Werner Heisenberg, David Bohm, Fritjof Capra, Paul Davies, Ken Wilber, Rupert Sheldrake and E.F. Schumacher. Who are these New Age associates of Bede Griffiths?

Heisenberg and Bohm were nuclear physicists. Davies and Wilber are psychologists. Sheldrake taught biology at Oxford University. Fritjof Capra was a physicist. All of them through their various works, point towards the *interdependence of energy, matter and mind*, of the physical, psychological and the spiritual.

Werner Heisenberg: “The New Age science-mysticism link [of physicist Heisenberg and others] needs careful examining. From the **Heisenberg** ‘uncertainty principle’, New Age physicist **Fritjof Capra** concludes that quantum theory “thus reveals the basic oneness of the universe.” The Heisenberg principle is accordingly cited as evidence for the monistic unity of experimenter and experiment and, by extension, all of reality.”

(*Understanding the New Age*, Russell Chandler, 1988, pages 246, 247)

David Bohm: "The *interconnectedness of electrons (matter)*, was proposed in a new form of the 'EPR' paradox, (first put forward by Einstein), to show the interconnectedness of electrons, by **Bohm** who 'has become popular in New Age circles.'

The teaching of the Isa Upanishad on 'This' (the cosmos within the grasp of the senses) and 'That' (which is the source of 'This' world, beyond the senses and known only in mystical experience), has a striking parallel in the work of the physicist **Bohm**... 'New Age thinkers say that the parallel between New Science and Vedanta is supported by physicists such as **Bohm**'... When the Upanishads say Tat Tvam Asi (That thou art) or Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahma), they are talking about the oneness of the human self and the divine self."

(*When the New Age Gets Old*, Vishal Mangalwadi, 1992, pages cf. 248, 249, 254, 255, 260)

"**David Bohm**, a theoretical physicist, says 'The primary emphasis is now on undivided wholeness, in which the individual is not separated from what is observed'."

(*Understanding the New Age*, Russell Chandler, 1988, page 186)

"In '*Science, Order and Creativity*' **David Bohm** argues that for science to answer life's most important questions, it must embrace a combination of Zen Buddhism and Hinduism."

(*The New Spirituality*, Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon, 1988, page 59)

Rupert Sheldrake: "**Sheldrake**, a British plant physiologist, postulated in his books '*A New Science of Life*' and '*The Presence of the Past*' that all patterns in the universe, from electrons to human minds to galaxies are linked by 'morphogenetic fields'. These M-fields operate... outside... space and time... and explain why phenomena such as extra-sensory perception and psychokinesis are possible, and how the law of karma might operate."

(*When the New Age Gets Old*, Vishal Mangalwadi, 1992, pages 250, 251)

Ken Wilber: "New Age notables would include New Age theorist and transpersonal psychologist **Ken Wilber**, the 'Einstein of consciousness research.' Transpersonal psychology seeks to blend Eastern religion with modern psychology."

(*The Facts on the New Age Movement*, Ankerberg and Weldon, 1988, page 10)

"**Ken Wilber**, a leading New Age exponent traces the stages of psychological growth through fourteen levels which mirror the seven yogic chakras of Eastern mysticism. At the 'most realized state' he maintains, a person experiences higher consciousness, the goal of mystics through the ages... and the apex of transpersonal psychology. At this stage, says Wilber, 'we are in touch with the

divine; we become enlightened'. I find it interesting that Wilber has edited a book whose major thrust is that modern physics 'offers no positive support (let alone proof) for a mystical worldview.' Yet he takes pains to point out that every one of the eight physicists whose writings comprise the book, including Werner Heisenberg, was a mystic. **Wilber**, a major architect of New Age thought, turns the biblical message of the Fall in the Garden of Eden upside down in his book '*Up from Eden*'. Actually, he says, 'the Fall' was an 'evolutionary advance and perfect growth, but it was experienced as a fall because it necessarily carried an increase in guilt...' By eating from the Tree of Knowledge "men... realized that they had to leave Eden's subconsciousness and begin the actual life of true self-conscious responsibility on the way to superconsciousness, or Actual Return to godhead. They did not get thrown out of the Garden of Eden; they grew up and walked out. (Incidentally, for this courageous act we have Eve *to thank, not to blame.*) The theological Fall, or original sin, Wilber contends, marked the 'illusory separation of all things from Spirit.' ... Evolution, then, is a labored return toward Spirit, toward Source. Hence the title of his book '*Up from Eden*': men and women are 'up from the beasts and on their way to the gods'." (*Understanding the New Age*, Russell Chandler, 1988, pages 175, 191, 274, 275)

Fr. Bede's New York *New Monk Project* leaders are so "intrigued with [Wilber's] Integral Philosophy" as to take it up for study, and Fr. Dominic OSB of Shantivanam is so familiar with **Wilber's** New Age writings that out of just two references in his introduction to the Shantivanam golden jubilee souvenir *Saccidanandaya Namah.*, one is from a book by Wilber.

Paul Davies: "Davies went so far as to write 'It may seem odd, but I feel that science paves the way to God with greater certainty than religion'." (*Reasons to Believe Today in Christ*, Fr. John Martinetti, 1996, page 21)
Davies, like Wilber, is a transpersonal psychologist (read chapter 39).

E.F. Schumacher: "In ex-president of World Vision Stanley Mooneyham's '*What do you say to a Hungry World?*' which advocates the political program of New Agers, and in the book '*Earthkeeping*', the New Age political program is laid out in its entirety... New Ager **E.F. Schumacher**, de Chardin and others are quoted with approval." (*The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*, Constance Cumbey, 1983, pages 154, 164)

Fritjof Capra: "After a long trip to Europe during which he met leading New Agers, Fr. Bede candidly admits in a November 1982 letter to Jyoti Sahi "I have been very much influenced by the work of **Fritjof Capra** (*The Tao of Physics*), especially *The Turning Point*." Both titles are listed along with 10 others in 'Some New Age books', JCBWL #9.1.

“**Capra**, is a leading New Age exponent. He has become a major mouthpiece for the New Age contention that modern science irrefutably supports mysticism and the ‘universal one’... In his influential and much quoted book ‘*The Tao of Physics*’... Capra’s views stem at least in part from a ‘visionary experience’ he had while he sat on a beach meditating, and which he acknowledged was primed by psychedelic herbs: ‘I *saw* the atoms of the elements and those of my body participating in a gigantic cosmic dance of energy. I felt its rhythm and *heard* its sound, and at that moment I knew that this was the Dance of Shiva, the Lord of Dancers worshipped by the Hindus... In his later book *The Turning Point*, **Capra** elaborated on Werner Heisenberg’s theory that observation affects the object observed. ‘The electron’, Capra said, ‘does not have objective properties independent of my mind’.”

(*Understanding the New Age*, Russell Chandler, 1988, pages 187, 188)

“According to **Capra**, ‘the earth is a living system; it functions, not just like an organism, but actually seems to be an organism, Gaia, living planetary being.’ ... His book *The Turning Point*, which has also been made into a film, *Mindwalk*, has become... a manifesto for the New Age Movement and a source of inspiration for the feminist spirituality of theologians such as Matthew Fox... Physicists such as Capra have seriously argued that the conclusions of the *New Physics* are best understood in the philosophical framework of Eastern mysticism such as Taoism, Hinduism and Buddhism... Physicists such as **Capra** find [the] tantric view of the ultimate oneness of mind and matter to be a mind-blowing insight for scientists.”

(*When the New Age Gets Old*, Vishal Mangalwadi, 1992, pages cf. 127, 137,243, 111)

These, then, are some of the world’s leading “New Age scientists” who influenced the philosophy, ideology and writing of **Fr. Bede Griffiths** and, through him, the **Catholic Ashrams movement** in India. **Saccidananda Ashram, Shantivanam**, is a leading entity of the “Ashram Aikiya,” the organization that keeps alive the NAM in the Church.

Chapter 49

Chakra Therapy and Chakra Balancing

Origins and development

“**Chakra** is a word from the Sanskrit (Hindu) meaning circle or wheel. It refers to centers of energy allegedly found in the spine located at major branchings of the human nervous system, beginning at the base of the spinal column and moving upward to the top of the skull. These chakras (energy centers) are considered to be a convergence point of metaphysical and biophysical energy.

“There are different traditions and variations of the Chakra philosophy. In Tantric tradition the seven chakras are:

Sahasrara or the crown chakra is generally considered to be the chakra of consciousness. Symbolized by a lotus with one thousand petals, it is located on the crown of the head.

Ajna chakra or the Third Eye is the chakra of time, awareness and of light. Symbolized by a lotus with two petals.

Vishuddha or the throat chakra is the chakra of communication and growth, growth being a form of expression. Symbolized by a lotus with sixteen petals.

Anahata or the heart chakra is related to complex emotion, compassion, love, equilibrium and well-being. Symbolized by a lotus with twelve petals.

Manipura or the solar plexus chakra is related to the transition from simple or base to complex emotion, energy, assimilation and digestion. Symbolized by a lotus with ten petals.

Swadhisthana or the sacral chakra is related to base emotion, sexuality and creativity. It is located in the sacrum. Symbolized by a lotus with six petals.

Muladhara or the base or root chakra is related to instinct, security, survival and also to basic human potentiality. This centre is located in the region between the genitals and the anus. Symbolized by a lotus with four petals.

All this has to do with the energy flows and centers in the body that are thought to exist in Eastern cosmology. These cosmologies do not actually exist and are contrary to the Catholic worldview. The philosophy and all that goes with it should be avoided.”

(Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=728>)

“Much of Hindu philosophy has emerged through human experience and the effort to explain what these represent. The interconnection of our body parts, the influences of our feelings on our health and vice versa, also our interconnection with the nature around us, has driven the human mind to give biological explanations supported by philosophical assumptions. Even in this

short study about **chakras** it is obvious that there is not always clarity if these are to be found in the 'subtle', psychic, or the physical human body. Considering that Indians, following Hindu tradition, which does not know Christ and the teaching of His Church, it is remarkable that some of their philosophers had come to the conclusion that there is a 'subtle' or psychic body, which is thought to have connection with the physical body. It is intelligent, but does not represent the same as the Bible teaches, I Thessalonians 5:23."

(Erika Gibello, Roma Segreteria, International Association of Exorcists, in a March 3, 2016 in an article emailed to this writer, available at my web site: **CHAKRAS-ERIKA GIBELLO**)

"Chakra therapy is based upon fictitious subtle or putative energy forces which supposedly permeate the universe. It is founded upon the Hindu principle that the body contains seven energy centers known as chakras or meridians. These chakras supposedly have the ability to receive, assimilate and transmit a life force energy known as "chi". States of ill health are believed to be due to distortions in the chakra system which prevent the life force energy from freely flowing in and out of the body. Each chakra is believed to resonate with a particular frequency or vibration and are **balanced** back to their natural state of vibration by a variety of means, such as using light, sound, aromas, touch, etc." (*Chakra Therapy*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=247>)

"In the New Age version, color therapists, aka chromotherapists claim that they can use light in the form of color to **balance** energy in a person's body, mind or spirit. There are a plethora of these practitioners on the web, many of whom have adopted the ayurvedic medicine approach which asserts that each of the seven **chakras** (energy centers) of the body correspond to a particular body organ or function, but also to a specific color. Disease or illness occurs when the chakras become **imbalanced**, a situation that can be corrected by applying the appropriate color."

(*Is Color Therapy Legit?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=31518>)

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"All this has to do with the energy flows and centers in the body that are thought to exist in Eastern cosmology. These cosmologies do not actually exist and are contrary to the Catholic worldview. The Philosophy and all that goes with it should be avoided."

(Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=728>)

"The Church considers this fictitious energy to be a "New Age god" in its document entitled, Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life (Sec. 2.3.4.2). This is why practitioners who claim to manipulate or depend upon any kind of unintelligent "spiritual energy" to affect healing could be guilty of the sin of sorcery (See Catechism #2117). And because these therapies have no scientific

basis, persisting in their use is considered to be superstition (See Catechism #2110-2111)."

(*Chakra Therapy*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=247>)

"Working with an exorcist for well over 25 years, having seen evil spirits to leave a human body on very specific places, it is easily assumed that those locations in the body could be equated with positions of **the chakras**. This is not the case. Considering that the teaching of the assumed chakra positions are various according to tradition and may or may not coincide with an exit point of an evil spirit by prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, one can say that the claimed chakras do not exist, but the human experience of acquisition of various powers during specific yogic exercises should be taken seriously, as they may request later an exorcism... On their way out they (evil spirits) rise through stomach and chest and leave at the openings on the upper part of the body or slip down to leave at the openings at the lower part of the body. There seems to be no exact position, which could be equated with certain **chakras**. The same can be said for their place of entry. During exorcism prayer their manifestations are very visible and physical, so much so that the afflicted person has to be restrained as not to hurt her/himself. This is not at all demonstrated during ascent or descent across the chakras by yoga exercises. This shows that even on a spiritual level no evidence is given to believe that chakras are a reality."
(Erika Gibello, Op. cit.)

Chakras are referred to once in the JCBWL document.

"The connection between the spiritual and the physical aspects of the person is said to be in the immune system or the Indian chakra system." (#2.3.2)

Chapter 50

Channeling, Channeled Spirits, Ascended Masters, Entities and Spirit Guides

Origins and development

“**Channeling** occurs when someone permits a spirit entity to possess him or her usually for some form of psychic knowledge or power, e.g., psychic diagnosis or healing, or to use the person’s vocal cords to speak in order to give spiritual teachings or practical advice. Various forms of spirit communication by channeling exist, such as automatic writing, narrated visions, and inner voice dictation. In addition, many people say they channel entities who claim to be angels, even though these “angels” are indistinguishable in their methods and teachings from the spirits channeled by occultists in general.

“**Channeling** claims to work through a variety of means. For example, through meditation, relaxation, visualization, hypnosis, altered states of consciousness, and other methods, channelers claim the spirits are able to enter, possess, and control them much in the same manner as a puppeteer controls a puppet. Channelers claim that by permitting spirits to possess and speak through them, mankind can attain a wealth of spiritual and practical wisdom directly from spirits, who have “passed on” and are highly evolved. The spirits claim they can assist people toward true individual, social, and spiritual enlightenment.”
(*Channeling*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/channeling/channeling/>)

“There is “clairaudient” **channeling**, where the medium only hears the words dictated by the spirits, as was true for Helen Schucman, the human amanuensis behind the popular *A Course in Miracles* (read section C). Then there is “clairvoyant” channeling, where the spirits put certain images, pictures, or symbols into the mind of the person for a variety of purposes. This has occurred in some types of Jungian (read chapter 36) counseling.”

(*What Happens During Channeling*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/what-happens-during-channeling/>)

“Although not all cases of multiple personality disorder (MPD) are spiritistic, some clearly are. This illustrates yet another ruse whereby spirits can operate invisibly under the guise of a neutral concept in order to secure their goals... If researchers think that some of the personalities in MPD are actual spirits, while other researchers interpret actual spirit possession as MPD, it is easy to see the potential for confusion in sorting out what is actually occurring.

Consider the following discussion of the famous trance medium Eileen Garrett, whose main **spirit guide** was “Uvani,” but who also channeled other spirits by the names of “Abduhl Latif,” “Tehotah,” and “Rama”:

Ira Progoff, a psychiatrist, extensively interviewed Garrett and each of her spirit guides. He observed that Tehotah and Rama emerge from a deeper level of consciousness than did the other two spirits, and that they resembled the “archetypes” or universal symbols written about by Carl Jung. Progoff felt that Garrett was a highly complex person who used her mediumship and spirits in an ingenious way to obtain personality integration.

“Garrett herself wavered between regarding her voices as her own subpersonalities and as guides from the spirit world. *From a psychological point of view it makes little difference, because they serve the purpose of personality integration.* Furthermore, they provided her with information with which she was unfamiliar in her ordinary state of consciousness – information found to be useful by her clients. Larry Peters and Douglass Price-Williams find the shaman’s “astro flight” and the medium’s “spirit incorporation or possession” to be highly psychotherapeutic. [*Healing States*, Villoldo and Krippner, page 197, emphasis added]

“To the contrary, from a psychological point of view it makes all the difference in the world whether we were dealing with real spirits. If spirits serve the purpose of personality integration, or provide “useful information,” they are simply using these as a ruse to gain influence or control over a person. The basic problem with modern psychology is that it has no categories to deal effectively with spiritistic intrusion or imitation of MPD. Unfortunately, even those characteristics that *distinguish* MPD from spirit possession could be engineered on the part of the spirits. We are not saying this is the case; only that it cannot entirely be ruled out.”

(The Psychological Aspects of Channeling, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/the-psychological-aspects-of-channeling/>)

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“The New Age Movement as a whole is largely undergirded by **channeled revelations and activities.**”

(cf., *The Facts on Spirit Guides*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, Harvest House, 1988).

“**Channeling** is important to the New Age Movement because many of the spirits impart information on a wide variety of New Age philosophies and practices. In fact, channeling as a whole is one of the pillars of the New Age Movement.

In our chapter on New Age medicine we cite over 20 examples of how spiritism or the occult influenced the originators of specific New Age therapies plus a large number of New Age health practitioners who have spirit guides, who instruct them in the use of New Age health methods or related areas...

"In our discussion of acupressure elsewhere we mentioned Iona Teeguarden, a leading teacher of Jin Shin Do acupressure and cofounder of The Acupressure Workshop in Santa Monica, California. In the preface to her book, *Acupressure Way of Health: Jin Shin Do*, she expresses gratitude to her spirit guide, "**Iajai**," for its help in her New Age medical practice.

Edgar Cayce (1877-1945, called the "sleeping prophet" and the "father of holistic medicine") is another example; his spirit guides produced thousands of pages of information on New Age medicine over the years.

Another spirit entity, "**Seth**," dictated various texts through medium Jane Roberts on both attitudinal healing and another popular New Age technique, dream work! In the book *Seth: Dreams and Projection of Consciousness*, "Seth" cites information showing how dream work (read chapter 55) can be used to secure a wide variety of New Age goals. In particular, this spirit reveals how dreams can be used to develop spiritistic out-of-body excursions and altered states of consciousness."

(*What Happens During Channeling*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/what-happens-during-channeling/>)

We note the influence that these "spirit guides" exerted in inspiring New Age alternative medicine and the NAM. There have been hundreds of them. We learn now of the more notorious mediums and their guiding entities from the pit of hell.

Carl Jung, New Age psychologist (Read chapter 36): His were "**Philemon**", "**Basilides**" and "**Salome**".

Leading neurosurgeon **C. Norman Shealy** is the author of *Occult Medicine Can Save Your Life* and co-author with Carolyn Myss of *The Creation of Health: Merging Traditional Medicine with Intuitive Diagnosis*. In his clinical practice he employs the psychic advice of spiritist Myss who channels an entity called "**Genesis**".

Barbara Brennan, a former NASA research scientist turned New Age healer, author of "*Hands of Light*," is regarded as one of the most widely recognized teachers of New Age healing that uses spirit guides. As Brennan herself admits, her ideas are drawn from direct communication with a spirit guide named "**Heyoan**".

Jach Pursel channels “**Lazaris**”. He runs a multimillion-dollar corporation entitled “**Concept-Synergy**”. “**Lazaris**” would pass on practical pieces of practical wisdom on how to deal with anger, guilt, depression and other emotions. On the Merv Griffin show, Pursel described how he met his spirit guide while engaged in his normal practice of simple meditation. These were sometimes illuminated with examples from quantum physics, something that made the entire show even more spectacular. One of the famous “**friends of Lazaris**” included noted New Age promoter Marilyn Ferguson.

Alice Bailey, Theosophist: “In her major work *The Rays and Initiations*, page 26, published in 1960 in time for the universalisation of the occult through the NAM, she says that the time for individual initiation is over. What is required now is group initiation. Her book gives detailed instruction on how to achieve this. She claims that the contents of her book were dictated by the entity identified as **D.K.**, otherwise known as **Master Djwal Khul**, or the **Tibetan**, an ascended master.”

(*A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, 1994 <https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

Elizabeth Clare Prophet: “This medium claims to have received seven dictated messages from **Djwal Khul** ... Some of these messages are: discussion of the chakras within the body as transmitters of light energy which is essential to the understanding of spiritual evolution.” (*Intermediate Studies of the Human Aura*, Summit University Press, 1974, page 6)

Alice Bailey, Mme. Blavatsky and Rev. C. W. Leadbeater (Theosophists): Major parts of one book, *The ‘K.H.’ Letters to C.W. Leadbeater*, were dictated to him by a spiritual entity **Koot Hoomi (K.H.)**.

According to Theosophical writings, “**D.K.**” or **Djwal Khul** (variously spelled ‘**Djwhal Khul**’, ‘**Djwal Kul**’, or the ‘**Master D.K.**’ is said to work on furthering the spiritual evolution of our planet through the teachings offered in the 24 books by Alice Bailey of *Esoteric Teachings* published by The Lucis Trust. Djwal Khul’s name first appeared in the work of Madame Blavatsky, a co-founder of the Theosophical Society and author of “*The Secret Doctrine*”, published in 1888, which was primarily written by Koot Hoomi and Morya, according to Blavatsky and others in the Mahatma letters.

Benjamin Crème: (read section C: *The New Age: A Luciferic Initiation*) He gets his from “**Lord Maitreya**”. (*Reappearance of Christ and the Masters of Wisdom*, Benjamin Crème pages 75, 227-248)

“Crème also claims that “**Lord Maitreya**”, the NAM Christ, is the underling of the great **Sanat**. Once a person has been initiated by Christ Maitreya (the first and second initiations) they become eligible for the third initiation by ‘**God**’

Sanat. This third initiation is the important Luciferic initiation (read section C). I also refers to Sanat as 'The Ancient of Days' the term applied by the Old Testament to God the Father."

(*A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, 1994

<https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

"In NAM circles **Lucifer** is also referred to under the titles of **Sant, Nat, Tanat, Sat Guru**, and **Sanat**. (*Dark Secrets of the New Age*, Texe Marrs, pages 79-83)" **Sanat** is a different combination of the letters that make up s-a-t-a-n - satan.

Oscar Ichazo, founder of the Enneagram, (read chapter 40) "whose instructing "higher entity was '**Metatron**', the prince of the archangels", was "in contact with all the previous masters of the esoteric school, including those who have died", and his group was "helped and guided by a master called the **Green Qu'Tub** who makes himself known when a student reaches a sufficiently high stage of development", reveals Fr. Mitch Pacwa SJ."

(*The Enneagram Theory of Personality: Why its use is incompatible with Christianity*, Michael Rose, <http://www.aquinas-multimedia.com/catherine/enneagram.html>)

Eileen Garrett: The famous trance medium's main spirit guide was "**Usain**", but she also channeled other spirits by the names of "**Abduhl Latif**", "**Tehotah**", and "**Rama**".

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, M.D.: the thanatologist (one who studies the medical, social and psychological aspects of death) worked closely with occultist Raymond A. Moody, M.D. the "father of the modern Near Death Experience (NDE) (read chapter 74) movement". "She was very involved in spiritism and claimed to have a personal spirit guide named "**Salem**"."

(*Ned Dougherty and Near Death Experiences*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11446>)

J. Z. Knight (born **Judith Darlene Hampton**): She claimed that the spirit of a 35,000 year-old Lemurian warrior "**Ramtha**" appeared in her kitchen and began channeling messages through her. The teachings revolve around the belief that everyone is God and that consciousness and energy create the nature of reality. (*Ramtha, Voyage to the New World*, Douglas Mahr, Ballantine, 1987) She founded the Ramtha School of Enlightenment. She has sold over a thousand hours of "Ramtha's" videos and audiotapes. Like many channelers, she is now a multimillionaire.

Joy Pedersen: Her book is called *Wisdom of the Guardian*, which she claims will empower people to "resolve their issues affecting money, career, and

relationships as well as how to create peace on earth and prepare for heaven on earth." It is comprised of messages from "**St. Michael**" which she claims to receive through channeling.

Ronna Herman: She calls herself a messenger for "**Archangel Michael**". Her *Wisdom Teachings of Archangel Michael* offer to help people "claim self-mastery" and "attain soul-awareness and God-consciousness."

"**Kryon**" is an alleged being who is being channeled by a man named **Lee Carroll**. Kryon claims to belong to the same family as the Archangel Michael.

Helen Schucman: "**Jesus**" is the spirit who worked through her to write *A Course in Miracles*, 1977, (the "Bible of the NAM", read section C) which boasts over a thousand study groups around the U.S.

Barbara Marx Hubbard's (*Conscious Evolution: Awakening Our Social Potential*) entity called himself "**Jesus**".

There's the "**Jesus**" channeled through **Mark Thomas** (The Michael Digest Group, The Michael Game, Orinda, CA, Warwick, 1988) and the spirit entity "**Emmanuel**" in the text by **Pat Rodegast** titled *Emmanuel's Book*.

"**The Christ**" – dozens of spirits call themselves by this name. For example: One claims to be the biblical Jesus who, after 2,000 years in the spirit world, has "acquired new ideas and experiences." He endorses occultism, teaches all men will become God, and encourages his listeners to reject Christian teachings and accept spirit contact.

(*The Christ, New Teachings for an Awakened Humanity*, Santa Clara, CA, S.E.E. Publishing, 1987)

Jane Roberts: "**Seth**" is the spirit that spoke through Jane Roberts, a psychic and spirit medium and automatic writer. The messages were written down by her husband in *Seth Speaks*, Prentice Hall, 1972. "Seth," through Roberts, produced some 25 different books, which together have sold millions of copies.

Ruth Montgomery: She is author of *A Gift of Prophecy*. One of her spirit guides was "**Lilly**." They have written over a dozen bestsellers on New Age and spiritistic topics, including *Here and Hereafter*, *Aliens Among Us*, *Threshold to Tomorrow*, *Companions Along the Way*, *The Walk-Ins* and *A World Beyond*.

Kahlil Gibran: **Various spirits** who allegedly knew Jesus on earth, as written through medium Kahlil Gibran in *Jesus, the Son of Man*, New York: A. A. Knopf, 1959.

Jerry and Esther Hicks, the authors of the *Law of Attraction*, which is just another manifestation of the "New Thought" movement that has been around since the 19th century, channeled a cluster of spirits who call themselves "**Abraham**".

“**Neale Donald Walsch** (*Conversations with God: an Uncommon Dialogue*, Book 1, G. P. Putnam Sons, 1996) co-founded the American Renaissance Alliance in 1997, that later became the Global Renaissance Alliance of New Age leaders, that changed its name again in 2005 to the Peace Alliance. This Peace Alliance seeks to usher in an era of global peace founded on the principles of a New Age/ New Spirituality that they are now referring to as a “civil rights movement for the soul”.”

(http://www.inplainsite.org/html/oprah_and_the_new_age_christ.html)

‘**God**’ himself used to communicate with Walsch.

Another channeler is **Kevin Ryerson** and his spirit guide “**John**”, one of New Ager Shirley MacLaine’s favorite channelers. Ryerson is one of the more articulate channelers and has appeared on dozens of radio and TV shows. On these shows he offers live interviews with his spirit guides.

Incidentally, **David Spangler**’s (read section C, *The New Age: A Luciferic Initiation...*) spirit guide too was “**John**”.

“**Steve Rother**, president of *Lightworkers* (Lightworker.com is now espavo.org), who “channels the loving entities simply known as **the Group**” has presented the material from *the Group* five times at the United Nations.”

(<https://www.espavo.org/article-the-group-goes-to-the-un-vienna-austria-may-1999/> in http://www.inplainsite.org/html/new_age_global_unity.html)

Napoleon Hill author of the enormously successful bestseller *Think and Grow Rich*, 1937 is a founding member of the New Thought movement, which is the forerunner of today’s New Age movement. Hill openly described visits from spirits in Chapter 12 of his book. He described them as unseen friends, unseen watchers, strange beings, and the **Great School of Masters** that had been guarding him, and who maintain a “school of wisdom”.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon_Hill)

“Enneagram founder Oscar Ichazo claimed to have discovered the personality type meaning of the enneagram while in some kind of ecstatic state or trance under the influence of some spirit or angelic being: the **Archangel Gabriel**, the “**Green Qu’Tub**,” or **Metatron**, the prince of the archangels (the accounts vary).”

(*A Brief Report on the Origins of the Enneagram*, U.S. bishops’ Secretariat for Doctrine and Pastoral Practices. http://www.natcath.com/NCR_Online/documents/index.htm)

“**Channeling**: psychic mediums claim to act as channels for information from other selves, usually disembodied **entities** living on a higher plane. It links beings as diverse as **ascended masters, angels, gods, group entities, nature spirits and the Higher Self.**” (JCBWL #7.2)

“The quest for a universal consciousness, the goal of harmony with nature, the vision of a transformed world, and the practice of **channeling** ... have become hallmarks of the *New Age* Movement.” (Ibid.)

“One of the most common elements in *New Age* “spirituality” is a fascination with extraordinary manifestations, and in particular with **paranormal entities**. People recognised as “mediums” claim that their personality is taken over by another entity during trances in a *New Age* phenomenon known as “**channeling**”, during which the medium may lose control over his or her body and faculties. Some people who have witnessed these events would willingly acknowledge that the manifestations are indeed spiritual, but are not from God, despite the language of love and light which is almost always used... there are many levels of **guides, entities, energies, and beings** in every octave of the universe... Fusion with some spirits who teach through particular people is another *New Age* experience claimed by people who refer to themselves as ‘mystics’.” (JCBWL #2.2.1)

“(In the NAM) much credence is given to the mediation of various **spiritual entities**.” (JCBWL #2.3.3)

“(In the NAM) since there is only one Mind, some people can be *channels* for higher beings.” (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)

“Revelations about Jesus, made available by **entities, spirit guides and ascended masters** ... are basic for *New Age* Christology.” (JCBWL #4)

Channeling is mentioned several times in the JCBWL document. (#2.2.1, #2.3.4.1, #7.2) So are **spiritual entities, spirit guides and ascended masters**.

Chapter 51

Chiropractic

Origins and development

“D. D. Palmer founded **chiropractic** in the 1890s, after saying he received it from “the other world”, and his son B. J. Palmer helped to expand it in the early 20th century.

Chiropractic is a form of alternative medicine mostly concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of mechanical disorders of the musculoskeletal system, especially the spine. Some proponents, especially those in the field’s early history, have claimed that such disorders affect general health via the nervous system, through vertebral subluxation, claims which are demonstrably false. The main chiropractic treatment technique involves manual therapy, especially spinal manipulation therapy (SMT), manipulations of other joints and soft tissues. Its foundation is at odds with mainstream medicine, and chiropractic is sustained by pseudoscientific ideas such as subluxation and “innate intelligence” that reject science. Chiropractors are not medical doctors.

“Numerous controlled clinical studies of treatments used by chiropractors have been conducted, with conflicting results. Systematic reviews of this research have not found evidence that chiropractic manipulation is effective, with the possible exception of treatment for back pain. A critical evaluation found that collectively, spinal manipulation was ineffective at treating any condition. **Chiropractic** is frequently associated with mild to moderate adverse effects, with serious or fatal complications in rare cases. There is controversy regarding the degree of risk of vertebral artery dissection, which can lead to stroke and death, from cervical manipulation. Several deaths have been associated with this technique and it has been suggested that the relationship is causative, a claim which is disputed by many chiropractors.

[**Check out:** *Playboy model dies after visit to Chiropractor*, Susan Brinkmann, <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=54497>]

“Throughout its history, **chiropractic** has been controversial. Despite the overwhelming evidence that vaccination is an effective public health intervention, among chiropractors there are significant disagreements over the subject, which has led to negative impacts on both public vaccination and mainstream acceptance of chiropractic. The American Medical Association called chiropractic an “unscientific cult” in 1966 and boycotted it until losing an antitrust case in 1987.”

(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiropractic>)

“**Chiropractic** can be safe and effective for a number of muscular and related conditions when used responsibly by adequately trained chiropractors. Unfortunately, there is another side to chiropractic, as we documented in *Can You Trust Your Doctor?* Not unexpectedly, the chiropractic profession is almost single-handedly responsible for the introduction and promotion of muscle testing (read chapter 3) in America. John Thie, the developer of “Touch for Health,” states that “most of these [Touch for Health] methods and techniques have been exclusively the province of the chiropractic profession.” A text on applied kinesiology (read chapter 3) confesses, “Most applied kinesiologists are chiropractors.”

“Muscle testing was developed by chiropractors and is often taught at **chiropractic** schools. George Goodheart was the chiropractor who may have used psychic methods to develop his system of applied kinesiology, that New Age chiropractor John Thie popularized it (with Goodheart’s help), and that John Diamond, an understudy of Goodheart, took applied kinesiology and extended its principles into his strange system of behavioral kinesiology. It is important to understand the logical connection between chiropractic, the potential for dabbling in the psychic world, and muscle testing. Classic chiropractic theory easily lends itself to the acceptance of a psychic realm as related to health. (We documented this in *Can You Trust Your Doctor?*) That Goodheart might have used psychic means to develop his system of applied kinesiology would not be surprising. Furthermore, although elements of the chiropractic profession are scientifically oriented and practiced responsibly, chiropractic itself often rejects the safeguards of the scientific method; historically, it has opposed medical science and rejected any findings disproving its theories.

“**Chiropractic**, for example, was founded upon a false theory of subluxations being the cause of all disease, and its early concept of the “Innate” is difficult to distinguish from psychic energy in general. Thus, the two characteristics that have strongly influenced chiropractic historically—the rejection of medical science and an openness to the psychic—help explain the unscientific and New Age orientation of much modern chiropractic practice. It is hardly surprising, then, that chiropractic would be the principal agent for advancing the practice of an unscientific and/or psychically based system of muscle testing in the United States.

“The ease with which **chiropractic** and New Age muscle testing are blended can be seen in the many books advocating a union of the two, such as the Valentines’ *Applied Kinesiology*, chiropractor David S. Walther’s *Applied Kinesiology: The Advanced Approach in Chiropractic* (Pueblo, CO: privately published, 1976), and Chiropractor Fred Stoner’s *The Eclectic Approach to Chiropractic* (Las Vegas:

privately published, 1976). Walthers is author of the “definitive textbook” on AK, *Basic Procedures and Muscle Testing*.

“Each of these systems variously accepts the occult idea of a mystical “life energy” flowing through the body. Although promoters may attempt to explain it scientifically, they accept the unproven premise of ancient Chinese Taoism and of much occultism, which teaches that psychic or mystical energy (*chi, prana, mana*, and so on) flows along energy pathways in the body called meridians.”

(*Muscle Testing – Chiropractic influence*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/muscle-testing-chiropractic-influence/>)

New Age

“Advertising connected with *New Age* covers a wide range of practices as acupuncture, biofeedback, **chiropractic**, kinesiology, homeopathy, iridology, massage and various kinds of “bodywork” (such as orgonomy, Feldenkrais, reflexology, Rolfing, polarity massage, therapeutic touch etc.), meditation and visualisation, nutritional therapies, psychic healing, various kinds of herbal medicine, healing by crystals, metals, music or colours, reincarnation therapies and, finally, twelve-step programmes and self-help groups. ” (JCBWL #2.2.3)

“The New Age didn’t invent alternatives, but they enthusiastically adopt and promote them because they fit so perfectly with their worldview. As the Pontifical document, *Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life* explains, “In a New Age perspective, illness and suffering come from working against nature; when one is in tune with nature, one can expect a much healthier life, and even material prosperity . . .” (#2.2.3) This explains why the same document claims that advertising connected with New Age covers such a wide range of practices including ... **chiropractic** . . . (#2.2.3)

“By spreading the belief that using pharmaceuticals or conventional medicine is somehow “unnatural”, New Agers have fueled the rise of so-called “natural cures” such as homeopathy, essential oils, and a variety of supplements said to aid the body’s natural healing processes. This belief thrives in spite of the fact that God also created science, and without science we would not have even the most basic understanding of how the human body functions! Instead, the New Age promotes the idea that “The source of healing is said to be within ourselves, something we reach when we are in touch with our inner energy or cosmic energy,” the document continues. This energy is referred to as the “New Age god” (#4).

“Belief in a “cosmic energy” (chi, qi, prana, universal life force etc.), a putative form of energy that has no scientific support and is founded in a pantheistic belief system (God is all in all), has spurred the growth of the enormous New Age industry known as “energy medicine”. This field encompasses a wide variety of practices such as Reiki, acupuncture, reflexology, Therapeutic Touch, biomeridian testing, chakra therapy, **chiropractic**, cranial sacral therapy, emotional freedom technique (EFT), meridian stress testing, and a variety of other methods.

“Alternatives can also be riddled with occult beliefs which are also embraced by the New Age movement whose adherents don’t believe in the personification of evil. This has led to the rise of occult-based healing techniques found in the thriving field of medical intuitives, psychic surgeons, shamanism, and other practices which rely on the guidance of a “spirit guide”.

Many people are being lured out of Christianity by participating in these treatment modalities because it inadvertently introduces them to non-Christian belief systems. This is why we need to be discerning about the use of alternatives. It’s much too easy to fall into the trap of the New Age’s most effective bait – the “Big Pharma is the enemy” theory – which plays upon the fears of anyone who has ever been hurt by conventional medicine or drugs. This theory has been used with great success by New Agers who use it to fuel the use of alternatives, one of the most lucrative areas of the New Age movement in which they are heavily invested. Attempts to demonize science should be dismissed out-of-hand. Science should be respected as the gift from God that it is – and one which has enabled mankind to overcome diseases, injuries and disabilities that once limited lifespans to less than 40 years.

“Years of research (and common sense) tells us that there are bad actors in both conventional and alternative medicine and the only way to protect yourself and your loved ones from bad medicine is to ask the right questions and insist on getting the right answers. (See *Discerning good medicine from quackery*, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=48783>)”

(*How Alternatives are connected to New Age*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=48779>)

“Aside from the fact that many chiropractors dabble in New Age healing techniques such as Reiki, Therapeutic Touch and the Traditional Chinese Medicine form of acupuncture, the reason this field is so often affiliated with the New Age is because of its occultic roots. Daniel David Palmer (1845-1913), the founder of **chiropractic**, was a Freemason and an occultist who was known to attend the same spiritualist meetings in Clinton, Iowa, as the founder of osteopathy, A. T. Still. Palmer, who taught a pseudoscience known

as phrenology (based on the idea that personality traits can be determined by the shape of the skull) did not hide the fact that he was a non-believer. In 1905, during a coroner's inquiry, he refused to take an oath to swear the truth "so help me God" because, as he said, "I don't want any help from God."

"It is widely believed that Palmer invented **chiropractic** on September 18, 1895 when he adjusted a bump on the spine of a deaf janitor and restored his hearing. This led to his conclusion that misaligned bones (known as "subluxations") interfered with the body's expression of *Innate Intelligence* – a kind of universal energy or life force. The concept of Innate Intelligence came from another popular healing technique of his day known as magnetism (aka animal magnetism), which was a revival of an ancient idea that the planets exude invisible rays of energy that affect our bodies. Palmer believed Innate Intelligence was comprised of this and other spiritual forces. He also believed that the pathway of "innate intelligence" into the body was the human nervous system, especially the spinal cord. When a bone was out of joint, Palmer relied upon methods used by another popular fixture in 19th century health care, the bonesetter, who would wrench or push the bone back into place. This is why the name chiropractic originates with the Greek word for bone-setting, which essentially means "hand work".

"Although self-taught, Palmer considered himself a scientist and passed on his science to his son, Bartlet Joshua ("B.J.") Palmer (1882-1961). Young Palmer started out his career working as an assistant to a professional circus hypnotist, but eventually came up with enough money to build a school for **chiropractic**. Like his father, B.J. was also involved in the occult and liked to encourage the idea that he was a Christ figure. Early New Age guru Napoleon Hill (*Think and Grow Rich*, 1937) considered B.J. his mentor. B.J. also hobnobbed with prominent Masons and other influential people, which led to the use of chiropractic by John D. Rockefeller. In 1963, Nelson Rockefeller was successful in getting chiropractic legalized in New York and appointed chiropractor Albert Cera to his Medical Advisory Committee.

"Even though **chiropractic** has dubious roots, it is very important to understand that Palmer's notion of Innate Intelligence has been in dispute since the very beginning of this profession. According to a report by the American Medical Association (AMA), many of his first disciples, who would become some of chiropractic most influential teachers, refused to adopt it, calling it "religious baggage". This led to the first chair of the Council for Chiropractic Accreditation, Claude O. Watkins (1909-1977), to call for scientific research and the abandonment of all cultist and vitalist principles in their profession.

“Today, a substantial number of chiropractors are anxious to sever all remaining ties to the vitalism of innate intelligence,” writes Ted J. Kaptchuk OMD and David M. Eisenberg MD for the AMA. “For these practitioners, the notion of the innate serves only to maintain chiropractic as a fringe profession and to delay its transition into legitimate professional education, with serious scholarship, research and service.”

“Many of Palmer’s followers also amended his idea of subluxation by expanding it to mean more than just bone displacement but also to involve joint mobility, blood flow, muscle tone and the condition of the nerves. These discrepancies within the ranks led to an internal struggle for self-determination that remains to this day.

As Kaptchuk and Eisenberg explain, the Palmers believed **chiropractic** was not just the best way, but was the *only* way to treat disease. Those chiropractors who agreed with them, who relied solely upon spinal adjustment and emphasized “innate intelligence” were called “straights”. Those who disagreed and were open to conventional medical practice and to mainstream scientific tenets were known as “mixers”. The schism between “straights” and “mixers” persists to this day.

The National Board of Chiropractic Examiners indicates that most chiropractors today use conventional physical therapy techniques (corrective exercises, ice packs, bracing, bed rest, moist heat, massage).

“It is also important to note that chiropractors are not medical doctors. To practice in the U.S., a practitioner must earn a Doctor of Chiropractic (D.C.) degree from a college accredited by the Council on Chiropractic Education which is the agency certified by the U.S. Department of Education. Admission to a **chiropractic** college requires a minimum of 90 semester hours (3 years) of undergraduate study, mostly in the sciences. Training includes coursework in the biomedical sciences as well as public health and research methods. Some chiropractors go on to pursue two to three year residencies for training in a specialized field. Chiropractic is regulated by the state and board examinations are required for licensing.

“Although still considered to be a form of “alternative medicine”, **chiropractic** is now mainstream in the U.S. [...] However, there are risks to chiropractic care, particularly in the area of neck manipulation and strokes.”

(*Chiropractic*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=127>)

Chiropractic is named in the JCBWL Document (#2.2.3)

Chapter 52

Deepak Chopra and Quantum Healing

Deepak Chopra is an Indian-born American author, public speaker, alternative medicine advocate, and a prominent figure in the New Age movement. Through his books and videos, he has become one of the best-known and wealthiest figures in alternative medicine. Chopra studied medicine in India before immigrating to the United States in 1970 where he completed residencies in internal medicine and endocrinology. He met Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in 1985 and became involved with the Transcendental Meditation movement (read chapter 29). He resigned his position at NEMH shortly thereafter to establish the Maharishi Ayurveda Health Center. He gained a following in 1993 after he was interviewed on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* about his books. He then became the executive director of Sharp HealthCare's Center for Mind-Body Medicine and in 1996 he co-founded the Chopra Center for Wellbeing.

Chopra believes that a person may attain "perfect health", a condition "that is free from disease, that never feels pain", and "that cannot age or die". Seeing the human body as being undergirded by a "quantum mechanical body" composed not of matter but of energy and information, he believes that "human aging is fluid and changeable; it can speed up, slow down, stop for a time, and even reverse itself," as determined by one's state of mind. He claims that his practices can also treat chronic disease.

The ideas **Chopra** promotes have been regularly criticized by medical and scientific professionals as pseudoscience. This criticism has been described as ranging "from dismissive [to] damning". Philosopher Robert Carroll states Chopra attempts to integrate Ayurveda with quantum mechanics to justify his teachings. Chopra argues that what he calls "**quantum healing**" cures any manner of ailments, including cancer, through effects that he claims are literally based on the same principles as quantum mechanics. This has led physicists to object to his use of the term *quantum* in reference to medical conditions and the human body. Evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins has said that Chopra uses "quantum jargon as plausible-sounding hocus pocus". Chopra's treatments generally elicit nothing but a placebo response, and have drawn criticism that the unwarranted claims made for them may raise "false hope" and lure sick people away from legitimate medical treatments.

"As of 2015, **Chopra** has written 80 books, 21 of them *New York Times* bestsellers, which have been translated into 43 languages. His book *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success* was on *The New York Times* Best Seller list for 72 weeks."

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deepak_Chopra)

"Some *New Age* writers view suffering as self-imposed, or as bad karma, or at least as a failure to harness one's own resources. Others concentrate on methods of achieving success and wealth (e.g. **Deepak Chopra**, José Silva et al.)." (JCBWL #4)

"Quantum physics is claimed to support the mystical notion that the mind creates reality. However, an objective reality, with no special role for consciousness, human or cosmic, is consistent with all observations.

Certain interpretations of quantum mechanics, the revolutionary theory developed early in the century to account for the anomalous behavior of light and atoms, are being misconstrued so as to imply that only thoughts are real and that the physical universe is the product of a cosmic mind to which the human mind is linked throughout space and time. This interpretation has provided an ostensibly scientific basis for various mind-over-matter claims, from ESP to alternative medicine. "Quantum mysticism" also forms part of the intellectual backdrop for the postmodern assertion that science has no claim on objective reality.

The word "quantum" appears frequently in New Age and modern mystical literature. For example, physician **Deepak Chopra** (*Quantum Healing: Exploring the Frontiers of Mind/Body Medicine*. 1989) has successfully promoted a notion he calls **quantum healing**, which suggests we can cure all our ills by the application of sufficient mental power."

(*Quantum quackery*, Victor Stenger, https://www.csicop.org/si/show/quantum_quackery)

"**Deepak Chopra** promotes **quantum healing** - the idea that we can cure anything that ails us just by applying the correct amount of mental power. "According to Chopra, this profound conclusion can be drawn from quantum physics, which he says has demonstrated that 'the physical world, including our bodies, is a response of the observer. We create our bodies as we create the experience of our world' (Chopra 1993, 5). Chopra also asserts that 'beliefs, thoughts, and emotions create the chemical reactions that uphold life in every cell,' and 'the world you live in, including the experience of your body, is completely dictated by how you learn to perceive it' (Chopra 1993, 6). Thus illness and aging are an illusion and we can achieve what Chopra calls 'ageless body, timeless mind' by the sheer force of consciousness"."

(*Quantum woo*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=50389> citing Victor Stenger)

Deepak Chopra is mentioned in the JCBWL Document (#4)

Chapter 53

Dianetics and (The Church of) Scientology

Dianetics (from Greek *dia*, meaning “through”, and *nous*, meaning “mind”) is a set of ideas and practices regarding the metaphysical relationship between the mind and body created by science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard. Dianetics is practiced by followers of Scientology, the Nation of Islam (as of 2010), and independent Dianeticist groups.

(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dianetics>)

Origins and development

“**Scientology** was invented by L. Ron Hubbard (1911-1986) in 1952 as an offshoot of his self-help program described in the book *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*. Scientologists believe that people are immortal spiritual beings (Thetans) who have forgotten their true nature. It offers a method of spiritual rehabilitation known as “auditing” which attempts to free people of the scarring effects of painful and traumatic events in their lives. Scientologists scorn the use of all medicines, believing that most physical problems are manifestations of spiritual ailments.

“Some of their more outlandish beliefs surround an evil galactic ruler, Xenu, who supposedly lived 75 million years ago and who solved a universal over-population program by transporting trillions of people to earth where they were destroyed. The souls of these dead people – known as body Thetans – are thought to inhabit our bodies. The object is to get rid of these beings in order to be healthier and to gain special powers of powers of mind-over-matter. Apparently, this facet of scientology is not revealed to practitioners until after they have paid thousands of dollars to the Church of Scientology, which is why this belief-system has been besieged with accusations of fraud and other cult-like practices.”

(*Defectors describe abuse at Church of Scientology*, Susan Brinkmann, <http://womenofgrace.com/newage/?p=66#more-66>)

“**Scientology or Dianetics:** A movement listed as a cult in all parliamentary reports. Its founder, L. Ron Hubbard, was sentenced for fraud in France in 1983. Scientology presents itself to be absolute psychotherapy. It is about reliving traumatic memories in order to rid ourselves of them. When the client is ready, he is trained to re-remember traumatic memories from his past lives. After a whole life devoted to this and thousands of euros’ worth of training and auditions (a kind of confession, sometimes assisted by a kind of lie detector), he can eventually gain access to the big secrets of humanity, as summarised here: millions of years ago, the evil Xenu, a dictator from the galactic federation,

threw all the dissenting voices of his regime into the earth's volcanoes and killed them all with atomic bombs. The disembodied spirits of these dissidents, the Thetans, possess us like demons. They therefore have to be tamed through the use of Dianetics, or Scientology. This is, in fact, a kind of permanent ritual of exorcism of the Thetans that possess us. Ron Hubbard is also an author of science fiction, which certainly explains a lot."

(*Psychotherapeutic deviation – The use psychotherapy in the case of cult influence*, J.F. Armogathe <http://griess.st1.at/gsk/fecris/23%20conf%20engl%20ARMOGATHE.htm>)

"An explosive new report by *The New York Times* documents two more defectors from the Church of Scientology who say they were routinely abused by the cult and its leaders.

The latest defectors from **Scientology**, Christie King Collbran and her husband Chris, are adding their names to the list of other former members who say that while wealthy movie stars like Tom Cruise and John Travolta are paying the bills, their Church membership continues to shrink due to rampant abuse of its members. In the *Times* article, the Collbrans say they belonged to an organization within Scientology known as the Sea Organization, or Sea Org, since they were teenagers. Sea Orgs work for an elite corps of Scientology staff members who are responsible for keeping the Church running. The couple signed a contract with the Church for a "billion" years, which is in keeping with their belief that Scientologists are immortal, and worked there for 13 years before becoming disillusioned. During that time, they say they worked seven days a week, often on little sleep, for "sporadic" paychecks of \$50 a week at most. They said Sea Org members were repeatedly beaten by the church's chairman, David Miscavige, and others were pressured to have abortions. After the Collbrans decided to leave, the Church forced them to sign false confessions about their personal lives and their work and to pay thousands of dollars for the coursework and counseling they received. They were also made to cut off all communication with their parents, siblings and friends who remain in the Church.

Tommy Davis, spokesman for the Church, told the *Times* the Collbrans were "apostates" and claim they didn't leave out of protest, but were expelled. Chris Collbran says he no longer believes in Scientology. "Eventually I realized I was part of a con," he said, "and I have to leave it and get on with my life"

His wife, however, claims she still believes in its teachings and has only disavowed its leadership.

"In June of last year, several prominent members-turned-defectors of the **Church of Scientology**, Marty Rathbun and Mike Rinder, agreed to an interview with the *St. Petersburg Times* in which they talked about the rampant abuse in the Church. Close associates of leader Miscavige, they claimed he

routinely attacked his “lieutenants” and that they often did the same to their underlings to “demonstrate loyalty to Miscavige and prove their mettle.”

They said Church staffers are disciplined and controlled by a multilayered system of “ecclesiastical justice” which includes the public confession of sins, facing embarrassing “security checks” or threats of being isolated as a “suppressive person.”

These defectors also revealed how the Church covered up its role in the death of Lisa McPherson, a Scientologist who died of a pulmonary embolism in 1995 after being held by fellow Church members for 17 days in isolation at a Florida hotel. The state’s medical examiner determined that Lisa was a victim of negligent homicide and the Church was officially indicted on two felony charges of “abuse and/or neglect of a disabled adult” and “practicing medicine without a license”.

(Defectors describe abuse at Church of Scientology, Susan Brinkmann, <http://womenofgrace.com/newage/?p=66#more-66>)

New Age

“The New Age’s human potential movement ... teaches a human-centered psychology based on the belief that a person is in complete control of their destiny. Examples of books that fall into this New Age category would be *The Power of Positive Thinking* (Norman Vincent Peale), *A Course in Miracles* (Helen Schucman), *The Secret* (Rhonda Byrne), *The New Earth* (Eckhart Tolle), *Silva Mind Control* (José Silva), *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (Stephen Covey), *Dianetics* (L. Ron Hubbard) to name a few.

These books, and a variety of seminars such as *Landmark* and *The Turning Point*, blend psychology and spirituality into a new kind of personal growth movement that is aimed at helping man to discover his own true potential (divinity).”

(*Making Your Mind Magnificent*, Susan Brinkmann, <http://womenofgrace.com/newage/?cat=14&paged=8>)

“This week the Archdiocese of Burgos in Spain announced it has prohibited the use of church buildings and facilities by pseudo-religious sects that disguise or hide their true identity, in order to thwart their “chameleon-like strategy of proselytism.” The archdiocese warned that one of the strategies of such groups is to use Catholic facilities (schools, diocesan centers, and retreat houses) to hold their events. For this reason, the archdiocese said no Catholic facilities would be allowed to be used by pseudo-religious sects associated with movements and philosophies such as the New Age, Yoga, transcendental meditation, Reiki, **Dianetics**, and others.”

(*Spanish diocese prohibits use of Catholic buildings by pseudo-religious sects and movements*, 14 February 2007, https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/spanish_diocese_prohibits_use_of_catholic_buildings_by_pseudoreligious_sects_and_movements)

"#22. There are human empowerment programs of doubtful scientific origins, such as **Dianetics**, the Silva Method of Mental Control, Transcendental Meditation, and others, which produce an unbelievable amount of graphs and reports that supposedly verify the solidity of their claims. A pseudoscientific language permeates their books and discourses to create the impression of being a fully tested procedure. It could be that some of their clients experience an initial well-being, achieve a greater tranquillity, acquire the habit of greater concentration at work, or whatever was promised them, but many times these programs conceal a defective view of man, the world, and God. They imperceptibly lead the participant to affirm or to accept what common sense and the Christian faith reject."

(*A Call to Vigilance, Pastoral Instruction on New Age*, Archbishop [later Cardinal] Norberto Rivera Carrera, 7 January 1996 <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/acall.htm>)

"**Dianetics** (the cure of psychosomatic diseases through the purgation of fear; **Scientology** of Ron Hubbard)..."

(*Pastoral Instruction on New Age*, Archbishop Edward Anthony McCarthy of Miami, November 1991, <http://es.catholic.net/catequistasyevangelizadores/90/1915/articulo.php?id=32065>)

For further reading:

- *Scientology Is a Gnostic Cult* <http://catholicexchange.com/scientology-is-a-gnostic-cult>

Chapter 54

Dowsing or divining, Rhabdomancy and Radiesthesia. Psychic Diagnosis and Psychometry

Origins and development

“The practice of **divining using a rod, wand, or pendulum** is ancient. No exact history is available to pin-point the start, but some drawings found in China show evidence of this practice as far back as 1400 B.C. In the Bible (Deuteronomy 18: 9–14) which is dated around 1450 B.C., strong words of warning were given to the people of Israel concerning divining as they were about to enter Canaan. Divination was recorded in the Bible as having been used 500 years prior to the writing of Deuteronomy 18. This passage does not state the method of divining that was practiced. In the Bible, it is recorded that *divining by a staff* was practiced in Israel around 750 B.C. (Hosea 4: 12).

“**Divining** with a rod can be considered the same act as using a pendulum. When was it first used in medical diagnosis? We do not know, but early in history the rod became connected with health and healing as evidenced by the following examples. Greek mythology shows ties to serpent power and the use of a ‘rod’ when Apollo handed over to Hermes (Mercury) a magic wand. Homer, in his *Odyssey*, tells how this rod could send men’s souls to Hades or return them; it had power to bring winds and storms. Another name for the rod was ‘*caduceus*’ and was depicted as entwined with snakes. The rod was passed on to Aesculapius, the Greek god of healing, and has since become the symbol of medicine.

The pendulum is one of the most frequently used methods of divination. It may be used in psychology to assess personality disorders, to make diagnosis in medical conditions, to choose treatments or medicinals, to find oil in the ground, to locate different metals in the earth, and most frequent of all, to find water underground.

“Around 1900, a Catholic priest, Alexis Mermet, who was a dowser for underground water and metals, concluded that **dowsing** should be amenable in medical diagnosis for humans and animals as well. He wrote the book, *How I proceed in the Discovery of Near or Distant Water, Metals, Hidden Objects, and Illnesses*. He says: I invented the method of ‘pendular diagnosis’.

It is unlikely that Mermet was really the first to use the pendulum in medical diagnosis, but at least he thought so.”

(*Exposing Spiritualistic Practices in Healing*, Dr. Edwin A. Noyes M.D. MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

The art of divination using a hand-held instrument is also called “dowsing”. “**Dowsing** is the art of finding underground water by extra-sensory perception. Sometimes tools are used. The traditional one is a forked hazel stick. When held in the correct way this will twitch in response to small muscle movements in the back and shoulders.”

(<http://www.blessedquietness.com/journal/housechu/dowsing.htm>)

“**Dowsing** is also referred to as ‘**divining**’. Divining is a spiritual practice and the success or the outcome of the divining depends on the divine state of mind. It is a form of clairvoyance.”

(Sumeet Sharma, *All You Wanted to Know about Dowsing*, New Dawn, 2002)

“**Dowsing** is a psychic practice employing divinatory implements (e.g., rod and pendulum, forked sticks) and methods in order to search out desired information. For example, dowsing is used to discover the nature or location of disease and determine the proper treatment. It is also used to locate water or minerals, lost objects, missing persons, buried treasure, etc. Water dowsing claims to work through a supposedly natural sensitivity to geomagnetic phenomena, “water radiations,” or by some allegedly unconscious “motor ability” operating in an unknown manner. But dowsing is not the human ability that many people assume it is. Rather, it is a spiritistic power. Learning to dowse often involves the cultivation of mild to moderate altered states of consciousness, the development of psychic powers, and even spirit contact. As documented in dowsing literature itself or in Ben Hester’s *Dowsing: An Exposé of Hidden Occult Forces* (self-published), many leading dowsers freely confess that dowsing is a supernatural ability, and some also confess to having spirit guides.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-16/>)

“The ancient art of **rhabdomancy**, as **dowsing** was originally known, has been practised since time immemorial. Ancient Egyptians and Babylonians dowsed using split reeds, and the early Chinese Emperor Kwang Sung (circa 2200 BCE) was known to have dowsed. The Chinese art of Feng Shui, that is, sacred geomancy or building, evolved from a theory linking geomancy with rhabdomancy.”

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A3373175>)

Diane Marcotte, a former Board Member of the Canadian Society of **Dowsers** advises that we “ask the pendulum mentally or out loud” to show us its ‘yes’ or ‘no’ movement by swinging in a particular circular direction. She also teaches

the use of charts in which one can “mark the names of various remedies: Bach Flower, homeopathic, etc. to see which ones you should take.”

(http://www.canadiandowsers.org/How_to_pendulum.html)

“The actual words ‘**dowsing rod**’ first appeared in print in a seventeenth century essay written by John Locke, who referred to the ability to ‘divine,’ or discover, mines of gold and silver.

One of the first medical dowsers was Abbé Alexis Bouly, a Catholic priest, living in a little French seaside village on the English Channel. Bouly eventually founded the Society of Friends of **Radiesthesia**, a new word he coined for dowsing, an amalgam of a Latin root for ‘radiation’ and a Greek root for ‘perception’.”

(*Christofer Bird, The Divining Hand: The 500-Year-Old Mystery of Dowsing*, New Age Press, 1979, <http://www.prosperity.com/billellis/radi.htm>)

“Dowsers claim that **dowsing** is scientific. Controlled tests conducted by psychic debunker James Randi, who offered \$10,000 to anyone who would demonstrate that dowsing works, yielded no evidence that dowsers have any unique ability to find water. In fact, the results of dowsing trials in many countries do not confirm the scientific claims of dowsers.

Michael Martin, a professor of philosophy at Boston University, tested Paul Sevigny, president of the American Society of Dowsers. Even after 40 trials, Sevigny performed at levels worse than chance.”

(*The Skeptical Inquirer*, Fall 1978, pp.16-20; Summer 1984, pp.329-33; Summer 1982, pp.34-37; Winter 1983-84, p.139)

Technically, **dowsing** is a type of **radiaesthesia** and, by extension, a form of **psychometry**.

(*Dowsing and Water Dowsing*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/dowsing-and-water-dowsing/>)

“Radionics (read chapter 17) is a form of **psychometry** where the healer is aided by a mechanical apparatus such as Abram’s black box or a pendulum. Medical psychometry consists of methods of **psychic diagnosis** and treatment. These different practices claim to work by teaching healers an alleged psychic sensitivity to “radiations” or mystical energies in objects or people ... These methods have never been proven to work as claimed. For example, it is scientifically proven that radionic devices such as **dowsing** rods contain no mysterious powers in themselves. These techniques operate through spiritistic power not a natural human or mechanical sensitivity to strange “radiations.” Psychic development is required for their use and their practices are basically forms of spiritistic, **psychic diagnosis** and healing. Potential problems include

incorrect diagnosis of a serious illness, wrong prescribing of treatment, and occultic influence as revealed in such texts as *Spirit Psychometry*."

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-33/>)

New Age

The instruments of **dowsing** are manifold, as are the usages. At a charismatic workshop on healing and deliverance which I attended, one priest stated that a seminarian friend of his used a bunch of keys for divination (and that he himself had the "gift")! This fact underscores the psychic nature of dowsing in that the divining power does not reside in the object used. It resides somewhere else. The key question is: What is the true origin of the power used by the dowser? Dr. John Weldon says, "I believe the real source of a dowser's power is the spirit world. Promoters continually stress its supposed 'scientific' nature, but they cannot easily escape the supernatural and occultic reality of their art."

Weldon conducted an in-depth study of the practice and proved that dowsing involves occult power. He says, "The fact that dowsing is also increasingly accepted in the church as a spiritual practice adds to the need for an evaluation of this technique. Dowsing itself is a broad category encompassing many different forms, one of which is dowsing for water... All forms of dowsing are ancient pagan practices that are really forms of divination."

(*Dowsing: Divine Gift, Human Ability or Occult Power?* <http://iclnet93.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/crj/crj-jrnl/crj0099a.txt>)

Christian dowsers attempt to justify the practice by appealing to the Bible. Dowsing is divination, whether you are using a stick or a rosary or a crucifix, and divination is forbidden by God.

Passages that refer to digging wells or searching for water (called "water witching") are said to be 'mistranslated'. If they were 'properly' translated they would, supposedly, mention dowsing. They claim that Moses used his staff to dowse for water (Exodus 17). Moses was not *searching* for water. He had been divinely instructed to go to that particular rock and verbally command water to come out of it. In his anger over another matter he disobeyed and struck the rock with his staff as he made the command. He suffered rather severe punishment from God for this disobedience, which implies there was some important significance in the use of the staff.

In fact, there is only one direct reference to dowsing in the Bible. Here the practice is specifically condemned by God, Hosea 4: 12: "(My people) consult their piece of wood, and their wand* makes pronouncements for them; for the spirit of harlotry has led them astray; they commit harlotry, forsaking their God."

*Wood... wand: an idol used in divination (Notes, New American Bible)
The Bible condemns divination. God tells His people, "There shall not be found among you anyone who... practices divination..." Deuteronomy 18: 10. Because dowsing is a form of divination, it is also condemned.

Ben G. Hester in *Dowsing* writes, "In 1362 a Papal Bull against the 'use of a ring to obtain answers in the manner of the Devil' (pendulum dowsing) was issued by Pope John XXII... Today, the Roman Catholic Church takes somewhat the same stand as reflected in its works on Moral Theology, stating that dowsing is 'practicing superstition' which is a serious sin. The Catholic Information Service of the Knights of Columbus classifies dowsing as 'rank superstition' and breaking the first commandment only if using the power as supernatural. The Catholic Church in 1853, declared that dowsing worked because it was the devil his very self that pulled and twisted the dowsing rod to give the accurate results."

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A3373175>)

Radiaesthesia or **Radiesthesia** is the supposed paranormal ability to detect a radiation-like aura within the human body.

"The Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office has given serious consideration to the troubles which to the detriment of religious and true piety arise from the investigation by clerics of **Radiaesthesia** for divining facts and events. In view of the directives of canon 138 and 139.1 of the Code of Canon Law protecting clerics and religious from those matters which are such as to dishonour their office or dignity or to do possible harm to their authority, (the Congregation) makes the following findings. However the Congregation has no wish by this decree to touch upon scientific investigation of Radiaesthesia: The Most Excellent Ordinaries of places and Religious Superiors are ordered to prohibit their clerics or religious by stern directive from ever proceeding with those exercises in Radiaesthesia, which are involved in the above mentioned investigation.

It will be for these Ordinaries or Religious Superiors, if they consider it necessary or appropriate, to attach a threat of penal sanction to forbidden action of this kind.

But if any cleric or religious should repeatedly transgress this ban or if he (she) should provide an opportunity for serious harm or scandal, the Ordinaries or Superiors should report this fact to this Sacred Supreme Tribunal.

Given in Rome, at the chambers of the Holy Office, on 26 March 1942
Giovanni Pepe, Notary of the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office.
#9629."

(Acta Apostolicae Sedis, <http://www.vatican.va/archive/aas/documents/AAS-34-1942-ocr.pdf>,
page 148)

Please also refer to “Divination” in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2115
to #2117 in Introduction – “After JCBWL”.

Chapter 55

Dreamwork or Dream Play, Dream Therapy

Origins and development

“Dreams fascinate millions of people, including a large number of researchers. **Dream work** involves the exploration of and/or interaction with dreams as an adjunct to physical healing, for psychological insight in psychotherapy, for spiritual insight in “Christian” dream work, and/or the manipulation of dreams for occultic revelations or spiritual growth in New Age practices. Dream work practices, which extend into antiquity, claim that our dreams can powerfully reflect and/or influence physical, psychological, and spiritual realities. In physical healing, dreams may allegedly be used to reveal hindrances and provide assistance to the healing process. In psychotherapy, exploring dreams may allegedly open doors to the unconscious mind to reveal and help resolve hidden emotional conflicts or other problems. In Christian dream work, dreams are seen as signs or even personal messages or revelations from God; therefore, for some, exploring dreams is equivalent to studying “God’s Word.” In New Age practices dreams can be explored and even manipulated, as in lucid dream work. In lucid dream work, dreams are employed for various reasons, including occultic revelation, spirit contact, psychic development, astral travel, and to induce altered states of consciousness.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-17/>)

“*Newsweek* magazine (Sharon Begley, “*The Stuff That Dreams Are Made of*,” August 14, 1989) has observed that a “New Age” of revived interest in **dreams** and **dream work** has arrived. The article noted, “What was [once] a fad is now mainstream.”

Like crystal work and channeling, dream work is one of the more popular New Age practices. Since 1970, dozens of books on New Age dream work have total sales in the millions.

What is **dream work**? In general, dream work attempts to remember, explore, evaluate or manipulate normal dreams for psychological, physical, spiritual, or occult purposes. These purposes include physical healing, greater self-understanding in secular counseling, discerning “God’s will” in so-called Christian dream work, and a variety of occult goals in New Age dream work. At the risk of oversimplifying, **dream work** may be divided into three basic categories: 1) “secular” dream work, as in Freudian, Gestalt, Jungian, humanistic, and other conventional psychotherapy; 2) so-called Christian dream work, popularized by Morton Kelsey, John A. Sanford, and others, which often relies

on Jungian psychology; 3) New Age dream work, which incorporates diverse elements from, for example, ancient pagan (e.g., shamanistic) dream methods, modern spiritistic revelations (e.g., Edgar Cayce, "Seth") (read chapter 50), Jungian techniques (read chapter 36), and transpersonal ("Eastern") and fringe psychologies. It must be noted that the lines separating these categories are not rigid. Elements of Jungian, humanistic, Christian, and New Age dream work are often mixed together."

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/dream-work-and-the-new-age-movement/>)

New Age

"People have access to their former lives through **dreams** and meditation techniques." (JCBWL #2.2.3)

"Depth Psychology: the school of psychology founded by C.G. Jung, a former disciple of Freud. Jung recognised that religion and spiritual matters were important for wholeness and health. The interpretation of **dreams** and the analysis of archetypes were key elements in his method. Archetypes are forms which belong to the inherited structure of the human psyche; they appear in the recurrent motifs or images in **dreams**, fantasies, myths and fairy tales." (JCBWL #7.2)

"For the past thirty years the works of psychologist Carl Jung have been used as a spiritual guide in the Catholic Church throughout the United States and Europe. Sister Pat Brockman O.S.U., who trained at the Jung Institute in Zurich, explains that dreams act as our "personal scriptures." She suggests "**Dream Play**" as a substitute for Catholic devotional practices such as the morning offering, acts of faith, hope, and charity, examination of conscience, and prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. The "Dream Play" that she recommends consists in naming, describing, interpreting, and dialoguing with the dream. She also holds that "Some think that the Church is the center of the world but we are really the center, the abode of God"."

(*The Church and the New Age Movement*, John Shea MD, FRCP,

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=7091>)

"Examples of occult potential: **Dream work** can be used to foster many New Age goals, from altering consciousness and developing psychic powers to spirit contact. It is used in many occult disciplines, such as astrology, and in shamanism and other forms of sorcery.

Major problems. The value of dream work to healing is unsubstantiated. In psychotherapy, dream work interpretation is often subjective and contradictory. In psychotherapeutic and Christian dream work, or in New Age occult

manipulation of dreams, the practice may have unexpected or unforeseen negative consequences.

Potential dangers. Unintended occult influences. Some researchers have speculated as to possible harmful psychological consequences from personal dream exploration.”

(*Dreamwork*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/dream-work/>)

“**Christian** psychotherapy and **dream work** reveal a sometimes appalling lack of discernment when it comes to secular and even New Age thinking. Christians who are interested in exploring their dreams need to realize that even secular dream work can be tied to psychic exploration, and that it can become a means to spiritistic intrusion or contact. New Age dream work is almost exclusively the psychic use of dreams, which is more common than most assume, as we will later illustrate. We should also remember that merely because a practice is labeled Christian, as in “Christian” dream work, does not mean that it is either biblically wholesome, safe, or genuinely Christian. A large number of churches, groups, and individuals call themselves “Christian,” yet reject clear biblical teachings and standards, and they may even experiment with the psychic realm. Some Christians who are involved in **dream workshops** perhaps do not realize that the sources of interpretation derive from the dream work materials of liberal theologians, secular psychologists, and even spiritists. Such information taints the dream program with unbiblical premises, philosophies, or practices. Some (Christians) are influenced by Carl Jung, whose extensive personal involvement in the occult colors many of his theories and makes such dream work suspect from the start. In general, we think that the importance of dreams is often exaggerated and that time spent in exploring them is often more profitably spent elsewhere. Throughout human history, most people have lived well without attending local dream workshops or having their dreams analyzed in therapy.”

(*Dreamwork and the New Age Movement*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/dream-work-and-the-new-age-movement/>)

“There’s a world of difference between the Christian understanding of **dreams** and that of New Age enthusiasts.

There are many occasions in Scripture when both Old and New Testament figures experienced prophetic dreams, such as Abimelech (Genesis 20:3); Jacob (Genesis 28:12; 31:10); Solomon (3 Kings 3:5-15); Nebuchodonosor (Daniel 2:19); Daniel (Daniel 7:1); Joseph (Matthew 1:20; 3:13) and St. Paul (Acts 23:11; 27:23). Although God certainly can and has used dreams as a means of manifesting His will to man, there is a stark difference between Biblical dream experiences

and those recounted by pagan civilizations and today's New Age enthusiasts; namely, none of the dreams recorded in Scripture were sought.

"In fact, Scripture contains many warnings against deliberately seeking omens or other sorts of supernatural **dreams**. A prohibition to "observe dreams" can be found in Leviticus (19:26) and Deuteronomy (18:10). Prophets such as Jeremiah repeatedly warned people against giving heed to **dreams**. "I have heard what the prophets say who prophesy in my name. They say, 'I had a dream! I had a dream!' How long will this continue in the hearts of these lying prophets, who prophesy the delusions of their own minds? They think the dreams they tell one another will make my people forget my name, just as their fathers forgot my name through Baal worship. Let the prophet who has a dream tell his dream, but let the one who has my word speak it faithfully..." (Jeremiah 23: 25-29)

Contrast this with the kind of dreamwork promoted by the New Age. The New Age Dictionary tells us that dreams fit into two categories, "those that are generated from within your physical body and mind and those that come from your spirit guides or tutors."

"**Dreams** that originate with the physical body are for function and survival in the physical world, it says. Those that come from the spiritual world are special visits from spiritual beings such as your "Higher Self," Guardian Angel, or deceased loved ones, who give instructions, lessons and guidance.

The trick is to understand how to interpret these messages or the symbols in a dream to not only make life better for oneself but to be able to influence the affairs of others. One can actually employ a little "dream magic" to achieve these ends, which is as simple as thinking about your heart's desire before falling asleep, then turning it over to higher beings.

"The New Age version of **dreamwork**, while combining pagan and paranormal beliefs, also relies heavily on the work of Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung (1875-1961), the first person to use the term "New Age". Jung emphasized understanding the psyche by exploring the worlds of dreams, religion, art and mythology. Although he was a theoretical psychologist and practicing clinician, much of his life's work was spent exploring other realms including Eastern and Western philosophy, alchemy, astrology and sociology.

"According to Jung, **dreams** are the method of communication between the unconscious and conscious mind," writes Johnette Benkovic in her book *The New Age Counterfeit*. "The key to understanding the unconscious and our negative tendencies lay in our dreams. Since the unconscious mind speaks in

symbols (intuitive ideas to Jung), dream work is difficult and demands much time, effort, and introspection.”

Jung’s ideas have become quite popular in Catholic retreat centers. Sister Pat Brockman, O.S.U., who describes herself as a Jungian “community psychologist” is a sought after speaker on the Catholic retreat circuit and says our dreams “are our personal Scriptures.”

“In an article appearing in St. Catherine Review, author Michael Rose says Brockman considers her technique, which she calls “**dream play**”, to be a modern form of prayer. For instance, instead of the traditional examination of conscience that should take place at night before sleep, Rose says Brockman recommends we spend that time preparing our consciousness for dreaming and remembering our dreams. “Prepare yourself for the dream experience,” she teaches. “You might decorate your pillow so as to awaken your unconscious, then ask yourself, what do I want birthed by me? Where in your life would you like to be bettered? Then ask for a message, ask for an angel.”

But the angel she’s invoking is not the kind we Catholics know. One of the steps in her dream ritual involves dialoguing with this “angel” who she calls a “dream figure” in a way very similar to channeling. In this dialogue, the dreamer is to ask questions of this figure, such as why it appeared in a dream or what the dream meant. Brockman suggests that a person recreate the dream scene in their imagination until the “dream figure” comes alive again.

“At this point, they are instructed to begin the dialogue in order to “get a relationship started.” They are to ask questions of this “dream figure” and write down its answers, continuing the dialogue until one feels “something has been changed or resolved,” Brockman recommends. That we are dialoguing with what is probably our own imagination or, worse, an unknown spiritual entity, is problematic at its core.

Nevertheless, Jungian **dreamwork** is becoming increasingly popular in the Church, and has become an enormous money-making business, Rose writes. “These practices are ways, according to Jung’s methods, to tap into one’s subconscious to retrieve ‘hidden knowledge’. Instead of calling it the Occult, it is referred to as ‘Jungian’.”

From a scientific point of view, there has been quite a bit of study of dreams. Experts define dreams as a mental activity that involves thoughts, images and emotions. Most dreams are said to occur in conjunction with rapid eye movements (REM), which occur during what is known as REM-sleep, a period that takes up about 20-25 percent of our total sleep time.

“REM-sleep was discovered by scientists at the University of Chicago in 1953 who learned that it occurs in approximately 90 minute cycles throughout the

night. The REM dream state is a neurologically and physiologically active state, meaning that while people who are in a deep sleep do not dream at all, once they enter REM sleep their blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing change dramatically.

“Some claim that the distinct brain wave activity that occurs during sleep is evidence that the dream state is a gateway to another world. They believe brain waves represent states of consciousness and that sleep is an altered state of consciousness.

But this belief is not at all shared by experts in dream research who say sleep is not a state of consciousness but of unconsciousness and that brain waves represent nothing more than electrical activity in the brain.”

(*Dreamwork*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1253>)

“In *Dreams and Spiritual Growth: A Christian Approach to Dreamwork*, we discover that so-called “**Christian dream work**” is not derived from Scripture itself. Rather, it comes from secular psychotherapy and culture, such as the Jungian analysis and dream work of those who endorse shamanism, such as John Sanford and Morton Kelsey.

The book repeatedly stresses that dream work leads to “wholeness” and “holiness.” “Wholeness” is supposedly achieved by the technique of Jungian “individuation,” and “holiness” is a subjectively determined state of spiritual growth based upon psychological completeness or integration. In other words, this book basically deals with psychological experimentation, defined subjectively and then interpreted as spiritual growth. Despite its title, it does not deal with Christian theology or Christian sanctification.

“This kind of dream work may also be used as a means of spirit contact, although the spirits contacted are believed to be Christian saints. Most but not all “**Christian**” **dream work** is really New Age dream work using Christian terminology.”

(*New Age “Christian” Dreamwork*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/christian-dream-work/>)

The New Age use of **Dreams** is named in the JCBWL document. (#2.2.3, #7.2)

Chapter 56

Energy Healing

We have already noted that in New Age thought, “there is one single reality – **energy**.” (JCBWL #7.1) and that much of New Age “healing” is effected by the manipulation, “balancing” or “channeling” of this esoteric Universal Life Force Energy that is all (pantheism), and is in all (panentheism).

Also, we have come to know from Section E, “Medicating in the New Age”, that virtually all Alternative Medicines – including homoeopathy – claim to effect healing through the movement of this putative energy.

“A November 4, 2004 post *Therapeutic Touch healing*, has an explanation of New Age **energy healing**. The list of occultic energy forces includes the vital energy of Hahnemann’s homeopathy (read chapter 13.”

(*Homeopathy confusion*, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=1213>)

Origins and development

“At the heart of alternative medicine therapies is the doctrine of correspondence, or sympathies, between the cosmos, earth, and man. This concept is central to the term *life force energy*. This **energy** in theory is emanating from the cosmos, from which all things are said to be made, and within which all are *one* (pantheism). Let us look at some popular therapies for health disorders developed from this theory.

“Early in the development of the astrological system in Europe, the 12 houses of the zodiac were assigned to various parts of the body starting at the head with Aries, the ram, and ending at the feet with Pisces, the fish. The organs of the body were then assigned to the remaining individual houses. The Chinese divided the body in a vertical manner believing that a special universal **cosmic energy** they (referred to as *ch’i*) ran through the body following 12 vertical divisions called meridians.

“These meridians had side channels to distribute the **energy** to the various organs of the body. In contrast, the Hindus described the distribution of **vital energy** as being concentrated in seven centers in the body called chakras. The chakras utilized nadis (small channels) to distribute **energy** to the tissues surrounding each chakra. When the energies of the chakras were combined; an aura was believed to surround the individual.

The cosmos was considered the macrocosm and man the microcosm. Man was then divided into micro-microcosms. Specific locations on the body were believed

to have developed association in such a way as to represent the entire body. It was believed that cosmic **energy** influenced man by correspondence, association, and/or sympathy. One of the first body locations considered to reveal this sympathy, or correspondence, was the hand. It probably began in the Sumerian civilization. Birth omens were obtained by inspecting a newborn infant for any sign which would predict the child's future. Palmistry likely had its origin in this manner. Palmistry, or Chiromancy, had roots in the ancient Vedas of India 4500 years ago. Additional areas of the body that were believed to have correspondence with all other areas of the body were added over time. Now, a total of 18 areas on the body are considered to be *holograms* of the whole. The most common locations are ear, hand, foot, the web between thumb and forefinger, tongue, etc. Apart from the hologram locations, the musculature and fascia (membranes, tendons, ligaments) of the body are also believed to have many points that may impede the flow of **universal energy** so as to influence the function of body, mind, and spirit. Pressure, or some type of physical stimulation to those points, is said to affect—correct the flow of universal energy.

“Why so many types of therapies if the treatments are effective? Because none of them are based on physical science but on the paranormal or psychic; the actual physical method used matters little in medical treatment. It depends on the mental attitude and acceptance of the theory of *universal energy or cosmic intelligence*.”

(*Reflexology or Zone Therapy and other energy-balancing therapies...*, Dr. Edwin A. Noyes M.D. MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

New Age

“There is talk of God, but it is not a personal God; the God of which *New Age* speaks is neither personal nor transcendent. Nor is it the Creator and sustainer of the universe, but an “impersonal **energy**” immanent in the world, with which it forms a “cosmic unity”: “All is one”. This unity is monistic, pantheistic or, more precisely, panentheistic. God is the “life-principle”, the “spirit or soul of the world”, the sum total of consciousness existing in the world. In a sense, everything is God. God's presence is clearest in the spiritual aspects of reality, so every mind/spirit is, in some sense, God. When it is consciously received by men and women, “divine energy” is often described as “Christic energy”.” (JCBWL #2.3.4.2)

“*New Age* is often referred to by those who promote it as a “new spirituality”. It seems ironic to call it “new” when so many of its ideas have been taken from ancient religions and cultures. But what really is new is that *New Age* is a conscious search for an alternative to Western culture and its Judaeo-Christian

religious roots. "Spirituality" in this way refers to the inner experience of harmony and unity with the whole of reality, which heals each human person's feelings of imperfection and finiteness. People discover their profound connectedness with the sacred universal force or **energy** which is the nucleus of all life. When they have made this discovery, men and women can set out on a path to perfection, which will enable them to sort out their personal lives and their relationship to the world, and to take their place in the universal process of becoming and in the New Genesis of a world in constant evolution. The result is a *cosmic mysticism* based on people's awareness of a universe burgeoning with dynamic energies. Thus cosmic **energy**, vibration, light, God, love – even the supreme Self – all refer to one and the same reality, the primal source present in every being." (*New Age as spirituality*, JCBWL #3.1)

"Is God a being with whom we have a relationship or something to be used or a force to be harnessed? The *New Age* concept of God is rather diffuse, whereas the Christian concept is a very clear one. The *New Age* god is an impersonal **energy**, really a particular extension or component of the cosmos; god in this sense is the life-force or soul of the world."

(*New Age and Christian Faith in contrast*, JCBWL #4)

"Christ: in *New Age* the historical figure of Jesus is but one incarnation of an idea or an **energy** or set of vibrations (read chapter 72). For (Theosophist) Alice Bailey, a great day of supplication is needed, when all believers will create such a concentration of spiritual energy that there will be a further incarnation, which will reveal how people can save themselves... For many people, Jesus is nothing more than a spiritual master who, like Buddha, Moses and Mohammed, amongst others, has been penetrated by the cosmic Christ. The cosmic Christ is also known as **christic energy** at the basis of each being and the whole of being. Individuals need to be initiated gradually into awareness of this christic characteristic they are all said to have. Christ – in *New Age* terms – represents the highest state of perfection of the self." (JCBWL #7.2)

Watch these videos on Energy Healing:

- <https://youtu.be/Qse4Z0tWxvs> 04:33
- <https://youtu.be/Q-IFVy7rjyA> 14:20
- <https://youtu.be/fPkpyrwwNVk> 40:00

Chapter 57

Enlightenment

Origins and Development

We find that the main ideologies of the New Age Movement correspond to the lie of Satan in Genesis 3: 4, 5.

He said to our first parents, (When you eat of the forbidden fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden), “You shall not surely die (reincarnation) ... then **your eyes shall be opened (enlightenment)** ... you shall be as gods (self-deification) ... you will know good from evil (gnosis)”.

In the Hindu discipline of Yoga meditation, concerning the eighth and final stage called Samadhi in which the adept attains “enlightenment” and achieves the “realization” or *knows* that he or she will never die because now he or she is god:

“Samadhi is **occult enlightenment** or ‘God [Brahman] realization’ i.e., ‘union’ of the ‘individual’ with God).”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/yoga-theory-and-practice-separable-part-1/>)

New Age

“**Enlightenment** is the goal of much of new age practice: attaining “higher states of consciousness and existence.” But is the pursuit of enlightenment dangerous?

“**Enlightenment** involves an allegedly higher state of consciousness and existence leading to a potentially profound personal alteration that radically, and often permanently, changes one’s perception of self and the world.

The goal of seeking alleged enlightenment is a central characteristic of much pagan religion, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism. It claims to work by various occult practices and disciplines (altered states of consciousness, meditation, magical practice, yoga, and so on) one allegedly realizes the divine or monistic nature of all reality – self, world, universe – and lives in accordance with such a perception.

“New Age scientists and other researchers who are attempting to examine “higher or enlightened” states of consciousness are having little success. This research is usually conducted through the disciplines of parapsychology and New Age consciousness studies.

Occult potential: Psychic development, spirit contact, or possession.

Potential dangers: Occult bondage, demonization.

The goal of occult enlightenment is not merely a new perspective; it is usually to destroy and replace the old personality and consciousness with a radically new level of being. Unfortunately, that which is alleged to be a higher state of existence is usually a state of spiritistic manipulation of consciousness or actual spirit possession. It is not an advanced spiritual state, but one that is primitive and regressive, and consequentially results in bondage to spiritistic powers.

Enlightenment is a phenomenon stressing the need for occult practice, the acceptance of psychic development, the experiential realization of occult philosophy (e.g. pantheism), and it has traditional associations to spiritism. As such, seeking a state of New Age enlightenment is prohibited biblically.”

(*Enlightenment*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/guests-and-authors/dr-john-ankerberg/enlightenment/>)

“**Enlightenment** is realization of the truth of Being. Our native condition, our true self is Being, traditionally called God ... the Supreme Being. The value of mystical and transformative states is not in producing some new experience, but in getting rid of the experience. In the New Age Movement, “enlightenment” is one of those words that everyone respects. It suggests something very good. For anyone to say that it is something negative would seem harsh, for such a polite-sounding word should speak of something noble and sublime.

But just what is “**enlightenment**,” this concept that allegedly describes a higher order of existence, a grander state of being, which for many New Agers represents the emerging prototype of a new species of humanity? This is the fundamental question, a question which in some ways answers other important questions about New Age metaphysics, occultism, and Eastern mystical religion in general. It is also an important question because the final goal of almost all serious New Age practice, as well as of many within occultism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sufism, Sikhism, and other forms of mysticism is “enlightenment,” however it is conceptualized. And whatever occurs along these spiritual paths is designed to nourish the process of enlightenment; whatever is endured or achieved is inescapably linked in some fashion to that final goal. And if we can determine the nature of the goal, we can also learn something about the nature of the path.

“Because it is in harmony with Hindu, Buddhist, and most mystical metaphysics, New Age “**enlightenment**” teaches the internal recognition by the individual that he or she is one essence with God or ultimate reality, with all that this implies. All mysticism is not the same, of course, nor are all categories of religious enlightenment, but sufficient commonalities exist to warrant extrapolation for the focus of our study here. For example, the development of monistic consciousness, the acceptance of spiritism and other forms of

occultism, and a pragmatic amorality typify the general process of mystical enlightenment. Our own research on many occult traditions and on some 25 Eastern mystical sects bears this out. Not all are equally potent or radical, but all set up shop in the same spiritual house, so to speak. Different rooms may be occupied, but the fundamental environment is consistent."

(*What is New Age Enlightenment*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/what-is-new-age-enlightenment/>)

New Age

"The human potential movement among the New Agers is based on the faulty premise that each person is god and needs only to have his consciousness **enlightened** so he will realize that fact. And the means to this **enlightenment** is meditation. But the forms of meditation are many. Daniel Coleman, writing in *Psychology Today* (March, 1977), described 13 different forms of meditation. "Each of these approaches," wrote Coleman, "seeks the same basic psychological change in the meditator's awareness"."

(*The Age-Old New Age Movement*, Prof. Harold J. Berry, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/newage/age-old.txt>)

"Some stages on the way to self-redemption are *preparatory* (meditation, body harmony, releasing self-healing energies). They are the starting-point for processes of spiritualisation, perfection and **enlightenment** which help people to acquire further self-control and psychic concentration on "transformation" of the individual self into "cosmic consciousness". The destiny of the human person is a series of successive reincarnations of the soul in different bodies. This is understood not as the cycle of *samsara*, in the sense of purification as punishment, but as a gradual ascent towards the perfect development of one's potential." (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)

"Psychology is used to explain mind expansion as "mystical" experiences. Yoga, Zen, transcendental meditation and tantric exercises lead to an experience of self-fulfillment or **enlightenment**. Peak-experiences (reliving one's birth, travelling to the gates of death, biofeedback, dance and even drugs - anything which can provoke an altered state of consciousness) are believed to lead to unity and **enlightenment**." (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)

Chapter 58

Erhard Seminars Training or est, the Forum and Landmark

Origins and Development

“**Landmark** descended from the original New Age self-help seminar known as **est** (Latin for “it is”).

est was founded by Werner **Erhard** (not his real name), a former used car salesman who worked his way into a vice presidency at *Parents* magazine.”

(*The Dangers of Landmark*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11456>)

“Werner **Erhard** is the originator of transformational learning methodologies that have helped shaped human consciousness in the 20th century.” (<http://wernererhardbiography.com/>)

“**Erhard** based his concepts on Eastern beliefs and on teachings from the Church of Scientology (read chapter 53). The **est** program later came to be known as the **Forum**, and now goes by the name **Landmark**.”

(*In the image of man: An overview of the Human Potential Movement and Motivational Seminars*, Marcia Montenegro, http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_HumanPotential1.html)

“**est** was big in the late 60s. The trainers used mind manipulation techniques on willing participants during feel good weekend seminars. “We’re going to tear you down and put you back together.” Critics of the training called it a cult. The organization changed its name to **Landmark Education** (link) and now promotes the **Landmark Forum** but only the name has changed.”

(*Caught up in a cult?* Marsha West, <http://www.renewamerica.com/columns/mwest/090109>)

For further reading: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landmark_Worldwide.

In 2010, a young Catholic who attended a New Age Seminar given by me and experienced deliverance from occult bondage that she came under after attending Landmark (and other) programmes in Mumbai sent me her testimony. She explained:

*You had not mentioned **The Landmark Forum** in your talks. It is called the Landmark Advanced Course and The Landmark Self- Expression and Leadership Program which I had gone through. There are many Catholics attending. During one course a nun and a priest were along with me. I also know a priest who is using all the principles of this program in his church ministry... Landmark Forum has its operation in more than 50 countries and 5 Indian states.*

New Age

"New Age training courses (what used to be known as 'Erhard seminar trainings' [EST] etc.) marry counter-cultural values with the mainstream need to succeed, inner satisfaction with outer success." (JCBWL #2.4)

"Some of the traditions which flow into *New Age* are: ancient Egyptian occult practices, Cabbalism, early Christian gnosticism, Sufism, the lore of the Druids, Celtic Christianity, mediaeval alchemy, Renaissance hermeticism, Zen Buddhism, Yoga and so on.⁽¹⁵⁾" (JCBWL #2.1)

⁽¹⁵⁾"In late 1977, Marilyn Ferguson sent a questionnaire to 210 "persons engaged in social transformation", whom she also calls "Aquarian Conspirators". The following is interesting: "When respondents were asked to name individuals whose ideas had influenced them, either through personal contact or through their writings, those most often named, in order of frequency, were Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, C.G. Jung, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Aldous Huxley, Robert Assagioli, and J. Krishnamurti." "Others frequently mentioned: Paul Tillich, Hermann Hesse, Alfred North Whitehead, Martin Buber, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson, Tarthang Tulku, Alan Watts, Sri Aurobindo, Swami Muktananda, D.T. Suzuki, Thomas Merton, Willis Harman, Kenneth Boulding, Elise Boulding, Erich Fromm, Marshall McLuhan, Buckminster Fuller, Frederic Spiegelberg, Alfred Korzybski, Heinz von Foerster, John Lilly, **Werner Erhard**, Oscar Ichazo, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Joseph Chilton Pearce, Karl Pribram, Gardner Murphy, and Albert Einstein": *The Aquarian Conspiracy. Personal and Social Transformation in Our Time*, Los Angeles (Tarcher) 1980, p. 50 (note 1) and p. 434." (JCBWL Notes 15)

"According to experts such as Dr. Margaret Singer, Fr. William Kent Butner, Rick Ross, and others, most people who become involved in what are referred to as "white collar cults," are above average in intelligence, are mentally healthy with normal social skills for their age and tend toward high ideals and a commitment toward making the world better. Even though different seminars recruit different kinds of people, a typical "hook" is to find people who are in the midst of a major change in their lives (divorce, new job, mid-life crisis, etc.). While typical cult converts tend to be people in their late teens and early twenties, in the case of white collar cults, a disproportionate number of attendees are older and female. Cult Expert Rick Ross has devoted an entire [web page](#) (link) to educating the public about **Landmark**. This page includes court documents pertaining to litigation against Landmark, labor violations, personal testimonies, and a variety of news reports.

“**Landmark**, has a long history of problems. It is classified as a “possible cult” in France and The Cult Awareness and Information Center in Australia has listed Landmark among “psychotherapy cults.”

There have been numerous articles written in professional medical journals about the dangers of Landmark (formerly known as **est** and **Forum**) which you can read [here](#) (link).

“**Erhard** became heavily involved in the New Age and Zen Buddhism, and attended some of the earliest group awareness seminars taking place in the New Age retreat known as Esalen in Big Sur, California from where the modern human potential movement originated.

Erhard claims to have had a vision in 1971 while driving across the Golden Gate Bridge that led to the development of **est**.

Based on Eastern beliefs and teachings from the Church of Scientology, **est** is what psychologists call a large group awareness training program. It’s a hodgepodge of philosophies ranging from existential philosophy, motivational psychology, Maxwell Maltz’s Psycho-cybernetics, Alan Watts, Freud, Abraham Maslow, L. Ron Hubbard, Dale Carnegie, Norman Vincent Peale, P.T. Barnum, Hinduism, Zen Buddhism (read section 32), and just about anyone else who appealed to him at the time. **est** adopted, in part, the Zen master approach, which is often abusive, profane, demeaning and authoritarian, and is most famously known for the extraordinary bladder control expected of those in **est** training as shown in the 1978 Burt Reynolds movie, *Semi-Tough*.

“**Erhard** promised participants that his program would “empower” them to “produce effective action.” He would enable them to “produce new ways of working.” He would transform the basis of their communication. They would be able “to cause life instead of just living it.” Before Erhard left the country in 1991, more than 700,000 people had undergone his training programs and he was worth \$45 million. Now known as Landmark, a multitude of other programs have spun-off of **est**, such as Lifespring, many of which employ the same techniques. The biggest problem with these seminars is that they are often promoted as ways to help improve self-motivation, leadership skills, or workplace performance, which lures people into them who would not otherwise participate. However, once the attendees arrive, they quickly discover the truth.

““The usual function of these **est** seminars, which is not advertised, is to break down the identity and world view of the participants, and replace it with a new paradigm for reality and self-identity based on the philosophies belonging to the founders of these programs,” writes Marcia Montenegro, founder of the New Age research organization Christian Answers for the New Age. “In effect,

it is mind re-programming.” This mind-reprogramming is accomplished through a variety of mind-altering techniques such as deep relaxation, guided imagery (read section 96), and visualization (read section 96).

Trance-induction techniques are also employed and involve closed-eye exercises, a form of guided imagery, and the “dyad”, which is the pairing off of participants who are told to stare into each other’s eyes for several minutes at a time. During these “trances” trainers may encourage participants to recall their most powerful memories as a way of conquering their past, something that can cause dangerous psychotic episodes in fragile individuals.

““The **est** trainers usually get you to think of all your most powerful memories, under the guise of somehow conquering your past,” says Margaret Thaler Singer, Ph.D., professor emeritus of psychology at the University of California at Berkley and a leading expert on human potential groups. Dr. Singer has counseled more than 50 workshop graduates, some of whom attempted suicide in the aftermath of a program. “A trained professional knows when someone should not be put under stress,” she said. “And these people have absolutely no training outside the group.”

“Because of how many of these programs exist (and how often they change their names after a slew of lawsuits and other bad publicity), it’s important to learn how to recognize them. Montenegro lists the following warning signs on her website:

- The organization’s leadership or past participants refuse to share the contents of the seminar beforehand
- You are required to sign a “hold harmless” agreement which protects the organization from legal action should you be harmed by the program
- The organization uses hyper language offering self-transformation
- Strong sales-type techniques are used to get you to participate
- The organization portrays its critics as ignorant, evil, or influenced by Satan
- The organization dissuades you from evaluating the teachings and methods yourself
- The organization discourages or discounts criticism from participants or others
- Promises are made to redesign your view of yourself and reality
- Past participants exhibit an elitist attitude toward those who have not participated
- Past participants are pressured to recruit

“For all of the above reasons, Christians should never become involved in any of these programs because they often seek to destroy the Judeo-Christian worldview and replace it with a New Age version. This is why the Pontifical

document, *Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life*, condemns the human potential movement (read chapter 62), of which **Landmark** is a part, calling it “the clearest example of the conviction that humans are divine, or contain a divine spark within themselves”.

(*The Dangers of Landmark*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11456>)

Erhard seminar trainings (EST) and **Werner Erhard** are named in the JCBWL document. (#2.4, notes 15)

Chapter 59

Feminism, Feminist Theology, Inclusive Language and the Ordination of Women

Readers may be surprised to see a chapter on *Feminism* in this book.

Feminism (matriarchy) is a rebellion against the supposed “patriarchy” of the Judeo-Christian tradition in which God is “male”. Is *Feminism* New Age? Very, says JCBWL.

“Some say that the Christian religion is patriarchal and authoritarian... *New Age* appeals to people imbued with the values of modern culture. Freedom, authenticity, self-reliance and the like are all held to be sacred. It appeals to those who have problems with patriarchy.” (JCBWL #1.1)

Five more quotes from JCBWL, the Document on the New Age, follow.

#2.1 What is new about *New Age*?

Here is what is “new” about *New Age*...

– from a dominance of masculinity and patriarchy to a celebration of femininity, in individuals and in society.

#2.3.2 The essential matrix of New Age thinking

A prominent component of Mrs. Blavatsky’s writings was the **emancipation of women**, which involved an attack on the “male” God of Judaism, of Christianity and of Islam. She urged people to return to the mother-goddess of Hinduism and to the practice of **feminine** virtues. This continued under the guidance of Annie Besant, who was in the vanguard of the **feminist movement**. Wicca and “**women’s spirituality**” carry on this struggle against “patriarchal” Christianity today.

#2.3.4.2 *New Age* has a marked preference for Eastern or pre-Christian religions, which are reckoned to be uncontaminated by Judaeo-Christian distortions. Hence great respect is given to ancient agricultural rites and to fertility cults. “Gaia”, **Mother Earth**, is offered as an alternative to God the Father, whose image is seen to be linked to a patriarchal conception of male domination of women.

#2.4 The rejection of tradition in the form of patriarchal, hierarchical social or ecclesial organisation implies the search for an alternative form of society, one that is clearly inspired by the modern notion of the self...

Traditional science and medicine are felt to be inferior to holistic approaches, as are patriarchal and particular structures in politics and religion. All of these will be obstacles to the coming of the Age of Aquarius; once again, it is clear

that what is implied when people opt for *New Age* alternatives is a complete break with the tradition that formed them.

#7.2 Neopaganism: a title often rejected by many to whom it is applied, it refers to a current that runs parallel to *New Age* and often interacts with it. In the great wave of reaction against traditional religions, specifically the Judaeo-Christian heritage of the West ... Whatever preceded Christianity is reckoned to be more genuine to the spirit of the land or the nation ... often **matriarchal** ... Some "neo-pagan" religions are recent reconstructions whose authentic relationship to original forms can be questioned, particularly in cases where they are dominated by modern ideological components like ecology, **feminism**...

"Catholic" feminists militate for, among other things, the use of "inclusive language" in the Bible and liturgy, and the ordination of women as priests. I will not treat the latter issue in any detail in this book.

"Tired of seeing their holy texts used to justify the subjugation of women, a group of **feminist** theologians from across the Protestant-Catholic divide have joined forces to draft "A Women's Bible". "Une Bible des Femmes" ("A Women's Bible") was published in October (2018).

They are not the first to provide a more women-friendly reading of the scriptures.

Already back in 1898, American suffragette Elizabeth Cady Stanton (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Woman%27s_Bible) and a committee of 26 other women drafted "The Woman's Bible", aimed at overturning religious orthodoxy that women should be subservient to men."

(<https://www.france24.com/en/20181127-metoo-era-theologians-publish-womens-bible>)

"The **Feminist**, Homosexual and New Age Connection: The **feminist** believes that a fundamental principle of all human societies, sex-role differentiation, is essentially an arrangement by which men in power via a patriarchal society oppress women. Therefore a God with the name of Father - in their thought process - just continues and reinforces said "oppression." Naming **God as Mother** is a method of liberation to help shed the shackles of oppression because traditional theology is believed to assume that men's experience is normative for all of humanity, and the existence of an androcentric bias is considered a serious theological problem. As discussed earlier, the idea of goddess is clearly ancient and pagan, as is reflected in **feminist theology**. Wicca is the belief system which promotes the concept of goddesses (as well as gods) and is one in which many **feminists** participate. It gets even more disgusting...

If God is Mother, then the Trinity as defined would be schizophrenic because how could one God be "part male" (Jesus) and "part female" ('Mother')?

This further leads to the “female Jesus,” which sometimes is called the “SophiaChrist*.”

Some people have seen a “crucifix” holding a “Jesus with breasts.” How absolutely repugnant. By this point of logical conclusions, fatherhood and maleness have been totally eliminated from God. God is now a result of human logic rather than being known via His revelation - truly a pagan victory. Feminists would be happy.

Lastly, if God is Mother, creation is ‘birthed’ rather than made out of nothing by God our Father. This concept is strong within Wiccan beliefs. Therefore, creation is no longer limited to being simply good, as described in Genesis, but ‘divine.’ The essence of New Age, a modern form of paganism and pantheism, is to worship “Sacred Creation (read chapter 26)” .”

(*God the Father, the Trinity and Vertical Inclusive Language*, James A. Urda and Bruce Sabalasky, <http://www.ourladywarriors.org/articles/inclusive.htm>)

*“Sophia” is derived from the Greek translation of the word “wisdom” in Scripture - which is *Hagia Sophia*. Its New Age spiritual connotation is feminist.

“(In New Age) shifts are found in everything from the Human Potential Movement and the worship of goddesses such as Gaia and Sophia... from traditional forms of religion to more personal expressions of what is now being called “spirituality” – to move from a male-dominated culture to one that celebrates **the feminine**, and to rely less on reason and more on feelings and emotions.”

(*Popular Movement is one of the Most Pressing Challenges to Christian Faith*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=8754>)

Google for “Sophia New Age” and you get: “Sophia Center, Santa Fe, New Mexico: Wisdom recognizes and acknowledges Sophia-Gaia at the Center of everything we do. Gaia (read chapter 26) is the name of our Earth – **Mother Earth**. What we teach and what we offer must be in alignment with what’s good for our Mother Earth.”

(http://www.nmmagazine.com/links_directory/listing.php?id=1506)

“A **feminist** is a person, usually female but not necessarily, who believes in the concept of **feminism**, which is a belief that a fundamental principle of all human societies, sex-role differentiation, is essentially an arrangement by which some human beings oppress others. The oppressors are men in power, via a patriarchal society. Its aim is thus to create a new kind of human being living in a new form of society based on new ties among men, women and children, reconstituted in accordance with their ideological demands. This **feminism** itself is a divisive belief since it flows from the concept that patriarchal men have for thousands of years oppressed women who must now fight to claim

their rights at any cost. **Feminism** inherently pits woman against man, rather than following the Catholic teaching that men and women are of equal dignity, but do have different roles in society. What is important to understand is that feminism does *not* equate to femininity.

“**Feminist theology** emerged with the assertion that traditional theology is grounded in the experience of socially and politically dominant men. As such, traditional theology is believed to assume that men’s experience is normative for all of humanity. Their claim that the existence of an “andocentric” bias is a serious theological problem and **feminist** theologians attempt to develop alternatives for theological reflection. There is no one predominant **feminist theology**, but rather a variety of feminist theologies based upon women’s experience of life and God. Given that **feminist theology** is experience oriented, that is a creation of humans, it clearly goes against the teachings of the Catholic Church which, in Vatican II, states that the Catholic Faith has been divinely revealed by God. Experience-based religious belief systems always demand the concept of pluralism and its sister tolerance because everyone has different experiences, and therefore these different experiences lead to different views of theology, i.e. each to her own. **Feminist theology** is also behind the promotion of *goddess*, a long-time pagan concept, and seeks to remove the so-called andocentric theological bias through implementation of “inclusive language,” “**God the Mother**” and “**SophiaChrist**.”

“Gender equality is a **feminist** misnomer erected as a divisive barrier to pit men against women. The typical dissenter usage focuses on **the feminist’s desire to become a priestess**. They purport a belief that disallowing **women as priests** is oppression, discrimination and gender inequality, therefore the only way for gender equality is to have **women priestesses**. The Holy Father has made an infallible declaration that women can never be priests in Jesus Christ’s Catholic Church, but that has not stopped the **feminist** dissenters from whining. Their latest tactic has been to try and breach the Church’s teaching by pushing women deacons, who **feminists** claim were ordained in the early Church. What **feminists** refuse to acknowledge is the actual role for women “deacons” as defined in the early Church. Women were never ordained in any manner in the Church. At that time, Baptism was done via full immersion of the person, so a woman “deacon” was used to assist a woman who was getting baptized to avoid any scandals with male priests and Bishops. Since Baptism no longer requires full immersion, the woman “deacon” role is no longer needed.

“The dictionary defines **inclusive** as “*taking everything into account, comprehensive, or including the limits specified.*”

Dissenters distort the meaning to one that, as usual, creates divisiveness by implying any person who does not agree with the dissenters' position is practicing "exclusiveness," that meaning the disagreeing person is oppressing the dissenters' rights or looking to withhold some rights from the dissenter. The usual topic hidden within this is the **feminist drive for women priestesses**, and is just another coercive angle for the gender equality divisive argument. The other dissenter topic hinged on inclusiveness is the **feminist** plot to change the very name of God. What the dissenters refuse to take into account when considering everything - the proper definition of inclusive - is God's Will and His plan. God speaks to us through His Church, and His Church requires a Christo-centric priesthood.

"Inclusive Language: The term inclusive as applied to liturgical language is actually a misnomer, an invention of the **feminists** who want to change the very name of God. Instead of God the Father, **feminists** want "**God the Mother**" and to erase all references to masculine pronouns with reference to God. This is all consistent with Feminist Theology. For an in-depth discussion, see Vertical Inclusive Language. <http://www.ourladywarriors.org/articles/inclusive.htm>.

"Patriarchal is another denigrating term promoted by **feminists** who cause division between men and women. Dissenters' typical usage of patriarchal is to simultaneously attack the all-male priesthood and the hierarchical nature of the Church leadership. The former is viewed by **feminists** as an affront to women since their self-proclaimed 'right' to "priestess-hood" is being 'oppressed.' The Church teaches infallibly that the priesthood is a male-only role because Jesus Christ is male and the priest acts "*in persona Christi*" which means in the very person of Christ. Of course the **feminists** are pursuing the 'female christ' called "**SophiaChrist**." The latter attack against the hierarchical nature of the Church is to push a "democratic version" of the Catholic Church."
(<http://www.ourladywarriors.org/dissent/vocabula.htm>)

"What is unacceptable to the Magisterium is the use of inclusive language in collective terms for human beings which have an anthropological significance, or, in terms for God or Christ (vertical inclusive language). No one should understand that God is male or female. He is not. God is pure spirit... In giving human nature this created order, an order which in our embodied existence includes a common nature, as well as male and female, God not only stamped us with an image and likeness of His own nature and the Trinitarian Communion, but gave us a means and a language to understand Him. The use of male terms (Father, Son, He, Him etc.) are not statements about the masculinity of God, but ways to understand from our experience of ourselves, imperfect as we are, what are essentially spiritual realities. If God's self-

revelation is perverted, then both our understanding of God and ourselves is changed, as well. When **God is named Mother** (and a name speaks of what is of the essence of a thing), God is turned into an earth goddess of which we are but a part (panentheism). This is, in fact, what New Agers believe, and sadly some Catholics.

(*Bible versions and Commentaries*, Colin B. Donovan, http://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/bible_versions.htm)

“I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church’s faithful.”

(*Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* #4, Pope John Paul II, May 22, 1996.

https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19940522_ordinatio-sacerdotalis.html)

For further reading:

- *Vatican rules God must be recognized as Our Father*

<http://cathnews.com/archives/cath-news-archive/11700-vatican-rules-god-must-be-recognised-as-our-father>

Chapter 60

Feng Shui or Chinese Geomancy, and Vaastu Shastra or Vedic Geomancy

Origins and development

Feng Shui, pronounced as *foong soy* in Cantonese and *fong shway* in Mandarin, and which means *wind* and *water*, is the ancient Chinese practice of harnessing the powers of nature to promote one's well-being. It is the art of balancing the female energy symbolised by the *Yin* and the male energy symbolized by the *Yang* that is in all things, depicted as two fish-shaped halves that together form a circle. In every Yin there is a seed of the (opposite) Yang as symbolized by the light coloured Yang dot in the dark coloured Yin, and vice versa. Although in constant opposition, they can be controlled to constitute perfect balance and harmony. The interaction of Yin and Yang releases *chi* energy, and a house should be blessed with an abundance of chi if its inhabitants are to benefit. A defective flow of chi can occur if it is moving too fast, getting blocked, or being converted to bad chi. Clutter and junk in your home blocks the flow of good energy.

Because the Chinese venerate their dead ancestors, the belief developed that proper siting of tombs would bring good fortune to heirs. This was later extended to the dwelling places of the living. Anything like a pointed object or a sharp corner on a building is an 'arrow', and considered inauspicious or dangerous.

A dwelling should not be sandwiched between two tall structures as the chi would be oppressed and constricted and contribute to the occupants' physical and emotional mal-being.

While in **Vaastu Shastra**, the Indian equivalent of Feng Shui, the only solution for a defect is a structural correction, Feng Shui offers suitable 'cures' after an audit of the site by a consultant. The idea is to disperse the bad chi and enhance the good chi which is done using water features like fountains or aquaria, colour schemes, lucky bamboo, potted plants, Laughing Buddhas, tortoises, three-legged frogs, mandarin ducks, swastikas, mirrors, wind chimes, crystal pagodas, lighting, paintings, floating candles etc. to create a harmonious energy field within a structure.

A popular (occult) tool is the *pa-kua* (pakua) or *ba-gua* (bagua), an eight-sided symbol of the *I Ching*.

When the Chinese imperial government was forced to cede ports to colonial powers, it invariably chose to give what its Feng Shui experts deemed the worst possible locations. Present-day Hong Kong was one of them. All difficulties

experienced by the superstitious Europeans, from white ants to malaria, were put down to Feng Shui.

Apart from mainland China, Feng Shui is very popular in cultures with a Chinese connection, as in Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia; but with the increasing popularity of New Age fads, it is catching on in the rest of the world.

New Age

“Phenomena as diverse as the Findhorn garden and *Feng Shui* represent a variety of ways which illustrate the importance of being in tune with nature or the cosmos. In New Age there is no distinction between good and evil. Human actions are the fruit of either illumination or ignorance. Hence we cannot condemn anyone, and nobody needs forgiveness. Believing in the existence of evil can create only negativity and fear. The answer to negativity is *love*. But it is not the sort which has to be translated into deeds; it is more a question of attitudes of mind. Love is energy, a high-frequency vibration, and the secret to happiness and health and success is being able to tune in, to find one’s place in the great chain of being. *New Age* teachers and therapies claim to offer the key to finding the correspondences between all the elements of the universe, so that people may modulate the tone of their lives and be in absolute harmony with each other and with everything around them, although there are different theoretical backgrounds.” (JCBWL #2.2.2)

“**Feng-shui:** a form of geomancy, in this case an occult Chinese method of deciphering the hidden presence of positive and negative currents in buildings and other places, on the basis of a knowledge of earthly and atmospheric forces. “Just like the human body or the cosmos, sites are places crisscrossed by influxes whose correct balance is the source of health and life”.” (JCBWL #7.2)

“**Feng Shui** is fundamentally not about where you place your sofa. The whole theory of Feng Shui and its purpose is to align your physical surroundings to best facilitate Ch’i – that occult (invisible) force that is the basis of oriental cosmology and utterly hostile to the Christian cosmology. In Feng Shui the sofa is ultimately positioned according to metaphysical energies that will attain the optimal flow.

Feng Shui is a companion to Chinese divination. In this aspect Feng Shui can become geomancy, divination by geographic features. Divination is a sin against the First Commandment.

An Indonesian architect Sutrisno Murtiyoso reported said about Feng Shui, *‘In countries where belief in Feng Shui is still very strong, Feng Shui has become a hodgepodge of superstitions and unverified notions which are passed off in the university curriculum as scientific principles of architecture or city planning.’*

On a Feng Shui website: *Define the Ba-Gua (Bagua), or the Feng Shui energy map of your house, by using one of the two main Feng Shui methods – the compass or the BTB grid. Once you define the bagua, you will know which areas of your home are connected to specific areas of your life. For example, in traditional Feng Shui, the Southeast Feng Shui area of your home is connected to the flow of money energy in your life.*

This is called divination, a mortal sin.

The advice goes one with more nonsense about the five elements and other aspects of oriental cosmology. Strictly practical considerations in how you decorate your home or position your furniture is not a problem. But to Feng Fooy your home is another manner. Whether you intend to do it or not, to use Feng Shui is to use Chinese theories of cosmology that are false and occult in nature related to non-existent 'energy' flows."

(Feng Shui, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=1293>)

"Within this **Feng Shui** practice, elements from the Taoist religion and philosophy are taken out of context and are imported into our culture under a disguised form. Feng Shui is based on reductionist ideas of man, inherent in esoteric thinking, where all problems and difficulties are solely due to distorted "flows of energy". Even man himself thus is reduced to an "energetic quantity". It is conspicuous that in the many Feng Shui guidebooks on sale, a mostly negative impact is attributed to Christian symbols. Behind such an attitude, the New Age ideology is easily detectable."

(Dr. Fr. Clemens Pilar COp, in an emailed article to this writer, **FENG SHUI-FR CLEMENS PILAR 07**)

Feng Shui is named twice in the JCBWL document. (#2.2.2, #7.2)

Vaastu Shastra

'Vaastu' comes from the Sanskrit '*vas*' which means 'to live', and 'Shastra' means 'systems'.

Vaastu would therefore mean the space where one lives.

Vaastu Shastra is the science that analyses this space for "harmonious living". It is the Indian equivalent of Feng Shui.

Feng Shui and Vaastu teach us that the *lack of money is at the root of all evil*. True, they result in prosperity – but only for the expert you consult or the store which sold you your junk. For the Christian adherent, they bring spiritual bondage and condemnation. For believers, good vibrations are a myth. And words like propitiation, auspiciousness, luck, fortune and chance are not to be found in their dictionary.

Feng Shui and Vaastu Shastra are, at the very least, humbug or superstition. But they are also a lot more than that.

The two are systems of *geomancy*, a form of divination; they are occult and New Age.

Chapter 61

Harry Potter and J. K. Rowling. The Twilight series

Origins and development

“Joanne Rowling, writing under the pen names **J. K. Rowling** and Robert Galbraith, is best known for writing the *Harry Potter* fantasy series. The books have won multiple awards, and sold more than 500 million copies, becoming the best-selling book series in history. They have also been the basis for a film series, over which Rowling had overall approval on the scripts and was a producer on the final films in the series. The first novel in the series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*, was published in 1997. Over the years, some religious people, particularly Christians, have decried Rowling’s books for supposedly promoting witchcraft. There were six sequels, of which the last, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, was released in 2007. Since then, Rowling has written five books for adult readers: *The Casual Vacancy* (2012) and – under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith – the crime fiction novels *The Cuckoo’s Calling* (2013), *The Silkworm* (2014), *Career of Evil* (2015), and *Lethal White* (2018).”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._K._Rowling)

“Catholic Professor Edoardo Rialti described **Harry Potter** as “the wrong kind of hero” and said that, “Despite several positive values that can be found in the story, at the foundations of this tale is the proposal that of witchcraft as positive, the violent manipulation of things and people thanks to the knowledge of the occult, an advantage of a select few: the ends justify the means because the knowledgeable, the chosen ones, the intellectuals know how to control the dark powers and turn them into good... This is a grave and deep lie, because it is the old Gnostic temptation of confusing salvation and truth with a secret knowledge”.”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_debates_over_the_Harry_Potter_series)

New Age

“An entire generation is being lost to the occult and other New Age practices, says Catholic author and speaker Moira Noonan. Noonan ... shared the details of her leaving the Catholic Church as a teenager, embracing New Age practices for a quarter of a century and her eventual decision to return to the Church. She penned those experiences in a book called “*Ransomed from Darkness: The New Age, Christian Faith and the Battle for Souls*,” published in 2005 by North Bay Books. Noonan, who once worked for a Hollywood movie producer, warned

youths against reading books such as the **Harry Potter** series, which includes references of witchcraft and other false forms of spirituality."

(Former New Ager warns teenagers of its 'darkness', <http://www.stlouisreview.com/article.php?id=12290>)

"I can guarantee that **Harry Potter** will be an entry point into the demonic / New Age world for thousands of young Catholics. Many Christians scoffed at the potential dangers posed by *Dungeons and Dragons*, yet research has validated those warnings."

(*Harry Potter*, Steve Wood, St. Joseph's Covenant Keepers, http://www.ewtn.com/library/ISSUES/harry_potter.pdf)

"LifeSiteNews.com has obtained and made available online copies of two letters sent by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who was recently elected Pope, to a German critic of the **Harry Potter** novels. In March 2003, a month after the English press throughout the world falsely proclaimed that Pope John Paul II approved of Harry Potter, the man who was to become his successor sent a letter to a Gabriele Kuby outlining his agreement with her opposition to J.K. Rowling's offerings.

"As the sixth issue of Rowling's Harry Potter series *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* is about to be released, the news that Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger expressed serious reservations about the novels is now finally being revealed to the English-speaking world still under the impression the Vatican approves the Potter novels. In a letter dated March 7, 2003 Cardinal Ratzinger thanked Kuby for her "instructive" book *Harry Potter – gut oder böse (Harry Potter- good or evil?)*, in which Kuby says the Potter books corrupt the hearts of the young, preventing them from developing a properly ordered sense of good and evil, thus harming their relationship with God while that relationship is still in its infancy. Wrote Cardinal Ratzinger:

Many thanks for your kind letter of February 20th and the informative book which you sent me in the same mail. It is good, that you enlighten people about Harry Potter, because those are subtle seductions, which act unnoticed and by this deeply distort Christianity in the soul, before it can grow properly.

I would like to suggest that you write to Msgr. Peter Fleetwood, (Pontifical Council of Culture, Piazza S. Calisto 16, I00153 Rome) directly and to send him your book.

Sincere Greetings and Blessings,

+ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger"

(<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/pope-opposes-harry-potter-novels-signed-letters-from-cardinal-ratzinger-now>)

“A close reading of one of the books in the series, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, however, by the eyes of a former occultist like myself, reveals her more than cursory familiarity with the occult. One character is named Vablatsky (a play on the name of Madame Blavatsky, a theosophist of the 19th century). A class in “Transfiguration” (regardless of its sacrilegious context for us Muggles) also hints at familiarity with the “New Age” belief in stages of enlightenment (read chapter 57), including that of “transfiguration”.”

(Former New Ager explains Potter danger, Clare McGrath Merkle, <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/575634/posts>)

“What do **Harry Potter**, the Star Wars series (read chapter 77), The Matrix, Freemasonry, New Age and the Raelian cult – which claims to have cloned the first baby – have in common?

Their ideological soil. Identical esoteric ideas suffuse the novels, the movies, the lodges, the “alternative spirituality” and the cloning “atheistic religion,” and this ideological soil has a name – Gnosticism.”

(*Gnosticism and the Struggle for the World's Soul*, Fr Alfonso Aguilar LC, http://www.ncregister.com/site/article/gnosticism_and_the_struggle_for_the_worlds_soul/)

“Rome’s official exorcist, Fr. Gabriele Amorth, warned parents against the **Harry Potter** book series. The priest, who is also the president of the International Association of Exorcists, said Satan is behind the works. In an interview with the Italian ANSA news agency, Rev. Amorth said “Behind Harry Potter hides the signature of the king of the darkness, the devil.” The exorcist, with his decades of experience in directly combating evil, explained that J.K. Rowling’s books contain innumerable positive references to magic, “the satanic art”. He noted that the books attempt to make a false distinction between black and white magic, when in fact, the distinction “does not exist, because magic is always a turn to the devil.”

Rev. Amorth also criticized the disordered morality presented in Rowling’s works, noting that they suggest that rules can be contravened and lying is justified when they work to one’s benefit.”

(<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/romes-chief-exorcist-warns-parents-against-harry-potter>)

“Rome’s chief exorcist, Father Gabriele Amorth, has reignited the debate over whether Christians can practice yoga by declaring that both yoga and **Harry Potter** are tools of the devil. *NY Daily News* is reporting that Father Amorth made the comments at a film festival in the Italian city of Umbria this week where he was invited to introduce the new movie, *The Rite*. “Practicing yoga is Satanic, it leads to evil just like reading Harry Potter,” Father Amorth said. He went on to say that those seemingly “innocuous” Potter books convince kids

to believe in black magic. "In Harry Potter the Devil acts in a crafty and covert manner, under the guise of extraordinary powers, magic spells and curses." As for yoga, it leads to Hinduism and "all eastern religions are based on a false belief in reincarnation," the 86-year-old priest said."

(*Vatican exorcist calls yoga "Satanic"*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=10802>)

Since 2008, there's competition for **Harry Potter: Twilight**, a series of four books written by Stephanie Meyer based on a romance between a vampire named Edward Cullen and a mortal teen named Bella Swan. The four novels in the series, *Twilight*, *Eclipse*, *New Moon* and *Breaking Dawn*, have sold 100 million copies principally to pre-teen and teen aged girls.

"According to London's Daily Mail, Monsignor Franco Perazzolo of the Pontifical Council of Culture was responding to the movie, *New Moon*, the latest installment in the multi-part occult thriller, **Twilight**. Throughout the series, Edward tries to avoid biting Bella in order to spare her from losing her soul and becoming a vampire. In the end Edward relents and Bella joins him in the realm of the "undead." "Men and women are transformed with horrible masks and it is once again that age-old trick or ideal formula of using extremes to make an impact at the box office," Monsignor Perazzolo said. "This film is nothing more than a moral vacuum with a deviant message and as such should be of concern"."

(*Vatican Calls Twilight Saga a Deviant "Moral Vacuum"*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=3455>)

For further reading:

Harry Potter, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=77>

Chapter 62

Human Potential Movement

Origins and Development

“The emergence of the **Human Potential Movement** is linked to **humanistic psychology**. The movement is strongly influenced by Abraham Maslow’s theory of self-actualization as the supreme expression of a human’s life.

In the middle of the 1960s, George Leonard did research across the United States on the subject of human potential for the magazine *Look*. In his research, he interviewed 37 psychiatrists, brain researchers, and philosophers on the subject of human potential. He found that “Not one of them said we were using more than 10% of our capacity” – which should not be misconstrued as an endorsement of the ten percent of the brain myth, as it refers to general human potential rather than neurological activity.

“During the course of this research, Leonard met Michael Murphy, the founder of the nascent Esalen Institute that at the time was running educational programs for adults on the topic of “human potentialities”. Leonard and Murphy became close friends and together put forth the idea that there should be a **human potential movement**.”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_Potential_Movement)

“**The Human Potential Movement** and related teachings are based on human-centered psychology; on beliefs that one is in complete control of one’s destiny and that one deserves worldly success; and on Eastern/New Age/occult teachings about the self and the world. This movement arose in the 1970’s and 1980’s, finding fertile soil in the ambitious and success-oriented 80’s, promoting personal power, improved self-worth, and team cooperation through books, lectures, workshops; and through seminars offered on weekends, in the workplace, and elsewhere. The usual function of these seminars, which is not advertised, is to break down the identity and worldview of the participants, and replace it with a new paradigm for reality and self-identity based on the philosophies belonging to the founders of these programs. In effect, it is mind re-programming.”

(*In the image of man: An overview of the Human Potential Movement and Motivational Seminars*, Marcia Montenegro, http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_HumanPotential1.html)

“Motivational speaker Steven Campbell, a former college instructor with a masters in Information Systems and a passion for studying how the brain works, believes that the human brain accepts whatever we tell it – which essentially means that a person can do anything that they tell themselves is possible. This

theory dovetails very neatly with the basic premise of the New Age's **human potential movement** which teaches a human-centered psychology based on the belief that a person is in complete control of their destiny."

("Steven Campbell, "Making Your Mind Magnificent", Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=121>)

Popular programmes: Dianetics, the Enneagram, Erhard Seminars Training, Esalen Growth Center programs, Feldenkrais, Gestalt Therapy, Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Primal Scream Therapy, The Turning Point, Transactional Analysis...

Popular books: Norman Vincent Peale's *Power of Positive Thinking*, Steven Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, *Quantum Love* by Laura Berman, *Think and Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill, etc.

Notable proponents: Abraham Maslow, Alan Watts, Aldous Huxley, Alexander Everett, Anthony Robbins, Carl Rogers, Dick Price, Fritz Perls, George Leonard, Gerald Heard, Jean Houston*, Marilyn Ferguson, Michael Murphy, Moshe Feldenkrais, Viktor Frankl, Virginia Satir, Werner Erhard, William James, William Schutz, and others named in this chapter.

*"Jean Houston was a founder of the Foundation for Mind Research and the **Human Potential Movement**, past president of the Association for Humanistic Psychology and one of the premiere New Age promoters ... in North America." (Alice Bailey, the Lucis Trust, and the Reappearance of "The Christ", Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/alice_bailey_and_lucis_trust.html) -I have chosen Ms. Houston as an example here.

New Age

"The "New Age" Movement (NAM), sometimes also referred to as the "**Human Potential Movement**", is a loosely connected network of people, groups, activities and practices which, according to its adherents, purportedly foster and produce a vast array of beneficial results such as "spiritual" and personal growth, financial success, improvement in relationships, physical and psychological healing, individual and global peace, stabilization of the environment, etc."

(New Age Lies, David W. Pentrack, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/NEWAGE/NEWAGE.HTM>)

"**Humanistic psychology** is the belief in "self-actualization" and emphasis on discovering the potential within the Self, is perhaps the most fundamental belief of the New Age."

(What does your "Soma" say about you? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=9581>)

“As New Age expert Marcia Montenegro explains on her website, *Christian Answers for the New Age*, Dyer’s work reflects the views of the New Thought movement that produced the Christian Science Church and the Church of Religious Science.

“Much of New Thought was incorporated into the New Age and the modern **Human Potential Movement**, which encompasses a variety of self-help and motivational training programs that promote a human-centered psychology based on the belief that a person is in complete control of their destiny. In fact, it was the popular bestselling book, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, by Norman Vincent Peale that repackaged the ideas of New Thought for a modern Christian audience.

““Positive thinking as taught in New Thought and by Peale (read chapter 80) has nothing to do with merely having a positive attitude,” Montenegro writes. “More precisely, it involves the belief that via specific techniques your thoughts and words can have the power to alter reality, and to manifest nonexistent events or things into reality. The root of this is the New Thought conviction that we are all imbued with a boundless divine power within us which we can tap into (hence the popular motivational teachings that you have ‘limitless’ power and can do anything you envision).”

This is precisely what Dyer and many other self-help gurus like him preach. That he espoused the writings of Peale was made obvious in a 2003 interview with Family Circle Magazine when he repeated Peale’s famous quote, “Change your thoughts and you change your world.”

However, as Montenegro points out, New Thought teachers were themselves molded by Eastern teachings, which is why it should come as no surprise that Dyer refers to Eastern teacher Baba Sri Siva as his “guru”. He dedicated his book, *Manifest Your Destiny*, to Siva.)”

(Dr. Wayne Dyer, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=101>)

“The tendency to interchange psychology and spirituality was firmly embedded in the **Human Potential Movement** as it developed towards the end of the 1960s at the Esalen Institute in California. Transpersonal psychology, strongly influenced by Eastern religions and by Jung, offers a contemplative journey where science meets mysticism.

The stress laid on bodiliness, the search for ways of expanding consciousness and the cultivation of the myths of the collective unconscious were all encouragements to search for “the God within” oneself. To realise one’s potential, one had to go beyond one’s *ego* in order to become the god that one is, deep down. This could be done by choosing the appropriate therapy – meditation, parapsychological experiences, (and) the use of hallucinogenic

drugs. These were all ways of achieving “peak experiences”, “mystical” experiences of fusion with God and with the cosmos.” (JCBWL #2.3.2)

“The **Human Potential Movement** is the clearest example of the conviction that humans are divine, or contain a divine spark within themselves.” (JCBWL #4)

“**Human Potential Movement**: since its beginnings (Esalen, California, in the 1960s), this has grown into a network of groups promoting the release of the innate human capacity for creativity through self-realisation. Various techniques of personal transformation are used more and more by companies in management training programmes, ultimately for very normal economic reasons. Transpersonal Technologies, the Movement for Inner Spiritual Awareness, Organisational Development and Organisational Transformation are all put forward as non-religious, but in reality company employees can find themselves being submitted to an alien ‘spirituality’ in a situation which raises questions about personal freedom. There are clear links between Eastern spirituality and psychotherapy, while Jungian psychology and the **Human Potential Movement** have been very influential on Shamanism and “reconstructed” forms of Paganism like Druidry and Wicca. In a general sense, “personal growth” can be understood as the shape “religious salvation” takes in the *New Age* movement: it is affirmed that deliverance from human suffering and weakness will be reached by developing our human potential, which results in our increasingly getting in touch with our inner divinity.⁽¹⁰²⁾” (JCBWL #7.2)

⁽¹⁰²⁾ For a brief but clear treatment of the **Human Potential Movement**, see Elizabeth Puttick, “*Personal Development: the Spiritualisation and Secularisation of the Human Potential Movement*”, in: Steven Sutcliffe and Marion Bowman (eds.), *Beyond New Age. Exploring Alternative Spirituality*, Edinburgh (Edinburgh University Press) 2000, pp. 201-219.”

“Esalen: a community founded in Big Sur, California, in 1962 by Michael Murphy and Richard Price, whose main aim was to arrive at a self-realisation of being through nudism and visions, as well as “bland medicines”. It has become one of the most important centres of the **Human Potential Movement**, and has spread ideas about holistic medicine in the worlds of education, politics and economics. This has been done through courses in comparative religion, mythology, mysticism, meditation, psychotherapy, expansion of consciousness and so on.” (JCBWL #7.3)

“As we read in the Pontifical document, “**The Human Potential Movement** is the clearest example of the conviction that humans are divine, or contain a

divine spark within themselves” which is hardly a Christian concept... The idea that the “mind is god” and that we can accomplish anything just by thinking a certain way is rooted in the New Thought movement of the late 19th century (now Christian Science) and is one of the foundations for the New Age human potential movement, which essentially teaches that a person can learn how to find – and untap – their “divinity within”.”

(*Silva Mind Control*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=85>)

Colossians 2:8 says ‘See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ.’

Paul is teaching that **humanistic thoughts and ideas** are not a neutral as we like to imagine. There are spiritual forces at work behind the basis philosophical assumptions upon which man builds his society.

The **Human Potential Movement** comes up seven times in the JCBWL document. (#2.3.2, #4, #7.2, #7.3, Notes)

Chapter 63

Hypnosis and Hypnotherapy

Origins and development

“**Hypnosis** is a mental state (state theory) or set of attitudes and beliefs (non-state theory) usually induced by a procedure known as a hypnotic induction, which is commonly composed of a series of preliminary instructions and suggestions. Hypnotic suggestions may be delivered by a hypnotist in the presence of the subject, or may be self-administered (‘self-suggestion’ or ‘autosuggestion’).

The use of hypnotism for therapeutic purposes is referred to as ‘**hypnotherapy**.’” (Putting it differently, hypnotherapy is the use of hypnosis in psychotherapy.)

“Self-hypnosis happens when a person hypnotizes himself or herself, commonly involving the use of autosuggestion.

The words ‘hypnosis’ and ‘hypnotism’ both derive from the term ‘neuro-hypnotism’ (nervous sleep) coined by the Scottish surgeon James Braid around 1841. Braid based his practice on that developed by Franz Mesmer and his followers (‘Mesmerism’ or ‘animal magnetism’), but differed in his theory as to how the procedure worked.

According to his writings, Braid began to hear reports concerning the practices of various Oriental meditative practices soon after the release of his first publication on hypnotism, *Neurypnology* (1843). He first discussed some of these oriental practices in a series of articles entitled *Magic, Mesmerism, Hypnotism, etc., Historically & Physiologically Considered*. He drew analogies between his own practice of hypnotism and various forms of Hindu yoga meditation and other ancient spiritual practices, especially those involving voluntary burial and apparent human hibernation.

There seem to be many ideas about how hypnosis started. The Hindus of India claim that they started the method and used it as a cure for health. This is one of the main uses of hypnosis today and is linked to psychology... Most often, the hypnotist gives suggestions to the subject to put the subject in trance. In trance, the subject does not make decisions about the truth of the hypnotist’s suggestions: If trance is reached – it is not always – the subject will accept as true anything the hypnotist says, unless it goes against the subject’s core beliefs. This is the heart of hypnosis: to put the subject in trance so he will accept suggestions.

In a July 2001 article for *Scientific American* titled “The Truth and the Hype of Hypnosis”, Michael Nash wrote: *using hypnosis, scientists have temporarily created hallucinations, compulsions, certain types of memory loss, false memories, and delusions in the laboratory so that these phenomena can be studied in a controlled environment.*

Controversy surrounds the use of hypnotherapy to retrieve memories, especially those from early childhood or (alleged) past-lives. The American Medical Association and the American Psychological Association caution against repressed memory therapy in cases of alleged child-hood trauma, stating that "it is impossible, without corroborative evidence, to distinguish a true memory from a false one." Past life regression, meanwhile, is often viewed with skepticism."

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypnosis>; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypnotherapy>;
<http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypnosis>)

From my research on this subject, I came to understand that

- psychologists and scientists themselves are divided and unclear as to a full understanding of hypnosis, how it works as well as its effects on the human mind; they are still theorizing and debating the issues; and
- under the hypnotic state or trance and even at a much later date when not hypnotised, the subject's mind is under the control and power of suggestion of the hypnotist;
- the state of hypnosis is "often referred to as 'hypnotic trance' or an 'altered state of consciousness'".

New Age

"The point of *New Age* techniques is to reproduce mystical states at will, as if it were a matter of laboratory material. Rebirth(ing), biofeedback, sensory isolation, holotropic breathing, **hypnosis**, mantras, fasting, sleep deprivation and transcendental meditation are attempts to control these states and to experience them continuously. These practices all create an atmosphere of psychic weakness (and vulnerability)." (JCBWL #4)

"An essential part of the New Age Religion is the use of certain psycho technologies. They include the following practices: meditation, yoga, Zen, **hypnosis**, transpersonal psychology (read chapter 39), and positive thinking." (A Closer Look at the New Age Movement, Fra John Carlo Rosales FFI, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/NEWAGE/CLOLOOK.TXT>)

This writer learnt that scientists view hypnotherapy-linked "**repressed memory therapy**" and "**past life regression therapy**" with skepticism. Christians who have had an experience with the charismatic ministry of Inner Healing are aware that, by the sovereign power of God, penitents have experienced healing of painful repressed memories and of physical ailments and psychosomatic diseases caused by these repressed memories and past experiences. God created man a tripartite being, spirit, soul and body, (Genesis 2: 7, 1 Thessalonians 5: 23) and the only holistic healing that is permissible for man is through the

sacramental ministry of the Church. Since modern scientists tend to leave God out of the equation, their explanations of how many New Age therapies including **hypnotherapy** appear to work are limited to what science can or cannot verify.

“People who have these “past-life” experiences can be profoundly affected by them, and they not infrequently lead to occult involvement. They may produce dramatic life and worldview changes. For example, the individual who comes to believe in reincarnation through **past-life regression** is convinced that when he dies, he will not encounter divine judgment as the Bible teaches, but simply another life. Thus, one who believes in reincarnation cannot logically accept his or her need to believe in Christ as savior from sin. If he will atone for his own sins over many lifetimes through karma and achieve his own perfection, why does he need a savior?”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-21/>)

“Few fields have been as susceptible to manipulation by New Age as psychology and biology. Starting from the research of the father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), and the theories of the “collective unconscious” and of archetypes propounded by his disciple Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), there has been a varied succession of currents of thought in psychology that are connected to a greater or lesser degree with New Age’s ideas and therapies. In particular, so-called transpersonal psychology (read chapter 39), founded by the Italian psychologist Roberto Assagioli (1888-1974), attempts to go beyond the individual’s psychic experience in search of a superior collective consciousness that would be the door to discovering a “divine principle” lying at the core of every human being. This gives rise to a multitude of New Age’s typical techniques: biofeedback, **hypnosis**, rebirthing, Gestalt therapy, and the provocation of altered states of consciousness, including the use of hallucinogenic drugs.”

(*A Call to Vigilance (Pastoral Instruction on New Age)*, Archbishop Norberto Rivera Carrera, Primate of Mexico, 7 January 1996, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/acall.htm>)

Hypnosis is mentioned in the JCBWL document. (#4)

Chapter 64

InterPlay – The Dance of Life, and Mindfulness

Origins and development

An **InterPlay** workshop invitation received by me from a Catholic institution on 3 December 2010 said the following:

“InterPlay is an active, creative way to unlock the wisdom of the body developed by Cynthia Winton Henry and Phil Porter over the last 30 years and has spread around the world. It is a set of practical tools and ideas to help individuals and communities thrive and regain a sense of integration and connectedness – how all the parts of our lives can work well together. It is a peace practice that is the perfect antidote to stress and violence. It is a therapeutic tool for those who are most vulnerable and marginalized. The most precious resource that the poor have is their own bodies. InterPlay helps them discover the power they have to create their own future.

InterPlay helps us reclaim our lives and get more of what we want, whatever that might be. It reconnects us with the wisdom of our bodies- what we know from paying attention to our own experience. We are often cut off from that wisdom by the expectation of others, by external authorities, by fear, oppression or repression... It puts us in touch with Mother Earth (read chapter 26) and the entire cosmic community... Learn how to get your body, mind, heart and spirit all working together... Everyone is welcome to join us for this embodied approach to health and wholeness to expand our awareness of interconnection with all of life.”

New Age

The reader of this book has by now recognized all of the New Age terms in the above extract.

InterPlay has admitted that the programme concerns not only one’s physical body but also the “mind ... and spirit”.

Other commonly occurring New Age paradigms occurring in InterPlay literature are “health”, “wholeness”, the “interconnectedness of all life”, “body-mind-spirit” (“holism”), “connecting/reconnecting with one’s own wisdom” (“inner-self”), a focus on nature, not God: “...Mother Earth and the entire cosmic community...” etc.

In fact, God finds no mention in the InterPlay scheme of things. If the defenders of InterPlay will argue that InterPlay is a purely *secular* program, having no connection with the *spiritual*, we see clearly that that is not true. The Indian founder-priest himself concedes on Life Positive (<http://www.lifepositive.com/>

LPExpo2010/PrashantOlalekar.asp) that InterPlay is “an integrated form of personal development and *spiritual* practice.”

Life Positive is India’s leading New Age journal!

An InterPlay workshop invitation received by me on 30 July 2013 quotes not the Bible, not the Early Church Fathers or a Catholic saint, but Friedrich Nietzsche, the 19th century German philosopher who infamously declared that “God is dead”!

In January 2011, a leading Archdiocesan weekly reported on an InterPlay event thus, “This was better than morning yoga... I felt like I was in some ancient tribal ritual, singing sounds to Mother Earth... I saw (people) with both legs in the air, some rolling on the floor, others twisting their bodies. ‘Everybody’s gone mad’, I thought... We also communicated to one another through our body language... As we lay on the floor,... we curled up in foetal position and reminisced being in our mother’s womb... if I felt happy, I formed a shape with my body and my partner responded with her/his own body shape.”

The following extract is an account by a priest, Fr. Nn, in the InterPlay (India) Souvenir, 2010:

“Based on my studies of Integrated Spirituality, I have developed a unique model of meditation called ‘Movement Meditation’ (read chapter 73) which integrates **InterPlay** with eastern traditions like **Mindfulness** (read chapter 64) and Yoga... I have conducted sessions in Bombay for Small Christian Community leaders, superiors of priests and nuns and seminarians. During Lent 2007, these sessions were also conducted in Vasai for priests, Conference of Religious India sisters, parish leaders, Sodality women, married couples, senior citizens and youth.”

In another article written by him, the same priest, Fr. Nn, says, “**InterPlay** in a nutshell is a holistic spiritual practice to unlock the body wisdom... InterPlay trusts the wisdom of the body... Most eastern religious traditions have excellent forms of integration like yoga or tai chi... Movement Meditation integrates InterPlay and eastern techniques... I have thoroughly enjoyed conducting these workshops/retreats in ... USA, Canada, Ireland, Australia, Bombay, Vasai, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, as well as in the tribal regions of S. Gujarat and Talasari.”

“Q: How is **InterPlay** related to Movement Meditation?

A: Based on my studies and experiences in Integrated Spirituality, I have developed a unique model of meditation called Movement Meditation, which integrates InterPlay with Eastern traditions like walking meditation, creative visualization, and deep relaxation. The breathing exercises and movements

are spontaneous and simple, yet deeply spiritual. They heighten body-spirit awareness and seem to have a mystical quality of their own. The participants move to the rhythm of the sacred **dance of life** and experience the truth of "Isa vasyam, idam sarvam" (the Lord infuses all that moves in a moving world – Isha Upanishad) and the concluding verse of the Hebrew psalms: "Let everything that breathes praise the Lord."

Movement Meditation like InterPlay is not therapy but can be very therapeutic. I have witnessed several amazing healings from diseases like cancer, back pain and depression at sessions conducted in USA and India too. This can also be a powerful tool for the transformation of peace agents who will communicate holistic healing for a wounded world.

(The Dance of Life, An interview with InterPlay co-founder Cynthia Winton-Henry conducted by India's leading New Age journal Life Positive http://www.lifepositive.com/Spirit/Meditation/The_Dance_of_Life42007.asp)

“**Dance** is a medium for peace,” Fr. Nn explains, paying out the corollary that communing with other people somatically helps dissolve isolationism. “We restrict our communication to our intellect, and disparities and conflict can arise from there, but when you interact at the level of the body, you interact as equals.” And so, the methods of InterPlay have been recruited across five continents for the edification of industry, education, the arts, healthcare, peace activism and religion. In India, Fr. Nn plugged the compatible programme of his self-devised ‘Movement Meditation’ (alchemy of **mindfulness** and yoga) into the mainframe of InterPlay. The result: Instant relaxation. This could explain the participants’ readiness to **dance** like free radicals.”

(Let your Inner Child have a free run, <http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=67211023382&topic=9195>)

“Many people today practice yoga for health reasons, enroll in a meditation course so as to become more calm and collected, or attend **dance workshops** so as to experience their bodies in a new way. These techniques are not always harmless. Often they are vehicles for doctrines that are foreign to Christianity. No reasonable person should hold an irrational world view, in which people can tap magical powers or harness mysterious spirits and the “initiated” have a secret knowledge that is withheld from the “ignorant”. In ancient Israel, the surrounding peoples’ beliefs in gods and spirits were exposed as false. God alone is Lord; there is no god besides him. Nor is there any (magical) technique by which one can capture or charm “the divine”, force one’s wishes on the universe, or redeem oneself. Much about these esoteric beliefs and practices is superstition or occultism.”

(YouCat #356, <http://www.youcat.org/catechism/faith-believe-under-review/question-of-the-month/>)

“Peak-experiences (reliving one’s birth, travelling to the gates of death, biofeedback, **dance** and even drugs – anything which can provoke an altered state of consciousness) are believed to lead to unity and enlightenment (in New Age theory).” (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)

An extract from the earlier cited Life Positive interview with Cynthia Winton-Henry from the Life Positive 2010 Souvenir:

“Cynthia Winton-Henry, a co-founder of **InterPlay**, began by introducing herself in a dramatic way. Placing her shawl like a wreath around the photo of an Afro-American InterPlayer, who had died a few months earlier, Cynthia began dialoguing with her and introducing herself in the process. Since InterPlay involves expressing the energy of the body, she was laughing, crying, and moving about frenetically. On experiencing the death (link)* of her friend, Cynthia started weeping bitterly and rolling on the floor. Finally, she leapt into the air and landed on her feet with head raised high and outstretched hands. She thanked God (link)** for the death of her friend, who would be her ancestor in heaven, interceding on her behalf. The spontaneous resurrection **dance** that followed was truly out of this world.”

*The Life Positive link to “death” <http://www.lifepositive.com/spirit/death/death.html> gives information on New Age Near-Death Experiences (read chapter 74), etc.

**The Life Positive link to “God” <http://www.lifepositive.com/spirit/god/god.asp> leads one to other New Age links.

In the InterPlay Souvenir, a nun reports that she “floated in the air with the heavenly band of angels in a rhythmic motion”.

One person even claimed to see people “speak in tongues”. Another nun testifies, “As the group prayed over me, an electric current passed through me and I felt the healing touch of Jesus”.

The Indian founder-priest Fr. Nn cited the foregoing to conclude that “InterPlay releases the Holy Spirit” and elaborates, “In **InterPlay**... there is a mysterious energy flow with an unseen coordinator who, in my opinion, is none other than the Holy Spirit.” All of this indicates that InterPlay is not just relaxing through dance. It is more insidious than that. If there is any such “energy flow” during InterPlay, and there *is* according to the priest, it is from another spiritual source which is the very antithesis of the Holy Spirit. The Vatican Document on the New Age speaks extensively on this esoteric energy that counterfeits the Holy Spirit.

From the various contributions to the Souvenir, and from the photographs therein, one finds InterPlay participants fantasizing, simulating animals, twitching their imaginary tails, crawling on all fours on the floor among the chairs, “babbling” unintelligible sounds in “conversation” also described by them as speaking “gibberish”, etc. Participants “bless parts” of one another’s bodies and also practice “inner healing” of effects of childhood traumas.

One Gary Field, a student of Zen Buddhism, has contributed an article in the same Souvenir with the title “Wordplay”. Some of the New Age terms arranged in a completely meaningless jumble by him are labyrinth, guru, yoga, karma, mudra, mantra, chakra, bindi, swami, etc.

My research on other InterPlay associates also revealed their extensive involvement in New Age.

One of the article contributors is a Hindu “Consulting Homoeopath and Hypnotherapist” which itself says plenty!

The Interplay leaders, “ambassadors” and volunteers who come to India from overseas and teach Interplay to Catholics in Catholic institutions do not appear to be Christians or Catholics. One contributor to the Souvenir is a Unitarian Universalist minister. Unitarian Universalism is a theologically liberal religion which does not have a creed. Adherents draw from all major religions and can be humanist, atheist...

The InterPlay Souvenir carries a quote from Thich Nhat Hanh, Zen master and Vietnamese Buddhist monk and proponent of **Mindfulness***

*Mindfulness (read chapter 64), again a meditation, is also New Age. Tai Chi (read chapter 73) is a “Movement Meditation”.

From their frequent references to it, Interplay techniques also apparently borrow heavily from Yoga, again a meditation.

Chapter 65

Jesus Seminar and the Q document

“In modern times many enlightened types have become skeptical and we look down on the uneducated types who believe. It’s sort of a pity that all most of us know about Jesus is from the creeds, which we can’t believe.”

(James Robinson of the **Jesus Seminar and the International Q Project** in *The Atlantic Monthly*, December 1996)

“So many people have been confused by the findings of the **Jesus Seminar**. Dr. Norman Geisler explains exactly who the scholars are, their purpose, and how they reach their conclusions, to help you evaluate what they say.”

(*Baker’s Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*, 1999)

“The **Jesus Seminar** is a consortium of New Testament scholars, directed by Robert W. Funk, who were organized in 1985 under the auspices of the Estar Institute of Santa Rosa, California. Seventy-plus scholars meet twice a year to make pronouncements about the authenticity of the words and deeds of Christ. The Seminar is comprised of liberal Catholics and Protestants, Jews, and atheists. Most are male professors, though their number includes a pastor, a filmmaker, and three women. About half are graduates of Harvard, Claremont, or Vanderbilt divinity schools.

One of the intents of the organization is to publish critical books for a wider range of people than normally read such studies. So the group has a growing literary output. Among the works so far published: Marcus Borg, *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship and Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*; John Dominic Crossan, *In Fragments: The Aphorisms of Jesus*, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Peasant*, and *The Other Four Gospels: Shadows on the Contours of Canon*; Funk, *The Five Gospels* and *The Parables of Jesus*; and Burton Mack, *Jesus: A New Vision*, *The Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins*, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins*, and *Who Wrote the New Testament: The Making of the Christian Myth*. The group’s crowning effort has been a translation of the Gospels edited by Robert J. Miller, *The Complete Gospels: Annotated Scholars’ Version*.

The group has used colored beads to vote on the accuracy of Jesus’ sayings. A red bead means words that Jesus probably spoke. Pink indicates words that could probably be attributed to Jesus. Gray represents words probably, though not certainly, came from later sources. Black indicates words that Jesus almost certainly did not speak.

The vote was based on a variety of Christian writings other than the four canonical Gospels, including the fragmentary *Gospel of Peter*, the supposed

but not extant **Q** or *Quelle* (“source”) **document**, the second-century Gospel of Thomas, and the non-extant *Secret Mark*. *Thomas* is usually treated as a fifth Gospel, on a par with the four canonical books.

The results of their work is the conclusion that only fifteen sayings (2 percent) can absolutely be regarded as Jesus’ actual words. About 82 percent of what the canonical Gospels ascribe to Jesus are not authentic. Another 16 percent of the words are of doubtful authenticity.”

(Dr. Norman Geisler cited in *The Jesus Seminar*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/jesus/the-jesus-seminar/>)

New Age

“It is obvious the critical scholars have used inventive theories like “Q” only to make Jesus into an image they are comfortable with—whether political revolutionary, proto-feminist, mystic, cynic, etc. Every other image of Jesus is acceptable to them—except the one in the New Testament. Again, no biases here! As *Christianity Today* pointed out, their answer to who Jesus is seems to “be almost anything but the risen Christ worshipped by believers around the world.” Indeed, for the JS, “This Jesus is more Gnostic—concerned primarily to impart true knowledge—than anything orthodox Christianity has ever accepted. Today we might call it ‘New Age.’ But given the JS’s stated goal of discrediting orthodox Christianity and going beyond mainstream scholarship (despite their repeated claims that they represent a consensus), this conclusion should not be surprising.” The reason should be obvious: if we accept the real Jesus of history, the Jesus in the New Testament, then He is indeed our Lord, Savior and Judge. He is not someone we may trifle with but one we *must* bow to as our Sovereign. It is *He* who will judge *us* at the Last Day (John 5:27-29). Since the human heart, in its rebellion against God, prefers anything other than this, the almost desperate nature of the offensive “scholarship” to formulate a new Jesus is understandable.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/the-jesus-seminar-jesus-and-higher-criticism-part-3/>)

“Some of their main assumptions with which they attack the Gospels are:

-The authors of the four canonical Gospels are not Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, as traditionally believed.

-None of these four Gospels were written before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

-Jesus’ original sayings are mostly modified through an oral tradition that preceded the written Gospels. Various people in the early church, including the Gospel writers themselves, felt free to invent sayings of Jesus that had little or no basis in what he actually taught.

-If a saying can be applied to a later situation of the Christian society (for example persecutions) it could not have originated with Jesus.

-The historicity of John's gospel is extremely suspect.

-Historical analysis cannot accept a supernatural explanation for an event. Therefore, Jesus' words after his resurrection – like his earlier predictions about his death, resurrection, and return – cannot be authentic.

-Jesus never explained his parables and similes. All concluding words of explanation, especially allegorical interpretations of parables and metaphors, are later inventions.

-Jesus' 'I am' sayings (found in St. John) and anything about his identity revealed by him cannot be accepted.

-The burden of proof rests on any particular scholar who would claim authenticity for a particular saying of Jesus and not on the sceptic. The sceptic is free to question and reject any saying in the Gospel.

It sounds like New Age, as some of their tenets cited below claim:

-“The God of the metaphysical age is dead. There is not a personal god out there external to human beings and the material world. We must reckon with a deep crisis in god talk and replace it with talk about whether the universe has meaning and whether human life has purpose.

-The notion that God interferes with the order of nature from time to time in order to aid or punish is no longer credible, in spite of the fact that most people still believe it. Miracles are an affront to the justice and integrity of God, however understood. Miracles are conceivable only as the inexplicable; otherwise they contradict the regularity of the order of the physical universe.

-Prayer is meaningless when understood as requests addressed to an external God for favour or forgiveness and meaningless if God does not interfere with the laws of nature. Prayer as praise is a remnant of the age of kingship in the ancient Near East and is beneath the dignity of deity. Prayer should be understood principally as meditation – as listening rather than talking – and as attention to the needs of neighbour.

-The doctrine of the atonement—the claim that God killed his own son in order to satisfy his thirst for satisfaction – is sub-rational and sub-ethical. This monstrous doctrine is the stepchild of a primitive sacrificial system in which the gods had to be appeased by offering them some special gift, such as a child or an animal.

-The Bible does not contain fixed, objective standards of behaviour that should govern human behaviour for all time. This includes the Ten Commandments as well as the admonitions of Jesus”.

(The effects of “The Jesus Seminar” on Scripture interpretation, Dr. Fr. Jose Aymanathil SDB, Canon Law expert, Streams magazine, October-November 2010 and December 2010-January 2011)

Chapter 66

Kirlian photography

Origins and Development

“An Armenian electrician named Semyon Kirlian, the inventor of **Kirlian photography**, claimed he could see the energy field surrounding the physical body of plants, animals and people by using an ultrasensitive camera process. However, Kirlian’s theories were thoroughly debunked by physicists who claim the “aura” of energy Kirlian claimed to be photographing is known as a corona discharge, a well-known electro-magnetic phenomenon that has nothing to do with a universal life force.”

(*Stay Away from Pranic Healing*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=21181>)

New Age

“**Kirlian photography** is a controversial method of photography developed by Russian electrical technician Semyon Kirlian. It allegedly reveals a corona or “aura” around living things. Occultists frequently claim this photography supplies evidence of man’s inner psychic nature related to his alleged “astral body,” “higher self,” or occult aura. Psychics also claim to see auras around people, which are said to interpret their physical, emotional, or spiritual condition. Allegedly, Kirlian photography reveals this aura that psychics claim to see. Kirlian photography is also said to offer evidence of the healing abilities of psychics and spiritists insofar as it reveals the existence of the “astral body,” “higher self,” or other psychic components to man variously related to the healing process that occultists claim to employ.

But the meaning and value of Kirlian photography are not known and New Age occultic interpretations are doubtful at best. Occult interpretations of this phenomena frequently associate it with mystical occult energies connected with spiritism which are then wrongly interpreted as divine, natural, or neutral energies.

“No one denies there are weak electrical phenomena within the body or that living entities have what could be interpreted as “energy” fields. For example, the electroencephalograph can detect electrodynamic phenomena in the brain, and other instruments can detect heat energy radiating from our bodies. But to say that these supply any evidence for the occultic concept of the “aura” or the occultic energy called *prana*, *chi*, *ki*, etc., would be wrong. New Agers may speak of the thermal or electrical activity of the body as “bio-energy,” but it should not in any way be confused with the “aura,” or the *prana*, *mana*, *ki*, *chi*, etc., of New Age medicine. Comparing the scientific descriptions of known

bodily phenomena to the occultic descriptions of the aura reveals that both the “fields” and “energies” are vastly different.

Exactly what the **Kirlian photography** reveals is still uncertain. Kirlian photography may have experimental uses, but not for New Age believers. Its phenomena are explainable by recourse to more mundane things such as human sweat or the photographing process itself. (See *The Skeptical Inquirer*, Winter 1989.)

“As noted, New Age interpretations of Kirlian phenomena are cited as evidence of a human aura that many psychics claim to see. But first, not every psychic claims to be able to see auras. One wonders why, if everyone supposedly has an aura that can be psychically perceived.

Second, if auras are universal to man and internally generated by the human body or spirit, they should be able to be seen in the dark. But not all psychics can see them in the dark.

Third, Kirlian photography reveals auras around everything – inanimate objects such as coins and desks included – not just people, leaves, or other living things. This also suggests that the Kirlian phenomenon is related to the photographic process.

Biblically, we know that inanimate objects do not contain a spiritual essence. Thus, whatever Kirlian photography reveals, it does not appear to be something spiritual. If it reveals the same aura around dead objects that cannot have a spirit or spiritual life, why should we conclude that the aura it reveals around living objects is anything spiritual?

Fourth, whatever psychics are seeing does not appear to be genuine psychic perception of the human spirit or some universal, mystical energy field because the reports psychics give are too dissimilar and contradictory.

Finally, any known bodily energy or electricity is much too weak to become a healing power or the source of psychic abilities which occultists claim. And if everyone has an inner core of mystical divine power, then everyone should be able to develop psychic powers. But, in fact, the only ones who do so are occultists who have spirit guides.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-24/>)

Chapter 67

Labyrinths

The labyrinth has overrun parish churches, religious houses and retreat centres in the West. Like the enneagram, it is largely a “Catholic” phenomenon. Now it has reared its head in India in a prominent archdiocese. A few years ago, the archdiocesan weekly reported on a “Retreat for Christian meditators” thus:

*“The stage was set with insights into the very nature of God, dispelling the myth of a judgemental God doling out reward and punishment... The ancient religious symbol of the labyrinth was used to depict the pilgrimage of life and growth. The **Labyrinth** (not to be confused with the Maze) leads us unerringly, but in a round-about manner (three steps forward, two steps backward) to the centre. The programme included a virtual Way of the Cross in Triads.”*

“The myth of a judgemental God”? “A virtual Way of the Cross”? And what on earth is a “Way of the Cross in Triads”?

Again, the same weekly reported that a “**labyrinth prayer garden**” had been constructed by a major religious order; it would be “open to people of all faiths ... to enable people ... to get closer to one’s self, others, and God.”

This appears to be a devious and ingenious way of diverting people away from Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. What an ingenious way of negating the aids to prayer that the Church has developed over two millennia. This is one more of those inter-faith adventures; hence missing are the Real Presence, the Rosary and other Catholic pieties which, if offered, would offend the sensibilities of people of other faiths.

Origins and development

“A **labyrinth** is a circular maze with eleven concentric circles and a single path which makes 28 loops – seven in each of the four quadrants of the circle. People walk the path as a spiritual device to meditate, relax, or ‘find their soul assignments’ as New Agers like to say. The origin of the labyrinth comes from King Minos of Greek mythology who created the first maze as a prison for a wayward minotaur. It has been used ever since as a religious symbol and spiritual tool by a variety of pagan cultures such as the Mayans, Celts, and Native Americans.

“The first ‘Christian’ labyrinth appeared in a fourth-century Basilica in Orleansville, Algeria, which contained the words ‘Sancta Ecclesia,’ indicating its use for religious purposes. The most famous example can be found at the Cathedral of Chartres in France, which was constructed in the thirteenth century and allegedly used by Christians as a substitute for going on pilgrimage

to Jerusalem during the Crusades. However, the labyrinths in use today are not even remotely associated with these Christian labyrinths. Today's version was popularized by an Episcopalian canon and New Age devotee named Lauren Artress who describes walking a labyrinth as a 'way to find healing, self-knowledge and our soul assignments and to continue weaving the Web of Creation'."

(*Should you walk the Labyrinth?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11445>)

"Modern disciples of the **labyrinth** propose that ancient Christians used the labyrinth as a means of spiritual meditation. Scholars insist there is absolutely no evidence of labyrinth walking by Christians. The purpose of this article is to make Christians aware that Labyrinths are not in any shape or form a Christian practice."

(*Enter the Labyrinth*, Mike Oppenheimer, <http://www.letusreason.org/Nam30.htm>)

New Age

The former Chairman of the Anglican Charismatic Renewal, Canada, explains: "The Labyrinth is also called the Dromenon... As acknowledged in Labyrinth websites, the **Labyrinth** is a mandala (read chapter 67), which is actually a Hindu occult meditation process brought to the Western world by the grandfather of the New Age, Dr. Carl Jung."

(Rev. Ed Hird, http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/arm08.htm)

"The Mandala and **Labyrinth** are both favorites of New Agers... Mandalas, which come from a Sanskrit word meaning circle, are used in Hindu, Buddhist and Tibetan prayer. It is considered in these cultures to be a symbol of the universe and is usually a circle enclosing a square with a deity on each of the four compass points. The mandala is mainly for focusing attention and as an aid to meditation and trance induction."

(*On Mandalas, Labyrinths, and other Prayer "Gimmicks"*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=984>)

"**Labyrinths**, which are silly, can lead to Gnosticism, an ancient heresy."

(*Humbug!* Fr. Benedict Groeschel CFR, in Emmanuel magazine, Mumbai, July-August, 2003, courtesy: *The Priest*)

"In Deuteronomy 12:1-14 and in Exodus 34:10-17, God commands us clearly not to participate in anything that has ever been used in pagan ritual for worship or for any other use, for that matter. The **labyrinth** has been from the very beginning a demonic temple, a kundalini energy source, a tool of divination, a gateway and a portal to communicating with other spirits. People are drawn to the labyrinth by the subtle seductions of the spirit world trying to convince us

that anyone can get to know 'God' through some kind of spiritual experience. If this were the case then we have all been duped as Christians. If I knew that I could have a 'God' experience just by walking the labyrinth then all that God did through the sacrifice that Jesus gave on the cross is really unnecessary to bring us into relationship with the Father, I just have to have an 'experience' and all will be well.

"Many believe that the **labyrinth** is the beginning of a 'spiritual journey' opening up relationships with the ancient masters who will in turn offer the knowledge and wisdom of the ages to all who will take the first step or 'the initiation' to enlightenment (read chapter 57). Most Christians know or should know that the ancient masters are really 'familiar spirits' or seducing demons and the initiation is a bonding with the powers of hell itself. Is this really a walk to life or a deception that will lure us onto a path to death?"

(Steve Muse, *The Labyrinth: A Walk to Life or A Walk to Death*, <http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/04/labyrinth-muse.htm>)

"Some may argue that the use of a **labyrinth** is a good thing because it has been around for centuries. While it's true that the labyrinth dates back to earlier years, I have never found any indication it was ever used for anything other than a decorative object. Today, the labyrinth is always used as a New Age tool."

(*Catholics and the New Age – A Closer Look at the Vatican Document*, Susan Beckworth, <http://www.speroforum.com/a/7236/Catholics-and-the-New-Age>)

"The modern **labyrinth** movement is a troubling New Age trend that is introducing people to a non-Christian belief system that has no place in a Catholic setting..."

In her writings about the labyrinth, Lauren Artress reveals her feminist disdain for the God of the Bible. Instead, she refers to 'the Source', 'the Sacred', and 'the God within', which she claims has been 'destroyed through centuries of patriarchal domination, through fears of creativity and of the traits associated with the feminine.' Artress says she prefers this 'Source' to the transcendent God 'out there' who 'keeps track of whether we follow the rules'. She also says that Jesus as the Christ is too often not helpful because he is closely tied to the patriarchy. Instead, she calls people to the more inclusive 'Father and Mother God' and 'The Greening Power of God, the Holy Spirit in all Her mystery,' who is found in the 'power of The Divine within.'

Artress openly admits that neopagan journalist and Wiccan priestess, Margot Adler (author of *Drawing Down the Moon*) and New Ager Jean Houston, one of the founders of the Human Potential Movement, influenced her modern

labyrinth movement. Such a firm New Age foundation certainly explains why the emphasis for labyrinth walkers is always upon the self rather than on God.

“Knowing the belief system of the creator of the modern labyrinth movement hardly makes this so-called ‘meditation tool’ very appealing to Christians. But this doesn’t stop retreat centers in need of the Christian market from presenting the labyrinth in ways that will appeal to them.

For instance, some try to ‘Christianize’ it by using terms associated with the Christian mystical tradition although the meanings are radically different.

For instance, the three stages of a typical labyrinth walk are referred to as the purgation, illumination and unitive stages, all of which have meaning in the Catholic mystical tradition. But purgation doesn’t mean turning away from sin and embracing the gospel as it does in Christianity; it means ‘letting go of the details of your life’. Illumination means to ‘receive what is there for you to receive’ rather than the Catholic concept of illumination which is a new closeness to God after a deeper conversion. The unitive stage in labyrinth language is when one ‘is joining God, your Higher Power, or the healing forces at work in the world’ not achieving transforming union with God as is taught in the Catholic tradition.

The labyrinth might be the hip thing to do at retreat centers these days, but one hardly needs to rely on such a devious device to find God, meditate, or make sense out of life.”

(Should you walk the Labyrinth? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11445>)

Chapter 68

Laughter Therapy, Hasya Yoga or Laughter Yoga

The Health Promotion Trust of a major Indian archdiocese runs workshops on **Laughter Therapy**.

I have come across YouTube videos which demonstrate that kundalini arousal in the practice of yoga manifests as laughter.

Origins and development

“The experience of Dr. Mohan Kataria, pioneer of **Hasya Yoga**, with laughter clubs worldwide, taught him that people were definitely deriving health benefits from laughter yoga exercises. But there was no scientific proof that Dr. Kataria could offer to satisfy logical minded people especially in the west. “I had no problems in India as more than 100,000 people laughed every morning without asking me for any proof but when it came to the West everybody asked, do you have the data?” Finally, in 2003-04 the first authentic research was completed by Dr. Ilona Papousek from the University of Graz in early fall 2004. According to the news release by Ananova, March 2004, a new study shows that laughter really is the best therapy for stroke patients, according to scientists.”

(http://www.lifepositive.com/Body/Healing/Holistic_Healing42005.asp)

New Age

“Much ‘alternative medicine’, already popular in the West, is now available in the South Korean market. But the expression ‘alternative’ may not be appropriate in South Korea, because of the long tradition of Oriental (or Chinese) medicine. Under the heading of ‘alternative medicine’, the following are offered: ayurveda; reiki; reflexology; aromatherapy; herbal therapy; bodywork therapy, including massage and chiropractic; hypnotherapy; homeopathy; Gestalt therapy; Thought Field Therapy (TFT); holotropic therapy; kinergetic therapy; **laughter therapy**; pyramid therapy; electro-magnetic therapy; cranio-sacral therapy; yoga; *ki-* or *qi-gong*-therapy; and so forth.”

(*New Age in South Korea*, Hai-Ran Woo, http://www.naturomedica.co.kr/hmt_intro.html in <http://www.asanas.org.uk/files/woo%20advance%20publication.pdf>)

“**Laughter Yoga** is nothing more than yoga with a laughter component, so your pastor was correct to cancel the program. Whatever health benefits a person can get from laughter is in no way enhanced by the practice of yoga except (of course) in the minds of those promoting it.

According to the Laughter Yoga International website, the idea of combining laughter with yoga poses was invented in 1995 by Dr. Madan Kataria, a

physician from Mumbai, India. It supposedly combines “unconditional laughter” with yogic breathing, and participants are encouraged to “laugh for no reason” rather than in response to a joke or comedy.

“Laughter is simulated as a body exercise in a group; with eye contact and childlike playfulness, it soon turns into real and contagious laughter,” the site explains. “The concept of Laughter Yoga is based on a scientific fact that the body cannot differentiate between fake and real laughter. One gets the same physiological and psychological benefits.”

“There has been all kinds of research into the health benefits of laughter. Scientists know that it releases “feel good” endorphins that help to relieve stress and studies have been undertaken to determine its impact on certain diseases and conditions; however, why we need the yoga “attachment” is beyond me. There are absolutely no studies showing that laughter associated with yoga is any better than a good old fashioned guffaw.

Parents in this school need to ask these teachers what exactly they’re trying to accomplish – helping kids feel better with a good chuckle, or introducing them to yoga. I suspect it’s a little of both.”

(*Can Laughter Yoga Bring about World Peace?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=12562>)

Chapter 69

Lightworking and Lightworkers. Healing with Sound. Solfeggio Tones.

Origin and Developments

Dr. Evelet Sequeira is one of the three co-founders of **Rainbow Lightworkers** which was registered as a business "Rainbow Holistic Living LLP" in Mumbai in 2014.

"Rainbow Lightworkers is a Holistic Wellness and Lifestyle Management company. Celebrate the human Spirit with workshops based on Louise Hay and "Law of Attraction" (read chapter 42)."

(<https://twitter.com/RLightworkers>)

For the record, the rainbow is one of the pre-eminent symbols of the New Age Movement:

"The rainbow and Yin/Yang are both New Age symbols." (JCBWL #7.1)

"Evelet Sequeira, "Womb Healer", "works with womb wisdom and heals the wombs of women using **Sound** Voice Creative art and dance"."

(<https://twitter.com/evelets>, <https://in.linkedin.com/in/dr-evelet-sequeira-aab32718>, <https://www.facebook.com/Eveletcoach/>)

"Evelet Sequeira is a Certified Heal Your Life® Workshop Leader (based on the Louise Hay Philosophy authorized to conduct transformational workshops globally); a Gestalt Therapist and teaches Mindfulness based stress management. She has been in the field of Self Development since the last 5 years and has been counselling people on Self Improvement, relationships, career challenges etc. Her strength lies in designing training workshops, facilitating participatory learning processes with focus on self-transformation, leadership, team building and motivation to positive living. Her vision is to heal this planet by healing every soul she meets."

(<http://rainbowlightworkers.weebly.com/about.html>)

"The ability to create in your mind's eye what you wish to see in your real life is called visualization. We begin with a simple picture that you can easily bring to mind. Then we add layers such as the sensation of smell, touch, and even taste. When the picture that you create in your mind is as real as the actual event happening before you, you have a successful visualization.

Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) help when you need to address negative, fearful emotions that are affecting your ability to function effectively. It is done by tapping on the specified points on the body. There is nothing difficult about

learning EFT and you can find enough material online to teach yourself the basics of the tapping techniques.

Connection with Higher Self: While a part of you is made up of the gross body on earth, there is another free spirited part of your soul which can travel where it wants. This higher self is in a state of consciousness that can help provide you with all the answers that you seek. Forge a stronger connection with your higher self in order to receive the information that will make your life easier and more fun.

Get centered and connect with Spirit through Energy Work: We are basically all different forms of energy. Those who can learn to manipulate this energy are able to attract what they want and repel what they dislike. Through energy work schools of thought such as Pranic Healing, Reiki and Acupressure it is possible to subtly manipulate the energy field of the body and rid it of disease. You can also use these techniques to enhance your ability to grow spiritually. These tools are easily available for you. All you have to do is ensure that you use them to deal with the challenges that life throws at you. Rather like preparing for a marathon, you need to run every day in practice to be able to run the entire length on the final day. Similarly you need to use these tools every day in order to ensure that they do not desert you in your hour of need."

(Evelet Sequeira's blog <http://rainbowlightworkers.blogspot.in/>)

"I am trained to use the Tibetan sound bowls from the International Academy of **Sound healing**. I also use voice (mine as well as the clients) and chanting of mantras and sounds to bring about cellular transformation in the body.

Sound healing also includes use of tuning forks, crystal bowls, **Solfeggio** scales (see further below) music frequencies etc. I use the Basic Healing set of bowls to bring brain wave relaxation for clients, the Chakra set is used to align the energy of the chakras as well as bring about healing of specific ailments in the body. The Energy Meridians Meridian Bowl is a large bowl in which the client stands to get a complete sound bath. Deep seated emotions are released as the sound traverses the nadis and releases these blocks."

(<http://circleofpositivity.com/wp/index.php/2015/05/29/sound-healing-with-dr-evelet-sequeira/>)

This blog <http://goddesseva.blogspot.in/2016/01/i-walked-miles-and-miles-to-find-me-oh.html> of Evelet Sequeira is named "goddess Eva", and in the blog post <http://goddesseva.blogspot.in/search?updated-min=2015-01-01T00:00:00-08:00&updated-max=2016-01-01T00:00:00-08:00&max-results=1>, she actually signs her name as "Goddess Eva".

In another post, she proclaims, "I am a GODDESS OF THE MAGDALENE ORDER" (emphasis hers) <https://www.facebook.com/photo>.

<http://www.facebook.com/10153894279529225&set=a.456202134224.229098.731239224&type=3&theater>.

Evelet Sequeira never once uses the word 'God' except in the pantheistic/monistic sense of Advaitic philosophy:

The Universe, the Source, God, or Spirit, it doesn't matter what you call it, can be a frightening concept to grasp. We have forgotten that we are a part of the whole, and inaccurately believe that we are different from what has created us. The truth is that there is divinity in you and me. There is a spark of the Universe, Source, Spirit or God energies in each of us in existence. This is the philosophy of "Adwaita", you and I are one.

New Age

The Law of Attraction, Chanting with Mantras, Connecting with the Higher Self, EFT, Energy Work, Gestalt Therapy, Mindfulness Meditation, Affirmations and Visualization that we find propagated in her blog are New Age.

Evelet Sequeira is a registered member of the "New Age Foundation" (<http://thenewagefoundation.org/profile/DrEveletSequeira>).

Dr. Evelet Sequeira/**Rainbow Lightworkers** base their programme content on the work of one Louise Hay. Who is she?

"Louise Hay is the owner of Hay House, one of the largest publishers of New Age books in the country. In a May 4, 2008 expose about her life in *The New York Times*, author Mark Oppenheimer refers to her as the "Queen of the New Age."

Hay became involved in the New Age when she stumbled upon the First Church of Religious Science which preaches the "Science of the Mind" and other New Thought concepts along with psychic work and channeling. She became a "minister" in this church in the early 70's and made a name for herself after writing a pamphlet called "Heal Your Body" which included a chart of different ailments and their metaphysical causes. For instance, according to Hay's theories, Alzheimer's disease is caused by a "desire to leave the planet" and "anger and frustration" are the causes of anorectal bleeding.

At some point in the late 70's, she claims to have healed herself of cervical cancer through the use of enemas, reflexology, forgiveness, nutrition and positive thinking (although this has never been verified).

"In 1984, she expanded upon her theories in a book entitled *You Can Heal Your Life*. It became an instant best-seller with more than 35 million copies now in print around the world.

In 1987, she founded a publishing company, Hay House, to market her books, and soon began publishing other New Age and self-help authors such as

Wayne Dyer (New Thought guru), Deepak Chopra (overall New Age guru), Helen Schucman (*A Course in Miracles*), Sylvia Browne (psychic), Doreen Virtue (clairvoyant) and Joan Borysenko (expert in “mind/body connection”). I think it’s safe to assume that *The New York Times* got it right (for once) when they referred to Louise Hay as the “Queen of the New Age”.

(Louise Hay, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11447>)

“A **lightworker** is a fanciful New Age being who allegedly comes into the world with a special mark. According to this [YouTube](#) (link) video, Lightworkers are born with a strong inner desire to spread Light (knowledge love and freedom) throughout the planet. They’re “older” souls, meaning they have acquired a lot of experience in past lives and carry within themselves memories of non-terrestrial light spheres (whatever that means). They consciously accepted to be born as humans in order to fully live the earth experience. These people have felt special all their lives, even lonely and alienated at times, and thus find their own path in life in spite of religious and cultural constraints.

“According to [Judith Kusel](#) (link), a self-proclaimed soul-reader, Lightworkers actually signed a soul-contract before they were born which makes it imperative that they live up to their mission. They do this by giving up the struggle to come to terms with who they are and stop trying to please everyone around them. They must become fully “activated” and assume their role as peacemakers in the world. Thus, when a person sees a repetitive number, such as 11:11, this is a kind of activation code which confirms that they are a **lightworker** (or Starseed) and are being warned that they are transitioning from “normal” life to an alternate reality where the soul leads rather than the mind. They could also see other repetitive numbers as 22:22, or 33:33 but 11:11 seems to be the one most favored by these believers. The use of numbers in this way is considered to be numerology, an occult art which uses numbers to divine the future or to define specific characteristics about a person.

“Satan is more than capable of arranging for us to see repetitive numbers which he can use to lure us, through our innate curiosity, into believing we are something other than a child of God. He would be more than happy to convince us that we lived past lives and bear the special mark of a “**lightworker**” so he can draw us away from revealed Truth and ensnare us in the whimsical web of these and other New Age constructs.”

(*What’s a Lightworker?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=46661>)

“**Lightworker** located in Las Vegas, is a nonprofit corporation, run by Steve and Barbara Rother, that uses the name ‘Lightworker’ because “it clearly states our intent to carry Light to the earth”. Steve Rother (President) “channels the loving entities simply known as the Group”, and says, “It was in May of 1997

that I got a strong nudge from the Group to create a place for Lightworkers to gather here on the Internet. This was to be a place where all could gather and experience their own empowerment... The Group gave several guidelines for this project. The guidelines were all about creating a place for people to come together to re-member who they were and the powers they had forgotten as a result of playing the game of being human." The 'Lightworkers' "have presented the material from the group five times at the United Nations.

In fact, Steve Rother taught a class on channeling at the United Nations, on April 26th 2000, which he believes was the first class on the art of channeling ever presented at a UN facility anywhere."

(*The Global Alliance*, Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/the_global_alliance.html)

"Steve Rother, president of **Lightworkers** (Lightworker.com is now espavo.org), "channels (spirit) entities simply known as the Group"."

(*Global Unity*, Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/new_age_global_unity.html)

"I recently received an email from a reader who was concerned about the ill-effects suffered by a follower of Shekina Rose, a so-called "Priestess of Light, Divine Messenger and Harmonic Vocalist" who claims to be able to produce a musical tone that can do everything from heal cancer to transform DNA. According to her [website](#) (link), Ms. Rose lists herself as an intuitive, empath, clairaudient, claircognizant, clairsentient, and clairvoyant (these are all forms of psychic mediumship).

She also refers to herself as a "Blue Ray", one of an "ultra-sensitive empathic soul group like the Indigos that came from many different ascended planets and light realms to enlighten the genetic code of humanity and raise the God consciousness on Gaia [Earth Goddess]. They are the lost ray of the **Light Worker** [whatever that means]."

"Here is how she describes receiving the transmission of these special healing tones: "As I am in sort of a trance, when I channel and I could barely keep up with all the activation of number sequences being downloaded and there were many sacred high councils, beings of light, the archangels Michael, Rachel, Gabriel. Metatron, Shekinah, Gaia {many of their personal codes are in this transmission} the heavenly hierarchy were all present for this channel to be created here on earth. The light codes of the Archangels in this transmission are actually protecting and empowering this knowledge so all the light bearers where ever they are in the world will receive and be awakened by it."

"If you're wondering what the heck she's talking about, it's all about the [Solfeggio Tones](#). These are special tones of **sound** that New Agers believe

King David received with which he tuned the strings of his lyre. He used the tones when singing his psalms. But these tones were lost and not found until the 1990's when a man named Joseph Crane was given the tones during an apparition of who he believed to be the Archangel Michael. Michael supposedly told him there were two **solfeggio tones** – one sacred and one profane. Crane claims he received six of the frequencies of the **sacred solfeggio** – all of which New Agers claim can be used to heal.

To follow are the six **solfeggio** frequencies and the healing associated with each:

UT – 396 Hz – Liberating Guilt and Fear

RE – 417 Hz – Undoing Situations and Facilitating Change

MI – 528 Hz – Transformation and Miracles (DNA Repair)

FA – 639 Hz – Connecting/Relationships

SOL – 741 Hz – Awakening Intuition

LA – 852 Hz – Returning to Spiritual Order

Ms. Rose claims to have received the third frequency – the “Blue Ray” – the one which enables transformation, miracles, and even DNA repair. Her bio claims that these frequencies are “of the Grid of God” and that this level of **sound** “can heal cancer, raise Chi or Om Energy beyond comparison and awaken the soul to its highest potential.”

Of course, there is absolutely no scientific evidence to support any of this nonsense; however, you can readily see how this much dabbling in the occult can wreak havoc on a soul who might be searching for healing or just answers to the meaning of life. She talks about all kinds of encounters with her “star family” and other beings that supposedly gave her information and “opened her up” to what she believed were “higher realms.”

“She also claims to be “a direct voice channel for Mother Goddess Shekinah in the Language of Light, and is supported by the Angelic Star Tribes with a vibrational choir of healing frequencies.” In her performances, she claims to be able to “activate within the individual his or her Divine Original Blue Print or God DNA.”

She reports that many participants in her “performances” report having instant healings and “awakenings” and that they are able to feel the blessing of Divine Mother Goddess Shekinah and the Angelic Realms.

Although it might all sound like harmless gibberish, this woman (who may sincerely believe that she’s contacting good spirits) is certainly consorting with evil. We know from Scripture (see *Deuteronomy 18*) and the *Catechism* (Nos. 2116-2117) that God condemns all such forms of sorcery. He will not contradict himself by participating in it, nor will He allow His angels to do so. Because disembodied human souls are not capable of this kind of contact with the

material world without God's help, they obviously won't be participating in it either.

"That leaves only one other known spiritual being to be behind the visions Ms. Rose claims to be getting - Satan. She can give them all the fancy names she wants - but her "star family" and "sacred high councils" are nothing more than demons who are using her to lure souls away from God and into Ms. Rose's so-called "higher realms." This woman should be off-limits to all Christians." (*Beware of Shekina Rose and her language of light*, Susan Brinkmann <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=15780>)

"**Solfeggio tones** are believed by New Agers to have been the original **sound frequencies** used in ancient Gregorian chants that were either lost or suppressed by the Church. These chants, with their special tones, were believed to impart tremendous spiritual blessings when sung in harmony during the Mass.

"According to the history <http://www.soundsofwonder.com/pdf/files/grandsolfeggio.pdf>, King David supposedly "received" six **Solfeggio tones** which he then created with strings on his lyre. These tones were used with the psalms. "The mathematics of the tones matches the mathematics of the psalms (gematria)," this author states. Solomon then used the tones and the gematria in the creation of the Song of Songs, but eventually lost the tones. They were supposedly found again during the creation of the Gregorian chants. These tones were allegedly based on the discoveries of Pythagoras and his "harmony of the spheres" (whatever that means). But these were also later lost.

"Now we come to the 1990's when Dr. Joey Puleo was given the secret of the gematria in a vision along with the actual frequencies. In the vision, Jeshua appeared along with an angel that Dr. Puleo doesn't name. Not long after this, a man named Joseph Crane was told in an appearance of the Archangel Michael that two solfeggio scales existed - one sacred and one profane. Crane claims to have discovered six of the frequencies of the sacred solfeggio, now known as the "**secret solfeggio**", and added a seventh - all of which were to be used in healing. Crane claims that the Archangels Michael and Gabriel both verified the existence of the tones, and revealed other tones such as the Divine Masculine and Divine Feminine frequencies.

"In his book, *Healing Codes for the Biological Apocalypse*, Dr. Leonard Horowitz documents Dr. Puleo's rediscovery of the tones... [As listed above] As one author fancifully detailed, "The third note, frequency 528, relates to the note MI on the scale and derives from the phrase 'MI-ra gestorum' in Latin meaning 'miracle'. Stunningly, this is the exact frequency used by genetic biochemists to

repair broken DNA – the genetic blueprint upon which life is based!” (<http://www.redicecreations.com/specialreports/2006/01jan/solfeggio.htm>)

Unfortunately, there’s no such thing as repairing DNA with **sound frequencies** and (of course) the website offers no references to support this statement other than that of Dr. Horowitz, who is associated with all kinds of New Age alternative healing methods. Horowitz has written 16 books such as “The Love Frequency 528 for World Health, Peace and Freedom and launched the Healthy World Organization in 2009 which has its own supplement line. He hawks his Holy Harmony CD.

I could go on and on, but I think you get the general idea of where the **Solfeggio** frequencies are coming from.

Listening to musical tones is certainly harmless, but why keep charlatans like this in business?”

(*Can specific music tones heal your DNA?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=867>)

“Open2love.com <http://www.open2love.com> is “a positive spiritual new age community for **Lightworkers** and Wanderers, featuring chat, forums, links and more.”

(New Age Spirituality a.k.a. Self-spirituality, New spirituality, Mind-body-spirit, <http://www.religioustolerance.org/newage.htm>)

Chapter 70

Magnet Therapy, Magnetic Therapy or Healing using Magnets

Origin and Developments

“Magnetic therapy goes way, way back, all the way back to the ancient people of China, Greece, India, Egypt and many more countries. One of the earliest recorded uses of magnetic therapy is found in the Hindu Vedas, from 600 BC. The scriptures mention a lodestone being used to treat various ailments and diseases. A lodestone is a mineral that possesses natural magnetic qualities, and it seems symptoms could be alleviated by placing it on a person suffering from something. But it’s believed that the ancient Chinese were using lodestones long before that, even around 1200 BC. Back then, healers used the magnetic material to balance the flow of chi – believing then, as now, that blockages in this life-force energy lead to all manner of physical problems. It was thought that magnetism could manipulate the flow of energy and restore it to proper channels, thereby bringing about healing in the body and helping to cure diseases. In the many years and centuries since then, the popularity of magnetic therapy has grown as more people discovered the benefits of this alternative method of healing and pain relief.”

(*The History of Magnetic Therapy*, <https://www.copper-bracelets.com/the-history-of-magnetic-therapy-21-c.asp>)

“**Magnet therapy, magnetic therapy** is a pseudoscientific alternative medicine practice involving weak static magnetic fields produced by a permanent magnet. It is similar to the alternative medicine practice of electromagnetic therapy, which uses a magnetic field generated by an electrically powered device.

Practitioners claim that subjecting certain parts of the body to weak electric or magnetic fields has beneficial health effects. These physical and biological claims are unproven and no effects on health or healing have been established. Although hemoglobin, the blood protein that carries oxygen, is weakly diamagnetic (when oxygenated) or paramagnetic (when deoxygenated), the magnets used in magnetic therapy are many orders of magnitude too weak to have any measurable effect on blood flow. This is not to be confused with trans-cranial magnetic stimulation, a scientifically valid form of therapy.

Products include magnetic bracelets and jewelry; magnetic straps for wrists, ankles, knees, and back; shoe insoles; mattresses; magnetic blankets (blankets with magnets woven into the material); magnetic creams; magnetic supplements;

plasters/patches and water that has been “magnetized”. Application is usually performed by the patient.

A 2008 systematic review of magnet therapy for all indications found insufficient evidence to determine whether magnet therapy is effective for pain relief, as did a 2012 review focused on osteoarthritis.

Marketing of any therapy as effective treatment for any condition is heavily restricted by law in many jurisdictions unless all such claims are scientifically validated. In the United States, for example, U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations prohibit marketing any magnet therapy product using medical claims, as such claims are unfounded.”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magnet_therapy)

In summary: Magnet Therapy is “snake oil”, a scam, pseudoscientific (not scientifically validated)!

New Age

“**Magnet therapy**, or **magnotherapy**, is not inherently New Age, but it is a form of alternative medicine that is largely practiced by New Agers. Practitioners claim that the magnetostatic fields produced by permanent magnets can do everything from cure wounds to improving overall vigor. Typically, these permanent magnets are sold in the form of bracelets and other jewelry; magnetic straps for the wrists, ankles, knees and back; shoe insoles; mattresses; blankets; creams; supplements; and even magnetic water. The type of magnetics described above does not work and is considered to be sham medicine. In fact, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration prohibits the marketing of any magnet therapy that makes medical claims because these claims are scientifically unfounded. But if you’re wearing a device that is said to be able to cure headaches or get rid of your knee pain, it won’t be the first time a magnet salesman has made such claims. Mankind has been fascinated with magnets since the first lodestone was discovered. The ancients had such a tough time explaining why the stones (which are natural magnetic rocks) behaved as they did, they decided it was because the stones had souls.

“Nothing much changed through the centuries. Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815), who came up with the concept of “**animal magnetism**” to explain why he thought magnets could heal, believed it was a unique force of nature that flowed through all living things. He used a combination of magnets, hypnosis, and the laying on of hands to produce “healings”.

“Claims of magnetic healing continue to this day; but there are important distinctions to make about magnet therapy. What is marketed in bracelets and insoles consist of static or permanent magnets, the same kind that are used to attach your child’s report card to the refrigerator door, for instance.

“These static magnetic fields have no demonstrable effect on blood flow or living tissue, and their fields are so shallow they barely extend beyond the cloth in which they are encased, let alone to any significant tissue depth,” writes neurologist Steven Novello, M.D., on his NeuroLogic blog. “And the scientific evidence for efficacy is negative.”

Whatever help a person may believe they are receiving is purely placebo. (Read the pages “Why Does Alternative Medicine Seem to Work?” in Section E.)

“On the other hand, electromagnets, which utilize electricity to create a temporary magnetic field, are used in conventional medicine for things such as MRIs (Magnetic Resonance Imaging). Devices such as these employ powerful magnetic fields produced by electromagnets along with radio waves and computers to produce 3D images of the body. However, as anyone knows who has ever had an MRI, even this huge dose of super powerful electromagnetism does not heal the body. We’re as sick or injured after the scan as we were before it began.”

(*Can a refrigerator magnet really cure what ails you?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=716>)

“ALL ionized and **magnetized water products** are scams. There are so many of them out there it would be impossible to address them all in one blog. There’s structured water, magnetized water, energized water, oxygenated water, structured water, Kangen water, water clusters and even water awareness which is based on the preposterous notion that water is conscious and can respond to stimuli such as music, prayer, words, or emotions. And all of these products can be found on flashy websites that contain no indication of serious scientific testing, only the usual testimonials from people who swear the water cured their aching back or healed their cancer. Equally suspicious is the fact that none of these products or machines contain the required disclaimer that their claims are not supported by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. For some idea of how extensive this problem is, click here for a list of water scams that was compiled by Dr. Stephen Lower, a retired professor of the Department of Chemistry from Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada. I hope you have a lot of time because this list is incredibly long!”

(*Take a Look at All These Water Scams!* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=14255>)

I have corresponded with Dr. Stephen Lower, Dept. of Chemistry, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, Vancouver, Canada.

Check out **BIOCONNED-WATER, MAGNETIC, FAR-INFRA-RED NEW AGE WELLNESS PRODUCTS** at my web site.

For further reading:

- *Fatal Attraction – Resist the pull of Magnet Medicine*, Meme Black http://web.archive.org/web/20030729233658/http://www.healthquarterly.com/winter_2003/default.asp?filename=page30&adfile=ads11
- *Magnetic Water treatment and Pseudoscience*, Dr. Stephen Lower <http://www.chem1.com/CQ/magscams.html>,

Chapter 71

Mandalas

Mandalas are employed in meditation and in psychotherapy.

Origin and Developments

“**Mandala**” is a Sanskrit word meaning “circle”. In the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, mandalas are circles symbolically designed to represent the cosmic order. Mandalas belong to most spiritual and symbolic traditions as universal images of the human longing to achieve order within diversity and integration within creation.”

(*Golden Rule Meditation Exercises*, https://www.scarboromissions.ca/Golden_rule/meditation_exercises.php)

“**Mandalas** and mantras are frequently employed in Eastern religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism. Mandalas, for example, are “fundamental to the ritual and meditation of Hindu and Buddhist Tantrism.” (Abingdon Dictionary of Living Religions) However, one or the other may also be used by individuals in various magical practices or occult religions, such as the Church Universal and Triumphant. Mandalas may be used in Jungian psychology and other forms of potentially occult, occult, or fringe psychotherapy. For example, in Jung’s analytical psychology, “the mandala conforms to the microcosmic character of the psyche.” (Ibid) Among his patients, Jung felt that the spontaneous production of a mandala was a step along the path in what he termed the individuation process, a central concept of his psychological theory. The mandala is basically a representation of the universe, a consecrated area that serves as a receptacle for the gods and as a collection point of universal forces. Because of their alleged cosmic power, the use of mandalas and mantras in occult meditation, visualization, magic, and psychic development is common.”

(*Mantras and Mandalas*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/mantras-and-mandalas/>)

“The yogi who has attained complete mastery over the technique of breathing, and who has been able by this means to isolate himself totally from the external world, succeeds in “seeing” the interior of his body or, in other words acquires intuitive knowledge of the secret *mandala* that his subtle body forms.”

(*Yoga, A tribute to Hinduism*, http://www.atributetohinduism.com/Yoga_and_Hindu_Philosophy.htm)

“Because the **mandala** is a visual symbol of the macrocosm, the one who meditates on a mandala can visualize himself absorbing cosmic knowledge and

power through meditation. Mandalas are thus often used to assist the meditative process through visualization upon its symbolic pictorial representation."

(*Mantras and Mandalas in Occult Practices*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/mantras-and-mandalas-in-occult-practices/>)

"Mandala: A visual mantra (read chapter 72) – A graphic cosmic symbol shown as a square within a circle bearing representations of deities arranged symmetrically used as a meditation aid by Buddhists and Hindus. In the terminology of the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung (read chapter 36), 1875-1961, a symbol depicting the endeavor to reunite the self.

"Star in My Heart is the name of a book by Servite nun Joyce Rupp in which she reflects on her personal awakening to the feminine wisdom of *Sophia*, sometimes referred to as the feminine image of God. It contains information on **mandalas**, which are ritualistic geometric designs symbolic of the universe, used in Hinduism and Buddhism, as an aid to meditation."

(*The Church and the New Age Movement*, Dr. John B. Shea, M.D., FRCPI, http://www.catholicinsight.com/online/theology/article_653.shtml)

"The implications of the building of **mandalas** (magic diagrams): According to Victor and Victoria Trimondi, experts on *Mandala Politics* (*Shadow of the Dalai Lama* <http://www.trimondi.de/SDLE/Index.htm>): It is an act of sorcery – "a magic title of possession, with which control over a particular territory can be legitimated... One builds a magic circle (a mandala) and "anchors" it in the region to be claimed. Then one summons the gods and supplicates them [through ritual prayers and incantations] to take up residence in the 'mandala palace.' After a particular territory has been occupied by a mandala, it is automatically transformed into a sacred center of Buddhist cosmology. Every construction of a mandala also implies the magic subjugation of the inhabitants of the region in which the 'magic circle' is constructed."

"Jung's psychology was not scientifically neutral. He included all sorts of 'pagan' religions in his writings relating to what he called, the Collective Unconscious. There are numerous programs on 'spirituality' offered in Christian circles based on Jung's teachings which use art as a therapy: by designing your personal Mandala for getting in touch with the 'self'. However, considering what the word '**mandala**' means and what Jung's psychology is based on, it cannot be divorced from the ethos behind it."

(*What's in a word?* Catholic evangelist Eddie Russell, 23 September 1998, <http://www.flameministries.org/word.htm>)

"Jung wrote a book called "**Mandala Symbolism**". In this book he introduced the Eastern mandala practice to Western psychotherapy. He began

to have his patients create mandalas, to help him identify their emotional disorders. He didn't look at their tea leaves or read their palms. But he didn't just believe this was pure science either. He was deeply into the occult. He even published a dissertation about the science behind psychic mediums called, "*On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena.*" He ... even participated in séances. (*The Portable Jung*, Joseph Campbell)."

(*Adult coloring books and Mandalas – a warning for Christians*, <https://thelasthiker.wordpress.com/2016/02/16/adult-coloring-books-and-mandalas/>)

"Jung had studied Gnostic writers during the years between 1918 and 1926, they too, according to Jung, had the concept of the unconscious. He stated that he began to understand in the years between 1918 and 1920 that the goal of psychic development is the SELF. He, while being commandant of a prison camp in Switzerland during the First World War began to draw **mandalas**. These symbols are of a round design and with the entire symbol directing attention to the center of the mandala. The center represented the *Self* concept mentioned above.

He had a dream in 1927 which brought to conclusion his forming doctrine of *Self*. He stated that through the dream he understood that the *Self* is the principle, orientation, and meaning in the process of development of consciousness."

(*Secular Psychology – "Science of the Soul"?* Dr. Edwin A. Noyes M.D. MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

New Age

"Aside from its uses in Eastern religions, New Agers have their own unique uses for the **mandala**. New Age author Lauren D'Silva refers to them as 'cosmic maps that connect us to our place in the universe.' She cites an alternative definition of the mandala which says the word is derived from the root word Manda, 'which means essence, energy or spirit, and by adding the suffix -la to any Sanskrit word, it becomes the container or vessel for it; thus revealing the Mandala as a container for essence, energy or spirit.' New Agers believe mandala making is a form of active meditation that allows a person to still the left side of the brain and 'allow more intuitive energy to be felt.' Like the labyrinth, mandalas are popping up all over Catholic retreat houses. Instead of teaching authentic Catholic prayer, they are relying on this and other prayer gimmicks (such as the labyrinth, yoga, centering prayer, etc.) to attract customers."

(*On Mandalas, Labyrinths, and other Prayer "Gimmicks"*, Susan Brinkmann, <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=984>)

“As acknowledged in Labyrinth (read chapter 67) websites, the Labyrinth is a **mandala**, which is actually a Hindu occult meditation process brought to the Western world by the grandfather of the New Age, Dr. Carl Jung.”

(Dr. Jean Houston & the Labyrinth Fad, Anglican Renewal Ministries of Canada, http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/arm08.htm)

“Buddhist authority H. V. Guenther and leading Tibetan Buddhist guru Chogyam Trungpa warn in their book *The Dawn of Tantra* that “practicing visualization [e.g., with a **mandala**] without the proper understanding is extremely destructive. Tantric scriptures abound with warnings about using visualization”.

(Guenther and Trungpa, *The Dawn of Tantra*, Boston, MA: Shambhala 1975, p. 49)

Chapter 72

Mantras: chanting, harmony, sound vibrations, and emptying or voiding the mind. The Pranava “Om”.

Mantras are invariably associated with the practice of meditation.

Centering Prayer (read chapter 24) is a mantra-based meditation.

In Transcendental Meditation (read chapter 29), all initiates are given their unique mantra.

The “Christian meditation” technique of the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) is also mantra-based.

In Sri Sri Ravi Shankar’s “Art of Living” programme, a unique form of yoga that incorporates a puja and a mantra, a personal and secret mantra is given by the guru to each adept. The adept is expected to meditate for twenty minutes, twice a day, morning and evening, using the mantra.

Mata Amritanandamayi, the hugging godwoman, also bestows a secret mantra in each devotee’s ear.

Two of the more popular mantras among Hindus, Buddhists and Jains, are “Om” or “Aum” and the Gayatri Mantra.

You will never find in any legitimate writing of the Catholic Church any permission, instruction or suggestion to use the chanting of a mantra for any reason, especially as or in prayer. There is nothing in Christian history that suggests that the mindless repetition of mantras has ever been a part of Church tradition.

Catholics who enquire about these mantras used in eastern meditations or “Christian meditation” are told that they are meaningless words or sounds, or that they are not ‘mantras’. But that is simply not true.

“A **mantra** is a sound symbol of one or more syllables often used to induce a mystical state. It must be passed on by the living voice of a guru and cannot be learned in another way. One need not understand the meaning of the mantra; the virtue is in repetition of the sound. It is said to embody a spirit or deity, and the repetition of the mantra calls this being to the one repeating it. Thus the mantra both invites a particular being to enter the one using it, and also creates the passive state in the meditator to facilitate this fusion of beings.”

(*Death of A Guru*, former Brahmin temple priest, Rabindranath R. Maharaj, Hodder and Stoughton, 1977, page 204)

Origins and development

“**Mantras** originated in the Vedic tradition of India, later becoming an essential part of the Hindu tradition and a customary practice within Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism... the vocal sounds of the mantra have inherent meaning independent of the understanding of the person uttering them... they are essentially ‘thought forms’ representing divinities or cosmic powers, which exert their influence by means of **sound-vibrations**.”

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mantra>)

“**Mantra**: a mystical formula of invocation or incantation in Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism.”

(*A Call to Vigilance, Pastoral Instruction on New Age*, Archbishop [later Cardinal] Norberto Rivera Carrera, 7 January 1996, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/acall.htm>)

“**Mantra**: Short phrase or word from Hindu Scriptures that is repeated many times. One goal is to **empty the mind** to dispel the illusion of maya. Others claim that repeating the mantra raises one’s **vibration** levels and unites a person to the gods.”

(*Catholics and the New Age*, Fr. Mitchell C. Pacwa, S.J., Servant Publications, 1992)

“**Mantra**: Hindu tradition believes that such words or syllables have supernatural powers, often invoking a deity who is believed to embody the sound.”

(*Larson’s Book of Cults*, Bob Larson, Tyndale House Publishers, 1982)

“The word “spell” is perhaps the nearest approach to the Sanskrit word **mantra**. It is a form of words or sounds which are believed to have a magical effect when uttered with intent... A sound is a **vibration**, and when we consider that the family of **vibrations** include not only the things we hear but all material objects seen (which may be said to be patterns of vibrations), we can appreciate why the magician has always laid great emphasis on words of power. Sound is the foundation of all magic, and an armory of mantras forms part of the equipment of the magician in all countries. The mantra is an occult vehicle whose **vibrations** are first concentrated and then projected, either inward into oneself, or outward in the form of invocations, commands, blessings or curses, to function as protective instruments, healing potencies, defensive or destructive missiles.”

(*Mantras and Mandalas in Occult Practices*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/mantras-and-mandalas-in-occult-practices/>)

“The **mantras** directed internally are aimed at a particular part of the body such as the head, between the eyebrows, the solar plexus or the sex organs, and at these points they set up **vibrations** that create specific energies. Thus

those directed to the cranium set up resonances in the chambers of the head, resulting in a kind of mystic illumination. Sometimes a mantra is sent on a journey in a circuit round the body and its reverberations cause the old bodily tissues to fall off and make place for new. They may be directed to a part of the body that needs strengthening or healing. It is believed that there exists a mantra for every condition and every illness."

(*Encyclopedia of the Unexplained: Magic, Occultism and Parapsychology*, pages 137-38)

"Some **mantras** "are traditionally held to be revealed by the deities themselves, whose **name vibrations** are latent within them, so that a god can be summoned, or at any rate his power drawn down, by uttering his particular mantra. The mantra in this case represents more than a sound, it is the **vibration** of the divine emanation; the deity is identical with it, and like the deity it remains eternal"."

(*Man, Myth and Magic: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Supernatural*, Richard Cavendish, Vol. 13, p. 1727)

New Age

In an article about Sri Aurobindo and the 'Mother' of the Aurobindo Ashram in *The Indian Express* of 26 February 2005:

"Calling the Mother non-stop for a day or preferably three days does the miracle... Mother wants our **minds to be blank**. Calling - repeating the Mother's name - **renders the mind blank**. The Force is always there ready to act."

"The meditation most of us are familiar with involves a deep, continuous thinking about something. But New Age meditation does just the opposite. It involves **ridding oneself of all thoughts in order to still the mind** by putting it in the equivalent of pause or neutral. A comparison would be that of turning a fast-moving stream into a still pond. When meditation is employed by damming the free flow of thinking, it holds back active thought and causes a shift in consciousness. This condition is not to be confused with daydreaming, where the mind dwells on a subject. New Age meditation works as a holding mechanism **until the mind becomes thoughtless, empty and silent**.

The two most common methods used to induce this thoughtless state are breathing exercises, where attention is focused on the breath (read chapter 86), and a **mantra**, which is a repeated word or phrase.

The basic process is to focus and maintain concentration **without thinking about what you are focusing on**. Repetition on the focused object is what triggers the **blank mind**.

“Since **mantras** are central to New Age meditation, it is important to understand the word. The translation from Sanskrit is *man*, meaning to think and *tra*, meaning to be liberated from. Thus, the word literally means to **escape from thought**. By repeating the mantra, either out loud or silently, the word or phrase begins to lose any meaning it once had. The conscious thinking process is gradually tuned out until an altered state of consciousness (read chapter 43) is achieved.”

(*Transcendental Meditation*, Carol Brooks,

http://www.inplainsite.org/html/transcendental_meditation_tm.html)

“Using **mantras** and reaching a mental void are also New Age, not Catholic. In fact, **reaching a mental void** is described in the Catechism as an erroneous notion of prayer (#2726).”

(*A Closer Look at Centering Prayer*, Margaret Anne Feaster, <http://www.ourladyswarriors.org/dissent/centerprayer.htm>)

“In the Christian tradition we are taught how to come to know and love God as embodied in Jesus Christ, by prayerfully reflecting on the sacred scriptures or through other traditional methods of meditation, not by using **mantras** to **bypass the mind**. In the Western Christian tradition, meditation primarily means prayerful reflection on the person of Christ, to enter into him through love. In the Far East, meditation primarily means the repetition of mantras.

If using these mantras leads to a certain inner stillness, peace, or what is sometimes called *mindfulness* (read chapter 27), it may well contribute to a certain self-generated psychological equilibrium, but it must never be confused with the true mystical contemplation of God. This cannot be generated in a matter of minutes, but only in years of selfless giving in dryness and aridity and is then a pure gift of God. That is why this Vatican document (JCBWL #4) insists: “*There is a tendency to confuse psychology and spirituality. Many of the meditation techniques now used are not prayer. They are often a good preparation for prayer, but no more, even if they lead to a more pleasant state of mind or bodily comfort*”

What the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* wanted to do for his readers ... he taught them to cry out to God “*To the rescue,*” or call out the name, “*Jesus*” so that he would come to the rescue. This is the origin of what later came to be called the *Jesus Prayer*. The *Prayer of Faith* was the collective title later given to various short prayers used most especially by those who languished in *Accidie* (period of aridity) or in *The Dark Night of the Soul*. To suggest that these prayers were meant to be used as **mantras**, as used in the Indian tradition, shows a total ignorance of the Christian mystical tradition.” (*Christian Mysticism and its Counterfeit*, David Torkington, <http://www.davidtorkington.com/christian-mysticism-and-its-counterfeit/>)

Says a Dominican priest, "Only in Hinduism, '**mantra**' has its true meaning: a magic word."

(Liturgy and Liturgical Aberrations in *The Golden Sheaf*, Prof. Fr. J. P. M. van der Ploeg, OP, 1980)

"In the Bhagavad Gita, one of the most holy books of Hinduism, Krishna very plainly says, 'I am the salinity in water and the light of the moon and the sun. I am the sacred syllable **OM** in all the Vedas.' (BK. VII. 8)."

(Indian Rite Mass – Totally Pagan Melodrama, in *The Golden Sheaf*, Prof. Fr. J. P. M. van der Ploeg, OP, 1980)

Father Bill Kneemiller who had at one time indulged in yoga, Transcendental Meditation and **mantra** chanting recounts that as a priest himself, he had to 'denounce the mantra' and be delivered by a fellow priest of the resulting spiritual oppression that still afflicted him from having used it years earlier. He adds, "It would be decades before I learned that **mantras** are names of Hindu gods." (http://www.catholicmessenger.org/articles/2011/01/12/opinion/guest_opinions/doc4d2ddb6eb021c530661137.txt)

"It is clear that if any Christian is using this particular **Om mantra**, then they are calling on this deity and not the True God that they intend."

(*What's in a word?* Catholic evangelist Eddie Russell FMI, <http://www.flameministries.org/word.htm>)

"The so-called 'Indian rite' (Mass) uses the **mantra 'Om'**, the name of the Hindu god Krishna."

(*The Unicorn in the Sanctuary –The Impact of the New Age on the Catholic Church*, Randy England, Tan Books, 1990, page 70, citing Malachi Martin, *The Jesuits*, Linden Press, 1987, page 411)

"The word **mantra** never appears in traditional Christian spirituality. It is not to be confused with *monologistos* or one word prayer. St. John Climacus refers to the Jesus Prayer as *monologistos*.

"New Agers wrongly claim that **mantras** can be found in works like the Jesus Prayer, John Cassian's Conferences, The Cloud of Unknowing, St. Teresa of Avila's writings etc. But in spite of hijacking these works as mantra-based, they *never* recommend these so-called mantras as they are too long: Jesus Prayer (15 words); Cassian's aspirational prayer (13 words). So they are not suitable as meaningless shields against thoughts and for inducing altered states of consciousness! NAM meditators prefer harmonic words to build up a resonance of powerful sound waves to **empty the mind** and expand consciousness to reach a **mental void**. 'Maranatha' has good **vibes** but not 'Come Lord Jesus' it seems! Altered states and **mind voiding**, especially for children, are dangerous as they can lead to depression, madness and openness to the demonic. St. Teresa

writing of people in the 4th Mansion who have progressed beyond the beginner stage to the advanced stage in prayer, when distractions come, can utter a single word occasionally, to solve the problem. This is *not* mantra meditation which is used to attain altered states of consciousness (ASC's) (read chapter 43) and dissolve stress."

(*Desire for God*, Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM, <http://sine-glossa.blogspot.in/search/label/Desire%20for%20God>)

"Sadly many have been misled into thinking that methods of Eastern mysticism involving the continual repetition of **mantras** is not only in conformity with the Christian mystical tradition, but the high point at which Eastern and Western religion meet. However, contemplative prayer is so important for the future reform in the Church – as it has been in the past – that it must be protected from its counterfeit ... If anyone wants to be guided by the authentic Catholic tradition rather than by its counterfeit, then they must look, in the first instance, to Jesus Himself, who never taught the use of mantras."

(David Torkington www.davidtorkington.com, *Letter to Susanna 43: The Authentic Tradition*. Catholic Herald (U.K.), 28 May 1999, cited by Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM, 26 February 2018, <http://sine-glossa.blogspot.in/>)

"Here are some of the entry points (access points) for evil spirits into a person... Through repeatedly calling or chanting **Mantras**: It has been found that when certain mantras are given, the recipient is told not to disclose (occult) the mantra under any circumstances. These mantras are actually invoking pagan gods or religion. The same goes for certain prayer practices such as Transcendental Meditation."

(Fr. Joseph Wilson MSC, cited by Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM in <http://sine-glossa.blogspot.com/search/label/Demons%20-%20Incubi%20Succubi%20etc.>)

Apart from the Gayatri Mantra of the Hindus, one of the most popular mantras among Catholics is the "**Om**" or "**Aum**".

The latter mantra is found in some vernacular *bhajans* in the Catholic charismatic hymnal "Praise the Lord". It is chanted in charismatic retreat centres which are associated with the Catholic Ashrams (read chapter 48) movement. **Om**-bhajans have replaced the Sign of the Cross in their liturgies. The symbol even adorns some church tabernacles and liturgical vestments.

"In 1980, Wladyslaw Cardinal Rubin, Prefect of the Congregation for Oriental Churches, forbade the use of '**Om**' because it is 'an essential, integral part of Hindu worship'."

(*The Paganized Catholic Church in India*, Victor J. F. Kulanday, 1985, http://canisiusbooks.com/articles/hindu_mass.htm)

Read **THE PAGANIZED CATHOLIC CHURCH IN INDIA-VICTOR J F KULANDAY** at my web site.

The full text of Cardinal Wladyslaw Rubin's letter is given below:

"Report on the State of Liturgical Reform in the Syro-Malabar Church by the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches. (Text sent to all Hierarchs of the Syro-Malabar Church. 12.8.80)

Section 3: Observations on certain points of the 'Indian Mass' and the 'Indianized Mass (Dharmaram CMI group)' and related questions.

The 'Om' according to what innumerable Passages of the Upanishads continually and repeatedly affirm, is the synthesis of all the Vedas, and of all the 'gnosis' of Hinduism. Notwithstanding the attempt made in various quarters to offer an accommodated Christian interpretation, it remains so strong - qualified in a Hindu sense, is charged with meanings so unmistakably Hindu, that it simply cannot be used in Christian worship. 'Om' is not a revealed name of God. Besides, if even the Old Testament Tetragrammaton itself can no longer be used, how can this syllable, so charged with special meanings, and charged with ambiguity, be used to invoke God? Moreover, 'Om' is an essential, integral part of Hindu worship."

(*Catholic Ashrams - Sannyasins or Swindlers*, Sita Ram Goel, 1994, <https://christiancult.files.wordpress.com/2017/02/catholic-ashrams-sannyasins-or-swindlers.pdf>)

On Mon, Aug 8, 2016 at 11:00 AM, **Archbishop Bombay** <diocesebombay@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Mr. Name Withheld,

I have your email of August 2, 2016. My personal opinion is that **it is not appropriate for Catholics to say OM during any service**. Some argue that it expresses the inexpressible and therefore signifies God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I am not comfortable with this argument. Besides, there is the question of scandal which has to be kept in mind.

With kind regards and best wishes,

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ Oswald Cardinal Gracias

Archbishop of Bombay

"In her major work *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (Theosophist) Alice Bailey says that the true mantra is **OM**. This is the 'Sacred Word' even though 'there are several such mantric formulas and Words of Power'. When used correctly they 'automatically become dynamically effective' she says, and 'they will produce changes in the person and their circumstances in life.' Alice Bailey is speaking out of an occult background where the mantra is known and used properly... If the music has the **mantra OM** in it, and, the mantra is chanted

or given in a meditative, rhythmic way, then one realises that one is being led into NAM."

(*A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, 1994, <https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

We have confirmation of all of the above from a secular source that, but naturally, employs a lot of New Age jargon:

"Are certain **vibrations or sounds** more powerful than others? The answer, if we look at the Eastern legacy of chants, mantras and the omnipotent '**Om**' sound is 'yes'. In the Bhagwad Gita, Lord Krishna is said to have explained that whatever exists in Brahman (creation) is Me manifest through '**Om**'. The **vibration** of '**Om**' moves through the nadis or subtle energy channels resonating from the root chakra to the crown (chakra). Thus '**Om**', the primordial sound of creation, itself has power to reform the body, removing negativity and stored stresses, harmonizing and balancing the body's energies." (Sangeeta Wadhvani, *Music, the Ethereal Healer*, in *Elle magazine*, February 2000)

Using similar vocabulary, the 2003 Vatican Document clarifies, "Thus cosmic energy, **vibration**, light, God, love – even the supreme Self – all refer to one and the same reality, the primal source present in every being... New Age truth is about **good vibrations**, cosmic correspondences, harmony and ecstasy, in general pleasant experiences." (JCBWL #3.1; #4)

"This concept of **vibrations** is purely an Eastern/occult idea; it is not of Christian origin."

(Op. cit., *The Unicorn in the Sanctuary-The Impact of the New Age on the Catholic Church*, page 111)

About 200 years ago, a French Catholic missionary, Abbé J. A. Dubois (1770-1848), spent 31 years in the villages of Madras State, India (1792-1823) living among the people and studying the Hindu religion. His recorded observations and opinions can be considered to be indisputably authoritative.

The Asiatic Review says it is a valuable historic document. *The Hindu* newspaper endorsed these views in its review, and the book's editor Henry K. Beauchamp writes, "The general accuracy of the Abbé's observations has nowhere been impugned and every Indian critic of the work has paid a warm tribute to the Abbé's industry, zeal and impartiality."

I quote below from the Fr. Jean Antoine Dubois' book, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 3rd edition, 1906, Rupa, 7th impression, 2002, 775 pages, page nos. in brackets:

"The sound '**Om**' or '**Aum**' is a **mantra** or **mantram**. (138)

After the **Gayatri**, the most powerful **mantram** is the mysterious monosyllable '**Om**' or '**Aum**'.

Though it is to the interest of the Brahmins to keep the real meaning of this sacred word a profound secret, and though the greater number of them do not understand it themselves, there does not appear to be much doubt that it is the symbolic name of the Supreme Being, one and indivisible like the word '**Aum**'. Here, Henry K. Beauchamp, the editor of the book, adds a note: "As long as there has been a Hindu faith, the power of sound has been recognized in the Sacred Word. In that word lie all potencies, for the Sacred Word expresses the one and latent Being, every power of generation, of preservation and of destruction. (140, 141)

The sannyasi's duty of meditation, to which Hindus attach so much importance, appears to me so remarkable a practice for idolaters that I have thought it incumbent on me to call special attention to it (and)... will show to what extremes superstition and fanaticism will pervert men's minds, especially when they are connected with self-conceit and a longing for notoriety. The doctrine of meditation is called yogam [yoga] and from it the word yogi is derived. According to Hindu doctrine, the practice of yogam has a peculiarly spiritualizing and purifying effect on a sannyasi. (529)

One of the most famous and edifying of the yogams is called Sabdabrahma (the sound of Brahma) or Pranava, that is to say, meditation on the sacred and mysterious word '**Aum**' - '**Aum**' being Brahma himself.

Adds Beauchamp, "It would be more correct to say 'Brahman', the Supreme Spirit itself."

As this word '**Aum**' is composed of three letters, which in writing form only one, we may consider that the 'A' is Brahma, the 'U' Vishnu, and the 'M', Siva. The sign representing the three letters ends with a semicircle with a dot in the centre which is called Bindu, and is the emblem of the purely spiritual Being. Those who desire to obtain salvation must be always meditating on this word and constantly repeating it... One must gradually withdraw one's thoughts from all material objects and fix them on the dot or Bindu. This point once reached, a single moment of meditation is sufficient to ensure the most perfect happiness... Vishnu always looks favourably on such meditation, and from the moment one is able to bring oneself to believe firmly that the pranava or the word '**Aum**' is the Divine Being, one sees Vishnu in everything. In fact, one see, hears and thinks of nothing but him, and finally one believes that there is nothing except him. Just as there is nothing worth knowing that is not to be found in the Vedas, so no meditation is equal in merit to the word '**Aum**'. (533) One reads in the Bhagavata [Gita], 'Arjuna having invoked Vishnu, and prayed to him to reveal himself, this powerful god answered, 'These Arjuna are the

forms in which thou must above all invoke me, acknowledging them as part of my Divine Essence: In prayer I am the **Gayatri**, in speech I am the word **Aum'**. **(The mantra 'Aum' is)** ...one of the unmeaning and ridiculous practices of Hinduism". (616, 617)

"The point of *New Age* techniques is to reproduce mystical states at will, as if it were a matter of laboratory material. Rebirth, biofeedback, sensory isolation, holotropic breathing, hypnosis, **mantras**, fasting, sleep deprivation and transcendental meditation are attempts to control these states and to experience them continuously." (JCBWL #4)

"All meditation techniques need to be purged of presumption and pretentiousness. Christian prayer is *not* an exercise in self-contemplation, stillness and **self-emptying**, but a dialogue of love, one which 'implies an attitude of conversion, a flight from 'self' to the 'You' of God'." (JCBWL #3.4)

To repeat what I said earlier, the Christian is exhorted to remain sober, to be alert, to renew his mind, to put on the mind of Christ, to reflect on the Word and to love the Lord with his whole heart and mind (Psalm 119, Mark 12: 30, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 2:16, 1 Corinthians 14:15, 2 Corinthians 10:5, 1 Peter 1:13); not to empty his mind, not to go "inward" or not to indulge in the practice of dubious or occult meditations. Emptying one's mind and mantra chanting in meditation are a devious Satanic ploy to deflect Christians from genuine prayer and communication with God.

The word "**Mantras**" is mentioned in the JCBWL document. (#4)

Chapter 73

Martial Arts: Aikido, Judo, Jujitsu, Karate, Kung Fu, Taekwondo, and Tai Chi or Movement Meditation (Meditation in Action). Yin and Yang.

Many Catholic institutions encourage different **martial arts** on their campuses either in their physical education classes or as extracurricular programmes. While not too long ago our pre-teen kids would be serving at the weekday morning Mass in the parish church or training at the cricket nets, it is now not an uncommon sight to find groups of them, come dawn, assembled on their school grounds robed in their white *ghis*, bowing to their *sensei* or 'honourable teacher' who will, for the next hour or so, take complete authority over their bodies. And their minds.

Sincere but ignorant Christians have insisted to me that martial arts is simply an exercise – or a sport. They are, after all, the national games of some countries (like *taekwondo* in Korea) and are now also Asian Games and Olympic games events (*judo* was the first to be included). Would that it were as innocent as that.

“**Martial arts** deal with moves, countermoves, kicks, punches and self-defence, but contrary to popular belief, these skills are not about fighting or conflict. The word which derives from the Chinese ‘*mu*’ (martial) and ‘*ye*’ (the way for search of truth) is considered to be a process of enlightenment (read chapter 57) that can be achieved by creating a synchronization of body, mind and spirit. A martial art coordinates the conscious and the subconscious mind.”

(*Spiritual Warriors*, Kanishka Sharma, *India Today* magazine, 3 November 2003)

For those who believe that *tai chi* and other **martial arts** is all about physical exercise, martial artiste Elizabeth Roy writes:

“The essence of *tai chi* practice is not to learn a set of movements or to become skilled in a system of self-defence although this may happen in the process of practice.”

(*The Hindu*, 19 June 2000)

The Easter 1990 issue of *Areopagus*, a Far East Christian quarterly, carried a 5-page feature, replete with photographs of *tai chi* sessions.

“Though I had already been practicing *tai chi* for many years, I had never really realized that it was not an exercise only, but a kind of contemplation in the unity of body- mind, matter- spirit, in the fullness of being... in the way of unification with God... There are many ways to get and to experiment with this unity. One of the most subtle and aesthetically pleasing is *tai chi chuan*”,

the author says. "If *tai chi* has roots in martial arts like *kung fu*, we must not forget that both Chinese and Japanese martial arts are always involved in the total self-realization of the human being... *Tai chi* requires time to learn, as all spiritual disciplines. It is a holistic discipline, which involves the body, the mind, and the spirit. It is also called "**meditation in action**". And, at the end, its perfection is in unification with the... cosmos: *the Tao*... Only in complete relaxation can a person become a live channel for the spontaneous flow of the mysterious vital energy coming from the *Tao*."

(*The Contemplative Way of Tai Chi Chuan*, Migi Autore, Areopagus, Easter 1990)

Origins and development

Their real history goes back to the dawn of civilization in India, and nearly five millennia in China where it developed more extensively. Over the centuries, various forms were evolved. Distinctive schools developed, 'hard' and 'soft'. '*Kung fu*' was the original, all-inclusive term describing the martial arts. Later, specific names were applied to its variations. Though they have many roots and cultural variations, their religious foundation has common, pagan origins. The original religious philosophy of *kung fu* dates back as far as 3000 BC where it was rooted in the occultic forms of divination known as the I Ching. The Chinese sage Lao Tzu, author of the *Tao Te Ching* (or 'the way') added further embellishments. He taught that salvation could not be attained by prayer to God, but by the natural way, the observance and emulation of nature. As the trees bend with the wind, and the rivers follow the path of least resistance, so too must man adopt this rhythm of coexistence with evil. With the adoption of Taoism, *kung fu* developed into a complex system of occult practices that included meditation and breathing exercises. The commonly shared doctrine of *chi* made acupuncture an aid in the quest for health. Eventually this led into a search for immortality through the mysteries of alchemy. The next development in the history of *kung fu* took place when a monk named Bodhidharma brought Buddhism to China in the 6th century AD. When he discovered monks sleeping during his lectures, he introduced exercises to assist them in meditation. Known as I-chin Sutura, it combined *kung fu* with the philosophical principles of Zen Buddhism to develop a highly sophisticated form of weaponless defence. The monks at his Shaolin temple (in Yunan Province of China, which was the citadel of martial arts theology) became famous for their savage abilities of defence employed whenever they were attacked in the course of their pilgrimages. Eventually, two schools of practice evolved:

1. *Ch'uan Fe* or *Kung Fu* based on the 'hard' or 'external' school of Buddhism
2. Martial arts based on the 'soft' or 'internal' school of Taoism.

The countries of origin of the more popular martial arts are China, Japan and Korea.

After centuries of metamorphosis, the martial arts have evolved into six distinct forms as they are now known in the Western world: *Tai Chi Chuan*, *Kung Fu*, *Karate*, *Aikido*, *Jujitsu* and *Judo*.

Tai Chi is "the Chinese [Taoist] notion of the Great Ultimate which is the underlying cause of everything... everything in the world, including human characteristics is generated from the Great Ultimate. It is the transcendent first cause which all else follows. Tai Chi is the nearest thing to an equivalent to God in Chinese thought."

(The Wordsworth Dictionary of Beliefs and Religions, 1992, ed. Rosemary Goring)

Kung fu emphasizes kicking and striking with strength and speed. Or, force to break force. It includes delayed action 'death touches'. Earl Medeiros quoted in the *History of Kung Fu* says, "It is not the breaking of bricks or the crushing of bones; but rather, the purpose of *kung fu* is as a spiritual discipline through which one may establish a pattern for life."

Karate is the most widely practiced of the martial arts and the one best known. It is basically a form of self-defence and sport-fighting using bare hands, arms and wrists. The term '*kara te*' means 'empty hand'. Gichin Funakoshi who developed it as Shotokan Ryu emphasized that the student must empty (*kara*) his mind (*te*) in order to react properly.

It was in Okinawa, Japan, that karate became infused with Zen philosophy. This undercurrent of Buddhism is found in the bowing, breathing exercises, seated meditation, intense concentration and heightened awareness that is said to be necessary to master the art. Above all, one is not to think. Karate's stated purpose is to unite body, mind and spirit to reach the unity envisioned by Zen. Admittedly, most sport karate falls short of its physical goal (disabling of an opponent) and spiritual purpose (union with an internalized god), but it is a question whether any devotee may be totally free of its pagan frame of reference.

Aikido is the most overtly religious. Literally, it means 'the road' (*do*) 'to a union' (*ai*) with the 'universal spirit' (*ki*). It was founded by Morihei Uyeshiba, who became concerned that he couldn't control his strength without controlling his mind. After entering many temples, he arrived at 'enlightenment' and viewed himself, in the Buddhist theological concept as 'at one with the universe'. He then declared, "The true martial arts regulate the *chi* of the universe."

All the body movements of aikido are said to agree with the universal laws of nature and bring to the follower the power of chi, which is inhaled into

the lower abdomen and exhaled through the hands. When the innate psychic powers of all men are united with the body and spirit, aikidoists predict the world will be as one family.

Jujitsu is a blending of *kung fu* and Japanese martial arts. A basic factor is knowing the vulnerable parts of an opponent's anatomy and knowing how to attack those areas.

Judo is basically jujitsu minus the killing aspects. It was founded in 1882 by Jigoro Kano, a student of jujitsu. Devotees are warned in judo manuals that the art should not be learned without the inclusion of meditation exercises. *Its founder had called it a "method of attaining self-realization", a common goal of pagan philosophy.*

"Taekwondo and Martial Arts are Zen Buddhist meditational technique designed to bring a person into the experience of satori or Buddhist enlightenment. It is no coincidence that the occult circular symbol of **Ying-Yang** constantly appears on even many innocuous-looking Taekwondo websites and brochures. One of the goals of Taekwondo and other Martial Arts is to enter a zazen meditational state so that 'the everyday experience of the dualism of subject and object vanishes.' Taekwondo means 'Hand (Tae) and Foot (kwon) Way (do). According to the Official WTF Taekwondo book, Taekwondo 'is now the national sport of Korea'."

(*Taekwondo and the Martial Arts*, Rev. Ed Hird, http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/arm07.htm)

New Age

Those Christians who practice the martial arts defend their position by insisting that they avoid any religious overtones. But two critical questions must be asked of them:

1. What is the ultimate intent of the art?
2. What de facto acquiescence to pagan doctrine is assumed by their involvement?

One cannot obscure the fact that in the case of the 'hard' arts, the purpose is to inflict bodily injury. Such violence is not compatible with the Christian way of life. And even the self-defence motive is questionable in view of the Christian's supposed subjection to the God's will & his dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit.

If the *tai chi* branch is representative of the martial arts family, all the above information could be summarised as follows:

While different martial arts may have differing systems of practice, they all have similar religious presuppositions based on the same ancient Chinese and Taoist philosophies, subscribing to a fundamental belief in a 'universal life force energy', the existence of meridians and a psychic energy body in human

beings, the **Yin/Yang** principle of life etc. Within the diversity of applications, the source of their spiritual basis for physical expression is the same.

The paranormal displays of power associated with martial arts have a Chinese name: *noi cun*. The source of this power is said to be the cosmic or vital or etheric or universal energy *chi* (also known as *ki*, *qi* or *ch'i*). One who has knowledge of the *prana* of the yoga system and the *ki* of reiki will understand that *chi* (the basis of the working of acupuncture, etc.) is the same phenomenon. While some *senseis* may conduct amazing demonstrations of *chi* power, the interest of most people in the martial arts is less exotic and is limited more to learning a system of self-defense through unarmed combat, attaining physical development, enhancing a macho image to others, or simply a pastime rather than attaining any sort of spiritual experience. But the inherent presuppositions of pagan doctrine underlying the martial arts assure them that they may get more than what they bargained for.

To Christian adherents of the martial arts who try to reduce *chi* to physiological terms, the pagan practitioners of this art will not join in agreement with them. The *History of Kung Fu* states, "All true strength is a product of *chi* rather than muscle. It is only when the **yin and yang** interplay harmoniously in their proper relationship that there is strength."

In *What Lies behind the Martial Arts*, Brian Pickering quotes Ed Hird, a former *taekwondo* exponent and Anglican minister from *Anglicans for Renewal*, "**Taekwondo and martial arts** aren't just physical exercise; they're Zen Buddhist meditation techniques designed to bring a person into the experience of *satori* or Buddhist enlightenment."

Practitioners can try to ignore the spiritual dimension of the martial arts, but spirituality is their ultimate purpose historically, Hird said. He noted that the Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs considers the **martial arts** as "forms of spiritual education that function as means toward self-realization or self-enlightenment."

While the religions of the martial arts believe in a god who is synonymous with creation, Scripture teaches a personal, transcendent Deity who is apart from the material universe that He has brought into being by the power of His Word. This created universe is imperfect in its present state. It is controlled by a sin principle that must be destroyed rather than accommodated. The Bible teaches a fallen creation with which there is NO harmony until it has been restored to its pre-Adamic condition (2 Peter 3: 13).

Nowhere does Scripture teach of some sort of impersonal, amoral supernatural power. However, since the reality and the results of the employment of this 'energy' is well attested to by martial arts devotees, the Christian can only

conclude that such power is real, but that it's origin is not God. Whether the form of martial art that one practices is based on the doctrine of naturalism found in Taoism or that of illusion found in Buddhism, it should be understood that both explicitly deny the blood atonement of Jesus Christ. To the Christian, salvation comes by the finished work of the cross. And by His resurrection we have eternal life, not the nirvanic nihilism of Zen Buddhism.

As Wang Tsung Yueh truthfully states in his treatise on **Tai Chi Chuan**, "A small divergence in the beginning will lead you a thousand miles away from your path in the end." (Purasai News, Chennai, April 4-10, 1999, Interview with sifu George Thomas) Christians who are training in the martial arts would do well to reflect on and pay heed to those words of warning.

Because of their founding in Taoism and Buddhism, the martial arts view the entire universe as an interplay of harmonizing opposites, the yin and yang. These principles are realized by the relaxed state of equilibrium produced by meditation and body movements. Each movement is uninterrupted and flowing. The end of one move is the beginning of the next.

Thus the yin and yang are balanced. When the Zen goal of stilled senses is achieved, this balanced harmony leads to one's unity with the Universal Consciousness.

Such theological footing is pantheism, and the doctrine of 'oneness' or monism, which is incompatible with Christian belief.

Martial arts are holistic techniques. While they go through the motions of physical exercises, they are all mainly functional on a mental level, and like it or not, finally operate in the spiritual realm.

Theoretically at least, their goal is illumination and self-realization (ultimately, self-deification) through an ancient Chinese religion (Taoism) that sought immortality for its adherents; and a monistic unity with a cosmic consciousness, the Tao, the Great Ultimate which is the deity of these arts. They unconsciously subscribe to New Age goals like the 'unity of all being'.

If *tai chi* is truly representative of the martial arts, then we can conclude like Elizabeth Roy that "The essence of all martial arts practice is *not* to learn a set of movements or to become skilled in a system of self-defence although this may happen in the process of practice."

The JCBWL Document, while not specifically mentioning the martial arts, speaks of the "exercises that lead to an experience of self-fulfillment or enlightenment", and of the 'holistic paradigm' which it says is "the greatest danger". (#4)

"The response from the New Age is unity through fusion... **Yin and Yang** is a New Age symbol, to do with complementarity of contraries" (#4.2, 7.1) it says.

The reader is by now aware that the Document talks in several places of the New Age concept of universal life force energy (*chi, ki* or *prana*) which is fundamental to the martial arts, and several other philosophical underpinnings of the NAM that are to be found in the Martial Arts.

Sr. Epifania Brasil OP, in *The New Age Movement: A Challenge of our Time* (p. 83) writes "In the Philippines there is something intriguing about the meditation practices like Zen, yoga, *tai chi*..."

Movement Meditation

Most Christians are unaware of this very important fact that yoga is categorized by the Church as a meditation system; and so too is *tai chi* a meditation.

Tai Chi is in fact a form of *Chi Kung* or *Qi Gong* which is known as Taoist Yoga (read chapter 28).

Tai Chi like Interplay (read chapter 64) is also known as "**movement meditation**" (or, as described further above, "**meditation in action**").

"**Moving meditation** is ... a New Age form of dance/exercise.

This studio <http://moving-meditation.com/?page=dance> gives a very good description: "Moving Meditation and Ecstatic Dance are free-form healing practices that unite the mind, body and spirit, while promoting spiritual awakenings, mental clarity, physical stamina and emotional well-being. These movement forms provide a powerful catalyst for personal and collective transformation by raising awareness. This expanded perspective leads to a greater range of choice and assists us in going beyond our habitual patterns and limiting thoughts."

"A typical class includes stretching and warming up with a short period of "instruction or intention" (red flag) offered before people are encouraged to "get in touch with their breath, body, sensations, emotions and mental presence. Specific music is selected to assist people in deepening their experience of themselves, their relationship to others and the community of dancers. In this practice we turn suffering into art and art into awareness."

This particular studio also offers a class called *Sweat Your Prayers*, which is "A silent moving meditation that presents heart-opening music from around the world to assist you in dropping into a state of Divine Awareness..."

Another class is called *Soul Motion (TM)* in which "the language of the dance becomes a Divine dialogue between the individual and the Creative Spirit within."

"Trance dancing <http://www.suite101.com/content/how-to-learn-a-spiritual-dance-meditation-a208521#ixzz1LtD3gCE2> is another form of

moving meditation that is designed to “bring about a euphoric state of altered consciousness.” It’s typically done free-style while listening to a meditative drum CD and should be done for a half hour in order to “give time for the mind to achieve an altered state of consciousness, which can bring about spiritual enlightenment.”

Tai Chi is perhaps the most prevalent form of **moving meditation** and is said to promote the circulation of a non-existent energy form known as chi within the body.”

(*Another New Age Exercise Craze – “Moving Meditation”*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=952>)

Says Anglican charismatic priest and ex-martial artiste Rev. Ed Hird:

“My research and personal experience has led me to the conviction that **Taekwondo and the Martial Arts** are not merely physical exercise, but in fact are Zen Buddhist meditational practices, both in their sitting and moving forms.”

(*Taekwondo and the Martial Arts*, http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/arm07.htm)

The Korean bishops have issued several warnings to “religious and laity who frequent centers of ‘ki-gong’”, “regarding the increasingly popular practice of ‘ki’ (energy) sessions that blend physical movement, breathing and concentration”.

(http://www.ucanews.com/story-archive/?post_name=/2001/01/23/church-warns-clergy-religious-of-popular-ki-experience&post_id=17714)

They are concerned about “the increasing popularity of methods such as yoga, Zen and ‘ki’ (‘chi’) energy training among Koreans, Catholics included, who say these techniques help them achieve soundness of body and mind... While many proponents claim these movements only promote well-being, many elements in such movements are based on pantheism and other religions, and clash with Catholic dogma.”

(<http://www.ucanews.com/search/show.php?q=yoga&page=archives/english/2004/11/w1/mon/KO7047Rg.txt>)

“Julian Porteous, the auxiliary bishop of Sydney (presently Archbishop of Hobart, Tasmania), warns that pursuing such ‘alternative’ relaxation techniques as yoga, reiki, massages and **tai chi** may encourage experimentation with ‘deep and dark spiritual ideas and traditions’. Bishop Porteous, who has stood in as exorcist ... for five years... warns that (they) can lead to people being in the grip of ‘demonic forces’.”

(<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/do-twilight-harry-potter-open-door-to-the-devil-20100320-qn74.html>)

Yoga, Tai Chi, Reiki: A Guide for Christians. A book by Br. Max Sculley DLS, 2012, 180 pages

Foreword by Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney, now Archbishop of Hobart, Tasmania, Julian Porteous,

(<http://www.christendom-awake.org/pages/book-promotions/yoga-tai-chi&reiki/yoga-tai-chi&reiki.htm>)

“The New Age challenge to Christianity – of which Yoga, Reiki and **Tai Chi** are part – is not trivial for committed Catholics.”

(Bro. Max Sculley,

https://www.ad2000.com.au/tai_chi_reiki_a_guide_for_all_christians_by_br_max_sculley_fsc_february_2013.html)

Watch the Bro. Max Sculley video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=htK2lg-E6Rk>

Chapter 74

Near-Death Experiences (NDEs). Out-of-Body Experiences (OBEs) and Astral Projection

“Near Death Experience (NDE): An experience claimed by many who came close to death or were declared dead medically before being brought back to life. Those who claim this experience often describe leaving their bodies, traveling in a tunnel towards a light, meeting deceased relatives or angels, and being taken to a beautiful place.”

(Marcia Montenegro, http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles__OccultTerms3.html)

“Most of us are familiar with the common elements of the popularly reported composite near-death experience.

After undergoing a near-fatal car accident, heart attack, or other physical tragedy, a person is near death or declared “clinically dead”. He or she has the perception of being “out of the body”, looking down at his or her body, while resuscitation attempts are made. The person soon finds that they are in another location (or dimension) where the spirit world is encountered. This world is perceived as one of utterly indescribable love, beauty, peace, joy, and contentment.

The individual may engage in telepathic or verbal communication with various spirits – usually of dear friends and relatives or a being (or beings) of light. Various teachings may be communicated and there may be a “review” of the person’s life. Eventually the person finds himself approaching a barrier or border that he or she is not allowed to cross. The individual is instructed to return to his body because the time for him to die has not yet arrived.”

(*The Facts on Near-Death Experiences*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, 1996, page 7)

Origins and Development... in the New Age

“The founders of the modern NDE movement were heavily involved in the New Age.

For instance, the man considered to be the father of the modern NDE movement is Raymond A. Moody, M.D. whose 1975 book *Life after Life* was considered groundbreaking because it documented the 15 elements commonly found in all NDEs such as the tunnel, buzzing noise, light, etc. A parapsychologist with a medical degree, Moody also dabbles in the occult and is currently conducting paranormal studies at a private research institute in Alabama. These studies include scrying, a form of divination also known as crystal gazing.

“Kenneth Ring, another New Age NDE pioneer, author of *Life at Death: A Scientific Investigation of the Near-Death Experience*, is a trained psychologist. Ring claims to be of no particular religious persuasion and once told an interviewer that he could not recall a single case of someone who reported being judged by God. Instead, he spews the typical New Age “talking points” in his book, saying the “light” is “actually a reflection of one’s own inherent divine nature and symbolizes the higher self.”

“What most people don’t know is that the scientific study of NDEs presents a much different picture. Notwithstanding the large school of thought in the medical community that these experiences could be the result of drugs or neurological functions that occur at the end of life, disinterested researchers such as Carol Zaleski, a professor of religion at Smith College, record not only heavenly but hellish NDE experiences. Her book *Otherworld Journeys: Accounts of Near-Death Experiences in Medieval and Modern Times* is widely respected for its academic excellence.

“Not surprisingly, Christian researchers such as cardiologist Maurice Rawlings, author of *Beyond Death’s Door*, also record hellish NDEs that include encounters with Satan and sensations of being in a lake of fire.

While the Church has made no pronouncement about NDEs and science is still studying the phenomena, this fascinating subject has become the unfortunate victim of New Agers. This is why we so rarely hear about NDEs that name the “being of light” as Jesus Christ, that involve a specific judgment, or that involve anything negative such as an experience of hell.

The International Association of Near Death Studies, a site which stakes New Age claims, says that negative NDE’s are rare, and that the “rarest of all” are NDEs in which a person “feels negatively judged by a Higher Power”.

(*Ned Dougherty and Near Death Experiences*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11446>)

“**Near death experiences (NDEs)** continue to confound the scientific community. Some doctors believe they may be caused by narcotics such as morphine or other anesthetic drugs typically used to treat patients after severe accidents, during surgery, or to ease the pain of death. Others believe they could be caused by hallucinations, or the result of the large amount of endorphins released near the end of life which can cause a natural high that some people interpret as a near death experience. Another possible cause is hypoxia, a condition where the brain is deprived of oxygen and a person hallucinates and experiences pleasurable feelings. There is also convincing evidence that many of the people who report having NDEs were never medically dead but only thought they were.

“New Age enthusiasts, whose writings dominate this field, typically represent NDEs in religiously neutral terms, with God depicted as a “light” or “force” rather than as Jesus Christ, and rarely mention any negative experiences.”

(*Toddler has Near Death Experience*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=4571>)

“There are also people who have **Near Death experiences** who report “seeing the light” but who then begin to develop ideas that are contrary to the truth of God. In those instances I suspect that their experience is either stimulated by neurological functions or stimulated by demons, either way, the demons exploit the experience to instill ungodly ideas into these people. If one is truly seeing the light of God, they will not be coming away from that experience with ideas and notions that are contrary to God’s teachings through His Church... There are reports of countless people who have had these experiences and as a result have converted to Jesus Christ. Others come back and involve themselves in New Age occultism. Those individuals, I think, met an angel of light that was the devil.”

(*Near Death Experiences*, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/fs/viewanswer.asp?QID=1041>, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=1114>)

“If one examines the major books and researches conducted into **NDEs**, one discovers that most NDE researchers generally seem to have a basic “New Age” interest, background or philosophy. Cherie Sutherland, whose Ph.D. dissertation was popularized for *Reborn in the Light*, speaks of her mystical experiences and daily practice of yoga. Raymond Moody and Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the two dominant figures in the field, are both spiritists.”

(*The Facts on Near-Death Experiences*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, 1996, page 32)

“In the end, what matters most about “private” revelations like **NDEs** is the fruit they produce. In other words, they can be considered authentic insofar as they help us to “live more fully” by “Christ’s definitive revelation” (CCC #67).”

(<http://memorareministries.com/do-catholics-believe-in-near-death-experiences/>)

I had compiled a few pages of information on the matter of Out-of-Body Experiences (OBEs) for an article as well as a report on my web site, but there is no Christian analysis available on this subject in the many books in my library, very little on the Internet (most of what I found were articles by evangelical Christian writers), and virtually nothing authoritative from Catholic sources except for a few short excerpts which I have presented further below.

“An **out of body experience, also known as astral projection**, is supposed to be the phenomenon when a person’s consciousness is detached from the physical

body and travels or exists outside of the body. During these experiences, the person is aware of his surroundings and is often aware of what is being said around him. There are a lot of reports from people who claim to have had various out of body experiences. The problem is testing them. Some people claim to have died during surgery, in emergency rooms, etc., who were aware of conversations going on in separate rooms while they were being worked on by doctors. Some of these “astral projections” seem to be generated by trauma, death and then being revived, drug use, and occult practices where altered states of consciousness are sought. There are people who claim to be able to do it at will. Generally, they seem to occur at unpredictable times. One of the explanations offered for out of body experiences is that the person has undergone a trauma or altered state of consciousness and is not actually traveling outside of his body, but is imagining it the way a person will experience a dream but in a much more “real” impression than normal. The brain, after all, is highly complicated and can produce all sorts of images that can seem real...

“The Bible tells us that we are to avoid any occult practices. **Astral projection** is just such an event. Essentially, it amounts to what the Bible calls divination and sorcery and is to be avoided (Leviticus 19:26, Leviticus 19:31, Deuteronomy 18:9-11, 2 Chronicles 33:6). In addition, it may very well open up individuals to demonic oppression since it is in violation of the Scriptures and is dabbling in the spiritual realm in a manner not approved by Scripture.”

(*What is an “Out of body experience”?* Matt Slick, <https://carm.org/out-of-body-experience>)

“According to Wikipedia, one out of ten people claims to have had an **out-of-body experience (OBE)**, and there are many different types of the experiences claimed. They range from involuntary out-of-body experiences or near-death experiences that happen after or during a trauma or accident, to what is called “**astral projection**” in which a person voluntarily tries to leave his/her body behind and ascend to a spiritual plane where he/she believes he/she will find truth and clarity.

“A few famous Christians have had what might be called, in today’s world, an out-of-body experience, most notably the Apostle Paul. He says in 2 Corinthians 12:1-4, “I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know – God knows. And I know that this man – whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows – was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.” In the verses preceding this passage, Paul lists his “boasts” or the things that, if he were counting on works and good

deeds to secure his salvation, would get him into heaven. Though he seems to be referring to a third party, scholars agree that he is speaking of himself in the third person. Therefore, he is including this apparent out-of-body experience in his list of boasts. The point he is making is that any revelation that comes from outside the Bible (extra-biblical revelation) is not a reliable source, and as Paul says, "There is nothing to be gained by it." This does not mean that his out-of-body experience wasn't real, only that he is not relying on it to give him truth or really to benefit himself or other people in any way.

"An involuntary **out-of-body experience** or a **near-death experience**, like the Apostle Paul's, should be treated in the same way as a dream in the life of a Christian—an unexplained phenomenon that may make a good story, but does not give us truth. The only place we find absolute truth is in the Word of God. All other sources are merely subjective human accounts or interpretations based on what we can discover with our finite minds. A voluntary **out-of-body experience**, or an "**astral projection**," is a different story. A person trying to achieve an out-of-body experience in order to connect with spirits or the spirit world is practicing the occult. There are two forms of this. The first is called the "phasing" model, in which the person tries to find new spiritual truth by accessing a part of the mind that is "shut off" during everyday life. This practice is connected to Buddhism or postmodernism and the belief that enlightenment is achieved from looking within oneself. The other form, called the "mystical" model, is when the person tries to exit the body entirely, his/her spirit traveling to another plane that is not connected to the physical world at all.

The Bible explicitly warns against occult practice, or sorcery, in Galatians 5:19-20, saying that those who practice it will not inherit God's kingdom. God's commands are always for our good, and He commands us to stay far away from occult practices because there is great potential, when trying to access the spiritual world, of opening oneself up to demons who can tell us lies about God and confuse our minds. In Job 4:12-21, Eliphaz describes being visited by a lying spirit in a vision that tells him God does not regard humans and that He doesn't care for us, which is false!

"The phasing model is also futile, according to Scripture. Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick; who can understand it?" and 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 says, "When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise

and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power." It is futile to search for infinite wisdom inside the finite mind of man...

"One concrete example of this comes from the popular book *90 Minutes in Heaven* by Pastor Don Piper. Piper describes what is, in essence, an out-of-body experience he had after a severe car accident, during which he believes he died and went to heaven for ninety minutes. Whether or not Piper did actually see heaven or spend time there is debatable, and in the end nobody but God knows. However, there is a serious problem, theologically speaking, with the conclusion Pastor Piper draws from his experience. He tells the reader that, now that he has "been to heaven," he can speak comfort to grieving people at funerals "with more authority" than he could previously. Piper's motives are correct: he wants to give people hope. However, it is dead wrong to say that his own subjective experience will give him more authority to administer the hope of heaven than the perfect truth of Scripture would do.

"In conclusion, whatever sort of **out-of-body experience** we are talking about, the main point to remember is that an out-of-body experience will give us neither truth nor knowledge. If an involuntary out-of-body experience occurs in the life of a Christian, the best approach would be to consider it in the same category as a dream – interesting, perhaps, but not a source of truth."

(What does the Bible say about an out of body experience/astral projection?

<https://gotquestions.org/out-of-body-experience.html>)

"As American civilization has been detached from its Christian moorings, a host of offbeat, confused, and superstitious ideas have infiltrated society. Especially with the resurgence of the occult in the last 50 years and Hollywood's efforts to create credibility for "ghosts," exorcism, and astrology, more Americans than ever before have come to believe in such hocus-pocus. One result has been the widespread belief in "**out-of-body experiences**." Even among otherwise straight thinking Christians, many have come to believe that a person can "die," as evidenced by "flatlining," that his or her spirit momentarily leaves the body, and then returns to the body, enabling the person to regain consciousness and live to tell about the experience. Stories often include reports of tunnels with bright light at the end, feelings of warmth and reassurance, a sense of hovering above and looking down upon the operating room personnel, etc. Are such experiences proofs that individuals are, in fact, dying and exiting their bodies, and then returning again?

"A brief perusal of the history of medical science reveals that, at one time, conventional wisdom held that a person was dead when breathing ceased. It

was thought that the “breath of life” had departed from the individual, leaving him “dead.” As medical science advanced, it was determined that a person’s heart could still be beating though the person had stopped breathing. He had not actually died, and hence, “mouth-to-mouth” resuscitation enabled a person to start breathing again. At that point of medical understanding, it was thought that when the heart stopped beating (determined by placing one’s ear to the chest of the person), the individual had died. However, with additional advancements and understanding, it was determined that it was possible to restart the heart, through cardio-vascular resuscitation, compressions of the chest cavity, injection of powerful drugs directly into the heart, massaging the heart directly, and eventually defibrillation, in which an electrical shock is delivered to the heart with a defibrillator. The current definition of “dead” is associated more with the cessation of brain activity. A typical definition of “flatline” is “to die or be so near death that the display of one’s vital signs on medical monitoring equipment shows a flat line rather than peaks and troughs” (Farlex, n.d.). “Flatlining” can refer either to heart or brain activity or both, depending on who is using the term.

“Does the inerrant Word of God have any insight into this question? Yes, it does. The Bible teaches that God places within each prenatal person at conception a spirit that makes each individual a unique personality that will survive physical death, living on immortally throughout eternity (Zechariah 12:1). At death, the spirit separates from the body and exists in a conscious condition in the spirit realm (1 Samuel 28:15; Luke 16:19-31). James 2:26 provides a precise, technical definition of death: “[F]or as the body without the spirit is dead...” In other words, the separation of one’s spirit from one’s body results in physical death, i.e., the death of the body, not the spirit. Thus the Bible defines physical “death” as *separation* –not “extinction” or “annihilation” (Thayer, 1901, p. 282; Vine, 1940, p. 276). Once the spirit of a person exits the body, he or she is “dead” (Genesis 35:18; 1 Kings 17:21-22). Science will undoubtedly never develop a test for ascertaining when the spirit exits the body. After all, “a spirit does not have flesh and bones” (Luke 24:39).

In order for a person’s dead body to come to life again, the spirit would have to reenter it. The term that the Bible uses to refer to such an occurrence is “resurrection.” The only way resurrection can occur is by means of supernatural intervention by an individual who possesses authority and power from God to miraculously cause the spirit to return to the body.

“Instances of deceased people in Bible history whose spirits returned to their dead bodies include the following:

(1 Kings 17:21, 2 Kings 4, John 11:43, Matthew 27:51-53, Acts 9:40)

Such occurrences were rare, and always meant that the resurrected individual later died again (Jesus excepted – Acts 13:34; Romans 6:9; cf. Enoch [Genesis 5:24; Hebrews 11:5] and Elijah [2 Kings 2:11] who never died). In every case, a miracle was necessary to restore the separated spirit of the individual to the body.

But then how does one account for the numerous reports of tunnels, lights, and feelings of warmth? The mind is an incredible, divinely designed wonder capable of far more than we know or comprehend. When anesthesia is applied to the respiratory system and bloodstream in order to prevent awareness of pain, causing a patient to become unconscious, the parts of the body that perceive (i.e., seeing, hearing, etc.) continue to function. The mind is still hearing what is being said in the operating room, whether or not the person is able later to recall the conversation. Temperature and other bodily sensors are still operative. Additionally, the mind's ability to dream realistic dreams is surely a factor to consider. These and other features of the mind and body adequately account for the unsubstantiated allegations of "out-of-body experiences."

One final thought: if "near death" and "out-of-body" experiences are authentic, where are the comparable reports of those who encounter the scorching, threatening fires of hell or hades (cf. Luke 16:23ff.)? Where are the accounts of individuals being warned to correct their behavior and live godly lives – as Paul admonished Titus: "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age" (Titus 2:11-12)?

"For those acquainted with the stabilizing influence of the Bible, all such experiences are meaningless and provide no assistance for ascertaining the meaning and purpose of life—in view of eternity. The inspired writer of Hebrews succinctly summarized the point: "[I]t is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (9:27)."

(*What about "Out of body experiences"?* Dave Miller, Ph.D., <http://ap.lanexdev.com/APContent.aspx?category=11&article=4694>)

"Astral Projection, Astral Travel, Astral Plane: Also known as **out-of-body experience (OBE)**, this is a practice in which a person believes their astral self separates from the body and travels to other physical locations or possibly to an astral realm. Sometimes the person merely hovers above his/her body, especially during medical operations or severe accidents. This experience may be a physiologically caused hallucination.

"Astral travel is referred to in ancient practices from Egypt and Tibet, and is also written about by some ancient writers such as Plato, Plotinus and others (Guiley, *Encyclopedia of the Mystical and Paranormal*, 420).

The astral self is a major belief of Theosophy (a religion based on Hinduism founded in the late 19th century by occultist Madame Blavatsky) and of other religions that divide a person into various essences and parts. The astral self is part of the etheric body and separates from the body at death. However, many occult teachings hold that the astral self can leave the body during life. The astral self is non-material but can be visible to those in material form, though not always. In many New Age and occult belief systems, such as the cult of Eckankar, it is thought to be good, although potentially dangerous, to practice astral travel, and techniques to do this are taught.

“Some beliefs posit several planes of reality, such as the causal, spiritual, mental, astral and material, each being a realm through which the soul eventually passes. Teachings somewhat similar to this are in Tibetan Buddhism, as espoused in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, which gives advice on preparing for what will happen after death. Some believe the Akashic Records are part of the astral plane. Astral projection is also used by those calling themselves psychic vampires, who believe they can leave their body and in astral form secretly feed off the spirit or energy of another person. There is no clear evidence that astral projection is real, though there are stories from those who claim to practice it that make it seem as though it is real (including this writer, who experienced astral projection frequently). However, proponents of astral projection do not account for spiritual deception and would dismiss this as a possible explanation.

“Some claim that Paul in Second Corinthians 12:1-5 is speaking of an out-of-body or astral experience. However, first of all, Paul says that he does not know if he was in his body or not, so the value of this as an astral or out-of-body experience is totally diminished at the very beginning of the account. Secondly, this is a revelation and experience that God initiated and gave to Paul; Paul did not seek this out or initiate it. Thirdly, Paul did not reveal what he saw because he was not permitted (verse 4). Fourth, this experience or visionary revelation is not the point of the passage, but is used to make another point, that Paul cannot boast of anything because he is a weak man and God keeps Paul humble through his weakness (verses 6-10). There is no endorsement of astral travel in this passage and using it as such is a gross misuse and twisting of the passage. The advocates of astral travel teach that one can learn to initiate the experience and that it can be of spiritual benefit, but the benefits are measured according to the teachings and standards of those advocating it, and these teachings are rooted in occult philosophies.”

*(The Occult: Brief explanations of various terms and concepts, Marcia Montenegro, http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_OccultTerms1.html
http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_OccultTerms2.html)*

“Astral (out-of-body) experiences

Out-of-body experiences, including near-death experiences (NDEs)”

(*The New Age Movement: Highway to Hell*, A partial list of New Age practices, practitioners, and organizations, American Life League

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/PROLENC/ENCYC130.HTM>)

“[Co-inventor of the New Age/occult personality typing device, the Enneagram, Chilean Catholic] Oscar Ichazo ... claimed he was having **out-of-body experiences** at the age of 6, which resulted in his leaving the church. He claimed that he could not accept Catholic teaching on heaven or hell because he had been there, and knew more about them than Christ and the church.”

(<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=8757>)

“The occult pertains to any system that claims to use or have knowledge of secret or supernatural powers or agencies. This includes witchcraft, alchemy and magick, palm reading, fortune-telling, tarot cards, ouija boards, and astrology. The occult also includes spiritualistic practices such as séances, channeling and mediumship, and **out-of-body experiences** such as **astral projection**.”

(*Pokémon*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=254>)

“New Age is oriented toward intuition which attempts to appropriate the mysteries, the unknown and undeveloped powers of the brain. Transformational journeys are common which are manifested in a revival of clairvoyance, telepathy, psychic healing, psychometry, **out-of-the-body experiences or OOBEs**, extra sensory perceptions (ESP), hypnotism, and brain/mind technology, psychokinesis, meditation, subliminal programming, search for consciousness, astral projection, and other occult practices.”

(*The New Credulity on Religious Phenomena and Magic*, Professor Fr. Jose Vidamor B. Yu LRMS, Manila, Congregation for the Clergy International Theological Video Conference: The Church, New Age and Sects, 27 February 2004, <http://www.clerus.org/clerus/dati/2004-03/01-13/04CNSIn.html>)

“In modern times there are countless descriptions of **OBE** experiences from victims of road accidents, the seriously ill, and those who have undergone clinical death but recovered to tell the tale. The number of cases is in fact so great that studies of OBEs are now being compiled by some doctors and psychiatrists...

Another quite extraordinary example of spontaneous projection concerns St. Anthony of Padua. This took place before witnesses in the Church of St. Pierre du Queyroix at Limoges on Holy Thursday, 1226 – the Catholic Church admits to the incident under the term ‘**bilocation**’. Remembering suddenly that he was due at a service in a monastery at the other end of town, St Anthony drew his hood over his head and knelt down for some minutes while the congregation

reverently waited. At that moment he was seen by the assembled monks to step from his stall in the monastery chapel, read the appointed passage in the office and immediately disappear.

Similar stories are recorded of St. Serverus of Ravenna, St Ambrose and St. Clement of Rome.

But the best known case of this type is dated September 17th, 1774. Alphonse de Liguori, imprisoned at Arezzo, remained quiet in his cell and took no nourishment. Five days later he awoke in the morning and said that he had been at the death-bed of Pope Clement XIV. His statement was later confirmed by those in attendance by the bedside of the dying Pope."

(<http://www.douglaslockhart.com/out-of-body-experiences>)

"Psychology is used to explain mind expansion as "mystical" experiences ... Peak-experiences (reliving one's birth, **travelling to the gates of death** ... anything which can provoke an altered state of consciousness) are believed to lead to unity and enlightenment." (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)

Chapter 75

New Age Angels and Angel Therapy

The reader will note that contact with New Age “Angels” is otherwise known as “Channeling” (read chapter 50).

Origins and Development... in the New Age

“The etymological sense of the word “Angel” (from the Greek “*aggellos*”) means: “messenger”. This is not a name of nature but a name of function.

In the study of angelism, considered in a wider way as a part of a panoramic view of sources and evolution of western esotericism, we discovered much to our surprise how various the notion of Angel appears, in the same time so popular (well, even trivial) and so far-fetched, but how far it can also reach in the present-day context of NRMs. Such a question about **Angels** is amazing and paradoxical for many reasons: though it happens on the one hand in the New Age thinking (i.e. the “**channelling**” which is based upon the dialogue between Angels and human beings is one of the criteria giving the definition of New Age, according to Wouter J. Hanegraaff), the worship of Angels, or in other words, the dealing with Angels, perfectly suits to catholic theology on the other hand. Our aim is to demonstrate that the concept of angels or messengers bringing teachings to mankind is indeed at the roots of occidental esotericism, but the fashion of messianic angelism in *New Age*, in fact based on books by Alice Bailey, is a deceit.

“The Aquarius era that is supposed to have begun in the seventies, is thus amalgamated with the beginning of a new “Golden Age”.

The messages of **Angels** are the premises of a “return of Christ” in direct line from Alice Bailey’s teaching, but opposite to Blavatsky’s *The Secret Doctrine*. About the controversy between messianic aims of Annie Besant, Alice Bailey and Helena Petrovna Blavatsky’s teachings, see the biography of Krishnamurti where he tells how he opposed the “*oriental star*” project of theosophy to make of him the new Maitreya, and Rudolf Steiner’s Biography where he tells how Blavatsky was deceived by Besant and C. W. Leadbeater.

“In the *New Age* NRM’s, the 90ies was the period for a kind of folklore of **angels**, for instance, the “angels cards” from the Findhorn community, the “angels tarot”, and many others. But this period is marked with a lack of discernment: each entity getting in touch with a human being is supposed to be inevitably an Angel, though the orders given to man may be very different from each other : either saving the planet and communicating with the spirit of plants for Eileen Caddy [13], or opening the spiritual gates of a new arising world based

on the number eleven for SOLARA, or re-creating a perfect humanity thanks to genetics and laboratory manipulations for the Raëlian movement, or prepare the return of Maitreya with group praying and World Good Will Lodges for Benjamin Crème.

On the Internet you can find at least 298 specialized Websites and 5 web rings (on **Angels**)."

(*The concept of Angels: from the Early Christianity and Gnosticism to Post New Age NRMs*, Sylvian Imbs, Center for Studies on New Religions, <https://www.cesnur.org/2001/london2001/imbs.htm>)

"There are many people today who are seeking to "connect with their **angels**" or have some sort of experience or other with an angel. The internet is full of websites like this, and there are many books promoting this concept, such as *Ask Your Angels*. There are also many traditional occult tools that have been re-packaged to have an angelic feel to them. Some Ouija Boards have become "**Angel Boards**", some Tarot Cards have been called "**Angel Cards**", or "Oracle Cards", and the practice of **channelling** so-called departed spirits has been extended to channelling angels. Despite these clear associations with the occult, many people are coming to this subject with their guard down. It seems that just because something is *labelled* "angel" then that somehow makes it a true angel, or something automatically good and acceptable.

The messages that many of today's **New Age angels** give out is in direct conflict with what the Bible says. There are many books by New Age authors on angels. Most of them tend to be somewhat similar in the practices they promote. Throughout Diane Cooper's book *A Little Light on Angels*, there are constant references to such New Age practices as: auras, meditation, reincarnation, past life regression, karma, clairvoyance, psychic powers, the Akashic records, the Age of Aquarius, and references that all religions are true and acceptable to God. All such teachings are at strong variance to the Bible. From the above evidence, it can only be concluded that these angels are most certainly *not* in allegiance with the God of the Bible. Not only that, but it appears that they stand diametrically *opposed* to many cardinal Christian doctrines."

(*Revealing the Identity of the New Age Angels*, Vincent McCann, <http://www.spotlightministries.org.uk/newageangels.htm>)

"A new book on the subject, *Angels in My Hair*, an autobiography by Lorna Byrne, has been on the top of the Irish bestseller chart for 12 weeks. Byrne claims she has been able to see **angels** and other "spirits" since childhood.

The Catechism teaches that angels have been present since creation and throughout the history of the world, but that "Christ is the center of the angelic world. They are His angels." [CCC 331] Angels are messengers of God who

exist solely to praise Him and do His will. The new age version also makes a dangerous omission when it fails to recognize the difference between good and bad angels, thus leaving adherents open to a wide range of serious spiritual dangers."

(*Interest in New Age "Angels" on the Rise*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=2509>)

"Byrne claims to have been able to see **angels** (and dead people) since birth. She sees ... angels that supposedly inhabit trees and frolic in the woods, etc. They sometimes look like balls of light, pulsing energy, or people. These beings are possessed of all kinds of powers that they generously share with her, such as the ability to read minds, produce out-of-body experiences, predict the future, etc.

"New Agers love to attribute all kinds of occult powers to their **angels**, who they prefer to call "spirit guides" - everything from prophesying about the future to introducing her to dead people - all of which are included in Byrne's book. For instance, Byrne's angels are forever telling her who is about to die, including her own husband and father.

On page 93 Byrne describes how the angels transported her soul out of her body so that she could be with a co-worker spiritually. She describes the episode as having left her "body and soul connected by a thread."

On page 211, she's told by an angel that her father would be needing her to help him "pass over" to the other side (which sounds a lot like the jargon used by TV psychics such as John Edward).

Byrne also speaks quite often about being able to see "energy flowing around people" much like what New Agers describe as "auras". On page 20, she describes how, as a child, she used to play with these energy fields that surrounded trees in the forest, saying they used to "pull her" toward them while she tried to escape.

On page 24, she describes the Queen of Angels, who we know as the Virgin Mary, as a being similar to a tiny spark of light that the **angels** put into her hand. It "came alive" and grew bigger and bigger until she saw "a beautiful face, like a human face, smiling down at me." She referred to this "face" not as the Virgin Mary but as the "mother of creation", which I found odd from someone who was supposedly raised Catholic.

"Byrne also speaks very often about the souls of the dead who are lingering on earth and waiting for some kind of help to depart. For instance, when she was a child, she claims she often played with the soul of her deceased sibling, Christopher, who "sparked" when she touched him.

Byrne also makes the claims that “when babies die, their spirits stay with their mothers for as long as they are needed” (Page 5). Need I point out that this is not a Catholic belief? Our faith teaches that “Each man receives his eternal retribution in his immortal soul at the very moment of his death, in a particular judgment that refers his life to Christ: either entrance into the blessedness of heaven – through a purification or immediately – or immediate and everlasting damnation.” (Catechism No. 1022) In other words, there’s no hanging around after death waiting on the disposition of mortals.

“She also claims on page 62 that the “spirit of someone who just passed over can ask for the **angels** to console and help those left behind.” This is a nice thought, but it’s totally unfounded mainly because angels don’t take their orders from humans. They exist to serve God and Him alone. “With their whole beings, the angels are servants and messengers of God,” the Catechism teaches (No. 329). “Christ is the center of the angelic world. They are His angels.”

Sadly, I must say that the above examples are almost minor compared to the more glaring errors being put forth as messages from heaven delivered by these so-called angels. For instance, on page 29 Byrne claims her angels told her that all religions should be “under one roof”. “Muslims, Jews, Protestants, Hindus, Catholics and all the other different religions should be together under one umbrella,” the angels supposedly taught her. So where does that leave Jesus Christ and the Church He founded? I guess He’s relegated to the New Age list of prophets alongside Moses and Mohammed.

“Another significant error can be found on page 167 where she speaks about children who choose their parents before they were born. “It actually chose you before it was even conceived.” Byrne writes about an unborn child. This teaching is known as pre-existence, often associated with reincarnation, and proposes that the soul is in existence before being placed into a body. Byrne obviously is unaware that the doctrine of pre-existence was condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 540 A.D.

“To her credit, she does claim that Satan exists – something New Agers are loathe to do. Her writing is peppered with truths about God and His action in the world which only makes it easier for someone to become confused when trying to determine what is of the faith and what is of the occult. I could go on and on but I think you get the idea. We should all take this occasion to sit down and read Colossians, a letter written by St. Paul in part to counter the teachings of people who were improperly stressing the importance of **angels** and other “principalities and powers” which were connected with astral powers and other cultic practices.

“Let no one disqualify you, delighting in self-abasement and worship of angels, taking his stand on visions, inflated without reason by his fleshly mind...” Paul writes, and exhorts his followers to avoid all practices that are contrary to the faith.

This is why I would not recommend this book to anyone who is looking for the truth on **angels**.

A much better choice for an explanation of authentic Catholic teaching on the angels is Fr. Pascal P. Parente’s book, *The Angels: Catholic Teaching on the Angels*. His accounting of the mind-boggling capabilities of these ethereal creatures makes the New Age version look like the fairy tale that it is!”

(“*Angels in my Hair*” is New Age! Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=169>)

“New Age **Angels** come in disguise. Many New Agers say that their angelic informants tell them that, through the ages, people have had a very false impression of fallen angels. Lucifer, for example, “has been identified in our mind as the devil, instead of an aspect of God dedicated to our growth by helping us strengthen our spiritual muscles,” we are told. He is the “Light Bearer” who teaches about the necessity of life’s dark side. This reminds us of the words of St. Paul, “Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. It comes as no surprise that his ministers disguise themselves as ministers of the justice of God. But their end will correspond to their deeds” (2 Corinthians 11:14-15).”

(*Angels of the New Age Kind*, Mary Drahos, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/NEWAGE/NAGEANG.TXT>)

“Trust me, the kind of **angels** Doreen Virtue is communicating with aren’t the kind you want hovering around. According to her website, Doreen Virtue claims she is a spiritual doctor of psychology and a fourth generation metaphysician who is a “natural clairvoyant”. She spoke with “imaginary friends” when she was child and only stopped because of teasing. Later in life, she was allegedly warned by one of these “angels” that her car was about to be carjacked. She heard a voice that was loud and distinctly male command her to scream with all her might, which attracted passers-by who scared off her would-be attacker. “Doreen immediately began a daily rigorous practice of receiving and deciphering her Divine Guidance,” she writes on her site. At the same time, she began “re-examining her spiritual beliefs, along with her Western psychological beliefs” and ended up combining her clairvoyance with her education in psychology (she holds a Ph.D. in counseling psychology from a non-accredited distance learning center). Her practice evolved into

“**Angel Therapy**” in which she combines her psychology background with her spiritual abilities.

“When you work with **angels**, you can lean upon their light to help you heal at miraculous rates and in amazing ways. The angels can help us heal physically, spiritually, emotionally, and financially,” she says.

“The first clue that the **angels** Dr. Virtue contacts aren’t good angels is that she does so through clairvoyance, which is an occult art (Deuteronomy 18: 10-12) Because angels exist to do the will of God, and God despises these practices, He would not contradict Himself by allowing His angels to take part in them. We also know that Satan likes to disguise himself as an “angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14) which he is obviously doing in this case. He was more than happy to save Dr. Virtue from a carjacking in order to win her confidence in him. I’m sure he did everything possible to facilitate her new career path so that, through her, he will be promoted as an “angel” to thousands of people through her books and seminars.

This kind of deception, which just about anyone can fall victim to, is precisely why we are told: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God ...” (1 John 4: 1, 2)

“**Angel Therapy** is notoriously New Age. It is based on the premise that the key to healing is in communication with angels. The field is reserved exclusively to New Agers, clairvoyants, hypnotherapists who believe in past life regression, etc.

However, don’t feel bad if you have been lured into buying these books or believing this nonsense. Listen to how deceptively it’s promoted. “Angel Therapy is a non-denominational spiritual healing method that involves working with a person’s guardian angels and archangels, to heal and harmonize every aspect of life,” Virtue writes on her site. “Angel Therapy also helps you to more clearly receive Divine Guidance from the Creator and angels. Everyone has guardian angels, and these angels perform God’s will of peace for us all. When we open ourselves to hear our angels’ messages, every aspect of our lives becomes more peaceful.” It’s not until one checks into Virtue and her background that they discover the kind of **angels** she deals with are not the kind of any of us want to consort with.”

(Beware of false angels – and the false prophets who promote them, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1223>)

“A yearning for spirituality and a good dose of distress can even lead Catholics to the New Age, says a member of the Pontifical Academy of Theology.

Q: Followers of New Age often talk about the **angels**.

Father Scarafoni: There is a genuine fixation with **angels**, which the followers of Aquarius see everywhere. But their angels have nothing in common with those of Christians. They have strange names and powers similar to those of talismans and amulets. To them are added many other popular figures of the New Age, such as “guiding spirits” and varied “entities”.”

(*Responding to the Lure of New Age – Interview with Father Paolo Scarafoni of the Academy of Theology*, 27 February 2004 worldwide video conference on “The Church, New Age and Sects,” <https://zenit.org/articles/responding-to-the-lure-of-new-age/>)

“In the New Age, “god” is either the self or an energy force – or a combination of the two.

The St. Michael who is preached by New Agers is an imposter. Believers in the New Age are notoriously inclined to put their own spin on the beliefs of others, often trying to blend them with other religions to create a kind of “hodge-podge” that has ingredients familiar to many and therefore appealing to a wider variety of persons. This is how they lure people into the New Age – and is precisely how they are accomplishing one of the main goals of the movement – the establishment of One World Religion.

“**New Age angels** are always focused on “empowering” people to achieve their highest potential, rid themselves of anxieties and troubles, rake in all kinds of money while being enormously successful, etc.

St. Michael is a favorite of these “Santa Claus” angels. Check out [this](#) (link) blog about the book by Joy Pedersen called *Wisdom of the Guardian* which she claims will empower people to “resolve their issues affecting money, career, and relationships as well as how to create peace on earth and prepare for heaven on earth.” The book is comprised of messages from St. Michael which she claims to receive through the occult-art of channeling (read chapter 50).

“Then there’s Ronna Herman who calls herself a messenger for Archangel Michael. Her “Wisdom Teachings of Archangel Michael” offer to help people “claim self-mastery” and “attain soul-awareness and God-consciousness.” Authentic **angels** are never at the beck and call of mediums and channelers. They are pure spirits who are at the command of God alone.

The good news is that this phony St. Michael is easy to spot, even for people who are only marginally educated in the faith. If any version of St. Michael is coming from a channeler or psychic or any other occult means, it’s not from God.

“As the Catechism teaches: “Christ is the center of the angelic world. They are his angels: ‘When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him. They belong to him because they were created through and for him: ‘for

in him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities – all things were created through him and for him.’ They belong to him still more because he has made them messengers of his saving plan: ‘Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?’” (Catechism No. 331)

Those who say, “Well, they pray to St. Michael so how bad can they be” probably aren’t aware of how the New Age sabotages the beliefs of others. And it’s not just Christian beliefs. They have so distorted the many rites and rituals of Native American spirituality that the Lakota tribe actually declared war on them (they call New Agers “plastic shamans”) in the early 90’s!”

(*Beware of phony St. Michaels*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=21525>)

“The Catechism teaches: “The existence of the spiritual, non-corporeal beings that Sacred Scripture usually calls ‘angels’ is a truth of faith.” (No. 328)

The *Catholic Encyclopedia* reports that of the seven archangels that appear in the angelology of post-Exilic Judaism, only three are named in canonical Scripture – Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael. The other names (Uriel, Jehudiel, Sealtiel and Barachiel) are taken from a non-canonical source – the *Book of Enoch* – with derivatives found in other apocryphal sources.

It’s important to note that the Vatican does not approve of the veneration of these and other “rogue” angels. In this 300-page [Directory of Public Piety](#) (link) which was published in 2001 by the Congregation for Divine Worship, the faithful are discouraged from “assigning names to the Holy Angels . . . except in the cases of Gabriel, Raphael and Michael.”

These directives serve to protect the faithful from being drawn into devotions to phony angels such as those being promoted by proponents of the New Age movement. Angel intuitives and card readers form a virtual cottage industry on the internet and who make a variety of absurd claims about angels who do everything from find our soul mate to insure our financial success.”

(*Beware of Rogue Angels!* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=33690>)

“One of the most common elements in New Age “spirituality” is a fascination with extraordinary manifestations, and in particular with paranormal entities. People recognised as “mediums” claim that their personality is taken over by another entity during trances in a New Age phenomenon known as “channeling”, during which the medium may lose control over his or her body and faculties. Some people who have witnessed these events would willingly acknowledge that the manifestations are indeed spiritual, but are not from God, despite the language of love and light which is almost always used... It is

probably more correct to refer to this as a contemporary form of spiritualism, rather than spirituality in a strict sense. Other friends and counsellors from the spirit world are **angels** (which have become the centre of a new industry of books and paintings). Those who refer to **angels in the New Age** do so in an unsystematic way; in fact, distinctions in this area are sometimes described as unhelpful if they are too precise, since “there are many levels of guides, entities, energies, and beings in every octave of the universe... They are all there to pick and choose from in relation to your own attraction/repulsion mechanisms”. These spiritual entities are often invoked ‘non-religiously’ to help in relaxation aimed at better decision-making and control of one’s life and career. Fusion with some spirits who teach through particular people is another New Age experience claimed by people who refer to themselves as ‘mystics’. Some nature spirits are described as powerful energies existing in the natural world and also on the “inner planes”: i.e. those which are accessible by the use of rituals, drugs and other techniques for reaching altered states of consciousness. It is clear that, in theory at least, the New Age often recognizes no spiritual authority higher than personal inner experience.” (JCBWL, *Enchantment: There Must be an Angel*, #2.2.1)

“The essential matrix of New Age thinking is to be found in the esoteric-theosophical tradition which was fairly widely accepted in European intellectual circles in the 18th and 19th centuries. It was particularly strong in freemasonry, spiritualism, occultism and theosophy ... People can contact the upper or lower worlds by means of their imagination (an organ of the soul or spirit), or by using mediators (**angels**, spirits, devils) or rituals.” (JCBWL, *The essential matrix of New Age thinking*, #2.3.2)

“Psychic mediums claim to act as **channels** for information from other selves, usually disembodied entities living on a higher plane. It links beings as diverse as ascended masters, **angels**, gods, group entities, nature spirits and the Higher Self.” (JCBWL, *Channeling*, #7.2)

“The Vatican has banned the veneration of angels who do not appear in the Bible in an attempt to ward off the influence of New Age religious movements and other **angel-based cults**. Prayers to disputed celestial beings such as Uriel and Jophiel - viewed by some as the angels of peace and enlightened understanding - were proscribed in a 300-page December 2001 [Directory of Public Piety](#) (link) by the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship. The document makes it clear that all veneration and prayer should be directed solely towards Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. The aim of the directory, say its authors, is to distinguish between acts of piety which belong to “true faith” and those which are merely “pseudo-spiritual experiences”.

Chapter six deals with angels, delivering a stinging rebuff to followers of Uriel, Jophiel, Chamuel and Zadkiel, who enjoy a burgeoning reputation in New Age religions but make no appearance in the New or Old Testament.”

(*Vatican bans rogue angels*, Julian Coman,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/3295124/Vatican-bans-rogue-angels.html>)

For further reading:

- *Angel Popularity on the Rise*, Fr. John A. Hardon SJ
http://www.therealpresence.org/archives/Angelology/Angelology_004.htm.
- *New Age Ideas: How Catholics should respond*, Fr. Peter Joseph
<http://www.amicidilazzaro.it/index.php/new-age-ideas-how-catholics-should-respond/>

Programming our imagination. The difference between Christian and occult-based fantasy

Let me introduce the following three chapters with an excerpt from *Confronting the New Age* by Douglas Groothuis, InterVarsity Press, 1988, page 185. After speaking about New Age visualization (read chapter 97) and imagination techniques, he says:

“A related point concerns the use of the *imagination* in *fantasy* literature, *fantasy* role-playing games, movies, cartoons or toys. Some Christians having detected the intrusion of the occult into these genres, have rejected them entirely. Undoubtedly, New Age ideas have poisoned many a book, game, movie and cartoon... The premier *fantasy* role-playing game **Dungeons & Dragons** (not to mention spin-offs) is incorrigibly occult... Various movies such as the **Star Wars** series, **The Karate Kid**, and numerous other films either subtly or blatantly sound New Age themes. And even children’s cartoons and toys, such as the immensely popular **He Man and the Masters of the Universe** use occult symbolism and concepts to draw children into their world of error.”

“In an effort to help Christian parents learn how to discern whether or not certain toys and games and the content of books and films, is suitable for their children, I would like to post here some insights from Michael O’Brien’s book, *Harry Potter and the Paganization of Culture* (www.studioobrien.com).

“In a chapter on Christian *fantasy* writing, O’Brien compares the magic found in occult fiction such as **Harry Potter** to that which appears in Christian classics such as J.R.R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* and C. S. Lewis’ *Chronicles of Narnia*. Essentially, the problem is not so much that magic is present in the book, but how the magic is presented. The Potter books use magic in a way that

turns the moral order on its head with grave distortions of good and evil. For instance, so-called “black” and “white” magic (a distinction that does not exist) is used by both good and bad characters in the book. This makes magic morally neutral, taking it out of the moral realm completely and making it into a kind of tool. “If magic is presented as a good, or as morally neutral, is there not an increased likelihood that when a young person encounters opportunities to explore the world of real magic he will be less able to resist its attractions?” O’Brien asks. “Of course, children are not so naïve as to think they can have Harry’s powers and adventures; they know full well the story is make-believe. But on the subconscious level they have absorbed it as experience, and this experience tells them that the mysterious forbidden is highly rewarding.”

“Occult fiction often includes other distortions that can have a negative effect on a child’s moral outlook. For instance, in the Potter books adults are presented as mean and those who don’t practice magic to be backward. The books can also be overtly anti-Christian, such as the trilogy, *His Dark Materials* by Philip Pullman, in which God is openly maligned. It should come as no surprise that occult-based fiction has produced some rather dark and bitter fruits (which are rarely publicized for obvious reasons.) For example, a January 2006 Barna report on teenage views and behavior regarding the supernatural indicates that “three-quarters of America’s youth (73%) have engaged in at least one type of psychic or witchcraft-related activity, beyond mere media exposure or horoscope exposure.” One out of every eight teens (12%) said the Potter books increased their interest in witchcraft, a number which amounts to almost three million young people in the U.S.!

Contrast this with **Christian fantasy**, which has caused no such turn to the occult. Why not? *The Chronicles of Narnia* are loaded with magic, as is the *Lord of the Rings*. What’s the difference?

“The difference is that these writers portray magic in the proper context and without upturning the moral order. As O’Brien explains, throughout Lewis’ fiction, witches are portrayed in classic terms, as malevolent, manipulative and deceiving. An example would be the witch in *The Silver Chair* who mesmerizes the children to convince them that there is no sun. But one character, the Marsh-wiggle, deliberately burns himself in the fireplace to shock his mind back to reality. When he snaps out of it, he confronts the witch who then reveals her true nature by turning into a serpent, thus alerting the children to their peril. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the four Pevensie children discover a wardrobe that leads them into the land of Narnia. One of the children is then tricked by a witch posing as a beautiful queen who tempts him with treats and promises of power if he will turn on his siblings. He does so, but when

he later learns the true nature of the witch, he regrets his action and repents. But he cannot be free of the dominion of the wicked witch until he pays his debt, something that Aslan, the Christ-figure presented in the form of a lion, agrees to do. Aslan sacrifices his own life in exchange for the children, but then miraculously returns to life and liberates Narnia, crowning the children kings and queens of Narnia. "This is salvation history, distilled in the form of Story," O'Brien writes.

"The same holds true with Tolkien, where magic is also portrayed as fraught with deception. As O'Brien explains, the character named Gandalf, who is often referred to as a wizard, is not a classical sorcerer. Rather "Gandalf's task is to advise, instruct and arouse to resistance the minds and hearts of those threatened by Sauron, the Dark Lord of this saga. Gandalf does not do the work for them; they must use their natural gifts to resist evil and do good – and in this we see an image of grace building on nature, never overwhelming nature or replacing it." Instead, Gandalf's gifts are used sparingly, and then only to help others in the exercise of their free will and moral choices. "It is only an assist, never a replacement."

The proper moral order is also reflected in the way Frodo realizes that the ring he has been entrusted with has great powers and he is constantly tempted to use them for the good. "But he learns that to use its powers for such short-range 'goods' increases the probability of long-range disaster, both for himself and for the world."

"Tolkien makes it clear that "such powers are very much a domain infested by the 'deceits of the enemy' used for domination of other creatures' free will. They are metaphors of sin and spiritual bondage."

"Compare this to Potter-type literature. "In neo-pagan **fantasy** literature, magic in the hands of both 'good' and 'bad' characters is frequently used to overwhelm, deceive and defile," O'Brien writes. "In the Potter series, Harry uses his powers to overwhelm, deceive and defile his human enemies, and he resists Voldemort with the very powers the Dark Lord himself uses." This same distortion of good and evil is present in the *Twilight* series which posits the existence of "good" and "bad" vampires. Of course, this can never be true. As E. Michael Jones writes, vampirism the antithesis of Christianity. "Whereas Christ shed his blood so that his followers could have eternal life, Dracula shed his followers' blood so that he could have eternal life."

"Make no mistake, occult-based fictional heroes and heroines have an impact on a child's ability to distinguish truth from falsehood, good from evil. As O'Brien explains: "A novel about a boy who regularly skips along a tightrope

across Niagara Falls without falling is no real threat to one's child, because he instantly recognizes the absurdity of the notion. The danger is immediately perceived and the practice rejected. But a novel about a boy who skips along a tightrope across an eternal abyss is a real threat, for the danger is difficult to recognize without knowledge of moral absolutes and a developed sense of the immediacy of spiritual combat. Parents' warnings about abstract dangers can pale in a child's mind when compared to tales packed with potent images that have lodged deeply in his *imagination*."

"Any parent who is concerned about the ever-darkening trends in children's literature needs to read this book because it gives a thorough explanation of the problem and is loaded with tips on how to discern the good, the bad and the ugly in modern reading material."

(*The difference between Christian and occult-based fantasy*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=793>)

"JRR Tolkien, himself a noted **fantasy** author (Lord of the Rings), notes the dangers of fantasy: "**Fantasy** can, of course, be carried to excess. It can be ill done. It can be put to evil uses. It may even delude the minds out of which it came."

"Many, including Christians, mock conservative Christian concerns about fantasy games and movies. Such people believe that **fantasy** is harmless. By turning those fantasies inward, indulging in them, we will actually come to no harm, they say.

"*The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*" Genesis 6:5

G.K. Chesterton wrote, "The power which makes a man entertain a good impulse is the same power as that which enables him to make a good gun, it is *imagination*. It is truth to say that evil acts begin in evil *imagination*."

Although imagination is a gift from God, it can be perverted or developed by external forces.

Our **fantasy** or our imagination will be only what we feed it. Leave alone that our hearts are intrinsically evil by the Fall.

"Catholic Educator's Resource, James Duffy remarks, "*Imagination* will work on what we give it. If **Pokémon** and **Terminator** are the only things feeding the *imagination*, then they will form our dreams, too"."

(*Moral Imagination Filling Our Children with Good Things* www.catholiceducation.org/directory/Current_Issues/Parenting/more5.html)

I retrieved the following from www.heritagefwbc.org/education/handbook11.html, the website of a U.S. school, the Heritage Christian Academy, Arizona,

USA (many similar notifications are on the Internet, put up by Christian educational institutions):

“Toys, backpacks, school supplies, clothing or any other items with a violent connotation are not acceptable at any time! This includes, but is not limited to, *Harry Potter*, *Action Heroes*, *Power Rangers* or similar type, *Star Wars* or similar type, *Ninja* type toys, guns, swords, knives, *Pokémon*, *Digimon*, *Game Boys*, etc.”

Chapter 76

New Age Games: Bakugan, Beyblades, Digimon, Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, Pokémon, Skylanders, Yu-Gi-Oh!

Few wise parents would permit their children to consume junk foods and colas at every meal which result in an unhealthy physical condition. Should Christian parents then allow their children to gorge their minds with spiritual junk foods?

I am referring to the occult board games, “fantasy” Role-Playing Games or RPGs, collectible card games, Japanese ‘anime’ or animated feature films and cartoons, and the ‘manga’ or comics, which are the most visible face of the new kids’ entertainment industry.

“Spiritual?” you protest. Sadly, most parents remain ignorant concerning 21st century spiritual realities. Children must be guided by informed parents in their television viewing and entertainment habits. They must remember that hardly a day goes by when their children are not exposed to the subtle influences of the New Age movement. Even among those who are spiritually alert, believers are not united on the appropriate response to some modern kids’ “amusements”.

The origin of the word “amusement” is interesting. “Muse” is related to “thinking”, while the prefix “a” means “NOT”.

So, “amusement” is a time of not thinking! We like to switch off our brains at the end of a hard day and just be entertained. This is not a problem as long as we also do not turn off obedience to God’s wisdom and instruction.

So what’s wrong with many video “games”/RPGs, kids’ “entertainment”, card and board “games” and “toys” we ask in this and the following two chapters? The answer isn’t ours to give. Any view of right and wrong must be based on God’s Word.

“Bakugan is a game that consists of small plastic balls that pop open and transform into fighting figures when they roll onto special metal playing cards known as Gate cards. Players lay out their cards and take turns shooting their Bakugan onto the cards. When a Bakugan opens on someone’s card, the two players do battle. Each Bakugan has an attack strength called a “G-Power” which can be modified by the Gate card it landed on. Whichever Bakugan ends up with the highest total G-Power wins the battle and captures the Gate card, with the object of the game being to capture three of these special cards.

It all sounds as harmless as rolling dice, but the story line behind the game is troubling...

Listen to this explanation of the black Bakugan from [the Bakugandojo.com](http://theBakugandojo.com) website. **Darkus** thrives “on battles hidden in the shadows, for this is where they draw their strength... Once a Bakugan is sucked into the Doom Dimension, there is no coming back... The bottom line is, Darkus is evil but fun.”

“Berit Kjos, author, speaker and New Age expert explains what’s wrong with all this: “...The weapons used by Bakugan warriors are totally contrary to God’s ways. Based on the ancient Chinese force called ch’i, they flow from the same source as every other occult weapon. Ch’i (or Ki, Prana, etc.) is merely the Eastern label for the spiritual forces once commanded by Canaanite sorcerers, Babylonian magicians, mediaeval alchemists, and secret societies throughout history.”

“In summary, many parents see nothing wrong with these games and think we’re making too much of them. However, that doesn’t give nearly enough credit to the intelligence of our children who easily pick up on the concept of gaining power by calling on forces other than God. Allowing them to see occult symbols on games is also a bad idea because it teaches them not to be on their guard should they encounter these symbols elsewhere, say on the cover of books and videos they ought not to view.”

(*Bakugan, Star Wars and the Occult*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=111>)

“**Beyblades** is a **board game** that uses spinning tops which were inspired by Japanese spinning tops known as *Beigoma*.

Players launch their Beyblades into a Beystadium where the longest spinning top wins the battle. Points are deducted or won based on certain criteria. The introduction of these toys corresponded with the broadcast of the *Beyblade* anime cartoon show. The symbols found on the *Beyblades* supposedly represent the 88 constellations in space.

“Beyblades come with a bit-chip, which is a decorative plate inserted into its Attack Ring. Each of these plates is adorned with a small icon of a mythical creature which is based on Chinese mythology. Known as “bit beasts” to players, in earlier versions of the game they were known as “holy beasts” that were powerful animal spirits capable of inhabiting a *Beyblade*. The soul of these “beasts” are considered to be housed inside each Beyblade. This implies that inanimate objects can have a soul – a belief that belongs to animism, not Christianity. There are four so-called “sacred bit beasts” that belong to the main characters in the *Beyblade* series and are known as Dragoon, Dranzer, Driger

and Draciel. These four “sacred” or elemental spirits are also based on Chinese mythology. Beyblades is obviously infested with elements of the Japanese indigenous religion of Shinto, which is a mixture of nature worship, fertility cults, divination techniques and shamanism, none of which are compatible with Christianity. If children delve too deeply into the back-story of this game and television show, it could cause confusion about the teachings of our faith.” (*The Shinto Elements in the Popular Beyblades Game*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=10469>)

“Karate-kicking their way to global fame, the world’s hottest super heroes The **Mighty Morphin Power Rangers** have left the **Ninja Turtles** behind in the dust. Armed with magic crystals, megazords, and the ancient secrets of martial arts, they claim to be the saviors of the world-ready at a flash to combat evil aliens and inhuman monsters. Blending body, mind and animal power into an Eastern form of supernatural empowerment, they are super-fast and super-strong.

Obsession with power, violence and martial arts can prove fatal. Last fall, Norway, Sweden and Denmark banned the show for a season after a five-year-old Norwegian girl was kicked unconscious by classmates and died in the snow. Some blamed the **Ninja Turtles**, which had been broadcasting the skills and thrills of the martial arts longer.

In spite of the bad reports, there is no sign of a cool-down. Since the Power Rangers premiered on the Fox network last year, they have ‘built one of the most passionate groundswells of devotion in the history of Kids’ entertainment,’ says San Francisco Examiner writer Peter Stack. ‘Or zombie-like groundswells, depending on your point of view.’

“What does the program teach children about reality?

Since young children soak up images along with words--without much analysis or evaluation, their understanding of the world will be formed by the most fun, forceful, and persistent messages they receive. Fantasy or not, the repeated themes and occult context of most contemporary cartoons will train their minds to believe the timeless lies that have always drawn people from truth to myths.

(*The Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*, Berit Kjos, 1996, <http://www.crossroad.to/text/articles/power-rangers.html>)

“**Pokémon**, which is short for “pocket monster” [“poketto monsutaa” in Japanese transliteration] has become a runaway success in America among children. There are cartoons and even a movie based upon the Pokémon characters. Almost every child in America is familiar with this fad and owns some form of Pokémon paraphernalia. But, what is Pokémon?

Pokémon was created by Nintendo in Japan in 1996. It is a role-playing game involving cards, Nintendo Game Boy, and TV cartoons. The cards have pictures of different Pokémon on them, more than 150 so far. The Pokémon are supposed to be “monsters” that have special powers and share the world with humans. The idea of the game is to have the children learn how to collect as many Pokémon as possible, train them, and use them against other people’s Pokémon by invoking the various abilities of each Pokémon creature. Pokémon can evolve and pass through various levels, 100 being the highest. Colored energy cards are sometimes used to aid the Pokémon.

Is **Pokémon** dangerous? Potentially, yes it is. One observer of children playing the game said the children would afterwards mimic the game by summoning the Pokémon to attack others. This is occultic.

Pokémon are summoned to do battle and to protect. This is equivalent to sorcery.

Earth, Wind, Fire, and Water are frequent elemental themes found in Pagan religions, witchcraft, and Wicca, and are used heavily in Pokémon.

Does **Pokémon** contribute to impressionable children accepting occult ideas? Yes, it does.”

(*Pokémon: What is it?* Matt Slick, <https://carm.org/what-is-pokemon>)

“In a rare interview with **Pokémon** creator Satoshi Tajiri, he admits that the games were created as a backlash against his Christian parents. He also says that the games are tailored towards an anti-Christian sentiment or Satanism. The interview, conducted by *Time* about the continued success of the Pokémon series, took a sharp left turn when Tajiri was asked about the inspiration for the games.”

(*Pokémon Creator Admits Games are Anti-Christian, Aimed towards Satanists*, <http://www.p4rgaming.com/pokemon-creator-admits-games-aimed-towards-satanists/>)

Charisma, the Charismatic magazine (<http://www.charismamag.com/>) points out that three **Pokémon** sprout horns (Electabuzz, for instance)! And, Kadabra “making the satanic symbol -- a ram’s head -- with his thumb, pinky and index fingers”. Other Christian sites note that “there are occult symbols on Kadabra. He has a pentagram on his forehead, SSS (supposed to represent ‘666’) on his chest and he is giving the satanic salute with his left hand”.

When the main theme song for the television show is sung in English, the lyrics “gotta catch ‘em all” are alleged to say “I love Satan” or “O Satan” when played backwards, which is known as “backmasking”. This has left some Christians and Christian organizations believing that Pokémon subliminally encourages Satanism.

In the official guide to the “Pokémon Tower” portion of the game, the Pokémon cannot “fight” with the game’s characters because they are “possessed”. The text “I can’t fight now, I’m possessed” actually appears on the Game Boy screen. Witch covens, earth based religions, eastern philosophies, and pagan belief systems hold the elements - Earth, Water, Fire, and Wind - as sources of power, as the **Pokémon** game does. These are the energy cards in the Pokémon game. (Some extracts are taken from *Toying with Death*, Berit Kjos, <http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/04/toying-with-death.htm>)

“A Sicilian bishop has consulted with two lawyers about the possibility of suing Niantic, creators of the wildly popular **Pokémon Go** game, in an effort to have the app banned. [Breitbart](#) (link) is reporting on the efforts of Antonio Stagliano, bishop of the southern town of Noto in Sicily, who says the “diabolical” game is attacking the very fabric of society by creating “dependence on a totalitarian system similar to Nazism.” The game, which has 20 million active users in the U.S., comes in the phone of a smartphone app which is used to find Pokémon creatures who are hidden in the real world.

“Bishop Stagliano [claims](#) (link) the game is turning young people into the “walking dead” and has already “alienated thousands and thousands of young people” by getting them addicted to monster-hunting. Even more infuriating is the fact that his own cathedral in Noto has been designated as an official **Pokestop**, meaning that players routinely stop at the church to collect **Poke Balls**. The bishop isn’t the only one upset about the game. As Breitbart reports, the mayor of a town in central France banned the app because young people are becoming dangerously addicted to the game.

Elsewhere in France, Fabrice Beauvois, the mayor of the village of Bressolles, has sent a letter to Niantic demanding that the game be removed from his territory which he believes is necessary in order to ensure public order in his town.

Just for the record, the Virgin Mary statue in my own parish has become a designated Pokestop and has resulted in cars entering and exiting our church parking lot at odd hours of the day and night. It was the local police who alerted us to the situation. Thankfully, they’re keeping an eye on our premises to be sure law and order is maintained.

(*Bishop considers lawsuit to stop Pokémon Go*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=52943>)

For further reading:

- *How Pokémon and Magic Cards Affect the Minds and Values of Children*, Berit Kjos, 1999 <https://www.crossroad.to/text/articles/pokemon5-99.html>.

Digimon are the American-equivalent invention of Pokémon.

This troupe of monsters seems to be similar to Pokémon except with a higher cute-factor, less “realistic,” and with the suffix “mon” added to all the names. There are the Pikachu-type, ‘mild-looking’ Digimonsters such as Agumon and Monzaemon. At the other extreme are the unicorn-horned Gabumon, three-horned Greymon, the ferocious Garurumon, the werewolf WereGarurumon, and what are nothing but reproductions of the imagery of satan as Devimon and Kabuterimon. Even the middle order Togemon, Patamon, Angemon, Numemon, Garudamon, MetalGreymon, Meramon, Birdramon etc. are not very much better. After all they’ve got to be monsters!

“**Skylanders** is just another one of those toys, like Beyblades, that has a questionable back story that could confuse a child if they delve too deeply involved into the background of the game. In the case of Skylanders **Spyro’s Adventure**, as it’s officially called, this is supposedly an entertainment breakthrough in video gaming because it allows players to transport real-world toys into virtual worlds of adventure through the “Portal of Power™. According to the February 2011 press release, “These ‘toys with brains’ can come to life inside the game in connection with multiple gaming platforms, as well as on handheld gaming devices, mobile devices and on the web ... This marks a wholesale change in the interaction between toys and video games, opening up new possibilities and revenue streams for both industries.”

The game supposedly creates a whole new genre “that bridges the gap between the real and virtual worlds.”

The problem is not with the technology, it’s with the back story. This is how the website explains it:

“For generations, the Skylanders have used their magical powers and weapons to protect Skylands. But now, an evil tyrant has frozen them into toys and banished them to Earth. Only you can put them on the Portal of Power and bring them back to life in their world to save Skylands forever.

“The Skylanders figures remember their in-game experiences and upgrades. Each toy is uniquely different based on their game play. This allows kids to build a special relationship with them as they develop their skills and characteristics.”

“As you can read in <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=793> (further above) about the difference between Christian and occult-based fantasy, the presence of magic in a story isn’t a problem as long as the magic is not used in a morally neutral way, i.e., both the good and bad characters use it. Whenever magic is presented as a good, which it appears to be in the Skylander story line, there’s a problem. Children may be able to use this game without becoming

too involved in the story line, but it's there and a parent should be aware of it before deciding whether or not to expose their child to it."

(*Skylanders: Playing with magic*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=10551>)

Yu-Gi-Oh! is a kind of a play on Yugi Mutou, the name of the main character of the card game. Yugi means "game" or "play". The ending, "ou" or "Oh", indicates royalty. So Yu-Gi-Oh! is "The Game King" or "King of Games".

"**YuGiOh!** is an occult-themed card game that has morphed into a full-blown franchise that includes multiple anime TV shows and movies, video games, t-shirts, lunchboxes as well as the trading cards you refer to in your email.

YuGiOh! Was created as a manga (Japanese comic book) by Kazuki Takahashi in 1996 and was originally named "Magic and Wizards" which was a play on the popular (and very Satanic) card game known as "**Magic: The Gathering**". When the manga was picked up for animation, he decided to change the name to "**Duel Monsters.**" According to VirtualJapan.com, the purpose of the card game is to avoid losing "life points" while dueling with opponents in a mock battle of fantasy "monsters." Three types of cards are used: monster cards, spell cards and trap cards. Monster cards are the different monsters that attack or defend a player. Spell cards are used to make a monster stronger or weaker. Trap cards are like "wild cards" that can be used at the discretion of the player.

"The problem with **YuGiOh!** is its overtly occult story-line and symbolism. It centers on a Harry Potterish character named Yugi who was given broken pieces of an ancient Egyptian artifact known as the Millennium Puzzle by his grandfather. When he assembles the pieces, he becomes possessed by another personality who is later discovered to be the spirit of a 3,000-year-old Pharaoh named Atem who has no memory of his own time. Yugi and his friends try to find the secret of Atem's lost memories as well as his real name.

"In an [article](#) (link) on **YuGiOh!** written by New Age expert Berit Kjos, the official YuGiOh! website is quoted as saying:

"...There's more to this card game than meets the eye! Legend has it five thousand years ago, ancient Egyptian Pharaohs used to play a magical game very similar to Duel Monsters. This ancient game involved magical ceremonies, which were used to foresee the future and ultimately, decide one's destiny. They called it the Shadow Game, and the main difference back then was that the monsters were all real! With so many magical spells and ferocious creatures on the earth, it wasn't long before the game got out of hand and threatened to destroy the entire world! Fortunately, a brave Pharaoh stepped in and averted this cataclysm with the help of seven powerful magical totems. Now, in present times, the game has been revived in the form of playing cards." (Interestingly,

I could not find this particular description on the website which tells me it may have been scrubbed for something more “sensitive” to the game’s Christian audience.)

The description also explains why there are so many occult symbols on the playing cards such as the unicursal hexagram which is considered to be sacred by members of the Ordo Templi Orientis, an occult Brotherhood popularized by Satanist Aleister Crowley and is also used in black magick rituals.

“In the **YuGiOh!** movie, characters sport Millennium pendants which portray an Eye of Horus inside a triangle, which is a highly recognizable Illuminati/secret society symbol, as well as an illuminated third eye which denotes psychic powers.

Not surprisingly, the YuGiOh! Movie and card game received cautionary reviews from Christian media watchdogs, such as this one that appeared in [Christianity Today](#) (link). “Most kids will see **Yu-Gi-Oh!** as fantasy and have no trouble separating it from reality, but some may get lost in a world that, frankly, is more than a mere nod to the occult,” the reviewer warns. “The world of Yu-Gi-Oh! includes more than a fair share of spiritual darkness, and the trading cards—while not exactly a role-playing game along the lines of **Dungeons and Dragons**—sometimes can suck kids, unwittingly, into that world, sometimes to the point where they blur the lines between fact and fiction—and even between good and evil.”

As Ms. Kjos wisely states, there are much deeper things of the occult that can snare a child such as spiritism, witchcraft, fortune telling, demons and vampires, but “all of this begins from ‘little’ things such as Yu-Gi-Oh”.

(*The Occult-Saturated World of YuGiOh!* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11611>)

✱

New Age (occult-themed, gore- and violence-filled) games may be board games (like the **Ouija Board**), video gaming, role-playing video gaming, card games, and role-playing card games.

Dangerous video (mostly PlayStation) and online games:

Ars Magica, **Assassin’s Creed**, **Bayonetta**, **Book of Spells** (which is based on the Harry Potter saga), **Call of Duty 4**, **Choice: Texas** (which lets players hunt for abortion access), **Castle Wolf**, **Condemned 2**, **Darksiders**, **DayZ**, **Deception: Invitation To Darkness**, **Devil Summoner**, **Diablo II**, **Doom**, **Dragon’s Age**, **Dungeon Keeper 2**, **Evil Residence**, **Fate**, **Grand Theft Auto: Vice City** (casual sex and immorality), **Guitar Hero**, **Happy Meal** (from McDonalds!), **Koudelka**, **Manhunt**, **Modern Warfare 2**, **Nightmare Creatures**, **Nocturne**,

Planet Slayer, RuneScape, Shadow Hearts, Skyrim, Star Wars, The Club, The Sims (apparently the best-selling computer game of all time, liberalism and immorality), **Trapt, Wizard 101, World of Warcraft**, etc.

Buyers interested in a catchy ad campaign launched by Electronic Arts are greeted at the site by an alleged new game called, "**Mass: We Pray**," declared as heretics and rerouted to the satanic-themed **Dante's Inferno**. After ordering, they're offered a "Number of the Beast" discount of \$6.66.

Dangerous card (and collectible-card) games:

Bakugan, Doomtown, Dungeons & Dragons, Legend of the Five Rings, Magic: The Gathering, Pokémon, (Disney's!) Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom, Yu-Gi-Oh! etc.

Dangerous role-playing games:

Alternity, Dungeons & Dragons, Skyrim, (Disney's!) Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom, Vampire: The Masquerade, etc.

"Pope Benedict XVI has minced no words in condemning **video games** such as these.

"Any trend to produce programs and products – including animated films and video games – which in the name of entertainment exalt violence and portray anti-social behavior or the trivialization of human sexuality is a perversion, all the more repulsive when these programs are directed at children and adolescents," the pope said in his 2007 World Communications Day Message (link). He decried such "entertainment" directed to adolescents as an affront "to the countless innocent young people who actually suffer violence, exploitation and abuse"."

(*Video Games Can be as Addictive as Crack Cocaine*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=15246>)

"The Archdiocese of Mexico City, headed by Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera has issued a stern warning to parents over the violent and sexual tones of the runaway phenomena known as "**Pokémon**" and other Japanese cartoons. In an official bulletin the Archbishop pointed out that these are but the tip of the iceberg in undermining the sacredness of family, empowering children to believe that they alone can possess powers which then allow them to disobey their parents and the laws of God."

(<http://www.dailycatholic.org/issue/2000Feb/feb24dc3.htm>)

More information at my web site:

**NEW AGE GAMES-POKEMON, POWER RANGERS, YU-GI-OH, ETC.
NEWAGEGAMES-POKEMONSKYLANDERSETC-SUSANBRINKMANN
POKEMON GO-THE SMARTPHONE GAME**

Chapter 77

New Age Movies: The Star Wars series, Avatar, Karate Kid, etc.

Christian analyses of three genres of movies to understand their New Age-ness

“The New Age Movement has a comprehensive body of doctrine which includes the following tenets:

Belief in a central spiritual being known as ... “*The God of Force*”, which is to them “God Transcendent” ...”

(*The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow – The New Age Movement*, Constance Cumbey, Huntington, 1983, page 253)

“Where would a Catholic run into New Age ideas? When he goes to the movies, he is exposed to New Age concepts such as “*the force*” in the *Star Wars series* and other films.”

(*New Age Traps, Why be Suckered?* Anne Feaster, <https://www.newoxfordreview.org/documents/new-age-traps/>)

In 1977, George Lucas released the first film of his series, **Star Wars** that eventually ran into three trilogies. Together with the theatrical spin-off films *The Clone Wars* (2008), *Rogue One* (2016), and *Solo* (2018), *Star Wars* is the second-highest-grossing film series of all time.

“*The Force*. Term popularised by George Lucas in his **Star Wars** movies to describe ‘an energy field generated by all living organisms. It surrounds us and penetrates us. The Force is where the Jedi gets his power’ - so says Obi-Wan Kenobi to Luke... The Force is but another attempt to invent monistic energies for any sorcerers, black or white, who wish to wield it.”

(*The Great Deception*, Jonathan D. James, GLS-Genesis, 1994. Chapter 5 *Entertaining Demons Unawares – Media Deception*, pages 56-69)

““May *the force* be with you.” Almost everybody knows what that means. This is a catchphrase the good guys used in the tremendously popular **Star Wars** movies. The underlying theology was pure New Age. There is no Creator God, no objective rules of right and wrong. There is simply this blind force which can be used by good people for good, and bad people for bad. This force can be tapped into by suspending reason and using instinct. [Three examples from the original trilogy are provided here] This was all New Age stuff. [Ralph Rath then quotes Bob Larson, *Larson’s Book of Cults*, pages 98, 100, to explain the Taoist philosophy underlying these movies, the “Force”, the ch’i or ki, **yin-yang**, etc.]”

(*The New Age: A Christian Critique*, Ralph Rath, Greenlawn Press, 1990, pages 254, 255)

“The field of mathematics evaluates the theories of physicists such as (New Ager) Fritjof Capra, author of *The Tao of Physics*. Their scientifically questionable ideas provide believers in the **Star Wars** “Force” or cosmic consciousness with “evidence” that such a force really exists. Probably the most powerful instrument available for influencing millions of minds is film. Box office records indicate that films either reflect the consciousness of a people, direct it, or do both. **Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom** is a bold statement about the dark and light side of Hinduism’s god, “the Force”. It spectacularly “proves” that the “white side” is terrific.”

(*Gods of the New Age – When Lies Masquerade as Truth*, Caryl Matrisciana, Marshall Pickering, 1985)

“Children can subconsciously get caught up in New Age thinking. For example, Luke Skywalker from the **Star Wars** saga can unwittingly lead children down the wrong pathway. George Lucas, the creator of the series, has Luke initiated into the league of Jedi knights; this involves mastering *the ‘force’* that animates the cosmos, dwells within, and is tapped intuitively through feelings. Millions of young minds will be familiar with the ‘force’, and the desire for the ability to control the world.”

(*What is the New Age?* Michael Cole, Hodder and Stoughton, 1990, page 32)

“The key New Age god-concept is ‘pantheism’. This idea claims that all is god: I’m god, you’re god, this book is god, etc. The pantheist’s god is not personal, but, rather, is a *force*, consciousness, or essence in the universe. Some New Agers reduce God to a mere *force* of nature. “The Force” of **Star Wars** is a good example of a pantheistic god-concept.”

(*The Lucifer Connection*, Joseph Carr, Huntington House Inc., 1987, page 76)

“The Christian-based Movieguide <https://www.movieguide.org/reviews/star-wars-the-force-awakens.html> is warning parents to beware of a very strong New Age worldview which permeates the movie **Star Wars: The Force Awakens** which could provide a valuable teaching moment for children. The biggest problem is that the movie has a very strong New Age pagan worldview promoting impersonal Eastern monism, a worldview that, ultimately, is irrational and warrants strong caution,” Movieguide reports. “In regard to the infamous *Force*, the movie also promotes modern monism, a New Age theology claiming that there’s a universal, but impersonal, energy or ‘Force’ that is part of everything and surrounds everyone. This is typical Star Wars mythology. However, in *The Force Awakens*, it’s suggested a couple times that there must be a ‘balance’ not only in the Force but also between the ‘good side’ and the ‘dark side’ of the Force. This is Non-Christian Eastern monism and moral dualism.” The review found this dualism to be confusing in light of the fact that the story

strongly suggests that the good must defeat and overcome or destroy evil – not co-exist with it – which clearly contradicts those calls for balance.

“The movie also suggests that characters who succumb to the dark side can redeem themselves by rejecting it and coming into the light – which is also not about “balance” but about the good side winning over the bad. Movieguide suggests parents and grandparents should take the time to explain these contradictions to their youngsters and not miss this opportunity to teach the Truth to their children.

““They should also note how such New Age thinking differs from the ethical monotheism and redemption of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the enlightenment and divine fellowship or communion that comes from a personal relationship with Jesus and from the power of the Holy Spirit,” Movieguide advises. It’s also a good time to explain why we don’t believe God is a universal life force – because He revealed Himself to us as a Person, not a thing. For example, when Moses asked Him to describe Himself, He responded with “I am who am” rather than “I am what is.” They may also benefit from knowing that this universal life force, called the Force in **Star Wars**, is known as chi, qi, and prana which supposedly involve energy centers and pathways known as chakras and meridians by other religions. Although scientists have been looking for proof of the existence of this energy since the time of Sir Isaac Newton, none has ever been found. In summary, Movieguide calls for “Strong or extreme caution . . . when it comes to the movie’s confused, impersonal, pagan monism. Christians have a better, more personal ‘Force’ – our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who created everything and redeems us and comes to us through the personal, divine power of the Holy Spirit”.”

(*New Age/Occult Elements in Star Wars*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=46134>)

The book by Peter Jones, *The Gnostic Empire Strikes Back: An Old Heresy for the New Age*, Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992, is dedicated entirely to exposing the New Age in the **Star Wars** series.

“The term **avatar** comes from a Hindu word, *avataras*, which means “descents,” describing a deity who descends into human form. In Hindu beliefs, it usually refers to the earthy manifestation of the Hindu deity, Vishnu, for he descends to earth to protect it. This term migrated into the New Age and has come to mean one who has evolved spiritually on earth, moved on, and then can incarnate at will to help humanity. An avatar may be a spiritually evolved person who has reached the realization that “reality is, in all that lives, divinity itself” (Stephen

Cross, *The Elements of Hinduism* [Shaftesbury, Dorset, Great Britain: Element Books Ltd, 1994; Rockport, MA: Element, Inc., 1994], 7).

“The main character of the movie “**Avatar**”, Jake Sully, reluctantly comes to the planet Pandora to take on the body of a Nav’i, the name for the inhabitants of Pandora, and to spy on the Nav’i people for those exploiting Pandora for its resources. Jake’s soul/spirit/mind is transferred via some type of scientific machine from his human body to a body that is grown from human and Nav’i genes so that he appears to be a Nav’i. This Nav’i body is called Jake’s “avatar.” In Hinduism, Krishna is an avatar of the god Vishnu, and is depicted with blue skin. The portrayal of the Nav’i as blue creatures suggests a parallel with Krishna -- that Jake could possibly be viewed as the (divine) being come to save the Nav’i.

“The Nav’i are in tune with nature, and since nature is the god(dess) here, nature is the measure and the regulator of value and goodness on Pandora... Neytiri, the female Nav’i that Jake falls in love with talks to Jake about “the flow of energy.” There is a “network of energy that flows through all living things;” this energy is “borrowed and one day you will have to give it back.” This latter statement is not explained but could mean, given other indications in the movie, that when one dies, one goes back into the elements of nature via Eywa, the deity of Pandora.

When Jake kills an animal, he says, “I see you, brother, and thank you. Your spirit goes with Eywa and your body stays behind to become one with the people.” Eywa, the goddess of planet Pandora, could be seen as Pandora itself. This action implies that Jake is respecting the animal, yet the animal, for all this respect, is still very dead. Do these words make it better for the animal? There is a myth like belief in our culture that tribal or aboriginal peoples who live in nature have a deep respect for nature simply because it is nature. Actually, these people are animists who believe that spirits and deities inhabit nature and must be placated in order to avoid disaster (Dan Story, *Are Animists Model Environmentalists?* Christian Research Journal, Vol. 33, No. 2, 2010.)

““...animists believe that *all of life is interconnected*. People are intimately linked to their *families*, some of whom are living and some who have already passed into the spiritual realm. They are also connected to the *spiritual world*: The ambivalent yearnings of gods and spirits impact the living. Animists feel a connectedness with *nature*: The stars, planets, and moon are thought to affect earthly events. The natural realm is so related to the human realm that practitioners divine current and future events by analyzing what animals are doing or by sacrificing animals and analyzing their livers, entrails, or stomachs. Many animists also believe that they are connected with *other human beings*.

They are able to access the thoughts of other human beings..." (Dr. Gailyn Van Rheenen, "Defining an Animistic Worldview," <http://www.missiology.org/mongolianlectures/animisticworldview.htm>).

Nature is respected because a natural disaster can mean death and because food and sustenance depend on the well-being and abundance of the plants, soil, and animals in the environment."

"The tree where it seems that Eywa resides sends out floating seeds which are called "very pure spirits" by Neytiri. These seeds gather around and land on Jake when he first arrives, a "sign" that Jake is special. Thus, Jake is chosen or recognized by the goddess as the avatar who will save the Nav'i. He is not the chosen of the gods, but the chosen of a goddess. The special tree is the "tree of souls" where the Nav'i connect to their "mother," Eywa. There, they can also plug in to "hear the voices of our ancestors." The tree's roots also connect with all other living things on the planet, forming a living interconnecting system throughout Pandora.

"The scientist from Earth in charge of the Avatar program, Grace Augustine, has an epiphany toward the end of the movie that Pandora is a living "network" with its own consciousness. This is similar to the idea behind the Gaia Hypothesis, a theory that the earth is a self-regulating organism, proposed by chemist James Lovelock in 1972. He chose the name "Gaia" because Gaia (read chapter 26) was the Greek goddess of the earth. Lovelock has since written "*Homage to Gaia*" (2001) and "*The Revenge of Gaia*" (2006).

"Neytiri tells Jake that Eywa does not take sides but "protects only the balance of life." In other words, the highest good is the "balance of life," not the lives of intelligent creatures such as the Nav'i or even of animals, but rather the balance itself is sacred. Nevertheless, Neytiri later tells Jake that "Eywa heard you" after he performs a feat.

The name "Grace Augustine" clearly has Christian references. When Grace is dying, there is a blatant pagan type ritual performed by the Nav'i before the Tree of Souls to save Grace's life. Chanting and moving in their bodies frenetically, they cry out, "Hear us, Mother Eywa." With her last breath, Grace intones, "I'm with her [Eywa]. She's real." After she dies, the shaman states, "She's with Eywa now." Does the fact that Grace Augustine goes over to the Nav'i side and profess her belief in Eywa mean that Christianity should or will embrace Gaia, the Eywa of planet Earth? Or that Christianity will be absorbed and subsumed into Gaia?

"Jake as well ends up talking to Eywa, telling her that earthlings "killed their mother" (meaning planet Earth).

The shaman looks possessed as she intones the chant before this tree. It is an eerie and chilling scene. Again the viewer sees chanting and homage paid to Eywa at the end when the Nav'i perform a ritual to transfer Jake's soul permanently into the avatar body of a Nav'i. It is not "sort of a pagan ritual" or "sort of goddess worship" as I've heard. It is pagan and it is goddess worship. This should not surprise anyone. James Cameron is the executive producer of the documentary, "The Lost Tomb of Jesus," which tried to claim that the tomb of Jesus had been found, with Jesus' body in it (<http://dsc.discovery.com/convergence/tomb/tomb.html>).

"In contrast to the goddess Eywa being one with Pandora, the earth and the whole universe was created by God and belongs to Him (Exodus 9:29; Psalm 24:1, 89:11). God is omnipresent but is distinct from creation.

The belief that the balance of nature or energy is the goal or is the highest good is the concept of Taoism and is found in the occult as well. When a balance of forces is the goal (found in the "Star Wars" movies as well), then there are no absolutes and no ultimate right or wrong. There is no intelligence in force or balance; therefore, there is no morality. Morality is a concept that exists only with mind and intelligence. In "Avatar," balance reigns supreme as an impersonal paramount value. Despite Eywa as the deity of Pandora, Eywa seems to be equated with nature and is not distinct from it. Furthermore, there is the connection of energy so that all is one. If all is one, then ultimately there are no distinctions between creatures, nature, and god(dess). A lack of distinctions also mean no distinction between truth and falsehood, or between good and evil.

"It seems clear that Cameron has made a parallel between Pandora and the concept of Earth as Gaia, and his preference is for us to treat Earth as the Nav'i treat Pandora. Yet the scientist Grace Augustine understands the network of energy as a scientific principle operating in a material way. So there is a contradiction between the concept of nature as sacred and nature as merely a physical, material component of some kind of energy. Which is it? The only way for it to be both is to abandon a transcendent religion altogether and be a naturalist. Perhaps the religion of Pandora and Gaia does devolve into mere worship of the natural, or naturalism. If so, then there is no transcendent god, goddess, or meaning to life.

"Comparisons of Jake becoming a Nav'i to Christ's incarnation fall short. First of all, an avatar is not a true incarnation but rather a manifestation. Jake is human, but Jesus is God. Jesus was not an avatar.

Secondly, Jake did not initially want to become a Nav'i. He only grew to like it because as a human he was crippled but as a Nav'i, he had legs; plus he fell in

love with Neytiri. However, Christ, out of love, gave up his glory as God the Son and chose to incarnate as man (John 10:11; Galatians 1:4, 2:20; Ephesians 5:2; Philippians 2:6-8; 1 John 3:16) .

Thirdly, Jake did not suffer a penalty for anyone as Jesus did when he suffered the penalty for sins (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 3:17; 1 John 2:2, 4:10. Nor did Jake redeem anyone from sin and death as Jesus did (Acts 2:24, 5:30; 1 Corinthians 15; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:15), giving eternal life to all those who believe in Him (Romans 4:24, 8:11; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 2 Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 1:20).

Finally, the ultimate meaning for Jake is to join the Nav'i and worship nature. Christ came to glorify God, the creator of nature, and to reconcile man with a transcendent God (2 Corinthians 5:20; Colossians 1:20)."

(Avatar: In praise of goddess Nature, Marcia Montenegro,

http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_AvatarMovie.html)

"While calling the plotline bland and accusing it of "giving a wink toward" environmental fanaticism, Vatican news sources have given James Cameron's 3-D techno-thriller less than favorable reviews. *Vatican Radio* accused the film **Avatar** of "being a wink towards the pseudo-doctrines which have made ecology the religion of the millennium" and said its many faults would prevent the film from making cinema history.

The **Avatar** story takes place in 2154 on the planet Pandora where a paraplegic ex-marine is sent to establish a human settlement. He is met with resistance from the planet's native population, known as the Na'vi race, which sets the stage for the many epic special-effects confrontations between the two forces.

"It has a great deal of enchanting, stunning technology, but few genuine or human emotions," wrote the Holy See's newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*.

"Its significance is in its visual impact rather than in the story, and in its messages, despite the fact that they are hardly new. Cameron, concentrating on the creation of the fantasy world of Pandora, chooses a bland approach. He tells the story without any profound exploration" and allows the plot to descend into sentimentality, the paper said.

"In the Hindu religion, an avatar is believed to be a god who is incarnated on earth; however, in Cameron's world, an **Avatar** is a human-Na'vi hybrid created through genetic engineering. He describes Avatars as "living, breathing bodies in the real world, controlled by a human driver who projects their consciousness via technology which links their mind to the Avatar body and lives through the body in a remote-control kind of way while the body is in a coma-like state."

“The film is also receiving criticism from Christian leaders such as Dr. Alex McFarland, President of Southern Evangelical Seminary who says the movie’s pantheistic worldview makes it “new-age friendly.” “**Avatar**’s storyline presents us with a world of pantheistic monism,” Dr. McFarland said. “Pantheism sees no distinction between creation and Creator, the temporal or eternal, or between the natural world and the supernatural. In a pantheistic world all is God, and God is all. Pantheism is incompatible with Christian theism. The theist distinguishes between the universe and God. For the pantheist, the universe and all of its contents is God (including you and me).”

“In addition, CNN is reporting that people are beginning to suffer from what is being called the “Avatar blues”. The movie’s Fan Forum site has set up a special thread called “Naviblues” to accommodate all the people who are writing about experiencing depression and suicidal thoughts since seeing **Avatar**.

One fan named Mike wrote: “Ever since I went to see ‘Avatar’ I have been depressed. Watching the wonderful world of Pandora and all the Na’vi made me want to be one of them. I can’t stop thinking about all the things that happened in the film and all of the tears and shivers I got from it. I even contemplate suicide thinking that if I do it I will be re-birthed in a world similar to Pandora where everything is the same as in Avatar.”

The forum administrator, Philippe Baghdassarian, said he can understand why people are feeling depressed. “The movie was so beautiful and it showed something we don’t have here on Earth. I think people saw we could be living in a completely different world and that caused them to be depressed.”

If we all lived the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we’d all be living in a completely different world, and one that would make Pandora look like the fairy tale it is.” (*Vatican News sources pan “Avatar”, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=3729>*)

“The original **Karate Kid**, which was made in 1984, and starred Ralph Macchio and Pat Morita. The 2010 remake stars Jackie Chan and Jaden Smith.

Dads.org is correct that *there are some references to eastern mysticism in the film*. The remake of *Karate Kid* has the same central theme – a young boy tormented by bullies who finds a friend and mentor in a troubled martial arts (read chapter 73) champion. It’s a great story about overcoming adversity, but the new movie does have some problems.

First, it received a PG rating because of its realistic depiction of martial arts violence.

“But some reviewers are even more concerned about the **Karate Kid**’s spiritual content – which is definitely not Christian. According to Sheri McMurray of ChristianAnswers.net, it is “based around the Chi [universal life force energy]

and the belief that we all have a power from within.” The elder character teaches his young protégé that “Kung Fu is everything in life, and in how we do everything.”

McMurray concludes: “The values embraced within the film’s theme are not bad ones, they for the most part are in line with the principles we as Christians strive to teach our children, values and morals even Jesus teaches us, like love they neighbor, respect those in authority, honor your parents, truth in friendships, personal integrity, but it must be said that the spiritual aspect of this film is definitely Eastern in nature.”

She goes on to recommend: “If that is a concern to parents taking their families to see *The Karate Kid*, please be sure to sit down with them before you attend this movie, and make sure they know and can discern the difference between Eastern mysticism and Christianity.”

“I would encourage a parent to use common sense when deciding whether or not to take a child to see the **Karate Kid**. Naturally, a movie that depicts a young boy triumphing over his enemies with Kung Fu fighting rather than with the teachings of Christ is going to make oriental mysticism seem much more appealing to a child. This is especially true in a film that only presents the good aspects of eastern mysticism without mentioning the bad, such as the psychic dangers one is exposed to when practicing oriental meditation techniques and how those practices are often designed to unite one with the “universal life force” – which is a false god.

For obvious reasons, a movie like this could cause confusion and inner conflict in a child who is being raised in a home where Jesus Christ is Lord.”

(*The Karate Kid*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=201>)

“Another theme in contemporary movies common to the New Age is that of a more highly evolved race from outer space visiting us to improve our lives. *E.T.* and **Close Encounters of the Third Kind** were two very popular movies with this theme. This concept presupposes that humans can evolve into a higher type of existence. These outer space beings have evolved further than we humans have and the implication is given that, with luck, we can evolve further, too. *E.T.* was so evolved, in fact, that he could heal humans and resurrect himself from the dead. No hint was given in these movies that there is a Supreme Being, a God who created the extraterrestrials as well as the humans.”

(*The New Age: A Christian Critique*, Ralph Rath, Greenlawn Press, 1990, pages 254, 255)

E.T. (1982) begins with three boys playing *Dungeons and Dragons*, the occult violence-breeding fantasy role-playing board game. Later that night, Elliott, the young star of the movie, calls his brother “penis breath” during an argument.

Does their mother get mad with them? No, she just laughs. Later we find Elliott and E.T. linked by telepathy, and the both of them levitating.

Throughout the story, E.T. uses supernatural powers. It is also projected as a gentle creature, an emotionally and morally superior being to and has to be protected from them. It falls deathly ill, and virtually heals itself, much as is taught in New Age alternative medicine.

The hero of **Close Encounters of the Third Kind** (1977) is so obsessed with the Earth-visiting gentle aliens that he lets his marriage break up and elects to leave his wife and family -- and planet Earth -- to go back with them for God knows what, to God knows where.

More information at my web site:

NEW AGE MOVIES-THE STAR WARS TRILOGY, ETC

Chapter 78

New Age-tainted, Violence-filled, Occult-themed Toys and Games. He-Man. Barbie dolls. The Charlie Charlie Challenge. The Ouija Board. Tarot Cards.

The story line of the Arnold Schwarzenegger movie *Jingle All The Way* (1996) goes something like this. A **Turbo Man** action toy was so much in demand, it got sold out before Christmas. But the fathers of these two kids had promised their sons the Turbo Man as a Christmas gift. There was only one toy left in the town. They spend the entire film trying to outwit each other, using even unfair, violent and illegal means, to get the last Turbo Man, each for his own son.

In an age where parents share the viewing of *Star Wars*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *E.T.* and other Hollywood blockbusters with their children, come Christmas it does not take much thinking for dad or mum to gift wrap a **Star Wars** Luke Skywalker laser gun, a **Harry Potter** kit – complete with green slime and magic broom, or a **He-Man** robot that incorporates a voice recording to constantly remind the child that HE is the Master of the Universe.

Almost every popular cartoon is released in tandem with a toy. The toys and the cartoons mutually promote each other.

The TV cartoons have, as we all know, commercial breaks. Let me put it differently. At breaks during screening of the cartoons, commercials are introduced. The commercials are for toy products connected with the cartoons. So the question arose whether the cartoons were commercials or the commercials were cartoons. In 1983, the Action for Children's Television (ACT), accusing the companies of taking advantage of the children, who would not be able to differentiate between a cartoon and a commercial, filed a complaint in the United States that a number of children's programmes were "nothing more than thirty-minute commercials for [toy] products". The NABB or the National Association for Better Broadcasting also in the US objected to "cartoons based on trademarked products". It took the case of '**He-Man and the Masters of the Universe**' of which both, the action figures as well as the title of the show, are trademarked, saying, "It's an exploitation of kids - THE ENTIRE PROGRAM BECOMES A COMMERCIAL". Hence the term "commercialtoons".

Because a child cannot distinguish between fantasy and reality, he is not able to separate in his mind the difference between regular TV shows and commercials. When an animated commercial is sandwiched between an animated cartoon, to the child it is one continuous programme. Children therefore tend to view

the commercials as “public service announcements” and believe that they should possess the products advertised in the commercials. They also instill peer pressure on the kids by making announcements urging children to “be the first” to have the toy. It’s not just toys.

Parents today are familiar with the snacks, candies, cereals, etc. that are advertised during cartoons. Invariably, they offer “free” trading cards, tazos, or other collectibles associated with the toy of the cartoon. Cartoons that came under the ACT scanner for such “unethical” advertising in 1986 were Bugs Bunny, The Flintstones, and The Cabbage Patch Kids.

Bruce Watkins, assistant professor of the Communications Department at the University of Michigan told The Detroit News [November 10, 1985], “One element of these shows that is really unfortunate is that they were CREATED TO SELL TOYS as opposed to entertain children.”

The advertisements or commercialtoons also promote video games. **Dungeons and Dragons, He-Man, Smurfs, Shirttales,** and **Transformers** were among the first to adopt these tactics. The pressure is maintained by companies continually releasing new episodes, new toys to correspond with the new episodes, and also full-length movies.

Broadly speaking, there can be four kinds of toys for children.

1. ‘Amoral’ toys are those that have nothing to do with morality and are neither good nor bad. Just toys. Educational devices, model cars, simple dolls like the once famous Raggedy Ann, and teddy bears will come under this category.
2. ‘Christian’ toys are those toys that can instill ‘Christian’ or moral values in a child. There are companies in the West manufacturing them, but they are not anywhere as big as Mattel, Funkskool or Hasbro, the major secular players.
3. ‘War’ toys promote violence. G.I. Joe for instance, introduced in the mid ‘50s.
4. ‘Occult’ toys project the occult as well as “humanism” which teaches that man is his own god.

Categories three and four tend to overlap quite a bit.

Most toy characters lead a very ‘un-real’ life, as glamourized in cartoons. They do super-human feats, and possess ‘mystical’ powers. Children can sub-consciously accept these characters as real and believe these images. They can believe that these characters are equal to or more powerful than God.

A mutant is a creature that has undergone changes to make it unlike any other creature in its species. Some such toys are:

Man-E-Faces: a human, robot and monster

Beast Man: a savage half-man, half-beast

Stratos: half-man and half-bird

Mer-Man: half-man and half-reptile

Tri-Klops: a one-eyed monster

In 1985, the National Coalition on Television Violence reported that war toys comprised the leading category of toy sales in the USA. It also reported that a cartoon series promoting the most popular of these toys was also the most violent. [Religious News Service, July 16, 1985] The war toys in question were **The Transformers**, a series of futuristic robot warriors which averaged 83 acts of violence per half hour. A 1986 estimate of acts of violence per half hour in cartoons: 37 in the **He-Man** series, 67 for **Dungeons & Dragons**, and 80 in **G.I. Joe**, according to Phil Phillips in his book *Turmoil in the Toy Box*. **G.I. Joe** has metamorphosed from a 'simple' gun-toting, knife-wielding commando (as if that were not bad enough) into a veritable one-man army outfitted with assault helicopters, armoured missile vehicles, shoulder-fired rocket launchers, laser guns and so on.

Because even the simplest toy weapons are exact copies of the real ones, they are a reminder to children that adults often settle disputes with force and violence. But we have gone much further than that. There are toys and games that project not only human violence (with or without weapons), but also techno-violence and occult violence.

The human violence toys, like **G.I. Joe** are made in the image of men. They are human killing machines. Robotic toys like **Transformers**, **Robotech**, **Voltron**, etc. are the techno-violence toys. Their functions suggest intelligence and the ability to reason. Some of them may have occult characteristics.

Why the progressive increase in violence, sex and the occult in cartoons and toys over the years? One reason is the obvious one - that children get immunised and addicted to what they experience, and end up wanting more of the same, and with variety. The other is that the creators, designers, writers and producers are those who have themselves been gradually exposed in their childhood and youth to increasing levels of the same thing. At different times in the '50s, '60s and '70s, the hippie culture, 'flower power', rebellion against the establishment, the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, the import of Eastern meditations and religions, interest in UFOs, space travel becoming a reality, and the advent of New Age were major factors that influenced young people who were later to become the generations that produced these images.

Most of them are not Christians, are inculcated in hedonistic and humanistic values, and were raised by the so-called 'electronic parent'. Their creations will, but naturally, reflect the corruption of their minds.

While the **Smurfs** are cute toys, their cartoons are not. Every time the Smurfs have a problem, they go to Papa Smurf who casts a spell or recites an incantation to help them out. In one episode, the wizard Gargamel draws a pentagram -

an occult symbol - on the floor, and lights a candle at each of its points. He then dances within it while casting a spell. Next, a spirit leaves a magical book that opens, and it enters Gargamel giving him power to battle the Smurfs. In another episode, Papa Smurf uses cloves of garlic (used to keep vampires at bay) to counter a spell that Gargamel placed on them.

In the **My Little Pony** cartoon, flying dragons with demonic-looking riders come down from 'heaven' to capture four of the ponies. Taken back to the castle at midnight, they are greeted by a horned half-man, half-goat which has prominent cloven hooves (the god Pan, also symbolizing Satan) and a bag strung around its neck. The ponies are commanded to look into the "bag of darkness". When they do, a power rushes out transforming them into giant dragons. Meanwhile the ponies' friends have approached a wizard who "lives among the mushrooms".

The **Care Bears** too are cute and cuddly teddy bears who live in the land of Care-A-Lot. Like with the Smurfs, the problems arise when it comes to the cartoons. Their individual attitudes are indicated by symbols emblazoned on their tummies, and at first glance, they are loving and caring, and they come to earth to help little children to overcome their difficulties. But in one episode there is this boy who becomes obsessed with a magical book from which a demon entity speaks and controls him. He also practices sorcery with a magic cauldron. In another episode, the Care Bears fight using an energy beam that comes from their stomachs.

He-Man is ridden with occult symbolism. Some of the **Shadow Weaver's** (*She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*) spells are very specific and are found in books on witchcraft.

Christian writers also draw our attention to the "increasing amount of sexual innuendos" used in cartoons. Most women are perfectly formed, and wear the skimpiest of clothes. They point out that this leaves the door open for sexual fantasy, and that most women do NOT have the ideal 'figure'. These hyped images lead boys to unreal expectations about girls, and can cause girls to have the same wrong expectations of themselves.

Chuck Jones, the creator of the well-known "Roadrunner and Coyote" cartoon series said that the implication in cartoons is that "if you are ugly then you are evil, and if you are cute or pretty then you are OK." How would special children with disabilities deal with this line of thinking, and how would their peers treat them?

Which brings us to the little girls' all-time favourite, Mattel's **Barbie**, launched in 1959. She just turned sixty.

The original Barbie doll had stiff hair, pale skin, and heavy makeup. Today, the doll is much more mobile, has an accentuated bust line and is African, Eskimo, Hispanic... Barbie fashions have mirrored the changing times. The dolls come with a line of "easy-to- dress... slip on, snap, wrap and tie" fashion clothes, of course each one sold separately. In the first 25 years of Barbie, more than 300 million of the dolls were sold by Mattel. Now, it's a billion.

Barbie dolls are not exactly dolls that encourage the development of parenting instincts in young girls. They focus on the ideals of perfection- perfect body figure, looks, hair, skin, clothes, car, house, and boyfriend. To own a Corvette, a "dream house" and a handsome boyfriend like Barbie's Ken, a girl has to be as beautiful as Barbie. Realizing the potential of this doll, Mattel targeted the even younger by bringing out My First Barbie.

Barbie emphasizes physical perfection unrealistically. While, as argued by the manufacturers, the doll teaches valuable lessons such as good grooming habits and fastening one's seatbelts when seated in a car, children should not be taught to grow up wanting or expecting to be like Barbie, or to be beautiful. Instead, they should be made aware that very beautiful women are few, that most women have average looks, and that all are equally acceptable in the eyes of God who created them. And that it is more important for them to focus on their spiritual lives rather than their physical appearance.

The **Gummie Bears** are five in number. They have lost much of their original magic (occult) powers. But they brew Gummy Berrie juice which gives humans supernatural power. A little boy befriends them, and after drinking the juice, he helps them battle their enemies which are ogres led by an evil ex-duke.

The characters of **My Little Pony** are undoubtedly cute, and very popular with little girls. While some look like ordinary ponies, others are portrayed as unicorns, while still others are winged. These derive from Pegasus in Greek and Roman mythology. Also, the single-horned unicorn is one of the symbols of the New Age Movement (NAM).

The wizard gives the ponies a piece of the rainbow. They use the help of a little girl who shouts at the hooved figure, "The power of the rainbow will defeat you." The rainbow is another symbol of the NAM.

The rainbow is the centre-piece of another cartoon, **Rainbow Brite**, a cute little girl who lives in Rainbow Land at the end of the rainbow and glides through the air on her magical flying steed. Her friends are the Color Kids and Sprites, little spirits who mine and produce Star Sprinkles. Rainbow Brite fights horrifying monsters to keep the world colourful and happy. Although the theme is good, the intensity of violence is too much for the five-year olds at whom the cartoon is targeted.

In the Magic Stealer **He-Man** comic, the arch-villain Skeletor uses the energy power of the pyramid, which is a common psychic tool in New Age alternative medicine. Levitation, astral projection and other psychic phenomena of the series are as much New Age as they are occult. The two mantras of this series are the affirmations (read chapter 42) “By the power of Grayskull, I have the power!” and “By the power of Grayskull, I am She-Ra!”

You’re going to find it difficult to believe that there are -- or were -- available children’s games like these:

In 1986, Topps Gum Co. released a new line of trading cards in their packs of chewing gum - the **Garbage Pail Kids**, a satire of the Cabbage Patch Kids. Though grotesque, they were instantly popular. And in many schools they were instantly banned and the cards confiscated. The cards depict babies being decapitated by a guillotine, babies smoking cigarettes, a baby whose arms and legs have been cut off and are scattered on the floor. In the card titled Ray Decay, Ray -- who has only two teeth, both of which are rotten -- is shown gorging himself on junk food. The Dead Ted card has the picture of a boy’s badly decomposing body rising from a grave.

The three-colour, 11-inch styrofoam Voodoo Reagan dolls were sold with stickpins and an incantation to put a hex on the President, Ronald Reagan. The name of God is included in the curse, the last two lines of which are an actual voodoo hex.

“**Monster High Dolls** is a line of dolls introduced by Mattel several years ago that is aimed at girls ages 6+ that feature a variety of ghoulish characters such as Frankie Stein and Draculaura. These characters consider themselves to be “scary-cool students” at a school which boasts as its motto “Be Yourself. Be Unique. Be a Monster.” Not only are these dolls teaching children that the occult is cool, they’re also very scantily dressed and come with questionable biographies such as Clawdeen Wolf, a teen werewolf doll who claims to spend her time “waxing, plucking and shaving”.

(Other characters are Draculaura, Frankie Stein who says she was “brought to unlife as a teen”, and Headless Headmistress Bloodgood who is featured holding her head in her arms.)”

(*What’s wrong with Monster High Dolls?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=40225>)

“The **Legend of Chima** Lego toys and cartoon series is very much based on the existence of chi – which is an alleged life-force energy that is part of the eastern world view and pantheistic belief systems. The Lego story presents it as a kind of condensation of nature’s raw energy which flows through the waters of Mount Cavora and is the source of the land’s life. It is carried by the Cavora

River to the Sacred Pool of Chi. My great concern is that children may not be able to distinguish between the fictitious chi in this toy and the “chi” which is prevalent in so many New Age healing modalities. These practices range from Acupuncture and Reiki to Therapeutic Touch that purportedly manipulate chi in one way or another.”

(*Understanding the Legend of Chima*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=26887>)

Apart from having realized their true nature if in case you hadn't earlier, you must surely have been struck by the very names selected for many of these games (read chapter 75) and toys by the manufacturers and promoters. The more macabre and outlandish the characters appearances and names, the greater the toys' popularity, it seems.

And it's not just the way they look, it's also what they say, do, teach and convey. It is part of their marketing strategy, playing upon the already instilled desires of a new generation of kids for the ghoulish, the ghastly and the grotesque.

A couple of generations ago, these 'toys' were, if any of them had been around, what parents could terrify their children with as the perennial “boogie man”. Today, there certainly IS no boogie man. And few parents who are discerning enough to realize that the boogie man has long since gotten into their children's playrooms, and made himself at home.

Why the popularity of toys that promote aggression and super-human powers? Again one reason is the same as the first one earlier mentioned. The other is that modern society rewards talent over character. A humanistic society does not look at whether the character's qualities are “Christian” or not. Achievement at any cost, even at the expense of others, brings accolades. That is true even in the Church. If someone in the choir is an exceptional singer, people focus on the person's voice, probably making him or her the soloist, rather than the test of the person's spiritual witness. Promoters will continue the trend as long as their work receives the rewards from us by way of our patronage. If people refused to buy these toys or watch the programmes on TV, they would not receive endorsements or sponsors, there would not be additions to the series, and the creators and marketers would be out of business.

We only have ourselves to blame. I have always maintained that Michael Jackson would not be Michael Jackson the icon, if millions of Christians had boycotted his music. By our patronage, we maintain the lifestyle of these so-called role models who are a bad spiritual influence on our children. The same applies to the cartoons and toys, the comics and the games.

Don't buy them. If you've already got them in your home, get rid of them. Now!

“Benedict XVI gave his public support to the **Change the Game** project, an initiative that asks children to put **toy weapons** aside. “I am pleased with this initiative and I would like to extend the appeal: Let’s protect children from the spread of violence!” the Pope said on Sunday when greeting crowds gathered to pray the Angelus.

The project, which began in Lecce, Italy, sponsors campaigns to “disarm” children of their violent play things. Since it began, Change the Game has collected some 4,500 toy weapons. With the help of the civil authorities of Lecce, Vito Patti, known as the Magician Fracasso, organized a month-long “disarmament” campaign that ended Jan. 6.

When Benedict XVI received Fracasso in a private audience, the magician gave the Holy Father 12 toy weapons collected during the campaign. The Change the Game project is now being promoted in other European cities.”

(*Pope Urges Youth to “Change the Game”*, 22 January 2007, <https://zenit.org/articles/pope-urges-youth-to-change-the-game/>)

“Pope Benedict has slammed violent or sexually explicit **video games** and films targeting young children, a day after he offered support to an Italian project which aims to take toy guns out of children’s hands. Associated Press reports that Pope Benedict condemned violent or sexually explicit video games and animated films for young people as a repulsive perversion, saying he was concerned that media could have more influence on children than their family or teachers do. The Pope said children should be introduced to classic literature, fine arts and “uplifting music” .”

(*Benedict targets sex, violence - and toy guns*, 25 January 2007 <http://www.cathnews.com/news/701/139.php>)

“The president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications told media professionals that entertainment -- especially that aimed at children -- should be neither self-serving nor exploitative. Archbishop John Foley made this comment Saturday at the opening of the 5th World Summit on Media for Children, being held in Johannesburg through Wednesday. He invited the participants in the summit to carefully reflect on the formation of children by the media and the formation of children to respond appropriately to the media... “Any trend to produce programs and products -- including **animated films and video games** -- which in the name of entertainment exalt violence and portray antisocial behavior or the trivialization of human sexuality is a perversion, all the more repulsive when these programs are directed at children and adolescents,” said the archbishop. He continued: “How could one explain this ‘entertainment’ to the countless young people who actually suffer violence, exploitation and abuse?” Archbishop Foley expressed his hope

that young people might be formed by and through media to help build a just society in peace, mutual respect and happiness.”

(*Keep Media Clean for the Kids, Says Prelate - Urges Youth to Choose What Is Good and Beautiful*, 25 March 2007 <http://www.zenit.org/article-19239?l=english>)

The “**Charlie Charlie**” game is a modern incarnation of a Spanish paper-and-pencil game called *Juego de la Lapicera* (game of the pens). The game is played by teenagers using school supplies to produce answers to questions they ask. Teenage girls have played *Juego de la Lapicera* for generations in Spain and Hispanic America, asking which boys in their class fancy them. Originally described on the internet in 2008, the game was popularized in the English-speaking world in 2015.

“Known as the **Pencil Game** or the **Charlie Charlie Challenge**, teens are instructed to arrange pencils in a certain configuration in order to communicate with a dead child known as “Charlie”. Said to have its origins in Mexico, some versions of the game require two pencils to be laid on a piece of paper in the shape of a cross with the words “yes” and “no” written on the paper. The two players then repeat the phrase, “Charlie, Charlie can we play?” in order to summon the demon. If Charlie decides to answer, he moves the pencils to indicate whether he’s in the mood for play or not. If he does want to “play”, participants can then ask questions which he answers by moving the pencils to either “yes” or “no”, similar to how a **Ouija board** works.

To end the game, both players must chant, “Charlie, Charlie, can we stop?” After the pencils move, both players must drop their pencils on the floor which they believe breaks contact with the spirit. Teens who play the game report a variety of paranormal activities associated with it, such as hearing voices, sinister laughter, objects moving around, etc.

How else can you explain the fact that players actually believe they can cut contact with these spirits just by dropping a few pencils on the floor – something any medium worth their salt would scoff at. There is no “okay, you can leave now” for these demons. Once you open the door, they’re in, and they stay until the person who extended the invitation specifically renounces them. Simply chanting “Charlie, Charlie can we stop?” does nothing more than make the players feel like they’ve ended the conversation – which they have, but only the kind that requires the use of pencils. Demons have a vast retinue of communication skills, such as invading one’s thoughts and dreams, causing disturbances between friends and family members, accidents, insomnia, depression, suicidal tendencies, etc. and will simply resort to one of these other means to continue the “conversation” with their newfound friends. And what

if Charlie says “no”, he doesn’t want to stop playing, which he has apparently been known to do. What then?”

(Teens play “Pencil Game” to Summon Demons, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=40322>)

“Spanish exorcist Jose Antonio Fortea is warning children to take a pass on **The Pencil Game**, aka the **Charlie Charlie Challenge**... the Catholic News Agency is reporting <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/is-charlie-charlie-a-harmless-game-exorcist-says-absolutely-not-49686/> on an interview with Fortea... The exorcist says the game is very dangerous and warns that “some spirits who are at the root of that practice will harass some of those who play the game.” While not risking outright possession, participants in this game can expect that the spirits they invoke “will stay around for a while” in spite of the rules which say the spirit has to leave when the game is done. Participants also risk that playing the game “will result in other spirits beginning to enter into even more frequent communication,” Father Fortea said. “And so then the person really can suffer much worse consequences from the demons” who are pretending to be “Charlie”.

(Exorcist warns youth away from Pencil Game, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=40399>)

“Fortune-telling has real staying power. It’s been attracting crowds since prehistoric time. And in the recorded history of Greece for the period spanning 700-800 B.C., the ancients believed the home of the oracle of Delphi was the center of the universe. In modern times, divining the future can be cheap and convenient.

Some people are not aware that fortune telling and other forms of divination are linked to the occult. Two of the most popular forms of modern fortune-telling: **ouija boards** and **Tarot cards**, are currently being sold as children’s games.

The **ouija board** set consists of an alphabet board and heart-shaped pointer, known as a planchette, which are used for divination through spirit contact.

Although there are many different theories about the origin of **tarot cards** (pronounced “tar-o”), there is some evidence that they originated in Italy in the 14th century, with the earliest recorded mention of their use dating to 1391, according to Fr. William Saunders, dean of Notre Dame Graduate School, Christendom College, who wrote an article titled, “The History of Tarot Cards”. Based in the occult, tarot cards are used predominantly for cartomancy, divination or fortune telling.”

(Ouija Boards and Tarot Cards, Susan Brinkmann,

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=8760>)

“Angel boards are just as dangerous as **Ouija boards**, perhaps more so because they have the same purpose as a Ouija board – contacting “spirits” – only they pretend to be summoning guardian angels to make it seem less dangerous. They are used to contact angels (read chapter 75) and spirit guides.

The **Guiding Light Angel Board** is a message board that will help connect you with your angels on a much higher level.

“When a person evokes spirits of the dead, he or she is never in control because they are dealing with preternatural forces. These are powerful beings who are possessed of super-human intelligence, strength and cunning. Only the most naïve would think that they can control summoned spirits merely by “politely” asking them to come or go. Just because the board is designed to evoke angels doesn’t mean they’re good angels! Remember, God specifically condemns the practice of seeking oracles from the dead (See Deuteronomy 18:10; Leviticus 19:31, 20:6 and 20:27; Isaiah 8:19). He would never contradict Himself by allowing a good angel – who exists solely to do His will – to consort with a medium. Needless to say, angel boards should be strictly avoided.”

(Angel Boards are Ouija Boards in Disguise, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=45367>)

More information at my web site:

NEW AGE TOYS

TELETUBBIES

THE CHARLIE CHARLIE CHALLENGE

**TOYS GAMES ENTERTAINMENT YOU WANT YOUR KIDS TO AVOID-
SUSAN BRINKMANN**

**YOUR CHILDRENS TOYS GAMES MUSIC AND INTERNET
ENTERTAINMENT**

Chapter 79

New Age Peace (and harmony and justice and unity)

What is the New Age spirit of “peace”? Let us see... starting with what the Vatican Document JCBWL has to say:

“(The New Age of) Aquarius is set to be an era of **harmony, justice, peace, unity** etc.” (JCBWL #7.2)

“The musical *Hair* ... set forth the main themes of *New Age* in the emblematic song “Aquarius”. It is worth recalling the lyrics of this song, which quickly imprinted themselves on to the minds of a whole generation in North America and Western Europe: “*When the Moon is in the Seventh House, and Jupiter aligns with Mars, then **Peace** will guide the Planets, and Love will steer the Stars. This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius... **Harmony** and understanding, sympathy and trust abounding; no more falsehoods or derision – golden living, dreams of visions, mystic crystal revelation, and the mind’s true liberation. Aquarius...*” (JCBWL Notes 20)

The term “harmony” with New Age connotations is used no less than 18 times in the Document, justice – just the once, (top), “unity at least 15 times (out of 26) in the context of New Age, and “peace” 5 times. We’ll examine “peace” here.

New Age

One of the goals of the Catholic Ashrams movement is inner peace. The atmosphere is always one of silence except during meals (low conversation) and during satsangs (discourses).

The name of *Shantivanam* ashram (read chapter 48) that attracts seekers from all over means “Forest of **Peace**”.

The Ashrams’ chant is not the Hebrew (biblical) *Shalom* but “*Om Shanti*” (Sanskrit “*shanti*” means “**peace**”).

“Peace” is the pursuit of much of New Age meditation or chanting, which again is what one encounters in an ashram.

“Although virtually unknown a few years ago, this movement (New Age) is gaining in popularity on an international level. On the surface it appears to be a ‘**peace**’ movement, but in my estimation, it definitely belongs to the occult. This is because it presents some basic characteristics that are identified with the occult, even though Satan is not mentioned. For example, the ‘god’ of the New Age is not the God of Christianity and Judaism ... The New Age Movement is sometimes called a **peace** movement. Somehow, it is said, that when we become a part of this ‘Harmonic Convergence’ we can bring to bear a mighty power that is beyond ourselves for achieving world peace. But when we talk

about any power that is not from God, and beyond ourselves we are really talking about the occult.”

(*Spiritual Warfare: The Occult has Demonic Influence*, Bishop Donald W Montrose DD of Stockton, USA, 1996, <https://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/occult.htm>)

“Many ... abuse prayer techniques such as centering. They also use relaxation techniques, or mind control techniques in order to achieve ‘**peace**’ or quiet in mind and body.”

(*A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, 1994,

<https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

Apart from the pursuit of individual peace in the New Age, there are numerous initiatives for “World Peace”.

There is the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM)’s (read chapter 25) **Way of Peace** initiative. Each year they run the John Main Seminar and **The Way of Peace** initiative with the Dalai Lama.

Writes David Cloud: “This means that they are using contemplative practices and yoga as the glue for interfaith unity to help create **world peace**.”

(https://www.wayoflife.org/database/contemplative_practices_are_a_bridge.html)

But the Dharma Bharathi Ashram (hereinafter “DB”) pursues both, individual as well a world peace. This ashram is also part of the Catholic Ashrams movement. Its founder-acharya or guru is Swami Sachidananda Bharathi (formerly N.V. John) who was a disciple of Fr. Bede Griffiths OSB (read chapter 48). DB is also as New Age as it gets. Read **DHARMA BHARATHI-NEW AGE IN CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS** at my web site. DB targets mainly Catholic educational institutions with multiple New Age programmes. For instance I have on record (a lot of material was sent to me by the Swami) the **DB National Seminar on Peace and Value Education for Schools** in Hyderabad, December 2001.

The initial commitment for DB’s ‘**Disciples of Christ for Peace**’ (hereinafter **DCP**) was made, significantly on May 13, 1994, the first death anniversary of New Ager Fr. Bede Griffiths, at Shantivanam.

“The world at the dawn of the third millennium urgently needs **peace**... We are discovering the fact that **lasting peace and unity on earth** needs a religious motivation.”

(From the presentation made by the Swami at the World Peace Summit, United Nations, 28-31 August 2000. Source: *The New Leader*, November 1-15, 2000)

“There cannot be **peace** in the world unless there is unity among religions in the world.” (DB literature)

DB has a “vision of an awakened Mother India who will be an instrument of God for a **civilisation of love, unity and peace on earth.**” (DB literature)

What is the source of DB’s slogan? It was Pope John Paul II. At an interreligious ceremony in Rome in October 1999, the Pope “invited all people of goodwill to counter a crisis of civilization... by a new **civilization of love founded on the universal values of peace...**”

But the rest of the Pope’s message is deliberately ignored by the Swami! The Pope continued: “Jesus is the one who... sacrifices Himself for the salvation of others... Is not Jesus thus a model and a permanent message for humanity?” (Cardinal Arinze, President, Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, *The Examiner*, 13 May 2000).

Nowhere did the Pope make a call for a “unity among religions” that DB (the Swami, cited above) aims to bring about. Instead he has always called for a missionary proclamation of the person of Jesus who alone, when accepted, can and will bring about the ‘civilization of love and peace’ and unity of the human race that we yearn for.

The Swami sent me a copy of the Constitution (and Explanations and Orientations) of the DCP, a “Catholic Society” founded by him along with Archbishop S. Arulappa of Hyderabad on 9 November 1998.

The 3 Patrons of DCP are Archbishops. 3 of the 4 Advisors are Bishops. We will very briefly (as I have tons of adverse/New Agey facts on them) examine two **DB** associates: (Sr.) Vandana Mataji who is the fourth *Advisor*, and Rev. Dr. M. Amaladoss SJ, Professor of Theology, Vidya Jyothi Seminary, New Delhi who is the Swami’s *Theological Consultant*. Here we go:

“We are at the close of the era of ‘religions’ ... Now we stand at the threshold of an era of ‘spirituality’.”

“Is not our God Mother Earth in whom alone we can find or deepen our own spirit roots?”

“To enable people to become God by entering into silence, is this not the *raison d’etre* of an ashram?”

“Finding ‘the Self in all things and all things in the Self’ (Isa Upanishad 6) is our goal in life in an Ashram.”

“Swami Vivekananda says ‘We are the greatest god. Christ and Buddha are but waves of the boundless ocean that I am.’ ... Most Christians cannot easily think of man becoming god...”

“There is an interesting discussion going on among the Catholic ashrams as to whether in a Christian ashram, Meditation or the Eucharist should be at the centre of our lives. Personally I tend to agree with Fr. Bede Griffiths that the distinctive call of a Christian ashram is to witness to the transcendent mystery believed in by people of all faiths... in the cave of the heart as the Upanishads call it, and this is reached by meditation... The presence of Christ in the Eucharist is secondary... However precious this may be, it is still a secondary mode of the presence.”

“Many aspire when they go to ashrams to sit for long hours in meditation and to be taught by the guru how to raise the kundalini (the serpent power) or the energy within.” -Vandana Mataji.

In a critique of the October 1989 Vatican Document “*Orationis Formas*” which “warns all Catholic Bishops that Eastern forms of prayer and meditation such as Yoga, Zen and T. M. are ‘not free from dangers and errors’,” she accuses the Church of the “fear of syncretism”:

“We need to recognize... that no one religion, no, not even Christianity, can claim to have the whole truth... Personally, I do not think that syncretism is a real danger, nor what Cardinal Ratzinger truly fears.”

“Living together outside of marriage is not always promiscuity. It is often a sincere love-bond requiring unselfish adjustment to the other. When it is such, who can dare cast the first stone against them and call it a sin?”

All 9 above statements are those of the nun Vandana Mataji. For their sources, the reader will have to visit the **DB** report at my web site, where there’s plenty more.

This then is one of the **Disciples for Peace** founder’s advisors!

Naked New Age in DB literature (cited from material sent to me by the Swami on 25 July 2003):

‘Shanti Yagna’, a form of *meditation* promoted by Dharma Bharathi...has different stages. Stage one: *Harmony* and *synergy* stage... Stage three: *Wholeness* and *communion* stage.

There is need for man to capture a new Cosmo-vision ... (for) human beings to effect a *paradigm shift* in their lifestyle from anthropocentric world to *ecocentric universe*.

The *peace culture paradigm* ... is based on an *integral understanding of reality* in which God and creation are seen as interpenetrating realities, distinct yet inseparable. One is All, All is One is the basic understanding of reality within this *paradigm*.

Once again an exposure to the West has become necessary for India's further growth. This time it has to be 'New Science'. *New Science* proves the *interdependent organic nature of planet Earth* and of the whole creation. We have to live in *harmony... This earth-family consciousness...*

Discoveries of New Science are leading us today to an *integral vision of reality*. We have come to realize that creation is an *interdependent organic whole... Everything and everyone is... interdependent*. Scientific discoveries and religious insights need to be seen as complementary realities. *The rational and the intuitive, the masculine and the feminine, the secular and the sacred are to be seen as integral to one another.*

Dharma is the underlying principle of *unity behind all diversities in creation*. This *unitive dharmic worldview* of India is being supported today by the discoveries of *New Science*.

Discoveries of *New Science* starting with the Theory of Relativity and Quantum Physics are today proving beyond doubt the *interdependent organic nature of creation... A holistic vision of reality* is slowly replacing the old mechanical and materialistic model. This emerging *integral vision of reality* demands profound and far-reaching changes in our attitudes and outlooks as can be seen from the works of the *proponents of New Science* like *Werner Heisenberg, David Bohm, Fritjof Capra, Paul Davies, Ken Wilber, Rupert Sheldrake* and *E. F. Schumacher* to name a few. An interesting aspect of the emerging *integral vision of reality* is that it is more or less fully in *harmony* with the *unity of all life* experienced by the mystics of world religions. The sages and rishis of India proclaimed (it) in enlightened words like '*Ekam Sat, Vipra Bahudha Vadanti*' (*Truth is one, wise men call it by different names*)... Mystics of the 20th century like *Sri Aurobindo, Teilhard de Chardin* and *Bede Griffiths* have served as prophets of this emerging new *integral vision of reality*. Thus we see... *a confluence of science and religion taking place.*

A well-balanced *synthesis of science and spirituality...* should be evolved... In other words, the curriculum (for Dharma Bharathi education in schools) should be rooted in a *new humanism*.

Indian insights into the truths of spirit gave birth to a number of progressive movements (like) *Theosophical Society, Aurobindo Society...*

The *interdependent organic nature of creation and the interrelatedness of our existence* are well-embodied in and represented by the concept of Dharma... which according to *Annie Besant* is 'India's word to the world'. (A quote of hers is included.)

The Swami speaks and writes a lot about peace. One more for the road:

“Peace in the environment: ... Peace Education, therefore, should aim at helping students to end *the dichotomy between humanity and nature*, and live at **peace with nature by practicing the *eco-friendly values...*”**

In fact the full name of his organization is Dharma Bharathi National Institute of **Peace** and Value Education.

I have emphasised most of the New Age-speak, some of it innocuous, some subtle, in italics. Does the reader now understand the connection between New Age, counterfeit “New Age **peace**”, and the Catholic Ashrams movement?

“The rush to unite the religions of the world is driven by the belief that such unity will solve the problems of the world. Through the development of our *human potential* [Swami Sachidananda Bharathi’s ‘*a new humanism*’ (cited above)], we will usher in a New Era of **Peace** and Prosperity.” (DB literature)

Protestants like to quote Daniel 8:25 “By **peace** he shall destroy many” (KJV) and the Bible prediction that the Antichrist will come to power as a peacemaker. “And he will destroy many when they are **at ease**” (New American Standard Bible).

“Peace will be his platform; **peace** will be his bait.” (*Christ among Other gods*, Erwin B. Lutzer, 1994, page 171)

“Both **peace** and ecological issues play an ever-increasing part in international politics. **Peace** is an understandable desire of natural man; yet that **peace** is **not the peace** which the world can give.

Jesus said: Think not that I am come to send **peace** on earth; I come not to send **peace** but a sword (Matthew 10:34).

Yet we can have “the peace of God that surpasses all understanding” (Philippians 4:7).

(*Understanding the New Age*, Roy Livesey, 1986, page 28)

“A nation of firm purpose You keep in **peace**, in peace, for its trust in You” (Isaiah 26:3, New American Bible).

“When the Lord is pleased with a man’s ways, He makes even his enemies be at **peace** with him” (Proverbs 16:7 NAB).

“Those who love your law have great **peace**, and for them there is no stumbling block” (Psalm 119:165 NAB).

Dharma Bharathi offers a futile pursuit of worldly peace, a peace without a trust in the God of the Bible and His Law a peace that does not include the person and message of the Giver of genuine and everlasting peace, Jesus Christ.

Where does that New Age peace get them? Nowhere, by their operational record. The last time that I checked (in 2003 and again in 2009) there were three, that’s right, THREE, Dharma Bharathis. The one had become three.

In the Introduction to 'Disciples of Christ for Peace' we read that some persons "could not really understand Swami Sachidananda's 'call' (and) many of them, including his wife parted ways with him."

These 'some persons' include one Fr. Nn and a few others who broke away in July 1998 from the original DB founded by Swami Sachidananda Bharathi in Indore, having incorporated a new DB based at Indore under the slightly modified name of **Dharma Bharathi National Institute of Value Education for Peace** (while the Swami moved to Hyderabad). The breakaway Indore DB is now re-named the **Universal Solidarity Movement!!**

The split was acrimonious and scandalous. Hyderabad sought "to initiate legal action ... against... Fr. Nn - who had appropriated "all files, properties, photo albums, account books" -- for betrayal of trust and fraud." The advisor to the Hyderabad set-up, Fr. Mm, who was negotiating an amicable settlement between Fr. Nn and the Swami, and who, too, corresponded with me, later instituted his own DB at Lucknow in a third Indian state! A three-way split among three Catholics working for inner and world peace, including two who were priests!!! The July 10, 2002, letter head of Fr. Mm's Lucknow DB uses a different spelling, Bharati without the letter "h".

So much for New Age peace! And harmony! ... Among the DB promoters themselves.

For the record, the three DBS are not affiliated with the Church as far as I know. Before he launched his own variation, Fr. Mm had written to me, "Both Dharma Bharathis (Indore and Hyderabad) are doing good work and reach out to many parts of India through several hundred schools... Neither has and neither is interested in (Church) affiliation..."

Moving on, a whole lot of religious and priests are engaged in this justice and peace thing; much of the latter is New Age.

My research found that most of them were liberals and dissenters (how can one not get poisoned by what one dishes out?) One example to illustrate: the Adrian Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Michigan are collaborators with many well-known dissenting groups in the Church. Perhaps the most notorious is NETWORK, who they correctly describe on their **Peace** and **Justice** Work site as a "progressive voice within the Catholic community". This is the same organization that sent a letter to members of Congress endorsing health care reform in defiance of the bishop's stance against this legislation. Adrian Dominican Sister Josephine Gaugier OP, prioress of the Holy Rosary Mission Chapter, was a signatory on this letter.

They are also in collaboration with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) which is currently under investigation by the Vatican for its teachings concerning homosexuality, women's ordination, and salvation. (<https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?tag=spring-bank-retreat-center>)

Let me give you more examples to demonstrate how **feminist "peace"** and New Age go hand in hand:

"Making way for the divine feminine was a path-breaking summit held recently in India under the auspices of the global **peace initiative** of women, which highlighted the pivotal role of women in creating a **peaceful**, harmonious and sustainable world."

(*Peace - Wise Women on the Rise* by Suma Varughese, Editor in Chief, New Age journal Life Positive, May 2008, http://www.lifepositive.com/Mind/Peace/Wise_Women_on_the_Rise52008.asp)

Also, go to their web page and check out the link on "**Peace**" <http://www.lifepositive.com/mind/ethics-and-values/peace/peace.asp> to get *their* (New Age) understanding of peace.

InterPlay India (read chapter 64), according to their literature, aims "as **Peace** collaborators, to co-create a Universe InterPlaying for **Peace**." InterPlay "is a **peace** practice that is the perfect antidote to stress and violence." "It reconnects us with the wisdom of our bodies." "It puts us in touch with Mother Earth and the entire cosmic community (read chapter 26)." "As part of a global **peace** movement the co-founders of InterPlay from USA and Australia and their team come every year for the InterPlay India **Peace** Exchange (IPE) program."

I have successfully established here the association between New Age Peace, Eco-Feminism and Radical Feminism (read chapter 59).

"**Peace Circles** are very problematic. Not only are they derived from indigenous pagan practices, but they're being used for everything from facilitating respectful communication to discovering a "place of mystery from which synchronicity, magic and healing arise."

"According to the New England Literary Resource Center (<http://www.nelrc.org/practice/peacecircles.html>), "**Peace circles** draw directly from the tradition of the talking circle, common even today among indigenous people of North America ... The concept of a peace circle draws on the Native or First People's concept of the medicine wheel. The medicine wheel reflects natural phenomena that occur in fours; for example, seasons, phases of the moon, and stages of life. The peace circle aims to promote a balanced approach to individual and community health with an equal emphasis on mental, physical, emotional and spiritual growth and well-being. The assumption is that if any one of the four components is neglected or violated

the individual will be out of balance, and not “in a good way” with herself or her family and community.”

“They go on to say that these circles are being used in the criminal justice system, education, human service organizations “and others interested in alternative processes for conflict resolution, decision making, community building, healing and support ... The goal is to promote healing, harmony and a sense of connectedness.”

The way the circle works is described by Mark Umbreit of the University of Minnesota’s Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking. A group sits in a circle and a facilitator manages the conversation by the passing of a “talking piece” – an object that has special meaning to the circle facilitator, who is referred to as the “circle keeper”. After opening comments about the purpose of the circle, the keeper says a few things about the talking piece, than passes it to the person to his or her left. Only the person with the talking piece can speak. If others jump in with comments, they are reminded of the rules. No one has to speak if they don’t want to because this would cause “pressure” in the circle. If a person doesn’t want to speak, they simply pass the talking piece to the next person.

Umbreit credits feminist author Christina Baldwin (*Calling the Circle, The First and Future Culture*) as being one of the people responsible for introducing the circle into modern use.

“However, I found her name linked with a very disturbing set of guidelines for the circle’s use which incorporates New Age concepts as well as the occult. (<http://www.ca4women.org/circles.html>) “The center is the heart of the circle. This is where the group mind and the group spirit reside. Set a table for them here – offer light, flowers, incense or whatever beautiful thing you might think of. You may add to this altar something that represents you – an item you bring specifically for this purpose or something of the moment – a piece of jewelry, scarf, photo from your wallet, etc.” The Guidelines go on to describe the center as representing the hearth or the fire pit around which humankind has gathered in a circle for hundreds of thousands of years. A candle placed in the middle represents life-giving fire, warmth, safety, home. “The center acts as a filter for what is spoken. We do not address a specific person when we speak from our hearts. We speak to the center, to the group mind and spirit. The center receives our words and allows them to pass through blessed and enhanced by Spirit. The center is the open vessel waiting to receive. It is a dancing floor, a threshing floor, a stage, a portal, all open and waiting for whatever might manifest. This is the place of mystery from which synchronicity, magic and healing arise.”

“The “center” in this description is clearly given magical powers that are “blessed and enhanced” by another power named only as Spirit. What is this power and where does it come from? And why are we building altars to a “group spirit”?

Needless to say, there are many potential problems with the unsupervised use of circles in schools. While no one can argue with the promotion of more effective communication, facilitators can easily infuse this group session with pagan practices and rituals that are not compatible with Christianity. If the circle facilitators are using candles or other objects to build altars of worship to “group spirits” or any “Spirit” or power other than God, this is a violation of the First Commandment.

Because of the religious overtures in the use of peace circles, you have every right to insist that the school respect the “separation of church and state” and stop introducing children to pagan practices under the guise of learning how to communicate better.”

(*Peace Circles*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=237>)

“*New Age* has been a source of ideas for various religious and para-religious sects... It is a syncretistic structure incorporating many diverse elements, allowing people to share interests or connections to very different degrees and on varying levels of commitment. Many trends, practices and attitudes which are in some way part of *New Age* are, indeed, part of a broad and readily identifiable reaction to mainstream culture, so the word “movement” is not entirely out of place. It can be applied to *New Age* in the same sense as it is to other broad social movements, like the Civil Rights movement or the **Peace Movement**; like them, it includes a bewildering array of people linked to the movement’s main aims, but very diverse in the way they are involved and in their understanding of particular issues.” (JCBWL #2)

“If mantras or what is called mindfulness leads to a certain inner stillness, **peace**, it may well contribute to a certain self-generated psychological equilibrium, but it must never be confused with the true mystical contemplation of God.”

(David Torkington, <http://www.davidtorkington.com/christian-mysticism-and-its-counterfeit/>)

“Marianne Williamson believes *A Course in Miracles* (read Section C) can, and does generate real and lasting **peace**. She will undoubtedly be very involved in our Government’s “U.S. Department of Peace” if she can help to make it a reality. She is the founder of *The Peace Alliance*, a grassroots campaign group working to install in our Government, this “Department of Peace”, as a complement to our Department of Defense. This group’s numbers are growing daily, nationwide, thanks to Oprah’s enthusiastic promotion of Marianne Williamson. Marianne has said that the head of the Department of Peace will

be VERY influential in *our Government's policy making*, "having the ear of the President" as it dispenses advice on the art and science of "Peace keeping". Knowing that Marianne Williamson is a world renowned devotee of *A Course in Miracles* and the channeled spirit who authored it, and knowing full well what the Course teaches, I find myself thinking of a certain passage in Scripture: "And Jesus wept, for they knew not the ways of peace". Luke 19:41 (paraphrase)" (Sharon Lee Giganti, <http://jamesparkinsoncult.blogspot.com/2011/11/warning-about-course-in-miracles.html>)

"A yearning for spirituality and a good dose of distress can even lead Catholics to the New Age, says a member of the Pontifical Academy of Theology.

Q: **Peace** and happiness are the feelings New Age proposes.

Father Scarafoni: It's true, but they are aspirations whose way of fulfillment goes against the Catholic Church.

The conclusions shared by these and other ways of searching for **peace** and happiness are: the need to abolish truths and dogmas that break and divide the vision of reality, and refuge in intuition and in the irrational mysterious; the need to suppress churches or forms of stable organization of religions, especially the hierarchy of the Catholic Church; the search for a new mysticism accessible to all."

(*Responding to the Lure of New Age – Interview with Father Paolo Scarafoni of the Academy of Theology*, 27 February 2004 worldwide video conference on "The Church, New Age and Sects," <https://zenit.org/articles/responding-to-the-lure-of-new-age/>)

Christian practices far surpass human-based methods like meditations and actually draw us into the presence of God, where we can find authentic peace and healing. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, offers us a peace that the world cannot give:

"**Peace** I leave with you; my **peace** I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you." -John 14:27 NAB

"Then the **peace** of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." -St. Paul in Philippians 4:7 NAB

"May the God of **peace** himself make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." -St. Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 NAB

"*Pacem in Terris*, (**Peace** on Earth) Encyclical of Pope John XXIII on Establishing Universal **Peace** in Truth, Justice, Charity, and Liberty", April 11, 1963

http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html

Chapter 80

Norman Vincent Peale and the Power of Positive Thinking. The Prosperity Gospel.

Origins and development

Most Catholic bookstores have been found to stock **Norman Vincent Peale's** self-help (read chapter 95) book *The Power of Positive Thinking*, originally published in 1952. Dr. Peale (1894-1993) was a Reformed Church pastor for over five decades. The book was on the *New York Times'* best-sellers list for 186 weeks, 48 of which were spent in the No. 1 non-fiction spot. It sold more than 5 million copies worldwide, and was eventually translated into over 40 languages.

Peale is also the author of *You Can if you think You Can*, *Positive Imaging*, *Positive Thinking Every Day*, *The Positive Power of Jesus Christ*, *Why some Positive Thinkers get Positive Results*, *The Amazing Results of Positive Thinking*, and many more.

This chapter should have, more fittingly, been included in the Psychology section (G) of this book.

"The book makes use of positive case histories and practical instructions to propose the method of **positive thinking**. Peale's work describes how to achieve a permanent and optimistic attitude through unending positive conscious thought, usually through affirmations (read chapter 42) or visualizations (read chapter 97). Peale writes that such techniques will give the reader a higher satisfaction and quality of life. Though negatively reviewed by scholars and health experts, *The Power of Positive Thinking* became popular in public opinion when first published and continues in popularity today.

Peale's work came under criticism from various mental health experts, theologians, and academics. One general criticism against Peale's book was the lack of verified sources. *The Power of Positive Thinking* includes many personal anecdotes that the reader has no way of validating. The book includes stories about "a business executive", "a man, an alcoholic", "a famous trapeze artist", "a friend of [Peale's], a mid-western businessman", and other unnamed individuals which cannot be verified from the information Peale presents with each anecdote.

Other books published by Peale around 1952 include *The Art of Real Happiness*, published in 1950, and *Inspiring Messages for Daily Living*, published in 1955.

"Episcopal theologian John M. Krumm criticized Peale's teachings for their basis in religion, defining his teachings as heretical. Krumm writes that "the

emphasis upon techniques such as the repetition of confident phrases” or “the manipulation of certain mechanical devices” gives “the impression of a thoroughly depersonalized religion. Very little is said about the sovereign mind and purpose of God; much is made of the things men can say to themselves and can do to bring about their ambitions and purposes.” Krumm argues that Peale does not have the backing of religion to support his techniques. Krumm continues with a warning: “the predominant use of impersonal symbols for God is a serious and dangerous invitation to regard man as the center of reality and the Divine Reality as an impersonal power, the use and purpose of which is determined by the man who takes hold of it and employs it as he thinks best.”

Edmund Fuller, book review editor of the *Episcopal Churchnews*, warned against following Peale’s teachings in an article titled “Pitchmen in the Pulpit” from March 1957. Fuller cautions readers not to believe Peale just because he was a minister. He writes that Peale’s books have no connection to Christianity and that they “influence, mislead and often disillusion sick, maladjusted, unhappy or ill-constructed people, obscuring for them the Christian realities. They offer easy comforts, easy solutions to problems and mysteries that sometimes perhaps, have no comforts or solutions at all, in glib, worldly terms. They offer a cheap ‘happiness’ in lieu of the joy Christianity can offer”.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Power_of_Positive_Thinking)

Peale opposed the candidature of John F. Kennedy for President of the USA because Kennedy was a Catholic.

Peale was also a 33° Scottish Rite Freemason!

“Those who make an honest commitment to Christ can often become involved with PMA [**positive mental attitude**] **positive-confession** beliefs. The system by default encourages people to be more materialistic; which is not so surprising from the books and material they promote. The book reading list includes: Charles Capps “The Tongue: A Creative Force,” such authors as Napoleon Hill’s “Think and Grow Rich,” as well as works of PMA theologians **Norman Vincent Peale (Positive Thinking)** and Robert Schuller (Possibility Thinking). Motivational speaker Zig Ziglar and many others are part of this list. Amway as a business does not endorse all these books but they are recommended by many of the Christian distributors. Terms such as “speaking it into existence” and “get what you speak” are used by these authors ... Visualization techniques, (read chapter 97) such as thinking of a particular goal or item (such as a car or new house), or a specific amount of money, are also encouraged. The new down-line are encouraged to paste pictures of their desire on their refrigerator, bathroom mirrors, etc. They are also instructed to paste quotes from the different authors

on the reading list in different places, and repeat these “success” and “positive thinking” quotes just as the author recommends.”

(*Amway or God's Way*, Mike Oppenheimer, <http://www.letusreason.org/current6.htm>)

New Age

“The recipes for personal happiness promoted by popular New Thought authors, by **positive thinkers** such as **Norman Vincent Peale** (and, to some extent, by Morgan S. Peck) appear to be direct precursors of Deepak Chopra and other Next Age masters.”

(*After the New Age: Is there a Next Age?* Massimo Introvigne, Center for Studies on New Religions, http://www.cesnur.org/testi/NextAge_Rothstein.htm)

“In 1987, recognizing his lifelong support of *Freemasonry* (read section J, V) and American values, **Dr. Norman Vincent Peale**, 33°, received the Grand Cross, the highest honor that can be bestowed by the Supreme Council, 33°. In 1992, Dr. Peale’s portrait was received into the Scottish Rite Hall of Honor in the House of the Temple.

Peale endorsed the use of New Age occultic automatic writing:

Speaking of Jane Palzere and Anna Brown, co-authors of *The Jesus Letters*, which professes to be the product of *automatic writing* under the inspiration of Jesus Christ, Peale said: “*What a wonderful gift to all of us from you is your book, The Jesus Letters ... You will bless many by this truly inspired book. ... It little matters if these writings come from Jesus of Nazareth or Jesus of Jane [Palzere] they are all the same consciousness and that consciousness is God. I am a part of God, and Jane and Anna are part of that same God*” (advertisement for *The Jesus Letters and Your Healing Spirit*).

Of this, Peale gave the following frightful testimony: “*I found myself fascinated, deeply moved and having the feeling that he [the ‘Jesus’ of The Jesus Letters] was also speaking to me as I read*” (Ibid.). Peale was deeply moved by the New Age teaching of a demon masquerading as Jesus.

“The following are excerpts from watchman.org’s article on Norman Vincent Peale:

On March 28, 1980, **Dr. Peale** was the featured speaker at an 85th birthday dinner honoring Mormon prophet speaker Spencer W. Kimball. The official Mormon newspaper reported that Brigham Young University bestowed an honorary degree on Dr. Peale (Church News, February 9, 1980, page 11).

Dave Hunt in *The Seduction of Christianity* documents on page 152 said that Peale, the guest on The Phil Donahue Show “denied the necessity to be born again,” (Transcript, October 23, 1984). Also Peale called the virgin birth ‘some

theological idea' of no importance to salvation (Family Weekly, April 15, 1984, Cover Story).

In Guideposts magazine of which he was the founder-publisher, one regularly finds cover stories and articles by people who do not profess Christianity, but relate how they overcame difficulties through some dependence of God. He has featured Ed Asner, New Age leaning Martin Sheen and Dr. George Ritchie as well as Mormon Dale Murphy."

(Norman Vincent Peale-Apostle of self-esteem, Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/norman_vincent_peale.html)

"People often question why we include **Norman Vincent Peale** and his popular book, **The Power of Positive Thinking**, into the same category as other New Age-inspired self-help books that Catholics should avoid.

Here are a few good reasons for our decision to do so.

First of all, *The Power of Positive Thinking* is riddled with New Age-inspired gimmicks such as the use of imagery and repetitious phrases that are a form of auto-hypnosis. If you train yourself to think a certain way, certain things will happen. In other words, if the mind can conceive it, a person can achieve it - which is precisely what the *New Thought movement* of the 19th century was all about.

There's nothing wrong with training yourself to think positively, but when you believe your thoughts can actually change reality, then you've crossed the line and are now making the mind into a god. For example, Peale's book encourages readers to believe in themselves and to have faith in their abilities. There's nothing wrong with this attitude, but he takes it a step too far when he tells people to "formulate and staple indelibly on your mind a mental picture of yourself as succeeding," and then to "hold this picture tenaciously," regardless of how things seem to be going. The reader must be rid of all "fear thoughts" and to "never think of yourself as failing" as a way to stamp this image into the unconscious mind where it supposedly releases "untapped energies."

"It works best when it is combined with a strong religious faith, backed by prayer, and the seemingly illogical technique of giving thanks for benefits before they are received," Peale writes in one of his books. "When the imaging concept is applied steadily and systematically, it solves problems, strengthens personalities, improves health, and greatly enhances the chances for success in any kind of endeavor." Even if it's against God's will? I doubt it.

"A 1955 article published in *The Nation* by R. C. Murphy cited numerous examples of unnamed professionals mentioned in the book who supposedly supported Peale's ideas but whose names were never given. They were simply

referred to as “a famous psychologist” or “a prominent citizen of New York City.”

The mental health community also came out against the book, accusing Peale of luring the unwary into accepting his ideas through a combination of false evidence and self-hypnosis.

“But there are other even more serious problems and inconsistencies with Peale and his work. For instance, he claimed to be a Christian minister yet he denied that the only way to achieve salvation was through Jesus Christ. During an appearance on the Phil Donohue show, he told (link) his host: “It’s not necessary to be born again. You have your way to God, I have mine. I found eternal peace in a Shinto shrine ... I’ve been to Shinto shrines and God is everywhere. ... Christ is one of the ways! God is everywhere.”

He also taught that God was not a being. “Who is God? Some theological being? He is so much greater than theology. God is vitality. God is life. God is energy. As you breathe God in, as you visualize His energy, you will be reenergized!” This is in direct opposition to how God revealed Himself in Scripture when He called Himself “I am who am” to Moses, clearly indicating that he was a Person, not a “thing”.

“He was also a Freemason. “There is, as I see it, nothing like Masonry,” he wrote in the *Introduction to Freemasonry, a Celebration of the Craft*. “It is unique in its fellowship which spreads over much of the earth, in addition to our own country. Moreover, this in-depth fellowship spans the years, even the centuries, running back into antiquity. To me it means a personal relationship with great historical personalities and, taken by and large, also with about the finest body of men whom it is possible to assemble anywhere.”

That he was anti-Catholic was evidenced in public statements he made declaring John F. Kennedy unfit to be president because he was a Catholic. “It is inconceivable that a Roman Catholic president would not be under extreme pressure by the hierarchy of his church to accede to its policies with respect to foreign interests,” and believed that the free speech rights of Americans were at stake should he be elected. *The New York Times* reported in 1960 that the statement brought him resounding condemnation which damaged his reputation and caused his syndicated column to be dropped by dozens of newspapers. At one point he went into hiding and even threatened to resign from his church.”

(*What’s wrong with Norman Vincent Peale?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=47645>)

“**Norman Vincent Peale’s** thinking was doctrinally flawed with many New Age-isms. The other people you mentioned Marianne Williamson, Wayne

Dyer who teach about **positivity** and how to obtain happiness by changing the way you think are also inappropriate. These people are not Christian thinkers. Avoid them. If you cannot burn them, I would advise ripping the books up as best you can so others cannot read them.”

(*Norman Vincent Peale and Positive thinking*, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/fs/viewanswer.asp?QID=2147>)

“**Peale** also was a promoter of the idea of “**positive imaging**” which has become popular in many charismatic circles. Positive Imaging is a New Age doctrine and practice. Man, allegedly, has the power within himself, or the ability to tap into a higher power within himself, to accomplish whatever he desires by learning how to visualize it into reality.”

(*Norman Vincent Peale-Apostle of self-esteem*, Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/norman_vincent_peale.html)

“The **Prosperity Doctrine** (also known as the health and wealth gospel or the prosperity gospel) is nothing but the **Word-Faith/Positive Confession movement**... applied to finances.

“It is the doctrinal belief subscribed to by millions of Christians, centered around the idea that although Christians should keep one eye on Heaven, the good news is that God doesn’t want His people to wait until then to inherit His blessings. God, who loves His followers, doesn’t want those followers to be broke. He wants believers to wear the best clothing, drive the best cars, and have the best of everything in this life, provided they claim these blessing for themselves through positive confessions of faith and the ‘sowing of seeds’ (tithes and offerings). Prosperity theology is most commonly found in Charismatic and Pentecostal churches.”

(*What is the Prosperity Doctrine?* Carol Brooks, http://www.inplainsite.org/html/prosperity_doctrine_1.html)

“The New Age didn’t invent alternatives, but they enthusiastically adopt and promote them because they fit so perfectly with their worldview. As the Pontifical document, *Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life* explains, “In a New Age perspective, illness and suffering come from working against nature; when one is in tune with nature, one can expect a much healthier life, **and even material prosperity**...” (JCBWL #2.2.3)

Unfortunately, many so-called Catholic charismatic ministries propagate this false material prosperity gospel.

Chapter 81

Numerology

Today, one finds people modifying the spellings of their birth names or selecting the alphabet characters of their business venture titles for financial success according to what they say is numerology. Letters of the alphabet are assigned numerical values, and when the individual values of the different letters of a word are totaled, the resulting sum has a numerological significance, or so it is believed, which is either “good” (auspicious) or “bad”. Having the ‘right’ total is superstitiously believed to influence one’s fortunes.

In my ancestral Mangalore, when the harvest or new crop festival Monti Fest is celebrated by Catholics, the number of ears of corn (thene) collected from the field must be an odd number, i.e. 3, 5, 7 or 9. Similarly, the number of food dishes prepared for the festival celebrations should also be an odd number.

In Tamil Nadu where I live, I was horrified to watch a row erupt in the cemetery at a graveside over the number of nails hammered into a coffin at a Catholic funeral. Evidently someone had used one nail more than the numerologically permitted number and apparently jeopardized the occupant’s future “prospects” ... or whatever.

People select fancy numerology-compliant number plates for their vehicles, for “luck”. The terms “luck”, “fortune”, “chance”, and their derivatives, have no place in a Christian’s vocabulary.

Use of numerology is superstitious, and any form of superstition violates the First Commandment and is a mortal sin.

Origins and development

“According to the *Gale Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*, there are several different kinds of **numerology** that are used for divination purposes.

Gemantria, from the Greek word geometria, assigns numbers to each letter in the Hebrew alphabet in order to reveal a deeper, alternative or hidden meaning in the words. For instance, when Jacob tells his sons to ‘go down’ to purchase grain in Egypt in Genesis 42:2, the words ‘go down’ in Hebrew equal 210. This is interpreted to mean that Israel’s sojourn will last 210 years.

Modern numerology was developed by a fortune teller named Cheiro (Count Louis Hamon) who developed a system of what he called ‘fadic’ numbers, which were arrived at by adding together all the digits in the subject’s birth date to produce a ‘number of destiny’ to which special planetary and other significance was then attached.”

(*What does the Church teach about Numerology?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=529>)

“Numerology is the study of mystical relationships between numbers and events. The Catholic Church has historically believed in the significance of certain numbers, but ultimately rejects the systematic divination associated with numerology. There are many different systems of numerology, but many of them give numerical significance to such things as a person’s name or birthplace. Alphabetic systems of numerology assign specific values to each letter of the alphabet. Other methods simply assign meanings to particular numbers.

The Catholic Church Fathers believed the numbers in the Old Testament had mystical significance, but they cautioned against pushing mystical interpretations to the extreme. Father Herbert Thurston, S.J., wrote in the Catholic Encyclopedia: The Fathers repeatedly condemned the magical use of numbers which had descended from Babylonian sources to the Pythagoreans and Gnostics of their times.”

Fr. Thurston cited such men as St. Augustine, St. Ambrose and St. John Chrysostom as examples of early Church Fathers who opposed numerology. “The number seven is good,” wrote St. Anselm, “But we do not explain it after the doctrine of Pythagoras and the other philosophers, but rather according to the manifestation and division of the grace of the Spirit”.”

(<http://people.opposingviews.com/catholic-church-numerology-4955.html>)

“There are those who argue that there is the use of **numerology** in the Bible, and who interpret wrongly and for their own false gospels the meanings of numbers like “666” (the number of the beast) and “144,000” (the number of those who were marked with God’s seal) in the Book of Revelation.

Numbers are used throughout apocalyptic writings, again, not for details but for their symbolic meaning: ‘Three’ is considered a divine number representing God, hence the three-fold ‘Holy, holy, holy.’ ‘Four’ symbolizes the earthly world as in the ‘four corners of the earth’ due to the four elements of earth, wind, water, and fire. ‘Six’ represents man as he was created on the sixth day. The number ‘Seven’ signifies the seven days of the creation, and seven days of the week. ‘Twelve’ is the number of religion, as in the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles.

The number ‘ten’ is important in the Bible. The world is created with ten divine words (according to Jewish mysticism); there are ten patriarchs before the Flood, the ten temptations of Abraham, the ten plagues of Egypt, the Ten Commandments, and the one-tenth offering (tithing) for the church.

Forty is a special number in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament. It rained forty days and forty nights during the Flood of Noah, the Israelites were lost in the desert for forty years before entering the Promised Land. Moses spent forty days on Mount Sinai before receiving the Ten Commandments. Jesus spent forty days in the desert in preparation of his public ministry.”

(*The Everything Bible Book*, Fr. John Trigilio, Jr., Ph.D., Th. D. & Fr. Kenneth Brighenti, Ph.D., 2004)

This is what the New American Bible 1990-1991 edition says about the much misinterpreted (by Protestants and even some Catholics) “666” and the “144,000”:

Revelation 13: 18: *Wisdom is needed here; one who understands can calculate the number of the beast, for it is a number that stands for a person. His number is six hundred and sixty-six.*

Each of the letters in Hebrew as well as in Greek has a numerical value. Many possible combinations of letters will add up to 666, and many candidates have been nominated for this infamous number. The most likely is the emperor Caesar Nero (see the note on 13:3), the Greek form of whose name in Hebrew letters gives the required sum. (The Latin form of this name equals 616, which is the reading of a few manuscripts. Nero personifies the emperors who viciously persecuted the church. It has also been observed that ‘6’ represents imperfection, falling short of the perfect number ‘7’ and is represented here in a triple or superlative form.

Revelation 13:3: *I saw that one of its heads seemed to have been mortally wounded, but this mortal wound was healed. Fascinated, the whole world followed after the beast.* This may be a reference to the popular legend that Nero would come back to life and rule again after his death (which occurred in A.D. 68 from a self-inflicted stab wound in the throat; cf. v 14; 17:8. Domitian (A.D. 81-96) embodied all the cruelty and impiety of Nero. Cf. Introduction.

Revelation 7:4-9: *144,000*

One hundred and forty-four thousand: the square of twelve (the number of Israel’s tribes) multiplied by a thousand, symbolic of the new Israel (cf. 14:1-5; Galatians 6:16, James 1:1) that embraces people *from every nation, race, people and tongue.*

New Age

The personality typing device the enneagram (read chapter 40), is “a system of **numerology** intended to make a person perfect, better and whole by understanding personality types.”

(*Angels of the New Age kind*, Mary Drahos, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/NEWAGE/NAGEANG.TXT>)

So too is the Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator (read chapter 41). “The MBTI uses **numerology** to codify and number the results of the personality profiling... [A] person or Christian who takes these Personality Profiling tests is simultaneously doing all of the following at the same time: divination, numerology, astrology, necromancy...”

(http://www.cephas-library.com/formation_willowcreek_pt_3.html)

“Like practitioners in other divinatory fields, numerologists may claim that their profession does not involve the occult. Main advocates insist that **numerology** is merely “a science of the numbers of life.” One leading practitioner states, “Numerology is not fortune-telling, it is instead, a way to understanding through knowledge of numbers.” Another encourages readers “not [to] fall into the trap of looking at Numerology as a fortune-telling device. It is not.” And, “This is not a matter of fortune-telling; it’s plain mathematics revealed in the correlation of human factors to their cosmic pulse-beat as pictured in numbers.” Despite such claims, most numerologists will admit, when pressed, they are engaging in fortune-telling and divination.

Numerology is a method of divination, one that attempts to discern the occult significance of numbers. It too is a popular form of entertainment. Like palmistry, numerology is thousands of years old and strongly associated with the occult. The practice of using tarot cards and the cabala are rooted in numerology, and astrology also bears a relationship.”

(*Numerology*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/divination/numerology-introduction/>)

“**Numerology** is a form of divination. It is against the First Commandment of God.”

(<http://www.ewtn.com/vexperts/showmessage.asp?number=343415&Pg=&Pgnu=&recnu>)

Please also refer to “Divination” in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2115 to #2117 in Introduction – “After JCBWL”.

“**Angel numbers** are just another version of an age-old occult practice known as **numerology**. They are supposedly number sequences that New Agers believe are communications from a person’s guardian angel or spirit guide.

“Your angels (or spirit guides) guide you through your thoughts, feelings, words and visions. They also show you ‘signs’ – that is, things that you see repeatedly with your physical eyes. One of the signs is repetitive number sequences,” says a woman from Australia named Joanne Walmsley who runs the above referenced [website](#) (link).

Walmsley is also involved in psychic readings, runes, and other forms of divination. For this reason, I wasn’t surprised to find prominent New Agers among her “sources”, who she refers to as “respected authors, therapists

and spiritualists". One of these sources, Doreen Virtue, who she refers to as "renowned author and therapist", is a clairvoyant who calls herself an "angel intuitive". (In New Age parlance, this is a person who can make contact with who he/she thinks are the guardian angels or spirit guides of a client.)

"Joanne goes on to explain how angel numbers work - which is a very complicated "reading" of the numbers based on things such as their placement in the sequence. For example, in sequences that contain more than three digits, the middle number(s) "represent the crux of the message and meaning," she says.

She uses the number 376 as an example, saying that "the number 7 is to be looked at and deciphered first. Then each individual number - 3, 7 then 6 is to be looked at individually. The entirety of the number 376 can then be added and reduced to a single digit - $3 + 7 + 6 = 16$ ($1 + 6 = 7$). This makes the number 7 the most relevant message and meaning of your repeating number sequences. Clients are encouraged to "use your intuition and inner-knowing to decipher your personal message. Your soul will resonate with the appropriate message/s."

The use of numbers to divine the future or interpret a person's character, which is precisely what angel numbers attempt to do, is known as numerology. All divination is condemned by the Church (CCC #2116) and it must be strictly avoided."

(*Angel Numbers: The Latest Numerology Fad*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=42898>)

Chapter 82

Oprah Winfrey - Leading New Ager

“Oprah Winfrey (born Orpah Gail Winfrey, 1954) birthed into poverty in rural Mississippi to a teenage single mother. At 13, after suffering what she described as years of abuse, Winfrey ran away from home. She has stated that she was molested during her childhood and early teens and became pregnant at 14; her son was born prematurely and died in infancy. She once commented that she had chosen not to be a mother because she had not been mothered well.

Oprah is best known for her talk show *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, which was the highest-rated television program of its kind in history and was nationally syndicated from 1986 to 2011. She was the richest African American of the 20th century and North America’s first black multi-billionaire. She has also been sometimes ranked as the most influential woman in the world. By the mid-1990s, Winfrey had reinvented her show with a focus on literature, self-improvement, mindfulness and spirituality. She was criticized for unleashing a confession culture, promoting controversial self-help (read chapter 95) ideas, and having an emotion-centered approach. In 2008, she formed her own network, Oprah Winfrey Network.”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oprah_Winfrey)

New Age

“Oprah Winfrey, the Queen of Talk Shows, is considered by many to be the world’s most influential woman; and her show reaches millions. Over the years, she has hosted representatives of the New Age thinking such as Wayne Dyer, Marianne Williamson, Barbara DeAngelis, LaVar Burton, Richard Carlson, Betty Eadie, and others. She has now become the #1 promoter of the New Age Movement.”

She promotes Helen Schucman’s *A Course in Miracles* (read chapter 95). She also promotes the book *A New Earth* written by her New Age friend, Eckhart Tolle. Tolle claims on pages 6-7, that as you read his book “a shift takes place within you.” He speaks of a “shift in consciousness.” In his other book, *The Power of You*, he states on page 104, “Christ is your God-essence or the Self.” These are typical New Age teachings and are clearly incompatible with the Christian faith.”

(Margaret Anne Feaster, *Oprah and the New Age*, <http://annefeaster.accountsupport.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/OprahAndTheNewAge.pdf>)

“Oprah Winfrey was raised a Baptist. She was quoted as saying: “I have church with myself: I have church walking down the street. I believe in the *God force* (emphasis mine) that lives inside all of us, and once you tap into that, you can do anything.” She also stated, “Doubt means don’t. When you don’t know what to do, do nothing until you do know what to do. Because the doubt is your inner voice or the voice of God or whatever you choose to call it. It is your instinct trying to tell you something is off. That’s how I have found myself to be led spiritually, because that’s your spiritual voice saying to you, ‘let’s think about it.’ So when you don’t know what to do, do nothing.”

“In 1998, Winfrey began an ongoing conversation with Gary Zukav, an American spiritual teacher, who appeared on her television show 35 times. Winfrey has said she keeps a copy of Zukav’s *The Seat of the Soul* at her bedside, a book that she says is one of her all-time favorites. (According to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gary_Zukav, Zukav’s specialties are “*Spirituality, Self-Help, Empowerment, New-age*”).

“In 2007, **Oprah Winfrey** began to endorse the self-help program *The Secret*. *The Secret* claims that people can change their lives through positive thoughts or ‘vibrations’, which will then cause them to attract more positive vibrations that result in good things happening to them. Peter Birkenhead of *Salon* magazine argued that this idea is pseudoscience and psychologically damaging, as it trivializes important decisions and promotes a quick-fix material culture, and suggests Winfrey’s promotion of it is irresponsible given her influence. In 2007, skeptic and magician James Randi accused Winfrey of being deliberately deceptive and uncritical in how she handles paranormal claims on her show. In 2008, Winfrey endorsed author and spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle and his book, *A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life’s Purpose*, which sold several million extra copies after being selected for her book club. During a Webinar class, in which she promoted the book, Winfrey stated “God is a feeling experience and not a believing experience. If your religion is a believing experience [...] that’s not truly God.” Frank Pastore, a Christian radio talk show host on KKLA, was among the many Christian leaders who criticized Winfrey’s views, saying “if she’s a Christian, she’s an ignorant one because Christianity is incompatible with New Age thought”.”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oprah_Winfrey)

“Oprah’s Life Classes are totally focused on the self, which is a hallmark of the New Age movement. They are mostly motivational but are riddled with the idea that we are all in control of our destiny, something that is very much a part of the Human Potential Movement (read chapter 62).

“Here are a few examples from a [blog](#) (link) by a woman named Lori Deschene who attended a webcast of the classes:

I know I am a product of what I believe to be true. I know I hold the power... all the power to change when I want to.

Changing your thoughts can change your life!

The energy you put out is the energy you get back.

I am the only one powerful enough to stop me and the only one powerful enough to set me free.

The energy we attract is what we subconsciously feel we deserve.

These lessons are intermingled with others such as “It’s easy to give up on yourself” and “Failure is the path to success.”

These all sound well and good – until you understand what the Human Potential Movement is all about and why it is so subtly deceptive.

“The Movement derives from the *New Thought Movement* of the 19th Century which basically taught that “Whatever the mind can conceive, a person can achieve.”

Evidence of this is everywhere in **Oprah’s** work and in some of the New Age gurus she has hosted, such as Wayne Dyer who writes in his book, *Power of Intention*, “When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.” Self-help, “life-coach” and author Tony Robbins claims “We can change our lives. We can do, have, and be exactly what we wish.” In other words, if you think the right way, the right thing will happen to you. Statements such as these make the mind into a “god”. It’s not God’s will that determines the outcome of our life, it’s what the mind does or doesn’t do. This is crediting the mind with a power it doesn’t have. This is a classic example of New Age thinking – which is founded in a humanistic psychology that always glorifies the self.

“Oprah’s message is thoroughly riddled with New Age thinking and a mish-mosh of beliefs taken from other religious denominations. Her Life Lessons appear to be more of the same.”

(*Are Oprah’s Life Lessons New Age?* Susan Brinkmann, <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=25007#more-25007>)

“Medical experts are finally speaking out about the variety of New Age and otherwise bad medical techniques being touted regularly on the **Oprah Winfrey** show. Two high-profile publications have featured critiques of the media maven in the past month for promoting all kinds of untested quackery. In a May 15 expose in *Salon.com* by Rahul Parikh, M.D., Winfrey was taken to task for promoting dangerous medicine without adequately informing viewers of the risks involved.

One of the most egregious examples he cited was a show featuring Dr. Christiane Northrup, who helps women with thyroid conditions by connecting “the mind, the body and the spirit.” [...] Northrup later admitted to Dr. Parikh that this belief is not based on medical science but on Ayurvedic and other Eastern approaches to health. Even though Winfrey proclaimed Northrup to be “just the best doctor,” she neglected to mention that there is absolutely no medical evidence at all to support the idea that thyroid disease is the result of an “energy blockage” or a woman’s inability to assert herself.

Another example were two shows featuring actress and self-proclaimed health guru Suzanne Somers who promotes an untested and dangerous therapy to combat aging known as “bioidentical” hormones. [...] In Somers book, *Ageless: The Naked Truth About Bioidentical Hormones*, which Winfrey enthusiastically endorsed, Somers admits to using outlandish amounts of these hormones daily while taking 60 oral supplements a day. “Many people write Suzanne off as a quackadoo,” Winfrey declared on the show. “But she just might be a pioneer.”

“**Winfrey** did allow doctors who were seated in the audience to respond, but one of these doctors, Lauren Streicher, M.D., an obstetrician and gynecologist, told Dr. Parikh that Winfrey gave her little time to seriously rebut Somers. In addition, many of her comments were edited out of the show, such as when she told the audience that Somers’ “experts” had no medical degrees or clinical experience.

“In addition to promoting a variety of New Age self-help books such as *A Course in Miracles*, Ronda Byrne’s *The Secret* and Eckhart Tolle’s *A New Earth*, both Dr. Parikh and another article appearing in *Newsweek* took Winfrey to task for promoting a dangerous face lift technique called a “thread lift.” It involves inserting sutures under the skin to tighten tissue. What no one bothered to mention are the serious problems with the procedure such as indentations, bunching, dimpling, broken threads, and facial asymmetry. **Winfrey** featured another untested face lift cream, Restylane, which doctors inject into the eyelid to eliminate wrinkling. Again, no mention was made of the risks which include severe eye swelling and blood clots that can lead to blindness. In response to this criticism, Winfrey said in a statement: “For 23 years, my show has presented thousands of topics that reflect the human experience, including doctors’ medical advice and personal health stories that have prompted conversations between our audience members and their health care providers. I trust the viewers, and I know that they are smart and discerning enough to seek out medical opinions to determine what may be best for them.”

“But what if they aren’t? Unfortunately, **Winfrey** intends to continue her crusade of promoting untested medical cures. According to *Newsweek*, she is

planning to launch her own cable television channel that will reach 70 million homes. Called the Oprah Winfrey Network, it will include Oprah-approved programming on health and living well. In announcing the deal, Oprah said, "I will now have the opportunity to do this 24 hours a day on a platform that goes on forever"."

(*Oprah under Fire for Promoting Quackery*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=2024>)

"Any member of the family might be introduced to New Age spirituality by watching the **Oprah Winfrey Show**. She often hosts New Age speakers, such as Shirley MacLaine. For many weeks, she had a three- to five-minute segment called "Remembering Your Spirit." One segment featured the popular New Ager Dr. Wayne Dyer. A prolific writer and author of 27 books, including *Your Erroneous Zones*, Dr. Dyer teaches people how to tap into the universal energy force, or their Higher Self. Another segment highlighted the Labyrinth Movement (walking a maze to find the "goddess within"). Linda Gray also appeared on this segment, sitting in a cross-legged position trying to connect to the earth. In addition, Oprah highly recommends a book written by New Ager Miguel Ruiz based on ancient Toltec wisdom titled *The Four Agreements*. Said Oprah, "This book by Don Miguel Ruiz, simple yet so powerful, has made a tremendous difference in how I think and act in every encounter"

(*New Age Traps*, Margaret Anne Feaster, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=6667>)

"In spite of the fact that **Oprah Winfrey** has played hostess to just about every New Age guru in existence and infuriated even her most stalwart supporters by suggesting that Jesus is not the only way, she still considers herself to be a Christian.

However, she makes a distinction (as most New Agers do) between religion and "spirituality." "I am not talking about religion," she said during [this](#) (link) April 2012 broadcast. "I am a Christian. That is my faith. I'm not asking you to be a Christian. If you want to be one I can show you how. But it is not required. I have respect for all faiths. All faiths. But what I'm talking about is not faith or religion. I'm talking about spirituality." If you listen to this video, she'll go on to explain her definition of spirituality as living life with an open heart, through love, and allowing yourself to align with the values of tolerance, acceptance, of harmony, of cooperation and reverence for life. While these are all wonderful qualities, this shouldn't mean that a Christian reneges on their responsibility to further the teachings of Jesus Christ rather than the tenets of other religions. Oprah then goes on to say that she believes there is a divine thread that connects spiritually to something greater than ourselves. "My

favorite Bible verse—because I am Christian—is Acts 17:28,” she continued. “It says, ‘In God I live and move and have my being,’” Winfrey said. “And you want to know why I’m so successful? Because I knew that at 4 years-old ... I wouldn’t be who I am today without a spiritual consciousness, without spiritual values and ultimately without spiritual love.” Does this mean her Christian faith had nothing to do with who she is today? In an attempt to get around this esoteric non-speak and give her the benefit of the doubt, I can only hope that it did but she just didn’t take the time to announce it at the time of this broadcast.

“At any rate, in addition to the New Age “prophets” she raises to international prominence, which may or may not lead people away from Christ, she once said (link) how she reconciles her Baptist upbringing with popular New Age concepts of “spirituality”. “What I believe is that Jesus came to show us Christ consciousness. That Jesus came to show us the way of the heart and that what Jesus was saying that to show us the higher consciousness that we’re all talking about here...”

“This could explain why she touts gurus such as Eckhart Tolle, the prophet of “now” who once said that everyone carries “‘The Truth’ inside — all the joy, creativity, energy, love they seek,” Tolle writes in *The New Earth*. “Was Jesus the son of God? Yes. But so are you. You just haven’t realized it yet.”

Another frequent guest on Oprah’s shows is Deepak Chopra (read chapter 52), the high priest of the New Age “if-you-can-think-it-you-can-be-it” movement. Chopra wrote a book entitled *The Third Jesus* which is “about the consciousness of Jesus which was in touch with the source of all creation. If you can aspire to be at one with that consciousness, then you too can be in touch with the source of all creation.” Chopra has openly denied traditional Christian teaching, even going so far as denying the existence of Satan (link).

“But having said all that, none of us can judge what is going on between Oprah and God in the depths of her soul.

What we can judge, however, is the obvious. Let’s face it, there’s a reason why even the liberal *Washington Post* dubbed her the “high priestess of the New Age” in their May 25, 2011 (link) edition.”

(*Is Oprah Still Christian?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=18150>)

Chapter 83

Osteopathy

Osteopathy and Chiropractic (read chapter 51) are obviously different from each other, but they turn up together or separately in a number of other dubious or New Age alternative therapies offered by quackery practitioners, including some naturopathic physicians. Both easily blend with several alternatives as the following citation from a New Age web site promoting the Alexander Technique (read chapter 2) will demonstrate:

“Around a century ago, chiropractic and **osteopathy** came into being. These modalities relied on the practitioners’ hands to manipulate bones, sometimes with a fair amount of force, in order to bring about improvements. In more recent years, there has been a huge growth in the popularity of non-medical hands-on therapies and techniques. Massage therapy is certainly the best known of these but there are many others like Reiki and Cranio-Sacral work and various movement reeducation methods like Feldenkrais, Trager and Rolfing. It’s no exaggeration to say that the power of the human hand as a means to help and to heal has, in the last generation or two, been unleashed as never before. My own field, the Alexander Technique, is another example of this phenomenon. (*Strengthen Ye the Weak Hands*, Robert Rickover, <http://www.alexandertechnique.com/articles2/hands/>)

As one will have noted, in just those few lines that I have used, there are five other New Age complementary therapies -- all of which are examined in different chapters in this book -- mentioned. There is also their association with Craniosacral Therapy (CST), Cranial Sacral Therapy, or Cranial Osteopathy (Read chapter 10).

“Certain osteopathic concepts present problems. For example, the osteopathic lesion (in nature and importance similar to the chiropractic subluxation) is not scientifically demonstrated. Further, some theories and approaches of traditional or in some cases modern osteopaths, such as “**cranial osteopathy**,” are rejected by medical science. Further, conventional medicine does not place the degree of importance upon the musculoskeletal system or accept the claims of some osteopaths concerning its relation to organ function... One also finds infrequent New Age/Edgar Cayce associations related to some early theories and modern practices of **osteopathy**.”

(*What is Osteopathy?* Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-29/>)

New Age

“Aside from the fact that many chiropractors dabble in New Age healing techniques such as Reiki, Therapeutic Touch and the Traditional Chinese Medicine form of acupuncture, the reason this field is so often affiliated with the New Age is because of its occultic roots. Daniel David Palmer (1845-1913), the founder of chiropractic, was a Freemason and an occultist who was known to attend the same spiritualist meetings in Clinton, Iowa, as the founder of **osteopathy**, A. T. Still. Palmer, who taught a pseudoscience known as phrenology (based on the idea that personality traits can be determined by the shape of the skull) did not hide the fact that he was a non-believer. In 1905, during a coroner’s inquiry, he refused to take an oath to swear the truth “so help me God” because, as he said, “I don’t want any help from God”.”

(*Chiropractic*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=127>)

Chapter 84

Palmistry or Chiromancy

Origins and development

“**Palmistry** is the occult practice of predicting the future by the details of the hand, including size, shape, lines, nails, and other features. It is also commonly used in character analysis. Although its origins are uncertain, it has been practiced in most cultures throughout history. In earlier eras it contained certain subdivisions, such as onychomancy or divination by the fingernails.

“**Palmistry** is at least 3000 years old and may have originated in India. The basic theory is that every detail of the hand (not just the palms) has information about the individual’s present or future. Included are the hand shape and size, palm configurations and topography, finger shape, size, and configurations, and even features of the fingernails. There are at least a hundred signs, marks, or relationships through which supposed influences, events, or qualities can be “recognized” by the palmist.

“Depending on the part of the hand studied, palmistry may be divided into three lesser occult methods: 1) *chirognomy* (the outward shape of the hand), 2) *chirosophy* (manual formations), and 3) *chiromancy* (the form of the hand and fingers and its lines and markings.) A related category, *solistry*, involves reading the foot. Palmistry has become part of modern culture because most palmists have become adept at flattering their clients by stressing positive virtues and speaking of sadness or tragedy as being experienced only in the past. Who wouldn’t like to have their future revealed as successful and happy? Palmistry claims that it can help people with choices in vocation, decisions regarding a marriage partner or dating, raising children, medical diagnosis, business opportunities, and virtually any area in need of advice or counsel. But, as noted, palmists will also reveal the unspoken dangers facing a client in the future, even disasters which the client can discover how to avoid for a fee.” (*Palmistry*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/divination/divination-practices-palmistry-introduction/>)

New Age

“The dangers of **palmistry** include those commonly associated with occult practice, including physical, psychological, and spiritual damage. Other risks include false medical diagnosis and predictions of disaster or death based on what the palmist supposedly sees in the hands.”

(*Palmistry*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/divination/divination-practices-palmistry-the-occult/>)

“**Palmistry** has much in common with other forms of divination, especially astrology. As in all divination, some predictions will be found to be true but this only indicates a number of random hits. But when spiritism enters the picture, amazing predictions sometimes occur. Anyone who examines their own characteristics based on what palmistry claims will discover its lack of credibility.”

(Palmistry, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/divination/divination-practices-palmistry-introduction/>)

“The cosmos was considered the macrocosm and man the microcosm. Man was then divided into micro-microcosms. Specific locations on the body were believed to have developed association in such a way as to represent the entire body. It was believed that cosmic energy influenced man by correspondence, association, and/or sympathy. “One of the first body locations considered to reveal this sympathy, or correspondence, was the hand. It probably began in the Sumerian civilization. Birth omens were obtained by inspecting a newborn infant for any sign which would predict the child’s future. **Palmistry** likely had its origin in this manner. **Palmistry**, or Chiromancy, had roots in the ancient Vedas of India 4500 years ago. Additional areas of the body that were believed to have correspondence with all other areas of the body were added over time. Now, a total of 18 areas on the body are considered to be *holograms* of the whole. The most common locations are ear, hand, foot, the web between thumb and forefinger, tongue, etc. Apart from the hologram locations, the musculature and fascia (membranes, tendons, ligaments) of the body are also believed to have many points that may impede the flow of **universal energy** so as to influence the function of body, mind, and spirit. Pressure, or some type of physical stimulation to those points, is said to affect—correct the flow of universal energy.

Why so many types of therapies if the treatments are effective? Because none of them are based on physical science but on the paranormal or psychic; the actual physical method used matters little in medical treatment. It depends on the mental attitude and acceptance of the theory of *universal energy* or *cosmic intelligence*.”

(*Reflexology or Zone Therapy and other energy-balancing therapies...*, Dr. Edwin A. Noyes M.D. MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

“**Palmistry**, astrology, fortune telling, and divining are all of them objectively evil things and sinful to indulge in. They are violations of the First Commandment.”

(*Harry Potter and the lost Generations*, Clare McGrath Merkle, O.C.D.S., *The Cross and the Veil*, <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/575634/posts>)

“It is the purpose of **Palmistry** to teach you how to conquer the ancient art of divination.”

(*The Practice of Palmistry*, Comte C. de Saint-Germain, 1977, page 18)

“Divination, whether from the ouija board, tarot cards, **palmistry**, rod and pendulum, astrology, necromancy, channeling, Silva Mind Control, or any other form (numerology) is forbidden in the bible. It is a serious offense because in practicing divination, one is seeking knowledge from a supernatural source other than God.”

(*Satanism – Is It Real?* Rev. Fr. Jeffrey J. Steffon, Servant Publications, Ann Arbor, MI., 1992, page 52)

Chapter 85

Pilates. Contrology.

Origins and development

“**Pilates** (pronounced *puh - la - tes*), a registered trademark, is a method of exercise and physical movement designed to stretch, strengthen and balance the body. It is not only successful as a fitness regime but it has also been used to help in professional sports training and physical rehabilitation of all kinds.

“Joseph Pilates was born in 1880 and the introduction of what today we call, **Pilates**, was around 1914. Joseph was a German national living in England at the outbreak of WWI and, as such, he was placed under forced internment in Lancaster. During this internment he shared with his fellow camp members some of the exercises he had taught himself over the previous 20 years.

“The roots of these exercises came from his study of yoga, Zen meditation and ancient Greek and Roman physical regimens. During this period he developed the system of original exercises known today as “matwork.” A few years later, he was transferred to another camp where he treated a number of internees suffering from wartime diseases and physical injury. In 1926 he met Clara, a trained nurse, who was to become his wife and companion in the work for many years. She helped him with the medical expertise needed to develop his original system of 34 exercises and continued the work for 10 years after Joseph died. Joseph Pilates called his original overall programme, ‘**Contrology**’. He opened the first **Pilates** studio in New York and continued to develop his technique until he died in 1967, aged 87.

“**Pilates** today is the subject of court cases over the trademark and you will discover that there are a number of different types of Pilates...”

(<http://reachouttrust.org/alternative-therapies/pilates/>)

“Pilates puts emphasis on spinal and pelvic alignment, breathing, and developing a strong core or center, and improving coordination and balance. Pilates’ system allows for different exercises to be modified in range of difficulty from beginning to advanced. Intensity can be increased over time as the body conditions and adapts to the exercises.

A 2013 systematic review found only inconclusive evidence that Pilates was beneficial to people with lower back pain.”

(<http://morgantownpilates.com/2013/12/19/33/>)

New Age

“The origin of **Pilates** is in the New Age. The inventor, Joseph Pilates, was a man whose fitness ideas were rooted in yoga, Zen meditation and ancient Greek and Roman physical regimes. He was also very committed to what has become a popular New Age concept known as the power of positive thinking. A big problem with Pilates is in the instructors who may or may not be teaching a version that incorporates New Age techniques. Examples are ‘Yogalates’ and ‘Pilates with Chi’.”

(Are Pilates New Age? Is it a stretch or yoga? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=9>)

“Joseph Pilates also believed in the power of positive thought. We read in, *Return to Life through Contrology*: ‘One of the major results of **Contrology** is gaining the mastering of your mind over the complete control of your body’.” This is one of those disciplines where knowing the background of the practitioner is vital. As mentioned above, forms of **Pilates** are available combined with yoga and ch’i and these lead us into areas where, we believe, Christians should not go. Joseph Pilates was influenced both by yoga and Zen meditation in the development of Pilates. Whereas these practices, which are not compatible with the fundamental beliefs of Christianity, may not have a doorway through the Pilates exercises, some Christians may want to take this fact into consideration. In Joseph Pilates’ teachings there does appear to be instances of seeking to deal with ‘spirit’, the inner man. This too is something that Christians may want to take into consideration before undertaking Pilates.”

(<http://reachouttrust.org/alternative-therapies/pilates/>)

“Joseph Pilates was also a big endorser of the power of positive thinking (read chapter 42), a movement that eventually morphed into the New Age’s Human Potential Movement. This movement is a spin-off of the New Thought movement of the 1900s in which people believed that if the mind could conceive it, a person could achieve it. How much of these practices are present in a typical Pilates workout?

“The overarching problem with **Pilates** is that it is just too heavily infiltrated by New Agers, which means you’re bound to encounter instructors who incorporate New Age concepts into their workouts. Some do it openly, such as in Yogalates or Pilates with Chi. Others are more covert about it and employ more subtle suggestions such as introducing eastern breathing techniques or seemingly innocent visualization exercises.

“A person who is interested in becoming involved in this kind of resistance exercise must be willing to work out more than just their muscles. Their powers of discernment will also have to be put to the test. They must educate themselves

on the difference between eastern and western meditation techniques as well as the risks associated with altered states of consciousness, visualization and other trance induction practices that are likely to show up in mainstream yoga and Pilates classes. For those who just want to exercise and not be bothered with all this fuss, forget Pilates.

“Having been a fitness instructor for many years I can tell you that the best resistance exercise continues to be the use of free weights (particularly if you’re post-menopausal). Nothing even comes close to this as far as building strength and shaping the body. Tubes and bands are also excellent choices.

“Pilates are more of a fad than an innovation, so don’t think you’re missing something if you decide to pass on Pilates. There are plenty of workouts far superior to this one that come with no potential religious baggage.”

(Why do so many exercise programs feel more like something we should be doing in a Hindu temple?
Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=736>)

Chapter 86

Pranayama, the control of Prana. Breathing techniques, and “Breath Awareness” or “Breath Meditation”

The subject of “Pranayama” has also been treated in chapter 31 on Yoga Meditation.

Control of Prana is integral to Yoga

Let the reader be very clear at the outset: The Prana of Pranayama is NOT the same entity as breath or the air that we breathe. Prana is what Hinduism holds to be the monistic impersonal Universal Life Force energy or “Life Force” that is in all and is all. This is the essence of advaitic Hinduism, that all is one; hence man who is under the illusion (maya) that he is an individual creation must strive through practising the different paths of yoga to lose his illusion of individuality, realize his divinity and achieve union with the impersonal energy of the Brahman or ‘god’. The original Sanskrit word for yoga means “to unite”. The goal of yoga is “Moksha”, “self-realisation” or union with ‘god’. Pranayama is the refusal of breath. “*Ayama*” denotes *regulation* or *control*. “The effect or fruit of Pranayama is Udghata or awakening of the sleeping Kundalini,” we read below.

Pranayama is one of the eight limbs, the fourth exactly, of yoga, mentioned in verse 2.29 in the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali. It is the crossover or link stage between the physical and the spiritual aspects of yoga, indulged in immediately before one enters the final phase of yogic meditation that leads to the eighth limb, samadhi, enlightenment or “god realization”.

Some of the notes on Pranayama from Hindu sources cited below are pseudo-scientific and, for the Christian, occult.

Origins and Development

“**Pranayama** - The control of the life force through regulated or relaxed breathing, one of the eight *angas* in Patanjali’s *astanga* yoga; in Hatha Yoga and Kundalini Yoga, it is an elaborate system of breathing exercises aimed at the achievement of bodily and mental health and at inducing special abilities and powers.”

(A *Popular Dictionary of Hinduism*, Karel Werner, Curzon Press, 1994, 190 pages)

“Tasmin sati svasaprasvasayor-gaticchedah pranayamah - “Regulation of breath or the **control of Prana** is the stoppage of inhalation and exhalation, which follows after securing that steadiness of posture or seat.”

This is the definition of **Pranayama** in the *Yoga-sutras* of Patanjali.

“You can hardly make any spiritual progress without the practice of **Pranayama**. The energy in the body is **Prana**. By controlling the motion of the lungs or respiratory organs, we can control the Prana that is vibrating inside. By **control of Prana**, the mind can be easily controlled, because the mind is fastened to the Prana.

“**Pranayama** is the control of all life-forces by realising naught but Brahman in all things as the mind, etc.

The negation of the Universe is the outgoing breath. The thought: ‘I am Brahman’ itself is called the incoming breath.

The permanence of that thought thereafter is the restrained breath. This is the Pranayama of the wise, while the pressing of the nose is only for the unknowing.” (Sri Sankaracharya: Aparokshanubhuti, 118-120).

“**Pranayama** is the **control of the Prana** and the vital forces of the body. It is regulation of the breath. This is the most important step. The aim of Pranayama is the **control of Prana**. Pranayama begins with the regulation of the breath for having control over the life-currents or inner vital force. In other words, **Pranayama** is the perfect control of the life-currents through control of breath.

“If you can **control the Prana** you can completely control all the forces of the Universe, mental and physical.

“If one **controls the ... Prana**, the mind also is controlled. He who has controlled his mind has also controlled his breath. If one is suspended, the other is also suspended. If the mind and Prana are both controlled one gets liberation from the round of births and deaths and attains immortality.

“The effect or fruit of **Pranayama** is Udghata or awakening of the sleeping Kundalini. The chief aim of **Pranayama** is to unite the Prana with the Apana and take the united Pranayama slowly upwards towards the head. Kundalini is the source for all occult powers ... Particular occult powers develop themselves at each stage of progress.

“*Sukha Purvaka* **Pranayama** removes all diseases, purifies the Nadis, steadies the mind in concentration, improves digestion, increases the digestive fire and appetite, helps to maintain Brahmacharya and awakens the Kundalini that is sleeping at the Muladhara Chakra. Purification of Nadis will set in rapidly. You will have levitation (rising above the ground) also. Hatha Yogins approach Brahman **by controlling Prana**. Raja Yogins approach Brahman by controlling mind.

“*Surya Bheda* **Pranayama** ... awakens Kundalini Sakti and increases the bodily fire.

“Pranic Healing* (read chapter 19): Those who practise **Pranayama** can impart their Prana in healing morbid diseases. They can also recharge themselves with **Prana** in no time by practising Kumbhaka. Never think that you will be depleted of your **Prana** by distributing it to others. The more you give, the more it will flow to you from the cosmic source (Hiranyagarbha)... Repeat “OM” (read chapter 72) when you pass your **Prana** to others ... You can transmit your Prana through space, to your friend, who is living at a distance.

“The **control of the vibratory Prana** means to a Yogi, the kindling of the fire of supreme knowledge, the realisation of the Self ... The goal of life is self-realisation. “This is brought about by means of the subjugation of the body and the senses, the service to a good Guru, the hearing of Vedantic doctrine and constant meditation thereon” (Niralamba Upanishad).”

(*What is Pranayama*, <http://www.yoga-age.com/asanas/prana.html>)

*“**Pranic healing** (read chapter 19) has also become very popular, even among Christians. This is based on the Hindu concept of ‘**prana**’ or ‘universal life energy’ which flows through the body. In a trance-like state the practitioner becomes a channel of universal life energy for the patient, who assimilates this energy.”

(*A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, 1994,

<https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

“Universal or cosmic **Prana** is the energy that springs from the universal Spirit (Paramatman). It remains the motionless, unmanifested and undifferentiated Energy called Brahman...

Similarly, **individual Prana**, or vital force, springs from the individual spirit (Atman).

Earth, water, fire, air, and ether are the five elements called Mahabhutas. The source of atomic energy is the earth element; the source of steam force, the water element; of heat and light, the fire element; of electricity, the air element; and finally it is ether that establishes the gravitational balance through magnetism, which is **Prana** itself...

Thus **Prana** is the total of all energies existing in Prakriti (Nature). Nature is the great reservoir of **Prana** energy. It is through the subtle energy of **Prana** that everything in Nature comes into existence and functions.

“When one **controls Prana**, spiritual powers (Siddhis) are gained, as well as infinite peace and bliss. This is the state of liberation, the goal of yoga.

Vedanta Philosophy says, “**Prana is Brahman, or Absolute Reality.**” The Vedas declare, “He who knows **Prana**, knows the Vedas.” In Shiva Svarodaya, an

ancient text on Yoga, Lord Shiva also says, “**Prana** is a great friend, companion, and brother to all human beings in this world, because everything can be achieved with its help.”

Truly, **Prana** has a great friendship with the soul. When either of them leaves the body, the other immediately follows. In the Yoga Chudamani Upanishad it is said, “So long as **Prana** is restrained in the body, the soul does not leave the body. Then there is no fear of death. Hence one should practice the regulation of Prana” (stanza 90). In the Gheranda Samhita it is said, “By practicing the restraint of **Prana**, a man becomes a lesser god” (chapter V, stanza 1). All these statements explain the importance of **Prana and its regulation** for achieving spiritual realization.

“While breathing through the nostrils one derives not only oxygen for the gross body but also vital force, or **Prana**, which travels through the subtle body by means of subtle channels known as Ida and Pingala... They do not end up in the lungs like the respiratory system of the gross body. Instead they run down to a bulbous subtle structure (Kanda) situated about three inches below the navel of the gross body. There are fourteen principal channels (Nadis) in the subtle body. All of them converge into the subtle bulb (Kanda). They branch into 72,000 smaller channels and 350,000 minor tributaries spreading all over the subtle body. However, from the point of view of Yoga, only three of these Nadis- the Ida, Pingala, and Sushumna- are important. Of the three major Nadis, the Sushumna is the most important. These subtle channels are located in the subtle body coinciding with the spinal column of the gross body. The Sushumna is the middle channel, while Ida and Pingala are located on its left and right respectively. When we breathe in air through the nostrils, we also drive the vital force of **Prana** through the Ida and Pingala.

“The vital airs can be regulated by practicing a series of scientific steps of Yoga, such as postures (Asanas), exercises to control the breath (**Pranayamas**)

“Any of the following manifestations may occur in an aspirant’s body when the vital force is released:

“Performing various special Yogic gestures [Mudras] with hands and fingers; Rocking or swaying in a circular manner from the waist, or stretching and twisting the body; Shaking of the body or jerking of the limbs; Rolling on the floor; Spinning around on the buttocks while in a sitting position; Crying or laughing; Emitting meaningless sounds from the mouth; Singing or chanting holy Mantras; Getting up and beginning to dance. The above list of manifestations is not exhaustive.

“One should fully surrender to the released **Prana** that knows well how to lead an aspirant forward on the path of self-realization. [At the stage of Dharana/ Dhyana], many powers of extra-sensory perception and super-ability have been attained... With all the three bodies and all the three sheaths transcended, the final permanent state of Samadhi (Nirbij Samadhi) begins. Now the soul is established in Supreme Consciousness (Turiya). The longer the Yogi remains in Nirbij Samadhi, the greater the powers of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence unfold.”

(Yoga, The Ultimate Attainment, Awakening the Life Force, Swami Rajarshi Muni, Jaico Publishing, 1999, 200 pages)

Despite making a fervent appeal to science on the contention that matter and energy are different forms of the same substance to justify the vedic advaitic philosophy of monism or “all is one”, no data, justification or proof is (ever) offered to back up the innumerable claims made for the existence of the “subtle body” and its “vital airs”, bulbs, channels, nadis, tributaries, sheaths, chakras... and as to how the exact numbers (3, 14, 72000, 350000) are arrived at. Some proponents of yoga admit that knowledge of their existence is “clairvoyantly” revealed.

We learn that the Prana or “subtle energy” is believed to have a “life” and an “intelligence” of its own. Pranayama is an integral part -- the fourth “limb” -- of the practice of yogic meditation “on the path of self-realization”. Manipulation of prana in pranayama is expected to be accompanied by the manifestation of psychic phenomena at the physical, mental, and spiritual levels, and sustained practice would result in “the powers of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence”. The goal of the manipulation or “control” of Prana is self-deification. For Christians, the practice of pranayama can be very, very dangerous.

“**Prana** - ‘the life’: Hiranyagarbha, **the second aspect of Brahman** associated with ajnana (ignorance) is also known as Prana because he is the very life of the universe.

Prana - ‘vital air’: It is one of the five vital airs centred in the nose and responsible for respiration. It is a product of the rajas-aspect of the five tanmatras or primordial elements.

Pranayama - ‘regulation of breath’: The fourth of the eight steps of Yoga, it is concerned with the control of the **pranic energy** and hence the mind, by regulating breathing.”

(A Dictionary of Advaita Vedanta, Swami Harshananda, Ramakrishna Math, 1995)

“The aim of practising **Pranayama** is to stimulate, regulate, and harmonize vital energy of the body. Just as a bath is required for purifying the body,

so also Pranayama is required for purifying the mind... In the 49th Sutra of Sadhanapada of Patanjali Yogasutra, the great Rishi Patanjali has defined **Pranayama** as a process in which respiration is interrupted, and **Prana**, that is the vital force, **is controlled and regulated. According to some, Prana means air. But this is a wrong and misleading interpretation.** Prana, in fact, is the vital power which is the force motivating every element of the earth, and which is the origin of the force of thought. There is a deep affinity between Prana and mental force, between mental force and intellect, between intellect and soul, and between soul and God... This is the reason why **Pranayama** is considered one of the efficacious means of attaining yoga... Yogasana and Pranayama are closely inter-related. An aspirant should master asanas like Padmasana... before he begins to practise Pranayama."

(*Yoga: Yogasana and Pranayama for Health*, Dr. P.D. Sharma, Gala, Navneet Publications, 1984, 158 pages. Pages 9, 125, 140)

"The word *pranayam* is made up of two words, *pran* and *ayama*. The word *pran* means the *vital breath* or *vital air*. The word *ayama* denotes *regulation* or *control*. So *pranayam* means *regulated* or *controlled breathing*. The purpose of *pranayam* is to take full advantage of the vital breath. **Pranayam** is an important part of Ashtangayoga.

In the Yogdarshan, 2/52, it is said, 'Pranayam removes the film of ignorance covering wisdom in an individual.'

In the Yogchudamani, it is said that **pranayam burns sins**. It is a bridge to cross the ocean of life.

...While breathing, one may repeat the name of a deity or chant a mantra... The basic purpose of **pranayam** is to widen the path of spiritual attainment... Some are known to have achieved death at will through **pranayam**."

(*Hindu Rites, Rituals, Customs and Traditions*, Prem P. Bhalla, Pustak Mahal, January 2006)

"**Pranayama**, if not practiced under the guidance of a capable teacher, can do irreparable physical and mental damage to one who engages in it."

(*The Essentials of Hinduism, A Comprehensive Overview of the World's Oldest Religion*, Swami Bhaskarananda, 1994, published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1998, 234 pages. Chapter: The Four Yogas)

"The Sanskrit word *Prana* means cosmic energy... Through **Pranayama**, masters of Yoga not only control the energy in their bodies but also cosmic energy." The Swami lists the "Dangers associated with the practice of **Pranayama**", concluding that without proper supervision, "the practice of **Pranayama** can be extremely dangerous".

"He goes further, even suggesting that because of the "hazards associated with the practice of **Pranayama**", one can choose the alternative of "devotion

to God [that] enables a spiritual aspirant to have God-experience without practicing **Pranayama** or other Yoga techniques. Through devotion, when the mind becomes concentrated on God or the chosen deity, Kumbhaka happens automatically. Thus the fourth step to Yoga can be safely skipped."

He testifies to having known people to go "completely insane", develop "symptoms of premature old age" and suffer "total amnesia" by the incorrect practice of **pranayama** techniques."

(Meditation, Mind and Patanjali's Yoga, Swami Bhaskarananda, published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, 2002, 252 pages, pp 73-78)

If pranayama is so dreadfully dangerous and can lead to death and mental damage, and even a Hindu is advised to 'skip' it if need be, why do Christians insist that they are doing "breathing exercises" and practise this occult yogic technique?

"Prana is not the same thing as breath. Prana is a subtle energy, not gross, i.e. it cannot be observed or measured by any physical instrument... **Prana** is a cosmic energy pervading the universe. When we breathe in air, we take in not only the air but also the prana energy... According to yogis, when a particular sub-system is not working properly, the prana energy is not being properly distributed to the particular nadis controlling the operation of that organ... The disease can be cured only if the blockages stopping the prana flow are removed, allowing the prana to flow properly. The exercises which break these knots are the **pranayamas**, literally, '**the control of prana**'; yama means 'control'."

(Pranayama with Postures for Specific Benefits, by M.K. Gopalakrishna, Sri Aurobindo Kapali Sastry Institute of Vedic Culture, 2001)

New Age

Many New Age alternative therapies, as we have seen in Section E, Medicating in the New Age, follow the same philosophy as the above. The "blocked" nadi or "congested" meridian is cleared with pins and needles (acupuncture), pressure (acupressure, reflexology, massages), sweeping and cleansing (pranic healing), laying on of hands (reiki), use of crystals, pyramids, and gem stones, etc. because prana is the same entity as the Taoist chi or qi and the Japanese ki. For example:

"The source of life really defies logical explanation. Call it God, or nature, or Tao... The health, sexual rejuvenation, and longevity practices of the Taoists grew out of their quest for immortality... A Taoist learns to deal with his or her own energy and the energy of the Earth. One who walks on the Way [the Tao] learns to control his or her own energy. This lies at the heart of the practice of

the Tao. Probably the best term to call these practices would be *Taoist Yoga*. In China it is generally referred to as *Chi Kung*... Chi is the Key...

The modern translation is Qi. In Japan it is called Ki. **Chi, Qi, or Ki, it is all the same energy...** Chi Kung (Read Chapter 28. Taoist Yoga – Chi Kung, Qi Gong or Ki Gong) also means the study and practice of the Life Force Energy. For our purposes, Chi is both our breath and our life force. The two are intimately related... The basic concept is to learn to **control your Life Force Energy...** Taoists explored the Life Force Energy (Chi). They found that they could use their minds to control the Chi. They found they could **use breath to control the Chi**. They also learned that Chi could be moved in the body by different types of physical exercises. The Taoists combined breath and mind and found new ways to control the Life Force Energy... Chi moves through the body in what are known as channels or meridians..."

(*Taoist Yoga & Chi Kung For Better Health, Good Sex and Long Life, A Guide to Taoist Yoga and Chi Kung*, by Eric Steven Yudelove, Llewellyn Publications, 1997, 320 pages, pages xiii, 3, 5-7)

"A significant number of religions and psychotherapies employ "**proper breathing**" techniques as a supposed regulator of physical and psychological health, or for purposes of so-called spiritual (occult) enlightenment. Because **breath awareness methods** are often influenced by Eastern or occultic philosophy and practice (e.g., yoga) and because they are frequently designed to alter one's consciousness, they are also encountered in the many occultic forms of transpersonal and fringe psychotherapy. Eastern mystics and yogis have long claimed that the breath is a vital tool for altering one's consciousness. Concentration on the breath and regulation of its "flow" are necessary to attain occult enlightenment. For example, the yogic practice of *pranayama* attempts to use the breath to regulate the control of mystical life-energy "underneath" the breath, *prana*. The end goal is occultic enlightenment which frequently involves spirit contact and/or possession. **Breath awareness methods** have little to do with cardiovascular exercise. They are what the name implies – **breath awareness or breath meditation.**"

(*What is Breath Awareness?* Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-11/>)

"True yoga is the occult use of **breathing exercises**, physical postures, and meditation for supposed spiritual enlightenment. The physical exercises of yoga are believed to prevent disease and maintain health through bodily regulation of *prana* (mystical energy). In Hindu mythology, the serpent goddess Kundalini 'rests' at the base of the spine. She is aroused by yoga practice, travels up the spine regulating *prana*, opens the body's alleged *chakras* (psychic

centers), unleashes psychic powers, and finally reaches the top or crown *chakra* permitting occult enlightenment."

(*The Facts on Holistic Health and the New Medicine*, John Ankerberg and John Weldon, 1992, GLS Publishing, 2000)

If Yoga (read chapter 31) is New Age, so too is Pranayama.

"Yogasanas and **Pranayama** are closely interwoven. Regular practice of Yogasanas makes a person aware of the sensation of **Prana** in the vicinity of the Nabhi-Chakra. http://www.indiangyan.com/books/therapybooks/mystic_science_vastu/vastu_dosha_and_yogic_remedies.shtml."

(*Yogasanas: physical postures, spiritual method or both?* Dr. John F. Weldon, <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/y06aa.html>)

"Yoga's breathing techniques (**pranayama**) may seem stress-relieving, yet they can be an open door to psychic influences."

(Laurette Willis, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2005/120/42.0.html>)

"In yoga they do what they call *pranayama* breathing. *Prana* is the Hindu word for life force, the same concept as the word *chi* in some martial arts. Yoga breathing attempts to manipulate that life energy, which Laurette Willis (see immediately above), involved in yoga and the New Age for 22 years before coming to Christ, believes is perilous."

(*Should Christians do yoga?* Laura J. Bagby, http://www.cbn.com/health/fitness/bagby_yoga-alternative.aspx)

Breatharianism or Inedia – Surviving on Prana or Universal Life Force Energy

"**Inedia** (Latin for 'fasting') or **breatharianism** is the belief that it is possible for a person to live without consuming food, and in some cases water. Breatharians claim that food (and sometimes water) is not necessary for survival, and that humans can be sustained solely by *prana*, the vital life force in Hinduism. According to Ayurveda, sunlight is one of the main sources of prana, and some practitioners believe that it is possible for a person to survive on sunlight alone. The terms *breatharianism* or *inedia* may also refer to this philosophy when it is practiced as a lifestyle in place of a usual diet.

Breatharianism is considered a deadly pseudoscience by scientists and medical professionals, and several adherents of these practices have died from starvation or dehydration. It is an established fact that humans require food and water (nutrients) to survive."

(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inedia>)

"The Sanskrit word **prana** translates to "life air" or "life force," and that's what **breatharians** believe will give them sustenance. Prana is defined as an energy that runs through, and connects all of, creation.

Breatharianism was founded on the belief that this energy is all the human body needs to survive, not food or drink. Followers claim that, if they are conscious of doing so, they can inhale **prana** through breath and sunlight.”

(Eric McCann, <https://www.ranker.com/list/facts-about-breatharianism/erin-mccann>)

“*Fox News* is reporting (April 2012) ... a film about “**breatharians**” – people who survive on an alleged **universal life force energy** alone... Ellen Greve, author of *Living on Light: A Source of Nutrition for the New Millennium*, teaches that a person can survive on **prana**, which she calls “liquid light,” and 300 calories a day and claims to have some 5,000 followers worldwide.

The modern practice of breatharianism was begun by a man named Wiley Brooks, founder of the **Breatharian Institute of America**, who claims to have not eaten for 30 years. A self-proclaimed spiritual teacher and “interdimensional traveler,” ... Wiley himself was a fraud. He was involved in a scandal in 1983 when he was caught sneaking out of a 7-Eleven with a hot dog, Slurpee and a box of Twinkies.”

(Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=13963%20-%20more-13963>)

Chapter 87

Psychic Healing

Origins and Development

“Psychic Healing:

A process in which a person undergoes therapy by a psychic healer, who is directed by a spirit guide.

Psychic healing may be deliberately or inadvertently engaged through the practice of attempting to regulate or channel psychic energies.”

(*Psychic Healing*, <https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/psychic+healing>)

“Elliot Miller (*A Crash Course in The New Age*, page 93) claims that ‘**Psychic healing** has rapidly become accepted as a valid form of therapy in the medical world.’ He says that a survey done in 1981 showed that fifty-eight per cent of medical school faculty members wanted psychic phenomena included in psychiatric training.”

(*A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, 1994,

<https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

“Eastern meditative programs or other occultic practices may be used in conjunction with acupuncture therapy. Further, **psychic healing** may be deliberately or inadvertently engaged through the practice of attempting to regulate or channel psychic energies.”

(*What are Acupuncture and Acupressure?* Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon,

<https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-2/>)

“A conservative estimate is that hundreds or thousands of qualified medical doctors, psychiatrists, and nurses around the country are either channelers themselves or currently engaged in using channelers to help them diagnose their patients. Tens of thousands of nurses currently employ a form of **psychic healing** known as therapeutic touch. During its heyday, physicians formed a significant portion of the 2,000-member Academy of Parapsychology and Medicine (APM), which devoted a good deal of time to research in **psychic healing**. Partly due to the influence of the APM, the spiritistic phenomenon of **psychic healing** is currently practiced by hundreds of physicians.”

(*Medical Doctors Turn to Channeling*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon,

<https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/medical-doctors-turn-to-channeling/>)

“An example of psychic development in the martial arts is seen when Tai Chi, visualization, and meditation are used to develop **psychic power**... There are nine basically significant centers of power. The first of these is located at

the base of the spine.... This is the occult center of the body, which holds the serpent power

In the fourth power center one learns other exercises for transmission of psychic energy, plus "in combat, the *kiai* or spirit shout is drawn from this source." In the fifth power center, special exercises help one to "develop the power to relieve pain through psychic means. The yogic concept of *prana* is useful in understanding this. *Prana* is not the consciousness or the spirit, but is merely the energy used by the soul in its material and astral manifestations.... One who can learn to control this pranic energy has the power to bring it to a state of vibration that can be conveyed to others, causing them to vibrate harmonically." In other words, this power center is about **psychic healing**."

(*The Occult Potential and Spiritual Dangers of Martial Arts*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon,

<https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/the-occult-potential-and-spiritual-dangers-of-martial-arts/>)

"Therapeutic Touch (read chapter 3) and **psychic healing** are identical; they are one and the same."

(*Hospitals: A dark New Age?* Marcia Montenegro, http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_Hospitals.html)

New Age

"Altered states of consciousness (read chapter 43) are used for **psychic diagnosis** and **psychic healing**, and are frequently encountered as part of meditation programs which accompany many New Age therapies."

(*What are Altered States of Consciousness?* Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-3/>)

"**Psychic diagnosis**, **psychic healing** and psychic surgery are ancient spiritistic methods of diagnosis and healing performed supernaturally in conjunction with spirit guides whose presence may or may not be evident to the healer or client. Practitioners claim that they diagnose, heal, or even perform "surgery" through altered states of consciousness, radionic devices, and/or spirit guides. Such spiritism is often masked under New Age, psychological, or parapsychological concepts such as the "higher self," "inner counselor" Jungian "archetypes," or latent psychic ability, etc. But whatever natural explanations are supplied to explain these phenomena, research (such as that reported in a ten-year study: George Meek, ed., *Healers and the Healing Process*) consistently reveals that the lowest common denominator of these practices is spirit contact and/or possession.

(*What are psychic diagnosis, psychic healing and psychic surgery?* Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-32/>)

“Counterfeit miracles: One of the very disturbing aspects of trance channelling is the phenomenon of **psychic healing**. In her book *The Beautiful Side of Evil* Johanna Michaelsen testifies to have been involved as an aide to a person involved in **psychic healing**. She claims to have witnessed astounding events that could only be called ‘miracles’ to the onlooker. This raises the question of false miracles, or miracles coming from an evil source. Operations were carried out that amazed medical doctors, both as to the methods used, and the results achieved. The channelled spirit communicated with all those present and controlled the operations. Because this type of activity is not new or uncommon today, one must question the source. Do we accept healing at any price? Where is this power coming from? If it is not from God, do you want to allow some alien force to invade your personality?”

(*A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, 1994,

<https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

“Advertising connected with New Age covers a wide range of practices as ... **psychic healing** ...” (JCBWL #2.2.3)

“Parapsychology treats of such things as extrasensory perception, mental telepathy, telekinesis, **psychic healing** and communication with spirits via mediums or channeling. Despite fierce criticism from scientists, parapsychology has gone from strength to strength, and fits neatly into the view popular in some areas of the *New Age* that human beings have extraordinary psychic abilities, but often only in an undeveloped state.” (JCBWL #7.2)

Psychic Healing is named twice in the JCBWL document. (#2.2.3, #7.2)

Chapter 88

Rebirthing Therapy or Rebirthing-breathwork

Rebirthing is a form of psychotherapy and would be more fittingly included in section G of this book, along with chapter 38.

Origins and Development

“**Rebirthing-breathwork** is a type of **breathwork** invented by Leonard Orr. Orr proposed that correct breathing can cure disease and relieve pain. Orr devised **rebirthing therapy** in the 1970s after he supposedly re-lived his own birth while in the bath. He claimed that breathing techniques could be used to purge traumatic childhood memories that had been repressed.

Rebirthing-breathwork is one of the practices critiqued by anti-cult experts [Margaret Singer](#) (link) and [Janja Lalich](#) (link) in the book *Crazy Therapies: What Are They? Do They Work?* (Link) Singer and Lalich write that proponents of such “bizarre” practices are proud of their non-scientific approach, and that this finds favor with an irrational clientele. In 2006, a panel that consisted of over one hundred experts participated in a survey of psychological treatments; they considered rebirthing therapy to be discredited.”

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rebirthing_\(breathwork\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rebirthing_(breathwork)))

“Skepticism about **Rebirthing**: “*The Etiology of a Social Epidemic*” by Pat Crossman LCSW <http://www.skepticreport.com/sr/?p=563> attempts to trace the origins of the “attachment therapy” and “**rebirthing**” movements to ancient exorcism rites, and demonstrates a connection to Transactional Analysis (read chapter 38) via the “reparenting” movement.”

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transactional_analysis)

New Age

“**Rebirthing**: In the early 1970s Leonard Orr described rebirthing as a process by which a person can identify and isolate areas in his or her consciousness that are unresolved and at the source of present problems.” (JCBWL #7.2)

““The point of *New Age* techniques is to reproduce mystical states at will, as if it were a matter of laboratory material. **Rebirth***, biofeedback, sensory isolation, holotropic breathing, hypnosis, mantras, fasting, sleep deprivation and transcendental meditation are attempts to control these states and to experience them continuously” according to Michel Lacroix, *L’Ideologia della New Age*, Milano (Il Saggiatore) 1998, page 74.” (JCBWL #4)

*To be exact, the Document should have read “**Rebirthing**” and not “**Rebirth**”.

Inventor Leonard Orr has co-authored an appropriately-named book: *Rebirthing in the New Age* with S. Ray.

“Few fields have been as susceptible to manipulation by New Age as psychology and biology. Starting from the research of the father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), and the theories of the “collective unconscious” and of archetypes propounded by his disciple Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), there has been a varied succession of currents of thought in psychology that are connected to a greater or lesser degree with New Age’s ideas and therapies. In particular, so-called transpersonal psychology (read chapter 39) (which) gives rise to a multitude of New Age’s typical techniques: biofeedback, hypnosis, **rebirthing** ... etc.”

(*A Call to Vigilance (Pastoral Instruction on New Age)*, Archbishop Norberto Rivera Carrera, Primate of Mexico, 7 January 1996, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/acall.htm>)

“Today we have “pop psychologists” that purport to take one back into the womb by a process of deep breathing, and in so doing release the hypothetical psychological cramps of the original birthing experience, that is said to have allowed formation of anxieties, frustrations, etc., that man experiences. Below are some snippet explanations as to what today is referred to as “**rebirthing**.”

“**Rebirthing** is an American form of prana yoga that is closest to Kriya Yoga. It may be called scientific breathing rhythm or spiritual breathing. Simply described, it is a relaxed, intuitive, connected breathing rhythm, in which the inhale is connected to the exhale, and the inner breath is merged with the outer breath. This merging of pure life energy with air sends vibrations through the nervous system and circulatory system cleaning the body, the human aura, and nourishes and balances the human mind and body. -*Rebirthing - Maha Yoga: Spiritual Breathing*, by Leonard Orr.

“**Rebirthing** is called rebirthing because many times the suppression that comes up and is released is related to birth trauma. When a rebirthee has released enough suppression (usually in 10 to 20 sessions) they have mastered the breath and feel safe enough with the process to rebirth themselves whenever they want. -*What is Rebirthing?* By Russell J. Miesemer <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/r08.html>.”

(*Secular Psychology – “Science of the Soul”?* Dr. Edwin A. Noyes M.D. MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

“**Rebirthing** is a therapy used to treat attachment disorders in adopted children who are having trouble forming loving relationships with their new parents. The therapy involves covering the children in blankets and pillows meant to simulate the womb and then encouraging them to push their way out or be “reborn” into a new bond with their adoptive parents.

Unfortunately, people have died from this therapy. One of the most tragic cases was that of 10 year-old Candace Newmaker who died on April 18, 2000, after one of these “treatments.” She was wrapped in a flannel sheet and pillows upon which several adults whose combined weight was more than 600 pounds laid on top of her. The girl, whose adoptive mother was a single pediatric nurse practitioner, was then made to try to emerge while the adults did everything they could to stop her. The entire episode was captured on video camera and shown in a courtroom where the two psychotherapists, Connell Watkins, 54, and Julie Ponder, 40, were tried and convicted of reckless child abuse resulting in death. They were sentenced to 16 years in prison. The only good thing to come out of that case was “Candace’s Law,” now the law in the state of Colorado. It prohibits “reenactment of the birthing process through therapy techniques that involve any restraint that creates a situation in which a patient may suffer physical injury or death.” The U.S. House also passed a non-binding resolution in 2002 condemning rebirthing and urging every state to ban the practice.

“This bizarre and deadly practice was invented by a man named Leonard Orr who has no background in medicine or psychology. An advocate of the New Thought movement, he was one of the early proponents of “prosperity consciousness,” (read chapter 80) a belief that one can attract wealth just by opening the mind to the idea of it. A believer in physical immortality, he claims to have come up with a lot of his “revelations” in the bathtub (I’m not kidding). In 1974, he began suspending friends in a redwood hot tub with snorkels and nose plugs where they claimed to have experienced their birth. Orr and his friends began offering this “therapy” to others and, believe it or not, it caught on. After a while, he developed a theory that damage is done to the breathing mechanism at birth when a child is temporarily cut off from its oxygen when the umbilical cord is cut. This initial panic remains in the person’s subconscious as a nameless fear. As psychotherapist Margaret Thaler Singer writes in her book, *Crazy Therapies*, “the goal of the **rebirthing** process is to get the person to release this long-held tension and learn to take advantage of the fully functioning breathing mechanism. Once accomplished, the person can lead a full, happy, breathy life.”

“Sadly, Orr is still practicing this dangerous therapy via his [Rebirthing-Breathwork International](#) (link) business, and many other therapists offer it as well. As Singer states, there is “no scientifically established or objective clinical evidence” showing that rebirthing does anything beneficial. “Age regression, reparenting and **rebirthing** are not proven helpful techniques,” Singer summarizes. “So be careful! Think twice before going backward.”

Rebirthing is one of several types of regression therapy that is popular in some psychotherapy circles. Reparenting (link) is a similar practice that has also been found dangerous."

(*Why Rebirthing Therapy Should be Illegal*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=14123>)

Including the correction made by me further above, **Rebirthing** is named thrice in the JCBWL document. (#4, #7.2)

Chapter 89

Reincarnation and Karma

Origins and Development

For the Christian, time is linear; for the Hindu it is cyclical; hence the different concept of Christian eternity vs. the Hindus' karma-cum-reincarnation. (Karma is "payback" -- 'a man reaps what he sows', a belief that New Agers and reincarnationists attempt to justify by appealing to the Bible verse Galatians 6:7 -- which is accomplished through purgative reincarnations) Therefore, for the Hindu, there can be no concept of an eternal Judeo-Christian hell. Or heaven for that matter.

New Age

"An almost universal belief among New Agers is an adaptation of the Hindu concept of **reincarnation** which teaches that after death the soul, or essence comes back in another form to continue spiritual evolvement. New Agers misrepresent church history, the doctrines of Christianity, and often twist Scripture to support the idea that original Christianity taught **reincarnation**. They wrongly argue (Kenneth Ring, *Heading toward Omega*, page 158) that the early church suppressed the doctrine and censored its teaching.

Christians should be able to demonstrate that the Bible does not teach **reincarnation**. When Jesus calls John the Baptist "Elijah," He is clearly speaking metaphorically. Luke 1:17 demonstrates that John was filling the office of Elijah, fulfilling the prophecy of Malachi 4:5-6. In fact, Elijah was seen with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew 17:1-3. The meaning of the resurrection is the opposite of reincarnation (Hebrews 9:27; 1 Cor. 15:12-28). Point out that if God is an impersonal force, then love and forgiveness are not possible. These are personal attributes as opposed to impersonal **karmic law**." (*The New Age Movement*, Craig Branch, <https://www.watchman.org/profiles/pdf/newageprofile.pdf>)

"There is no Scriptural basis for the concept of reincarnation, nor is there any proof that it even exists. In fact, all of the most celebrated "proofs" of reincarnation, such as the famous Bridey Murphy case that started the contemporary reincarnation craze, were later discovered to have been faked. Many New Agers, such as Shirley MacLaine, incorrectly claim that the Church once believed in reincarnation because of statements made by an early apologist named Origen about souls existing in heaven before being born on earth. However, this belief was condemned at the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople in A.D. 553 and Origen was actually one of the most prolific early writers against reincarnation."

(Two New Summer Books Promote New Age Beliefs, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=2075>)

“A 2009 [Pew poll](#) (link) found that 22 percent of Christians in America believe in reincarnation. And many Catholics believe that because the Church has never officially condemned it, this means she may one day reconcile reincarnation with the Christian concept of death and the afterlife. However, this is a misunderstanding that Cardinal Christoph Schönborn addressed in his book, [From Death to Life: A Christian Journey](#) (link), where he writes: “Why has Christianity always rejected the idea of reincarnation? As far as I know, the Church has never formally condemned the doctrine of reincarnation: not because she might regard it as a doctrine that could be compatible with the Christian faith, but on the contrary because reincarnation so obviously contradicts the very principles of this faith that a condemnation has never seemed necessary.” As he points out, Church teaching on the subject of death and the afterlife could hardly be clearer. “Death is the end of man’s earthly pilgrimage, of the time of grace and mercy which God offers him so as to work out his earthly life in keeping with the divine plan, and to decide his ultimate destiny. When ‘the single course of our earthly life’ is completed, we shall not return to other earthly lives: ‘It is appointed for men to die once.’ There is no ‘reincarnation’ after death.” (CCC 1013) This teaching comes straight from Scripture in the Letter to the Hebrews which responds to the question of whether or not there is more than one lifetime. It clearly states that it is “appointed for mortals to die once, and after that the judgment.” (Hebrews 9:27) Catholics believe “Each man receives his eternal retribution in his immortal soul at the very moment of his death, in a particular judgment that refers his life to Christ: either entrance into the blessedness of heaven—through a purification or immediately—or immediate and everlasting damnation.” (CCC 1022) For a Christian, there’s no need to come back and work out our bad karma. Our bad karma was nailed to the cross of Jesus Christ, who took our sins upon Himself and reconciled us to the Father. In other words, we don’t need a re-do.”

(Why doesn’t the Church condemn Reincarnation? Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=62473>)

“There is a big difference between the New Age version of **reincarnation** and the **reincarnation** of Eastern religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism that teach this doctrine about life after death.

In the Eastern version, **reincarnation** is all about **karma** and the assumption that a person’s actions have both positive and negative consequences in the next life and any future incarnations. The object is to live a good life and perfect oneself in order to achieve moksha, which is to be set free from the cycle of

death and rebirth known as samsara. Hindus believe that the better one lives his/her life, the better the chance of achieving moksha. Indiscriminate living, on the other hand, leads to continued bondage to the cycle of death and rebirth and the chance of being reborn as a plant or animal.

Reincarnation to New Agers is entirely different, mostly because there is no concept of evil or immorality in the New Age – it's just a matter of making good or bad choices. So the object of reincarnation to a New Ager is to bring a person into a deeper understanding of who they are.

Whereas Buddhists and Hindus believe that being reborn as a human means they are making progress toward perfection, New Agers do not believe that a person can be reborn as a plant or animal. They are always reborn as a human. Also unlike the Eastern version of **reincarnation**, the New Ager believes they have some control over how and when they are reincarnated.

“Evidence to support the theory of **reincarnation** is nonexistent, unless you believe in the bogus science known as “past life regression therapy” where all kinds of false memories are planted in people by their therapists.

Aside from the lack of empirical evidence, the Bible is full of arguments against reincarnation.

For example, in the Old Testament, the book of Job tells us: “So men lie down and rise not again. Till the heavens are no more, they shall not awake, nor be roused out of their sleep.” (Job 14:12)

In the New Testament, Jesus Himself tells us that there is no “second chance” at life here on earth, most notably in the story of the poor beggar named Lazarus who was continually ignored by a rich man while the two lived on earth. When both men died, Lazarus went to heaven but the rich man went to hell. The rich man later begged Lazarus for water, but was refused. “Abraham replied, “My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented. Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours.” (Luke 16: 25-26).

This is why the Church teaches that there is no **reincarnation**. “Death is the end of man’s earthly pilgrimage, of the time of grace and mercy which God offers him so as to work out his earthly life in keeping with the divine plan, and to decide his ultimate destiny. When ‘the single course of our earthly life’ is completed, we shall not return to other earthly lives: ‘It is appointed for men to die once.’ There is no ‘reincarnation’ after death” (CCC 1013).

(*New Age vs. Eastern Reincarnation*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=24653>)

“Yoga (read chapter 31) was developed as an escape from endless **reincarnations**. The theory of **reincarnation** is continually promoted by the deceiving spirits “channeling” to mankind. In Eastern mysticism, as in Christian Science, death is an illusion. Existence follows an endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth through **reincarnation**. There is no such thing as resurrection, but a “transmigration of souls” into one body after another.

Reincarnation has become a widely accepted belief in the West to replace the biblical declaration that it is “appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). In the East, however, reincarnation is viewed as a means of punishment. Gandhi called it “a burden too great to bear” – returning to this life of suffering and disappointment, spinning forever upon a never-ending “wheel of reincarnation”!

One cannot believe in both **reincarnation** and resurrection. Each new reincarnation leaves one more body in the grave, overcome by death. In contrast, the Bible promises complete victory over death through Christ’s sacrificial death and resurrection for our sins. Jesus Christ was *resurrected*, not reincarnated. The Antichrist, lacking the marks of Calvary, will likely claim to be the latest *reincarnation* of the “Christ spirit.”

Professing Christians go to astonishing lengths in attempting to reconcile the anti-Christian doctrine of reincarnation with the Bible and even to find it taught there. Elijah is a favorite because “Malachi prophesies the return of Elijah, and Jesus says John the Baptist is Elijah returned.” Yet Elijah was taken to heaven without dying and appeared with Moses in conversation with Jesus (Matthew 17:3), so he could not have been reincarnated into John the Baptist’s body, as it is claimed. Clearly, John the Baptist came “in the spirit and power” of Elijah (Luke 1:17), not as Elijah himself.”

(*The Influence of Eastern Mysticism*, Dave Hunt, (Occult Invasion, Harvest House, 1998), http://www.inplainsite.org/html/influence_of_eastern_mysticism.html)

“Yoga classes are presented as physical exercises for the sake of health, wholeness, slimming or a variety of other reasons. ... The Yogic world view is tied up with their belief in the world of **karma** which traps people into the cycle of suffering and evil. One needs to seek liberation from karma through the disciplines of Yoga, which involve the discipline of the body in exercises and diet to liberate the true ‘life force’ and set one on this road to enlightenment.

Reincarnation and karma are basic beliefs in the *yogic* tradition’.”

(*A New Age of the Spirit?* - The Irish Theological Commission, 1994, cited in *Yoga - A spiritual health warning*, Michael Akerman, http://www.catholicassociates.com/leaflets/Yoga%20Spiritual%20Health%20Warning_Rev1.pdf)

“What is the place of **reincarnation** in the belief system of New Age groups?

The doctrine of **reincarnation** is found in many non-Christian religions. In its classical forms in Hinduism and Buddhism it involves the taking on by the soul or the psychic element in human beings, of a body in successive lives. The good or evil one thinks, says, or does in previous incarnations results in the accumulation of positive karma or negative karma. (The term *karma* is Sanskrit; and literally means “action” or “activity,” but in the context of Hindu or Buddhist belief in **reincarnation**, it *can be* better translated as “cause and effect.” Positive *karma* can be called “merit,” while negative *karma* can be called “demerit.”) Depending on the balance between one’s merits or demerits, after one’s death to one’s present incarnation, one could be reincarnated at a higher, an equal, or a lower level of being. A human being could therefore be reincarnated at a subhuman level of being. The aim of one’s striving should be to be liberated from this cycle of deaths and rebirths, called *samsāra*, and be reunited with or absorbed into oneness with all being.

In the modern period, the concept of reincarnation has entered in an altered form into Western culture, mainly through the New Age groups. The altered Western understanding of reincarnation that is dominant among New Agers does not admit of reincarnation at a lower level of being. Instead, at each reincarnation one passes to a form of life better and more beautiful than the previous, and ever more consonant with the energy of the universe, the energy that is the all and the divine. There is no point trying to free oneself from this cycle of deaths and rebirths, because it is never-ending, since it is the natural situation in which human beings find themselves, in the same way that fish are naturally at home in water. The law of existence and life underlying this altered Western concept of **reincarnation** can be rendered as “To be born, to die, and then to be born again, always attaining progress with each rebirth.”

Belief in reincarnation has spread to the Philippines in this altered form especially among our Westernized economically and socially dominant classes. There are many reasons for this spread, here and abroad, include the mistaken belief that **reincarnation** can provide a solid foundation or support for the following notions and aspirations: purification from the faults of one’s previous life; just compensation for innocent suffering and renunciations in this life; and being able to bring to reality the potential for good that could not be fulfilled in the short span of a single life.

“What kind of experiential evidence do New Agers put forward to support belief in **reincarnation** and how credible are they?

The experiential evidence that New Agers put forward to support belief in **reincarnation** consist of “past life” experiences or memories. These may be spontaneous or may be elicited by hypnotherapy. Most items of this evidence are questionable because with good reason they can be attributed to the following:

forgetfulness of similar experiences that took place earlier in life; suggestion by the therapist; inventions and delusions of the one who claims to have been reincarnated. Even those few items of evidence that appear impressive are not free from the reasonable suspicion that they are due to manipulation of the mind by malign deceiving spirits, because they contradict Christian teachings that the spirit and the body of each human being are intimately related (human beings are “embodied spirits”), and that human beings live only one life, after which comes judgment, which immediately or eventually brings eternal fulfillment or frustration, as the person deserves.

“May a Catholic Christian accept belief in **reincarnation**?

Definitely not. A Catholic Christian may not accept belief in **reincarnation**, because the latter contradicts some tenets of Christian faith. The idea of a re-embodiment or reincarnation of the soul after death in a new life in this world completely contradicts Holy Scripture and the Church’s tradition of faith.

According to the Christian faith, no number of earthly lives could suffice for the purification and fulfillment of human beings. God alone and life with God are the holiness, justice, and fulfillment of human beings. Furthermore, according to Christian teaching that human beings are embodied spirits, body and spiritual soul are so intimately related that they cannot be separated in such an extreme way that the soul could assume different bodies without thereby losing its own identity. Finally, this life and the moral effort that it includes, is taken with true and sufficient seriousness only if it is understood as a unique chance for deciding with God or without God, for God or against God - a chance that ends once and for all in death. This once-for-all quality of our earthly life corresponds to the once-for-all salvific deed of God through Jesus Christ, in which we permanently and definitively receive a share at our death to this mortal present form of life (Hebrews 9:27-28). This salvific deed of God culminates in our resurrection, like that of Jesus Christ, to a glorious and unending new form of life in which we shall experience the fulfillment of all our really worthwhile aspirations (John 11:25-26; John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Corinthians 15:50-57; Revelation 21:1-5).

“What can be said of the New Age claim that early Christians commonly believed in **reincarnation**, and that it was originally accepted as part of correct belief until it became suspect in the controversies over the influence of Gnostic ideas?

There is no basis to claim that early Christians commonly believed in **reincarnation**, much less that it was originally accepted as part of correct belief until it became suspect because it was a doctrine perceived to linked with gnosticism. On the contrary, for the early Christians, reincarnation held little if any in being considered an exotic and alien idea. Origen (about A.D.

185 – A.D. 254), a famous Church Father (who entertained the doctrine of the pre-existence of souls before, on, but not reincarnation, contrary to the claim of New Agers) already pointed out that reincarnation did not appear in the Bible or in Christian tradition. If it was mentioned at all among Christians, usually educated ones, it was with the awareness that it was Greek philosophy, and not the Bible nor Christian tradition, that was concerned with reincarnation. So unknown in the early Church was belief in **reincarnation** that it was never discussed nor debated, much less was there felt a need to condemn it formally. The Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (A.D. 553) did not directly condemn reincarnation, but rather the doctrine of the pre-existence of souls. The indirect effect, of course, was also to condemn reincarnation, since the preexistence of souls is a precondition for **reincarnation**.

“What about the passages in the Bible that some New Agers claim to support belief in **reincarnation**?

New Agers cite some Bible passages in their attempt to support belief in **reincarnation**.

For example in Matthew 11: 14 Jesus speaks of John as the Elijah whose coming was predicted. He also associated John the Baptist with Elijah in Matthew 17:1-13 (the Transfiguration account). But these cannot refer to reincarnation. According to 2 Kings 2:9-18 Elijah did not die but was taken bodily into heaven. Not having died, he cannot have reincarnated. Moreover, by the time the Transfiguration took place, late in Jesus’ ministry, John the Baptist had already lived and died. If John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elijah, the latter would no longer be able to appear at the Transfiguration scene, since he would no longer exist, his identity being subsumed, as it were, in John the Baptist and in the latter’s new **reincarnation**. The real connection between John the Baptist and Elijah is indicated in Luke 1: 17. John was to go before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous - to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Thus John the Baptist would virtually fulfill in his person what people were anticipating to be accomplished in the person of Elijah in the light of Malachi 4:5-6.

In John 3:1-7 Jesus speaks to Nicodemus of new birth in the water and the Spirit. Some New Agers claim that Jesus was referring to **reincarnation**. Not so. What is referred to here as new birth is the new spiritual life given by God to the Christian who has responded to God’s call by faith and conversion of life. This giving of new life from God is symbolized and effected in the Sacrament of Baptism.

In John 9:2, Jesus’ disciples ask him about the man blind from birth: “Master, was he born blind because of a sin of his, or of his parents?” New Agers take

this as evidence that Jesus and his disciples believed in reincarnation. Their reasoning is that the only way a man could have sinned before his birth so as to deserve the punishment of blindness is to have sinned in a life previous to his present reincarnation. However, their reasoning fails because of the fact that during the time of Jesus' earthly ministry some rabbis believed and taught that human fetuses in the womb could commit sin before their birth. This is one very plausible explanation for the above-cited verse, which renders unnecessary a resort to the postulation of **reincarnation**. In sum, there is no verse or passage in the Bible that supports belief in reincarnation.

“What is meant by *karma*?

Karma is a Sanskrit word literally meaning “action” or “activity,” but better translated as “cause and effect” in the New Age context. It is a belief basic to Hinduism and to Buddhism, according to which every action is the effect of a cause, and is in its turn the cause of an effect.

In the life of human beings, the doctrine of *karma* or karmic retribution holds that the good or evil one thinks, says, or does in previous incarnations results in the accumulation of positive karma (merit) or negative karma (demerit).

The doctrine of **reincarnation** is found in many non-Christian religions. In its classical forms in Hinduism and Buddhism it involves the taking on, by the soul or the psychic element in human beings of a body in successive lives. The good or evil one thinks, says, or does in previous incarnations results in the accumulation of positive karma or negative karma. (The term karma is Sanskrit; and literally means “action” or “activity,” but in the context of Hindu or Buddhist belief in reincarnation, it can also be better translated as “energy.” Positive karma or energy can be called “merit,” while negative karma or energy can be called “demerit.”) Depending on the balance between one's merits or demerits, after one's death to one's present incarnation, one could be reincarnated at a higher, an equal, or a lower level of being. A human being could therefore be reincarnated at a subhuman level of being. The aim of one's striving should be to liberate the cycle of birth, death, and reincarnation, called *samsāra*, and be reunited with or absorbed into oneness with all being.

In New Age, *karma* and **reincarnation** are closely interrelated, although New Agers have a concept of these two that is different from that of Hindus and Buddhists. New Agers opine that when a human being dies, his or her soul transmigrates to another body, there to resume its task of spiritual education under the guidance of spirit guides or angels of light, who are charged with showing him or her the way to a perfect life and how to get rid of the evil residues that had accumulated during his or her previous lives by virtue of the **law of karma**. In this way the human person becomes a perfect being

who lives, in harmony with the universal and cosmic energy, according to the maxim "All is energy, all is one, all is divine."

"How are Christians to regard the New Age teaching about *karma*?

A well-instructed and committed Christian knows that human beings are creatures endowed by God with freedom, and who are therefore responsible for their actions, and who by their deliberate decisions, work out their salvation and shape their eternity. A Christian believes that reward and punishment form part of the revealed message of the Bible, and operate in the lives of humans. Our human acts have great significance- we are responsible for their consequences, and they fix us in a situation that we have chosen and which may become definitive. Nevertheless, humans are not moved and determined from outside by *karma*, this fatal law in relation to which one has no choice but to submit, in order to make up for evil committed in past lives. Biblical revelation teaches us that humans dispose of only one life, and that at their death, they have to render an account to the One who wishes not that humans be condemned, but rather wishes that they may live forever. Yet God cannot constrain the human beings who misuse their freedom of choice by sinning against love and who during their earthly existence have preferred sin and not friendship with God.

At the same time, Christians believe that Jesus Christ, by his ministry, death, and glorious resurrection, has freed them from the possibility of being caught in the oppressive cycle of *samsāra*, the eternal return or beginning of all things. Consequently, it is not purificatory and ascetical rites and practices, not human beings own efforts and merits, that confer salvation on them and admit them to eternal blessedness. It is only a life of faith, inspired by great love for God, for other humans, and for creation, that permits Christian believers to hope that one day they will participate in Christ's glory, passing with him from death to life, from time to eternity, once and for all. This is very different from *karma* and **reincarnation**, as this is understood and taught by many New Agers.

(*Primer on New Age*, Philippines Bishops' Conference, 8 January 2003, <http://cbcponline.net/primer-on-new-age/>)

"Inasmuch as health includes a prolongation of life, *New Age* offers an Eastern formula in Western terms.

Originally, **reincarnation** was a part of Hindu cyclical thought, based on the *atman* or divine kernel of personality (later the concept of *jiva*), which moved from body to body in a cycle of suffering (*samsara*), determined by the **law of karma**, linked to behaviour in past lives. Hope lies in the possibility of being born into a better state, or ultimately in liberation from the need to be reborn. What is different in most Buddhist traditions is that what wanders

from body to body is not a soul, but a continuum of consciousness. Present life is embedded in an endless cosmic process which includes even the gods. In the West ... **reincarnation** has been understood far more optimistically as a process of learning and progressive individual fulfilment. Spiritualism, theosophy, anthroposophy and *New Age* all see **reincarnation** as participation in cosmic evolution.

This post-Christian approach to eschatology is said to answer the unresolved questions of theodicy and dispenses with the notion of hell. When the soul is separated from the body individuals can look back on their whole life up to that point, and when the soul is united to its new body there is a preview of its coming phase of life. People have access to their former lives through dreams and meditation techniques." (JCBWL #2.2.3)

"Karma: (from the Sanskrit root *Kri* = action, deed) a key notion in Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism, but one whose meaning has not always been the same. In the Vedic period it referred to the ritual action, especially sacrifice, by means of which a person gained access to the happiness or blessedness of the afterlife. When Jainism and Buddhism appeared (about 6 centuries before Christ), *Karma* lost its salvific meaning: the way to liberation was knowledge of the *Atman* or "self". In the doctrine of *samsara*, it was understood as the incessant cycle of human birth and death (Hinduism) or of rebirth (Buddhism). In *New Age* contexts, the "**law of karma**" is often seen as the moral equivalent of cosmic evolution. It is no longer to do with evil or suffering – illusions to be experienced as part of a "cosmic game" – but is the universal law of cause and effect, part of the tendency of the interconnected universe towards moral balance." (JCBWL #7.2)

"Reincarnation: in a *New Age* context, **reincarnation** is linked to the concept of ascendant evolution towards becoming divine. As opposed to Indian religions or those derived from them, *New Age* views **reincarnation** as progression of the individual soul towards a more perfect state. What is reincarnated is essentially something immaterial or spiritual; more precisely, it is consciousness, that spark of energy in the person that shares in cosmic or "Christic" energy. Death is nothing but the passage of the soul from one body to another." (JCBWL #7.2)

Karma (five times), and **Reincarnation** (fourteen times), are mentioned in the JCBWL document. (#2.2.3, #4, #7.2)

Chapter 90

Silva Method (formerly Silva Mind Control)

Origins and developments

“The **Silva Method** is a self-help (read chapter 95) and meditation program developed by José Silva. It claims to increase an individual’s abilities through relaxation and development of higher brain functions.

José Silva was an electrical repairman who developed a great interest in religion, psychology, and parapsychology. He spent much time learning about hypnosis, attempting to increase his children’s IQ. After experimenting and being convinced of his daughter’s sudden clairvoyance, Silva decided to learn more about the development of psychic abilities.

In 1944, Silva began developing his method, formerly known as **Silva Mind Control**, using it on his family members and friends, before launching it commercially in the 1960s. Silva did research on the brain, based on Robert Sperry’s split-brain theory, to improve his method. However, modern studies have not proven but instead suggest most of Silva’s beliefs about the brain to be incorrect. The technique aims to reach and sustain a state of mental functioning, called alpha state, where brainwave frequency is seven to fourteen Hz. Daydreaming and the transition to sleeping are alpha states.

“Silva claimed to have developed a program that trained people to enter certain brain states of enhanced awareness. He also claimed to have developed several systematic mental processes to use while in these states allowing a person to mentally project with a specific intent. According to Silva, once the mind is projected, a person can allegedly view distant objects or locations and connect with higher intelligence for guidance. The information received by the projected mind is then said to be perceived as thoughts, images, feelings, smells, taste and sound by the mind. The information obtained in this manner can be acted upon to solve problems.

Famed paranormal investigator and skeptic James Randi wrote that the Silva Method “*claims to develop improved memory, learning ability, and paranormal powers like telepathy. Much of the course consists of ‘visiting’ absent persons imagined by students and performing diagnoses on them. No tests of the validity of this practice have been done; such tests are discouraged by the teachers of the system*”.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silva_Method)

“In 1999 José Silva founded a new company and called it “**Silva UltraMind Systems, LLC**”. This new company was founded to present his newly developed course, which he named “Silva UltraMind **ESP System**”. This company and

course was not affiliated with Silva International, Inc., Silva Method, or any other Silva named organization. It was an independent Company, which presented his last course that Mr. Silva developed before his passing. In 2009, because of certain disagreements in the organization, the three owners decided to dissolve the “Silva UltraMind Systems, LLC” company. The intellectual property rights that he previously gave to the three partners were given back to José Silva’s Estate.”

(<http://www.silvaultramind.com/>)

Note: ESP stands for “extra-sensory perception” ... “popular in some areas of the *New Age* that human beings have extraordinary psychic abilities, but often only in an undeveloped state.” (JCBWL #7.2)

New Age

“**Silva Mind Control** is a method invented by José Silva ... He claims that anyone who takes his 48 hour course will develop psychic powers, will learn how to enter an altered state of consciousness and in that state be allowed to tap into a higher intelligence in the universe (known as “Christ consciousness”). The Vatican hardly needs to make a specific statement against Silva Mind Control because this one is a no-brainer for anyone who is even remotely catechized... The Silva Method - incorporates a variety of occult practices such as clairvoyance and the development of psychic abilities, the use of spirit guides, visualization and guided imagery, as well as very New Age mind control techniques.

Other problematic teachings for Christians concern sin, which José Silva explains away as ignorance or failing to think properly. Silva’s course also emphasizes the self and “looking inward” in order to teach one how to better “use the untapped power of the mind to accomplish whatever you desire” and to work toward the betterment of humanity. The idea that the “mind is god” ... is one of the foundations for the New Age human potential movement.”

(*Silva Mind Control*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=85>)

“In the NAM there are various methods of acquiring familiar spirits, disguised as ‘counsellors’, or friends to advise people in their decision-making. They can be acquired through mind control techniques that use counsellors in the so-called ‘laboratory’ of the heart in a step-by-step relaxation of mind and body technique that is offered by some groups, such as the **Silva Mind Control**, as a non-religious way of making oneself more productive in learning, mental work, or more successful in business. This practice is used in self-help groups for healing, relaxation, and creativity enhancement.

These counsellors can be anybody, including the dead or demonic spirits. From the time these spirits are engaged, one is told to pray to them and ask their

advice on everything. This opens the soul to demonic influence as we have no control over the forces involved, because the person has been put into a relaxed state in which they are ready to receive any influence without using the filter of intelligence or rational thinking. ... This is a basic NAM technique for developing higher states of consciousness. 'This practice of engaging familiar spirits is one of the most diverse, pervasive, and influential NAM methods in use today' ... Silva Mind Control ... is based on occult philosophy, simply repackaged in de-religionised form for the materialistic west. SMC teaches that the subconscious mind can be programmed to achieve any desired goal."

(*A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon*, Irish Theological Commission, 1994,

<https://www.worldcat.org/title/new-age-of-the-spirit-a-catholic-response-to-the-new-age-phenomenon/oclc/31172232>)

"Some *New Age* writers view suffering as self-imposed, or as bad karma, or at least as a failure to harness one's own resources. Others concentrate on methods of achieving success and wealth (e.g. Deepak Chopra, **José Silva** et al.)." (JCBWL #4)

"**Mind Control** was taught informally by an Argentinean Catholic priest in 1976 for the first time and one year later officially by a Korean Catholic priest, who was authorised by the New York headquarters of Mind Control.

José Silva, the founder of Mind Control, visited South Korea and gave public lectures in 1979. Shortly thereafter, the Korean Branch of Mind Control was founded and attracted many members at the beginning of the 1980s (*Chōngsin Segye* 1999: 68ff)."

(*Hai-Ran Woo, New Age in South Korea*, <http://www.asanas.org.uk/files/woo%20advance%20publication.pdf>)

"If your parish hasn't been the scene of *New Age* stirrings and teachings, it is a real blessing ... (however) if the pastor is faithful, even if he is rock solid, he may be undermined by others in a large parish to whom he must turn for assistance. If that were not enough, he may shepherd a fine parish and still see his flock infected, (*The Unicorn in the Sanctuary*, Randy England, p. 138) The author goes on to point out the danger of retreats and programmes which (sometimes inadvertently) act as a platform for *New Age* ideas. The chapter highlights such activities and topics as 'self-awareness' groups; how to develop the power of divine qualities within ourselves; how to enhance our 'spiritual understanding'; centering prayer as a method of meditation; and **Silva Mind Control**.

This last-named is a system which: *features both the meditative state of eastern religion and the pagan visualization techniques (read chapter 97) which give the method its power. In the Silva Method the student learns to achieve an altered state of*

consciousness (then) relaxation and problem solving. (Ibid. p.146) Catholic parishes are known to have promoted, and even hosted, such courses."

(Michael Akerman, http://catholicassociates.com/Todaysmost%20serious_Rev1.pdf)

"#22. There are human empowerment programs of doubtful scientific origins, such as Dianetics, the **Silva Method of Mental Control**, Transcendental Meditation, and others, which produce an unbelievable amount of graphs and reports that supposedly verify the solidity of their claims. A pseudoscientific language permeates their books and discourses to create the impression of being a fully tested procedure. It could be that some of their clients experience an initial well-being, achieve a greater tranquillity, acquire the habit of greater concentration at work, or whatever was promised them, but many times these programs conceal a defective view of man, the world, and God. They imperceptibly lead the participant to affirm or to accept what common sense and the Christian faith reject."

"#35. Finally, we must emphasize the fact that the promoters of "New Age's" spirituality usually affirm its absolute compatibility with Catholic faith and doctrine. In some cases this might be out of ignorance or superficiality. But in general, at least in Mexico, it probably comes from market studies: since the Mexican population is mostly Catholic, they strive not to wound the religious sensitivity of potential clients. It is not unusual for organizations such as the Great Universal Fraternity and programs such as **Silva Mind Control**, to name a few, to dress up in a very "Christian" vocabulary and present their beliefs as the ideal complement to Catholicism. Nonetheless, they lead their initiates towards pantheism and the denial of the essence of Christianity."

(*A Call to Vigilance, Pastoral Instruction on New Age*, Archbishop [later Cardinal] Norberto Rivera Carrera, 7 January 1996 <http://www.ewtn.com/library/bishops/acall.htm>)

José Silva, the founder of **Silva Mind Control**, is named in the JCBWL document. (#4)

Chapter 91

Spiritual Human Yoga (SHY) – Academy of Human and Universal Energy School (HUASA) Mankind Enlightenment Love (MEL) Human Universal Energy (HUE)

The New Age cult **Spiritual Human Yoga (SHY)** is unique. It is bizarre. It is very occult, thoroughly evil. It is an eclectic blend of -- or associated with -- something or the other encountered in almost every individual subject treated in this Compendium. And, though most readers must never have heard of it, it is quite an epidemic in the Church.

Whenever I refer to it, I will identify this New Age *cult*, for that's what it is, as **Spiritual Human Yoga, SHY** for short, which is the original name under which it was established and propagated. However, the founder of the Indian unit of **SHY**, and those who promote or endorse it, use alternative names for it as the chapter heading indicates, and as we will see.

Origins and Development

"**Spiritual Human Yoga** was founded in 1989 by a Vietnamese guru called 'Master Luong Minh Dang'. Originally known as IHUERI - '**International Human and Universal Energy Research Institute.**' The organization has been known by several other names including '**Mankind Enlightenment Love**', (MEL).

The 'Master' passed away in August 2007. The group has since split into two factions. One faction, still going under the name '**Mankind Enlightenment Love**' is operated by the Master's son, Dr. Trung Minh Luong, based in St. Louis, Missouri, USA. The other faction, known as '**Academy of Human and Universal Energy School**' (HUESA) is operated by the second wife of the Master and is based in Melbourne, Australia. Both factions have 'centers' located in the US and several countries throughout the world.

"According to the teachings of the Master, he considered himself the first and only person on earth who had the God-given ability to open the 7 'chakras' of the human body through a divine transmission of energy from himself to his students/disciples. It was asserted that this 'opening of the chakras' was what yogis through the ages have been trying to achieve through meditation throughout the centuries, but that no-one has ever achieved a full and permanent opening as Master Dang could provide. This opening and unblocking of the chakras is supposed to charge the body with 'Universal

Energy' which can then be used in an unlimited manner to heal all illnesses including cancer, AIDS etc. Energy transfers are given at lower 'levels' through the hands and later through the 'chakra 6' - meaning mental transfer of energy. In general the mindset of the group members tends to be positive in the hope of establishing a utopian 'spiritual' society where 'illness, aging and death' will cease to exist. Also, this utopian society will not occur until there has been a complete breakdown of the structure of society, including world-wide devastation of the environment caused by both natural and man-made disasters. The 'Master' also predicted a complete collapse of global economic systems. Many members 'voluntarily' give up outside interests including family, career and hobbies to devote their lives to 'transferring energy' to the 'heal' the sick and teaching the theological/philosophical concepts as taught by Master Dang during his lifetime. There are many who accept to live in poverty to do this.

"From the **HUESA** website: Master Luong Minh Dang, the founder of the **Universal Energy School**, was born in My Tho, South Vietnam, on 30 January 1942. In 1985, Master Dang migrated to the USA and he was later granted USA citizenship. 'Master Dang' initially told students that he learned about Universal Energy from a man known as Dasira Narada II, an Indian man who briefly visited Vietnam, during which time it seems he met and instructed M. Dang.

"According to the Master, this man later returned to India. This Dasira Narada II supposedly taught until about 1972. This would put the Master at about 30 years old when he studied with this teacher. Very little is known about Dasira Narada I (the Chinese name seems to have been 'Zushi Ye') except that he was from Sri Lanka and spent his life as a 'high civil servant'. He was born about 1890 and died 1924. There appear to be other groups existing today in China that also base their practices upon his teachings. 'Master Dang' adopted the title 'Dasira Narada III'. However, there was also a Vietnamese man by the name of Mr. Huynh (Chinese name Huang) who claimed the title of 'Dasira Narada' for himself. This teacher went to China and taught almost the exact same principles as Mr. Dang to another, apparently different, group of Chinese there. Those people still study and follow Mr. Huynh's teaching. In 1993 or 1994 another Vietnamese man, the leader of the 'Universal Energy' Center in Spain called Curtis Cao Duy also claimed to be Dasira Narada III. This man was almost certainly instructed directly by Mr. Dang, but apparently decided to create his own splinter group. At that time, the Master apparently made the decision to cut ties with the Dasira Narada connection completely. From that time on, he always claimed that everything he knew came directly from God, not from any other human teacher.

It seems that he used the story to explain himself when he first began teaching and then no longer found it useful.

“At one time, the Master was claiming to have 1 million practitioners throughout the world in 67 countries. Claims as to the number of students currently practicing have been pretty much dropped from the official websites. Mr. Dang began teaching students in California in 1989. These students were predominantly drawn from the pool of Vietnamese refugees residing there at that time. In October 1991 the Master announced that a major earthquake would destroy California. Mr. Dang announced the re-location of himself and his family to St. Louis. According to students, the Master did not encourage anyone to go with him. In fact at times he supposedly actively discouraged them from following him. Most of the students were panicked by the earthquake prophecy, however, and about fifteen to twenty Vietnamese families uprooted themselves and drove in a convoy from California to the Midwest behind the Master’s family car. The journey has become stuff of legend within the school, with the cars traveling at great speed through the mountains, feeling as though the hand of God was the only thing keeping everyone safe from falling off the winding, narrow roads. When the predicted earthquake did not destroy California, some students were angry and blamed Mr. Dang. Some did leave to go back to California or Texas etc. Most remained, staying loyal to the Master and believing his prayers and intercessions to God had averted the catastrophe. In 1991 the group began to attract American and then European students.

“As I mentioned before, the man known to his disciples as ‘Master’ Luong Minh Dang taught a method of healing by using ‘Universal Energy’. The Master made claims that when the techniques were applied correctly with pure intentions to help the patient, even medically incurable illnesses such as AIDS, cancer, leukemia etc., could be remedied: *“Presently in some special and difficult cases, scientists can do nothing about illnesses considered to be incurable diseases. There are no effective treatments and suffering can be incessant. Many patients see death near. We do not assert that we can solve all such problems, but we humbly present the marvel of Universal Energy...”* (From the **Spiritual Human Yoga** Level 3 Manual, 1988).

“The key ingredient in being able to ‘harness’ the ‘Energy of the Universe’ into the human body was the opening of the chakras. At the time of his death, the Master had taught twenty ‘Levels’ within the school of Universal Energy. Level One – The practitioner’s chakras are opened thirty percent and healing limited to self and immediate family. To maintain this ‘opening’, practitioners must perform the daily breathing exercises.

Level Two – The practitioner’s chakras are opened sixty percent and healing limited to self, immediate family and close friends. To maintain this ‘opening’, practitioners must perform the daily breathing exercises.

Level Three – Chakras opened 100% and no limitation on healing. There is no requirement to continue the breathing exercises to maintain the opening. At this level the practitioner is also said to be able to liberate ‘wandering souls’ (the souls of those who have passed on but have been unable for whatever reason to return to the ‘Light’) using a simple intercessory prayer to the Master. Up to this point, all healing is performed using a direct ‘hands on’ method. At higher levels, preparation begins for students to begin ‘transferring energy’ through chakra 6 (remote [aka distant] healing at a distance). Step by step, as a student progresses through higher levels, an entire spiritual system is revealed. Students come to learn from Mr. Dang that they are in fact the reincarnation of various spiritual Masters of the lost continent of Atlantis or of Egypt. They learn that that they caused the destruction of Atlantis in earlier lifetimes. This was due to their overweening arrogance; they believed that they were better than God almighty and put more faith in their own technological prowess than in God.

Thus they can see that the world is making the same mistakes of Atlantis all over again, with egoistic capitalists/scientists/religions leading the world to the brink of destruction. They learn that they have returned to earth to atone for past misdeeds and that they now have a mission to serve all of humanity by spreading the teaching of Universal Energy to save mankind from itself. Mr. Dang refers frequently to the ‘Higher Beings’ who are divinely appointed to protect/assist/guide and judge humanity. They include but are not limited to “Mohammed, Buddha and Jesus Christ”. Students are encouraged to pray to the divinity of their own religion for guidance on the spiritual path. If students have no particular religious belief, they can ask the ‘Master’ in their thoughts to guide them or intercede for them to God.

“Some of the following quotes of the Master indicating that it can be difficult to extricate oneself from this group are taken from transcripts of a meeting that was held in Tiel, Holland in 1998:

“If for any reason you refuse everything; you deny this teaching, you cannot be protected.”

“If the soul is not turned to the protection of the human race, then this soul will not be protected and will be eliminated.””

(<https://forum.culteducation.com/read.php?12,63622,64677>, Cult Education Institute, 2008-9)

“In October 1991, American newspapers reported that a healer named Luong Minh Dang, established in St. Louis and running an organization then called **International Human and Universal Energy Research Institute**, had predicted

that an earthquake would strike California. When wildfires began to rage through the hills of Oakland, several hundred members of the Vietnamese community in California fled to Missouri, supposed to be a safe place, in order to seek Dang's advice. Some subsequently left him. But reporters noticed that Dang, who had settled in the United States in 1985 and had first been known only within the Vietnamese community, was already beginning to attract European followers.

On January 16 and 17, 1999, more than 6,000 Level 5 and 6 initiates of Universal Energy -- renamed **Spiritual Human Yoga (SHY)** -- gathered in Geneva, but not without turmoil: Master Dang was prevented to attend, since he had just been arrested by the Belgian Police (he finally spent 65 days in jail there, before being released on bail). Some Swiss media had expressed anxiety during the previous days, describing the movement as an "apocalyptic cult" and claiming that Dang had scheduled a departure toward another planet on January 29, 1999. The congress took place without trouble. Worth noticing was especially the fact that participants had come from a number of countries around the world and that those of Vietnamese background were only a minority. Despite the failed prophecies of the early 1990s, the small group launched ten years earlier by a Vietnamese refugee in the United States had become an international organization with a presence in more than 60 countries. But the tendency of Dang to announce imminent planetary upheavals had not disappeared in the meantime and was putting him into trouble once again.

"Luong Minh Dang was born in Vietnam on January 30, 1942. According to his own statements, he served in the South Vietnamese Navy from 1961 to 1975 and became an officer. Following the Communist victory, he went through difficult years, but finally managed to immigrate to the United States in 1985 and settled in St. Louis, Missouri. During the first few months, he used to work as a waiter in a restaurant, but apparently soon developed fame as a healer and began to gather a following. In 1988, he used to describe his method as the "**Neo Healing System**". He undertook his first travels abroad in 1988-89 and launched his movement formally in 1989. Dang claims to have inherited his technique from previous masters and it is said to have come from Sri Lanka (while having very ancient origins in old civilizations). The founder of the current "Spiritual School of Universal Energy" was allegedly a resident of Sri Lanka named Dasira Narada (1846-1924), described as the holder of a doctoral degree in philosophy and a civil servant in a high position, who spent the final years of his life in seclusion and spiritual pursuits. His successor, Dasira Narada II, about whom little information is given except for the fact that he was an Indian, allegedly initiated Dang in Vietnam in 1972: Dang became Dasira Narada III. Dasira Narada II is said to have returned to Sri Lanka in

1974 and to have passed away there in 1980. No independent confirmation is available regarding those informations or even the existence of a man called Dasira Narada, and only research in Sri Lanka might possibly allow to shed some light on those claims.

“There is little literature available as a public introduction to **Spiritual Human Yoga (SHY)**, except for websites in several languages operated by some local SHY organizations. If one reads those texts as well as the teachings distributed to initiates learning the first levels of SHY, there seems to be no reference to apocalyptic events or planetary turmoils. Universal Energy is said to be found everywhere and to exercise a biological effects upon the bodily cells. SHY is supposed to allow to control Universal Energy and to use it for the well-being of everybody. Pyramids (read chapter 20) are supposed to have the ability to keep Universal Energy: students having reached the highest levels of SHY use small pyramids in order to stock Universal Energy. Chakras are used as gateways for Universal Energy to enter into our bodies; SHY students learn how to use the chakras. Energy can be transferred to people who need it (for instance as a complement to medicine for a sick person). From Levels 1 to 5, SHY students transfer the Energy with the hands; at the levels above, transfers are being made by telepathy -- which means that Energy can then be transmitted to people anywhere on the Earth. Chakras of the SHY students are opened step by step (30% at level 1, 60% at level 2 and 100% at level 3). Spiritual teachings are delivered from Level 4. Compared with other techniques, like Reiki, **SHY** is understood by its practitioners as being easier to use, less time-consuming and faster. Other methods of yoga require a very long time in order to open the chakras, and success is never fully guaranteed, while SHY claims to “obtain the 100% opening of the six chakras” in “less than a month”.

“According to Master Dang, **SHY** “enables the body to stay balanced, as well as to draw in energy from the universe, to teach others and open their chakras, as well as to treat all diseases”.

Dang’s teachings cannot be connected to any specific tradition, but they are definitely part of the “cultic milieu”, of the alternative religious trends: Dang believes that the teachings of Universal Energy were practiced 6000 years ago in Egypt and later in India, he gives a great importance to ancient Egypt and refers to it often. He seems to believe that most (if not all) of his closest followers lived in Atlantis and in Egypt in previous incarnations. He refers to names like Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815) or Edgar Cayce (1877-1945). Dang once recommended to people attending a Level 5 seminar to read the (fictitious, but still popular) *Life and Teachings of the Masters of the Far East* by Baird T. Spalding (1872-1953), presented by Dang as an “eminent English scientist”. Members

are also encouraged to read *In the Light of Truth* by Abd-ru shin (Oskar Ernst Bernhardt, 1875-1941).

“While a number of typical beliefs of the “cultic milieu” emerge in Dang’s teachings, some are not integrated: for instance, Dang denies the existence of extraterrestrials. The orientation of Dang’s teachings is not dogmatic, however, and he encourages his audience to take from his teachings only what seems adequate for them, depending upon their beliefs. Not surprisingly, a number of people practicing **SHY** were obviously quite familiar with alternative and esoteric teachings already before they became involved in SHY. It is not before the highest levels of SHY that teachings which have been termed by outsiders as “apocalyptic” (although this word does not seem really appropriate, as we will see) enter into the message of Universal Energy. In recent years, Dang has repeatedly warned his closest students that imminent, cataclysmic events would soon affect the entire world. As early as May 1996, during a seminar in the Netherlands” and August 1996, during a seminar in Thailand, he informed the participants that there would be a great change in year 2000, although this would not be the end of the world. But there would be cataclysmic events: for instance, at an unspecified date, Japan is expected to disappear into the sea, apparently as a consequence of atomic tests, and there will be other major disasters as well. But **SHY** students should help to reduce the impact of those upheavals, and there will finally be a new mankind in harmony with Universal Energy on a new Earth.

“During a one week long meeting in the Netherlands with 138 selected students in February 1998, Dang detailed his beliefs regarding the next few years. Let’s try to summarize the most relevant themes.

Year 2000 will mark a great turning point for mankind: everything which we know from the past will disappear -- and Dang insists: the new era won’t begin in 2001 or 2002, but in year 2000. January 29, 1999, was predicted as a fateful date: those who would begin to behave properly and decide to help mankind before that date would be in harmony with the new energy and would be able to remain in their current bodies, otherwise they would have to die and to get new bodies. There won’t be a world or nuclear war, but a world economic crisis as well as environmental problems. Illnesses will also be on the increase. All the countries of the world will be paralyzed and only **SHY** students will still be able to help. But here come the good news: from year 2000, all the problems of the world will be solved and mankind will develop incredible new abilities -- for instance, Master Dang promises to teach how to create a lesser density in order to reduce the weight of the human bodies. We will be able to move through space at a very high speed. Thanks to the technique of Universal Energy, we

will be able to change the consistence of objects -- for instance to fold a cup in order to put it into our pocket. Dang also taught that, from autumn 1999, the climate would become temperate on the entire Earth, neither too warm nor too cold, without great temperature changes, like a perpetual autumn.

Dang's utopia definitely has all the features of a millennial scenario. "Everything which is ancient will be erased" and leave place to a transformed world, in which the air will be pure and from which dangerous microbes will be banished: it will be a regenerated Earth where a new mankind will be able to live in peace and to cultivate new abilities -- some of them quite unusual ones, for instance the prediction that, at some point in the future, women will no more need men in order to beget children and will be able to have hundreds of children each with very short pregnancies thanks to Universal Energy which should allow to speed the growth! It is true that Dang is not particularly of a Malthusian inclination and declares himself convinced that the Earth should be able at some point to accommodate 80 billion human beings...

"Basically, Dang's message is that **SHY** holds the key to all the problems of the present and of the future world: "we will bring happiness and prosperity to mankind". Dang seems to think that he has a solution for most current problems: at the beginning of 1999, he even published a book claiming to "help the world to avoid the total global crash" caused by the Y2K problem, offering a temporary solution for the next 10 years.

Even if some readers understood it as apocalyptic, Master Dang's message seems to be rather optimistic. There will be "a positive change not only in just one country, but all over the world". One might even be tempted to describe it as excessively optimistic, since he takes the risk to announce major and positive changes within a short time-span, which means that disconfirmation is quite likely. We will very soon be able to see if the climate has changed for the better or not!

"A few comments can be made about Dang and his millennial message:

●**SHY** is no part of any specific millenarian tradition. It is an eclectic brand of millenarianism, using a variety of widespread topics: we can expect to see more and more such kinds of millenarianism during the years to come. Dang does not refrain from using older apocalyptic themes: he even claims that there is a lot about himself in the Message of Fatima (*La Retraite de Boomhoek*, page 44). Generally, however, Dang refers to modern fears: economic crisis, Y2K, pollution... It is definitely very much a late 20th century picture. Accordingly, appropriate techniques should be able to solve those problems: Universal Energy is the solution.

“Dang is also playing upon the feeling that the entrance into a new millennium must be associated with major changes. Actually, **SHY** is one of the very few relatively large groups (and probably even the only one with a following of that size) announcing that year 2000 will mark the beginning of a new era.

●Universal Energy appears first as a healing technique. But there is an extension from the idea of individual healing to collective healing -- healing of the planet through the combined efforts of **SHY** followers. The new way of life on Earth will be made possible by the application of this technique; in addition, the technique makes the transition from the old to the new age easier, reducing the turmoils usually associated with the entrance into the millennium. This appears to be the bridge between healing and the millennium.

●**SHY** can probably not be described as a religion in the strict sense of the word. For instance, it does not seem to have any kind of worship or ceremonies associated with major steps in life.

“But on the other hand, Dang considers Jesus and Buddha as having been the two greatest beings and, while stating that one should not believe in Dang in the same way one believes in Jesus or Buddha, claims to be helped by God and to “communicate with many of the Divine Beings” and that those Divine Beings “always are near, constantly teaching me the new information, so that I can continue on with this journey to help all of you”. People who have had their chakras opened are said to have constantly two Higher Beings with them, who help them. There is also a discrete criticism of established religions (“In our days, there are many churches, but without spirituality” [*Séminaire Spécial-Spiritualité du 3 au 7 août 1997*, page 13]. Christianity has not been able to bring a credible and tangible solution to mankind, in contrast with **SHY** [*La Retraite de Tiel*, page 117]).

“It is true that healing groups have often been seen as being orientated rather toward the fulfillment of individual concerns; but, in his research on a movement from the Philippines (**Pranic Healing**), Beckford had already remarked that global concerns were not foreign to its adherents (James A. Beckford and Araceli Suzara, “A New Religious and Healing Movement in the Philippines”, in *Religion*, 24/2, April 1994, pp. 117-141). The same could definitely be said of **SHY** students: there seems to be a strong altruistic impetus (to help individuals as well as the world). **SHY** fits at least to some extent into the category of “new religious and healing movements” described by Beckford. It would be interesting to examine to which extent such millenarian views are atypical or could actually be found in a wider range of such movements.

“●While Dang tends to distance himself from any suggestion that he announced apocalyptic events and explains that he had just stated that current problems

might doom mankind if not properly addressed, there is no doubt that, during the past few years, he has often mentioned imminent cataclysmic events as well as major world transformations in a very near future. Considering his previous predictions in the early 1990s, it is obvious that upheavals and disasters fascinate Dang. At a more practical level, it is certainly a way to motivate people and to incite them to engage into collective action. However, announcing such short-term events also means that the likeliness of empirical disconfirmation runs very high. This tendency to play with the topic of disasters and cataclysms means that: a) Dang will continue to get regularly into trouble, since it will create anxieties among people having relatives in the group as well as in law-enforcement agencies eager to prevent further “cult tragedies”; b) there will necessarily be disappointed followers leaving the movement. However, it is by no means sure that this will lead the movement to a premature disappearance -- if only because there will always be many people who had not heard about the previous predictions. In addition, while millenarianism certainly creates a sense of urgency among those who listen to those teachings, one should not forget that the millenarian message is only explained at the higher levels and that people do not initially become students of **SHY** because of this millenarian element, but due to the healing possibilities offered by Universal Energy attract them: the attractiveness of Dang’s message is not primarily based upon millenarian expectations. In addition, for those at the higher levels, Dang is already offering something which might be seen as a compensator for the failure of prophecy: for the first time, Level 7 of SHY will be unveiled at West Palm Beach (Florida) in late November, and certainly excitement must be great among practitioners of **SHY** due to this new opportunity -- still associated with the idea “to help Humanity to step into a New Era starting from the 21st Century” (SHY Worldwide, Internal Directive, July 15, 1999).

“●How is it possible to determine if a group like **SHY** might cause trouble, since this was obviously the concern of some law-enforcement agencies in Belgium, Switzerland and France last January? There were references at that time to statements by Master Dang during internal meetings, claiming that the purpose was “to reach rapidly the 4th dimension”. Some people feared that it might indicate a willingness to stage a “Transit”, Solar Temple style. However, if one reads those comments into context, without isolating them, they obviously have nothing sinister associated with them. One could actually find, among Master Dang’s sometimes strange statements, elements which might cause concern, but his accusers have apparently not been aware of some of those potentially quite controversial remarks (For instance this comment in December 1998, which might just have been a joke, but could certainly be perceived as bizarre at least if it was not: “A lot of times as I teach I feel exhausted.

As I went on the airplane and they see me sitting in the airplane, they ask what I'm praying for. I told them I pray for the airplane to crash. For dying together with me, then everyone would go with me to the light. Each time I go on the airplane, I keep on praying for the airplane to crash. I don't want to crash on land. I want it to crash on the ocean." [Level 5.2 Seminar, p. 181]. Master Dang certainly belongs to the category of rather unpredictable spiritual masters, he is not afraid of contradicting himself or of being proved wrong by the turn of events, and in addition there is no authority beside him for checking what he is telling. However, at this moment (1999), the number of followers is increasing, it has the potential to reach new territories. In addition, the reactions at the meeting in Geneva in January 1999, at a time of controversies and while Dang himself was in jail, were quite self-contained and not hysterical."

(*Healing for the Millennium: Master Dang and Spiritual Human Yoga*, Jean-François Mayer, University of Fribourg (Switzerland), CESNUR, 2000, <https://www.cesnur.org/testi/SHY.htm>)

Note: The study is from a secular -- not a Christian perspective.

New Age

The two articles reproduced immediately above are of an academic nature. They do not examine Dang's philosophies, teachings and practices from a religious perspective. I will look at their occult and New Age angles.

I visited an "Exhibition of Alternative Medicines" at Vailankanni, Tamil Nadu, 9 to 11 February 2002. One of the stalls was **Spiritual Human Yoga-Universal Energy** put up by its Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu-based founder-director, a nun with a medical degree, whom we shall refer to as Sr. MA. Sr. MA also ran a booth promoting the martial art of Tai Chi.

On October 28, 1999, her institute was accepted by the Master as a Centre of the International Universal Energy School.

Later, the school was renamed **Spiritual Human Yoga**. Energy transfer using the power of the chakras was taught, and the use of pyramids was introduced to "intensify the effects of UE ... and help the students for spiritual awareness and enlightenment," according to **SHY** literature.

"When the world entered the 21st century, Master gave a new name for the school: **Mankind Enlightenment Love**", the literature says.

By the time Sr. MA was interviewed by me, she had had 1314 "students" between 'levels' 3 and 5.2. She writes, "91 students who have completed Level 5.2 and who are waiting to realize and utilise the powers of the Double Pyramid are now eligible to reach Level 6... **HUE** is well received by all - Christians, Hindus and Muslims. Thus **Human Universal Energy (HUE)** has become a powerful tool in creating and maintaining religious harmony in our country."

Master Dang's philosophies are taught through his writings, and those of his followers'; but naturally, all of his devotees must accept them to be able to get raised through the different "levels" of training which means that Sr. MA and the many sisters of the different religious orders whom she trains are indoctrinated in these **SHY** beliefs: *man is only soul and body; the soul is energy; the physical body is "faked, ephemeral"; there are three spiritual forms: Buddha, Christ and Higher Beings; we are the Higher Beings; non-duality: everything is the Source or God; unification of the individual with God; individuality and separation is an illusion; there is no 'doership', the sense of doership is illusory; there is no thing as free will; prana; vital energy; the subtle body; energy is the basis of all existence and life; manipulation of universal energy by activating the chakras; universal energy can be transferred over distances using pyramids; the secret code 1-9-8-0; meditating with pyramids and the 'Antenna Model'; reincarnation; denial of the reality of evil and sin, etc.*

The MEL logo: There were a number of charts and photographs - including a large and prominent one of the Master, alongside the **MEL** logo at the stall. This occult logo, which incorporates a dragon, a phoenix, and a triple pyramid, had the lettering TAN LINH. CON NGUOI - THIEN DINH on its bottom perimeter, and **SPIRITUAL HUMAN YOGA** at the top.

"The word Minh in the Master's name means bright, light, intelligent, wisdom. It also denotes a clairvoyant king. The appearance of the golden dragon means there will be a coming saint to ease the sufferings of life. When the phoenix appears, there will be the delivery of a righteous king... a period in which the spiritual level of humanity will be at the high point... the Golden Age. The three triangles represent the three pyramids in **MEL** which will open up to the wisdom and enlightenment for humanity. The pyramid has three faces manifesting the three spiritual forms on this earth which are Buddha, Christ and Higher Beings."

(The Meaning of MEL Logo, Luan Truong, Malarga Manitham [MM] Special Issue, 16 December 2001, pages 71, 72)

The SHY logo: The logo of Sr. MA's operations is the same, except that it has **S.H.Y - INDIA** on its bottom periphery.

There was this photograph of Sr. MA, hand outstretched towards a pyramid, with the caption "SHY-India Director Taking Energy from the Master's Pyramid". (The exact same technique is practised by Pranic Healers, where energy is drawn from pictures of Master Choa Kok Sui or from pyramids etc. 'blessed' by him.

“When you are obstructed, look in the pyramid or pray for help using your Chakra 6 to think about my Chakra 6 which is a way that I can transfer energy to help you at that time.”

(Absolute Freedom, Dang)

“The Level 7 Special is an advanced level to enhance your practice from a single pyramid to double pyramid ... to transmit energy directly in front of a person or indirectly through long distance. There are many healers... (who) with the help of Higher Beings are able to look at the picture of a patient and the energy from the higher being transferred from the patient to the healer ... to help wounds heal faster ... you only need 2 to 10 seconds. Place the pyramid on the location of the wound, swelling, tumour or surgical incision... There will surely be a day when we can change UE into electricity ... I will teach you how to transmit energy by imagining (visualizing, read chapter 97) ... millions of pyramids in space.”

(Teaching about the Antenna Model, Dang, MM Special Issue, 16 December 2001, pages 14, 15)

In the MM Special Issue, page 16, an anonymous article “*Magnificent Moment at the Level 7 Special Seminar in Melbourne*”, 11-15 November 2001, describes the phenomena experienced by Dang’s Hong Kong students. The Master used his Triple Pyramids and Antenna Model to “transfer energy”, at which time one of the pyramids started to emit flashing coloured lights which began to form the numbers 1, 7, 4, and 5.

“Master Dang explained that number 7 represented the presence of God.” The phenomenon was repeated daily and was seen not only “by the naked eye in the room, but was clearly shown on the screen of the video phone system (and) on the television screen”.

The secret code 1-9-8-0, Pyramids, and the “Antenna Model”

“(Master Dang) emphasized that “The UE science is an instrument helping mankind in the direction that Jesus, Buddha and God would like to leave them these secret codes to build a foundation of peace ... and perpetual wisdom.

The two helpful implements for the UE student while meditating are Double Pyramid and Antenna Model. Double Pyramids were formed inside UE practitioners’ brains after a period of their meditations and practices. Master noticed that when a person practiced the Pyramid properly ... [he/she] will be able to reach the state of consciousness of zero that scientists were longing for. As Master taught us, the Pyramid and the Antenna Model were created from the special codes. Master Dang reminds us: The merging of your body-soul and Universal Energy is the last stage of your spiritual evolution.”

“MEL is the only school in the world teaching about UE.

“When Chakras 6 and 7 have been opened, it will attract pure energy from the stars ... in space. Human beings, animals and plants can be filled of light so that we can travel through time and space. Gradually when humans can be united with the light, they can travel as the speed of light. Today, all Universal Energy students, we are the world saviors.”

[*Spiritual Race*, Jenny Tran Truong, MM Special Issue, 16 December 2001, pages 56-57]

“Speaking of the electricity generator that structured by the secret code 1980 ... may bring a laugh to many people...

In the UE School, Master Dang has given us a signal, which is the secret code 1-9-8-0. This number is related to the energy problem in the future. The hidden meaning of the Antenna Model which includes the three circles welded with the axis straight upwards means the union of the Trinity, mankind-universe-God, Father-Son-Holy Spirit.

Number 1 is the main pole of the antenna mounted on top of the pyramid. When you understand this you are getting close to God. Number 9 has been used to describe many meanings in spiritual matters. In fact 9 is a mysterious number. When we understand this, we have reached the level of liberation or enlightenment. Number 8 is the union of two numbers 4 ... [it] indicates the chakra 4. The number zero (0) ... is the largest circle representing God. This number is mounted on top of the axis... Then: The Master is us, and we are the Master. Here, the word Master means God. The Unseen here is the Universal Energy which is God.

The Secret Code 1980 is a complete lesson for both science and spirituality. Practising our Pyramid daily will give us good strength, help us to cleanse ourselves... so we can reach true wisdom ... and master our own destiny due to the methodology of the endless source of UE through our chakra 6... Practising the Pyramid and the Antenna Model... included the meaning of practising the fairy medicine to reach the everlasting life ...

To help people reach wisdom and enlightenment, Master Dang has also taught us the way to reach the everlasting life:

Activating the Chakras... Practising the Pyramid... Practising the Antenna Model... That is the everlasting life.

When we have enough wisdom, then we will be able to develop our bio-energy infinitely, then we may make the Antenna Model produce electricity and light up the bulb. Here we can explain the meaning of the phrase:

WE ARE THE HIGHER BEINGS, THE HIGHER BEINGS ARE US (emphasis theirs). Master Dang has said this in Level 7.”

(The Electricity Generator of the 21st Century, Phat Tan Nguyen, MM Special Issue, 16 December 2001, pages 10-13)

“Master Dang has taught the union of the negative and positive forms and the soul and body ... If we can concentrate in a point where our soul, body, and God become one, then it is the time we unify with God. Master has reminded us to practice this unification more often so we can prolong it from one minute to... forever. This combined frequency flowing in our body will give us the ability to solve internal and external problems in our planet ... Master has done a sacred mission by connecting our hands to the Higher Beings ... with the purpose of “Awakening on the Path of Enlightenment”. That is the six words in our prayer before we practice the Pyramid or the Antenna Model. (Please attend Level 7 and 7.1 to practise this prayer.)”

(Spiritual Race, Jenny Tran Truong, MM Special Issue, 16 December 2001, pages 56-57)

“Prophecies and Prescriptions of Master Dang

As every year, I meditate at the moment of transition of the New Year to receive the message from the High Beings...

A strong energy from outer space will completely change the surface of the earth. 70% human beings and matters will be “incapable”... Within the next 2 years the earth will change its axis. Australia and Asia will be connected to each other to become the sixth continent... of spiritual development, the nirvana on earth...

I cannot disclose the situations of other continents... At any time during the next 2 years, God will end His experiment... In the first four years of the 21st century, God will resolve everything... Only 30% UE students from Level 3 to Level 5.2, and 70% students of Level 6 or higher will survive... Effective from December 25, 2001... certain incidents beyond our imagination may occur ... (which) may affect the electrical utilities and telecommunication systems. In order to prepare for these incidents with urgency in nature, I advise all UE students of Level 6 or higher (with Double Pyramid) to apply the daily practice and counter the incidents as follows.”

(Here, Dang provides detailed instructions, including these): “This method is effective from December 25, 2001 until December 31, 2003, or until over-written by newer decision. Daily Practice. The time duration of Double Pyramid practice is no more than 30 minutes each time, and no more than 3 times per day ... For UE practitioners of Level 7 or higher (with Antenna Model), after the Double Pyramid practice place the Double Pyramid on top of the Antenna Model ... You should make effort to do the Antenna practice for 30 minutes each time, and no more than 3 times per day...”

After that you should sit down in front of the Double Pyramid, meditate and make contact with Master Dang through telepathy in order to receive latest guidance from Master Dang. The time duration... can last... few hours."

(When the UE practitioner learns that there is an electrical utilities and telecommunication systems failure in the world):

"Connect a cable from the Antenna Model to provide electrical (sic) for your household usage. You should not worry whether you are required to have 110 or 220 voltage, because the electrical (sic) coming from the Antenna Model is Universal Energy that has combined frequency. You are only allowed to connect the electrical (sic) supplied to the Antenna Model up to 10 adjacent residents in your neighbourhood. If you have computer, place the small Pyramid on top of the computer, you will be able to access MEL websites throughout the world for the latest instructions from Master Dang."

(*Special Announcement from Master Dang, Message for New Year Day, 2002, Dang, MM of February 2002*)

Spiritual Human Yoga - Universal Energy, Mankind Enlightenment Love makes use of *universal life force energy* or 'chi' 'mixed with love' to heal and empower people, hence its name, and thus differentiating it from pranic healing, reiki and myriads of other energy medicines.

Sr. MA reposes complete confidence in the Vietnamese founder of the occult discipline that she propagates, because he possesses a wooden doll that 'grows', which apparently validates the gospel that he preaches.

The Souvenir

The Foreword to the Souvenir that was issued for the celebrations, written by a local priest and Convenor, Souvenir Committee, assures us that "the articles have been chosen from three main areas: Theology [sic], Medicine and Medical Sociology. Eminent persons in these fields have contributed the articles and we appreciate their willing cooperation. We are confident that these articles will be sure sources of information and inspiration to the readers."

A bishop, since retired, was the Chairman of the Souvenir Committee which consisted of two priests and a nun-medical doctor, Sr. H, President of the Sister Doctors Form of India, the SDFI.

In the November 2003 issue of Sr. MA's Malarga Manitham, it is recorded that Sr. H was a student of the SHY-UE school, which means that she is a fully trained practitioner in the use of esoteric Universal Energy.

Along with congratulatory letters from the Vatican, Archbishops, Bishops, Church Commissions etc., the Souvenir carries articles by several eminent theologian-priests. But it also has an essay on alternative New Age therapies by a Lutheran minister who has taken an MD degree in Alternative Medicine,

which he says includes “Spiritual Healing”, Yoga, Acupuncture, Hypnosis, etc. He describes the philosophies and practices of these and several other occult-based and questionable therapies like Light Therapy, Music Therapy, Ayurveda, Homeopathy, Bio-feedback, Chinese Remedies, etc.

It also contains a 15-page article “Healing Touch For The Community” by Sr. MA on over 40 esoteric practices including Pranic Healing, Reiki, Bach Flower Remedies, Acu Yoga, Zen Shiatsu, Gem Therapy, Pyramid Therapy, Imagery Healing (Visualization), Reprogramming of the Brain, Homoeopathy, Sujok, Neuro Linguistic Programming, Auriculotherapy, Reflexology, Zone Therapy, Polarity Therapy, Touch For Health, Jin-Shin-Do, Magnetotherapy, Ether Cure, Heliotherapy, Aroma Therapy, Yoga, etc., and of course, **SHY-UE**.

Sr. MA says, “Healing Touch is not new in India. God Brahma, the first teacher of medicine has taught nature medicine to yogis who were well united with Nature and God.”

SHY-UE-MEL books list the use of New Age therapies and arts like Tai Chi, Chi Gong, Acupuncture, Reiki, Cranial Sacral Therapy, Rebirthing, the Alexander Technique, Yoga, Breathing Exercises, Chakra-work, Visualization, use of intuition as against rational thinking, Remote Healing (Healing at a distance), clairvoyance, astral travel, kundalini power, etc.

The books’ bibliographies list the channeled writings of the spirit entity *Ramtha*; New Agers Fritjof Capra’s *The Tao of Physics*, Ken Wilber’s *No Boundary*, David Bohm’s *Wholeness and the Implicated Order* and *The Undivided Universe*, Freemason and Theosophist C.W. Leadbeater’s *The Chakras*; Theosophist J. Krishnamurti’s *The Flight of the Eagle*; books on Ramana Maharshi, C.G. Jung’s *The Structure and the Dynamics of the Psyche*; and literally dozens of other works on the occultic arts and esoteric sciences.

One occult book that relates to **SHY** and which cost Rs. 40, does not give the name of the publisher or year of publication:

Universal Energy: A Systematic and Scientific Investigation, by Bedri C. Cetin, Ph. D., 130 pages

The book is the Articles of Faith, the Mission Statement, the Bible of the **SHY-UE/MEL** organization of Dr. Sr. MA.

Cetin’s philosophies and ideologies are drawn from other occult works, as a glance at the book’s bibliography revealed.

Cetin’s and other **MEL** books list the entire gamut of New Age therapies and arts already listed above.

Their bibliographies list the channeled writings of the spirit entity *Ramtha*; New Agers Fritjof Capra’s *The Tao of Physics*, Ken Wilber’s *No Boundary*, David Bohm’s *Wholeness and the Implicated Order* and *The Undivided Universe*, and C.G.

Jung's *The Structure and the Dynamics of the Psyche*; Freemason and Theosophist C. W. Leadbeater's *The Chakras*; Theosophist J. Krishnamurti's *The Flight of the Eagle*; and literally dozens of other works on the occultic arts and esoteric sciences.

Sr. MA is closely associated with a *tai chi* Master named S., a Catholic whose booths were side-by-side at the Exhibition.

SHY and *tai chi* complement each other. Both of them manipulate the *chi*, though using different techniques.

S.'s *Tai Chi* Association advertises itself as propagating the "authentic 5th generation Yang family Fu Streng Yuan *tai chi* of Master J. J. Liang for health and self defence" as a "health and martial art".

According to the flyers distributed by S. at the Exhibition, "*Tai Chi* (read chapter 73) is a martial art that originated in China over 1000 years ago. This form of *tai chi* was founded by Chan San Feng during the 13th century. He was a skilled acupuncturist and hence he incorporated this knowledge into the *tai chi* system he created ... Legend has it that he ... did not die but transformed into pure spirit and flew away..."

"Medicina Alternativa Open International University" is affiliated to the Open International University for Complementary Medicines, Sri Lanka, which is an association for New Age Alternative Medicines founded by the United Nations' World Health Organization (WHO). It was at their 35th Congress for Alternative Medicines in Sri Lanka in November 1997 that Sr. MA met her Vietnamese Master Luong Minh Dang and imported his brand of "universal energy" healing into India.

Dang had by that time succeeded in getting **Human Universal Energy (HUE)** incorporated in the syllabus of Medicina Alternativa university studies.

A Catholic fortnightly, in its August 16-31, 2004 issue, carried a front inner cover, full page advertisement by the Institute for Behavioral and Management Sciences, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh, offering Post Graduate Diploma and Master's courses in psychotherapy and psychological counselling and inviting Catholics to "become a professional psychological counsellor".

This Institute is recognized by the "Medicina Alternativa Open International University". It is at occult-based and New Age-oriented programmes and gatherings like these, publicised in Catholic magazines, that spirituality-seeking religious like Sr. MA meet peddlers of esotericism like Master Dang and get inducted into New Age Complementary Medicine.

I came across an advertisement of the Holistic Health Centre -- which is totally dedicated to giving courses on New Age Alternative Therapies and run by

a congregation of nuns in Pune -- for alternative medicine programmes in the year 2006. One such programme from March 2 to March 5 was Sr. MA's "**Human Universal Energy and Spiritual Yoga**". It went:

"It is a way of bringing health and happiness. Spiritual Yoga means yoga for the mind. Through meditation we discipline our mind. This medical branch differs from other drugless therapies. It helps in opening your 2-7 chakras so that your spiritual energy flows freely. Thus you can give self-treatment and treatment for others. (Level 1, 2, 3) Its founder is Prof. Sir Dr. Luong Minh Dang. Bring salwar/slacks. Course Contribution: Rs. 650/- Dr. (Sr.) MA..."

http://wholistic.spaces.live.com/PersonalSpace.aspx?_c02_owner=1

Barring a pro-life stall, all of the other 'Catholic' stalls at the exhibition on Alternative Medicine were laced or loaded with, some exclusively, New Age alternative medicine propaganda for various healing systems based on life force and universal energies, as well as on the occult religion Theosophy. One stall of the latter kind was operated by nuns of the SDFI.

I had the opportunity of interviewing Sr. MA undisturbed for two hours as I reached the venue one full day in advance in expectation of what I was aware would be on offer and of what I was seeking confirmation for. I had audio-recorded the interview with nun, based on which I published a hard copy report of almost forty pages with photographs that I had taken. The 25 March 2002 report contains a transcript of my interview, from which I quote a few extracts here:

Q: Why have you used the word "Yoga" in **SHY**?"

Sr. MA: It is not physical Yoga. It is Yoga of the mind, a spiritual Yoga. To discover our minds, we need spiritual help and so the term "Spiritual".

Q: What is Universal Energy (UE)? How is it different from the Energy used in the Reiki and Pranic Healing systems?

Sr. MA: UE is Cosmic Energy. In Reiki and Pranic Healing, they say they are taking Cosmic Energy and giving it to you. The main difference is that we consciously inhale the Cosmic Energy, we mix it with our love, and we breathe it out through our mouth as a UE prayer. One can use Cosmic Energy without making it into UE.

Q. Each energy healing system claims itself to be the most effective. Your comment?

Sr. MA: People who have a deep connection with God through meditation discover something like Pranic Healing and Reiki. But UE was not discovered in that manner. It was actually taught by a god to our Master. He met an Indian who taught him Indian philosophies and other things for more than two years.

When the Master asked him his identity and the source of his knowledge, the man gave the master a wooden doll and said that if the Master continued with his work by teaching others, he would see that the wooden doll would grow. "If it grows, you will know who I am; otherwise you may go back to your life and your family." That was 30 years ago. For 10 years, Master did that work in Vietnam, and then he saw that the wooden statue had grown to a length of one foot. That's the way **SHY** was discovered. In other systems, one can practise techniques after studying books. Here one cannot do that. Your chakras have to be opened; only then you must practise. I am authorised to open chakras to Level 1 and 2, to 60%. Only the Master can open chakras to 100%.

Q: What does one benefit from by using **SHY** and **UE**?

Sr. MA: 21st century mankind is in a mess. Vanished diseases have returned. There is much suffering. Mankind needs holistic healing: physical, mental, psychological and spiritual. That is Master's ultimate mission.

Q: Your literature says that there is no absolute good or absolute evil whereas the Bible says that there is, and that suffering, disease and death are the consequence of sin. Sin is "evil". If you deny that, you do not repent of it and do not need the atoning death of Jesus on the Cross.

Sr. MA: All this about sin is before the birth of Christ. Once Jesus redeemed us, there is no more sin. Now we are only sinning against love. We have become love-less. We don't call that a sin. The word "sin" came to the Church level. What happens really is that we become less loveable which creates all our problems. Suffering, etc. is our own creation. Christ's role was over. He has redeemed all of us and rectified everything. If we continue to sin, do you expect Jesus to come again, to suffer again, to carry the cross again? Why do you call something against love as sin? We don't use the word "sin". The word "sin" comes from the Church level.

Q: But the word "sin" is in the Bible. So it is not the Church that first spoke of sin. Doesn't the Bible say that he who says he is without sin is a liar?

Sr. MA: Who has written the Bible? Jesus did not write the Bible. What Jesus taught was done by the apostles and approved by the Church. The Bible is an inspired book. I am also inspired by a message from God. But I can also interpret it according to my mind. My mind comes in and I am adding to that message. I neutralise that inspiration because I do not have the courage to speak the exact message that I received. I do not doubt that the Bible is inspired but how much of it is watered down and how much of it is not? I do not know. We do not call it sin. It is only loveless-ness. The only sin that one can commit is against love.

Q: Your literature teaches belief in reincarnation. The Bible says that it is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgement.

Sr. MA: I teach clearly what hell is and what heaven is at the 3rd Level. You say that there is a judgement. But if one really lives in love, why should one have a judgement? Before our death, our whole life comes before us; so we see the judgement, we see it clearly. That is what I believe. At that time, we regret everything. That is the judgement.

Q: UE philosophies are monistic and incompatible with Christian beliefs. You project God as an impersonal energy, not as a person.

Sr. MA: One understands the Bible according to their own mind. In what form does God exist? God is a life-giving energy. Nothing else. Do you realize that you are living because of life-giving energy? He breathed his life-giving energy into us. That is the energy form that is surrounding us as the plasma body. Christians never told is about the plasma body. We have three bodies: physical, spiritual and plasma.

Q: Objecting to that false statement, I pointed out Genesis 1: 26, 27 and 2:7, breath=spirit.

Sr. MA: Breath, light, prana. It all comes under energy. God comes in the form of energy. What is God? It is God who generates energy, operates and directs, which comes as God. Even the Bible... we cannot accept it as it is.

Q: To me all the answers are in the Bible. I cannot bring myself to accept your teachings.

Sr. MA: That is because your mind is conditioned by the Bible, because you understand the Bible as it is. The woman in the Bible who touched Jesus from whom energy went out... How do you understand that?

Q: Doesn't the Bible say that power and not energy went out of Jesus, and He said, "Your faith has healed you."? It was not energy.

Sr. MA: The woman's faith made her to touch and made the energy to come out.

Q: What about healing at a distance which you recommend, where touch is not used?

Sr. MA: If you do not have faith, I cannot do distant healing for you.

Q: Where is God's will in all of this? Many saintly Christians have endured suffering. They had faith in God but did not get healed.

Sr. MA: Because they did not ask for it. If they had asked, they would have received.

Q: If that is the case, I do not need to go to anyone else for healing. I must only go to Jesus and ask and I will receive if I have faith.

Sr. MA: No, Jesus said to heal. We need human hands for that.

Q: Many sick people who are bitter with God and have no faith are healed. Explain that.

Sr. MA: Each one acts according to their awareness of God. One person says, "I will commit suicide". Another says, "I will go back to God." Another says, "I have done something wrong. That is why God punished me." But God doesn't punish us. He keeps on loving us.

Q: I thought I read something about reincarnation, that death is not the end of everything, in your literature. Did you write it? Or someone else?

Sr. MA: It is my article. Life continues.

Q: The impression I got is that that after-life is not in the form that we believe as Christians: an eternal reward with God or eternal punishment with His enemy. So how does life continue for you? What is the after-life for you?

Sr. MA: We have come out of love, we will rejoin with love.

Q: When we rejoin with this love which is God, what will be our status? Will we be one with this love, or will be individuals?

Sr. MA: No. We will be one with God, because we are a part of God. What you call the soul is a part of that love.

Q: Do you mean the spirit or the soul?

Sr. MA: What one calls spirit, another calls soul or atma.

Q: St. Paul clearly differentiates spirit from soul in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, which is what we also understand from Genesis 2:7, the breath of life is the spirit. Our soul is our mind, will, intellect, emotions... the human being.

Sr. MA. No, no, no. The soul is a part of God. The divinity within you. The soul reunites with God.

Q: Ecclesiastes 12:7 says that when one dies, the spirit goes back to God.

Sr. MA: That is what I said. The atma goes back to God. [Earlier she had called the atma as the soul.] Atma is a form of spirit.

Q: Monism/Hinduism teach that the jivatma reunites with the paramatma and becomes one with it. It came from It and reunites with It.

Sr. MA: What is Hinduism? Before Christianity could come, we all had the same thing. There was no Hindus, no Muslims. Hinduism came as a side effect of Christianity - because Christianity came from outside. It does not belong to our Indian thing. Christians brought their terminology of "spirit" etc. If they had studied with our Indian philosophy, it would be the same (as Hindu

beliefs). Because Christianity came from outside, they do not know anything about how God has led the people and they have never tried to understand or study all that. Even the term "Hinduism" was given by Christians.

Q: Despite keeping an open mind, I see that your alternative system of medicine has to do with the lie of the serpent in Genesis 3: 4 and 5: you will never die, (reincarnation), and you will be as gods who know (self-deification).

Sr. MA: You may be open enough to read but your mind is strongly conditioned by Christian way of habit. I am a Christian and my parents were very conservative Christians. If I missed a Mass, my food would be reduced... As an adult, I asked myself why I was going to church. Only because I was being punished. Otherwise I wouldn't go. This is the way I came to realization. So, I told my father I would not go and that I regret I was born as a Christian. As an adult I studied I studied all religions, what they mean, and their origins. I said "I will discover my own religion, my own God. I will follow the footsteps of Christ, not as a Christian. I will follow all the principles of Jesus..."

Q: Jesus said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Over the last few years, so many new (belief) systems have emerged, each one claiming to be the truth.

Sr. MA: In India, all these have existed for years. Christianity suppressed them as being Hinduism. Soon we will go back to the original situation.

Q: Would you like to read my findings on Alternative Medicine?

Sr. MA: You may read a lot, but your mind is totally conditioned. It will not help.

Q: Will Hindus and Muslims accept your teaching? Aren't their minds conditioned too? Will it not conflict with their original belief?

Sr. MA: We have a Hindu, a Muslim, and a Protestant on our Board.

Q: Through **SHY**, how many people have embraced your beliefs?

Sr. MA: 1500. We have priests and religious with us. Keep your mind free. Jesus did not bring any religion. Then why do you hold on to religion? In the variety of our Board members we go beyond religion.

Q: The Church holds that the use of pyramids etc. such as in **SHY** are occult practices.

Sr. MA: The same Church will come back to the usage of them... after 5 years.

Q: I believe that there is a power in Pranic and Reiki and UE systems but I fear that this energy is an occult power, if it is not coming from the Father though Jesus Christ. The Bible warns that Satan masquerades as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). Your power comes from your Master who received it from a man whom he does not even know.

Sr. MA: Do you think it is the Master energy or my energy if I can open your chakra? I take God's energy into myself because my sixth chakra is God's eye. Through the chakra I give. I am only an instrument.

Q: I have difficulty accepting the existence of chakras.

Sr. MA: But do you believe in the astral body?

Q: I certainly do not. And I have a clear concept of Body-Soul-Spirit from the Scriptures and what happens to them when a person dies.

Sr. MA: Your clear concept is conditioned.

Q: All of your alternative and New Age systems do not accept that man is body soul spirit. They accept body mind soul and etheric (astral or plasma) body. This is contrary to what the Bible says.

Sr. MA: What you call spirit is the astral body. You hold on to one idea.

Q: In Pranic Healing, healing is done at the level of the astral body but you cannot do such a healing with the spirit that God created, can you?

Sr. MA: No. You can do it. You can expand. You grow as a divinity. You have a spark of it. It is left to you in your human life to become a divine.

Q: Your Master says "We are the Higher Beings, the Higher Beings are us." Who are these Higher Beings?

Sr. MA: Higher Beings are the people who lived, died and joined with the light.

Q: What connection do they have with us?

Sr. MA: They are what you are calling in Christianity as saints.

Q: So we will meet with them up there?

Sr. MA: Why do you have to go there? They will come and meet you here. You can talk to them. You can see them. There is a purpose. Jesus rightly said: You have got eyes but you are still blind.

Q: How does one know if these Higher Beings are coming from there (I indicated upwards) and not from there (I indicated downwards)?

Sr. MA: Your spirit, your atma will tell you.

Q: Whether they are Satan or saints, how will we distinguish?

Sr. MA: Everybody is saint only. Once they have joined the light, they are saints.

Q: No. There are devils around too.

Sr. MA: I said that all those who lived well joined with the light.

Q: How many have "lived well"?

Sr. MA: That we cannot know. Let us not become judgemental.

Q: Suppose the spirit that does to us is a deceiving spirit?

Sr. MA: We can easily differentiate between a good spirit and an evil spirit. The good spirit will drive you closer to God. The evil spirit will not.

Q: The deceiving spirit will guide you to where you think there is God. The Bible tells us that he is the Father of Lies. He will give power and work wonders to make you believe he is from God.

Sr. MA: The Bible says that if you experience peace, it is from God.

Q: Jesus said, 'I give you Peace, not as the world gives you...' The only true Peace is from God in Jesus Christ.

Sr. MA: How can you judge? How do you know that I am not at peace inside?

Q: What is your standard for "good" and "bad"?

Sr. MA: My atma will be at peace of mind. If the atma is disturbed...

Q: The Bible says that a man cannot trust his own heart, that the heart is full of deceit.

Sr. MA: Then what to trust?

Q: The Bible. The Word of God which clearly indicates what is right and what is wrong. If each individual has to decide for himself for himself there will be confusion.

Sr. MA: Don't condition yourself. You are very much conditioned...

This only the first 50% of the interview. I included it in this Compendium because it is the classic textbook case of the mind of a Christian who has embraced New Age thought. During the rest of the interview, Sr. MA kept insisting that I should rely on my intuition and reject the Christian conditioning that I got from the Church and the Bible.

A few thousand visitors attended the celebrations that the exhibition accompanied. They were the crème-de-la-crème of the Catholic Church and the charismatic renewal in India. But the alternative medicines exhibition went on till the final day.

Sr. Dr. MA's mind is obviously thoroughly indoctrinated, re-programmed and brainwashed through her acceptance of Master Dang's cultic-occultic-spiritual-New Age teachings and practices.

She has conducted SHY courses in convents and seminaries and has contaminated thousands of Catholics.

It is difficult for one to believe that Sr. MA is a Catholic, a senior religious sister and qualified medical doctor at that, and that the SDFI sister-doctors are into the wholesale dispensing not of allopathic medicine but universal energy healing systems.

Chapter 92

Symbols in the New Age and the occult. Symbolism.

The Wiki dictionary defines **symbol** as “a mark or character used as a conventional representation of an object, function, or process”. According to Wikipedia, “A **symbol** is a mark, sign or word that indicates, signifies, or is understood as representing an idea, object, or relationship. Symbols allow people to go beyond what is known or seen by creating linkages between otherwise very different concepts and experiences. Symbols take the form of words, sounds, gestures, ideas or visual images and are used to convey other ideas and beliefs”.

Companies’ logos are painstakingly created and publicised with the intent of conveying to the viewer the identity and essence of their businesses. The point that I do not need to make here is that not all symbolism is bad or dangerous.

“**Symbol** is the very language of liturgy. **Symbols** do what theory cannot do. **Symbols** bring us into touch with realities, which are at once familiar and mysterious. We use **symbols** to bring into our heads and hearts realities that are intimate to us, but which always lie beyond the power of our heads to pigeon-hole and absorb into abstract ideas. St Augustine spoke of visible forms of invisible grace. The same idea can be put into a more contemporary way: **symbols** are tangible, and when we touch them we touch a mystery that is at once familiar and elusive.

It is in the liturgy that we experience Church - where together we worship with our whole body. Catholics worship not just with their heads but with things of the earth: bread and wine, water and oil, processing, standing and sitting, lighting candles - and even smoke and ashes. Liturgical prayer is prayer with the body, the earth, ritual, song and celebration.

A **symbol** “says’ more than mere words could ever say.

A **symbol** is an action or thing or indeed a combination that accomplishes what metaphor does in words...

A **symbol** is its own reality and in its own reality it leads us into the profound mystery, which it signifies. If a symbol is worth its name, it is so expressive of the familiar mystery, which it signifies, that it could never be called “only a symbol”.

All true symbols shape our reality. When a symbol is brought forward or enacted, reality is altered for us.

All true symbols are effective. In the very act of signifying a reality, they both make and change our reality. It is in the reality that they signify that they are

effective, not in their being symbols. (The breaking of the bread signifies that we, though many, are one body in Christ...)"

(Julie Kelly, Catholic Outlook, Diocese of Parramatta, Australia, October 2009, <http://www.parra.catholic.org.au/Outlook/09oct/15.htm>)

"A primary method for making sense of the world is by interpreting its **symbols**. We decode meaning through images and, often without realizing, are swayed by *the power of their attendant associations*. A central proponent of this theory, iconic Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung, made an academic case for it in the now-classic *Man and His Symbols* (link), and a much more personal case in *The Red Book* (link)."

(<https://www.brainpickings.org/2011/07/29/the-book-of-symbols/>)

Therefore, symbols hold a meaning, carry a message, and have an unalienable association with an object or idea or philosophy that they were originally intended to represent. The Christmas tree, usually an evergreen like the pine, has since some centuries been used by Christians to symbolize the "Tree", the cross on which Jesus was crucified and died.

Symbols may be mundane and harmless or -- if they have overt and sometimes even subtle *religious* connotations -- occult or New Age. Those of the latter categories have the potential to attract spiritual powers and entities. The **bagua** (**pa kua**) is a round mirror surrounded by an octagonal wooden frame with a design in three colours. It is used in Feng Shui.

Christians have to always keep in mind that in matters pertaining to the spiritual realm, there are no "neutral" powers.

New Age is a New Religious Movement (NRM); so a New Age symbol can be expected to have spiritual connotations.

Non-New Age symbols or objects, such as the "**Laughing Buddha**", are potentially occult if not plain superstitious. We already know that the devil does not care about one's intentions (read section C). If a Christian has one of these icons in his home or office, it should be immediately removed. Christians should also refrain from breaking the First Commandment by allowing **pujas** -- consecrations to deities such as Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity and wealth -- of their vehicles and material possessions to be performed as is routinely done by Hindus on an annual basis in certain parts of India.

I would like to share in this chapter some information on this subject sent to me in a 2007 email by Erika Gibello whom I introduced under the sub-title "Personally speaking" in the Introduction to this book.

She holds that that occult power attaches to pagan symbols. Having decades of on-the-ground experience in the deliverance ministry with leading exorcists like the late Fr. Rufus Pereira, she should know. Fr. Pereira himself has testified

in Francis MacNutt's book on Deliverance that he delivered a demon that had possessed a young Catholic girl who had taken up the Hindu temple dance called **Bharatanatyam**. The *mudras* used in that dance form have religious symbolism. The dance performance is always conducted before an image of the Nataraja, the dancing aspect of the Hindu deity Shiva.

Similar potential hazards could be associated with the oil lamp called *kuthuvilakku* or *nilavilakku* which is lit to inaugurate Catholic events. The original Hindu design incorporates a *lingam*, the phallus of the god Shiva. The oil reservoir below the lingam is signifies the *yoni* which is Sanskrit for vagina. Much can be said about the Hindu "Om" or "Aum" symbol which we have come across in the chapter on Mantras. I want to make it very clear that such images and symbols might have no influence on a non-Christian user, but that cannot be said for a Catholic who either consciously or innocently uses them. One could be guilty of violating the First Commandment apart from opening oneself to demonic influence.

Occultist and leading New Ager Carl Jung (read chapters 36 and 55) who delved into the analysis of dreams and their interpretations, also wrote on symbols and suggested (from his perspective) what they might mean. The **mandala**, which again is a graphical representation popularised by Jung, is loaded with occult meanings.

To quote Erika Gibello, "**Symbols** are not neutral. Aristotle teaches that behind every symbol is a reality. He said, "No **symbol** is without a reality beyond it". That means we have to understand from where these symbols are coming.

St. Augustine as well as Thomas Aquinas have taken this view from Aristotle... Many pre-Christian symbols were adopted or as we say 'baptised' into Christianity. The whole symbolism of the liturgical cycle includes the pagan natural cycle of nature with many of its symbols. The egg, a symbol of life, is now used (at Easter) as a symbol of Christ's resurrection is another important example of this. So we do not have to be afraid of non-Christian symbols if they are not the direct carrier of a pagan message. That's what I wrote about rituals, a similar topic, where natural human development is transferred to Church liturgical use. The human needs symbols and rituals. Our religious inclination needs this form of expressions. We have only to be careful not to weaken the faith of a brother in Christ as St. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 6: 12."

Some common New Age symbols: The pyramid, the rainbow, the unicorn, and the yin-yang.

"The **rainbow** and **Yin/Yang** are both NA (New Age) symbols, to do with the complementarity of contraries, especially masculine and feminine". (JCBWL #7.2)

Chapter 93

Tachyon Energy and Tachyon Healing

Origins and Development

“A **tachyon** (pronounced /tækion/; Greek: ταχὺς, *takhus*, swift + English: -on elementary particle) is a hypothetical subatomic particle which moves faster than light. In the language of special relativity, a tachyon is a particle with space-like four-momentum and imaginary proper time. A tachyon is constrained to the space-like portion of the energy-momentum graph. Therefore, it cannot slow down to subluminal speeds...”

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tachyon>)

“A tachyon is a theoretical particle or wave which travels faster than the speed of light. Tachyons exist in a theoretical world where objects have negative mass and time goes backwards. Tachyon energy is used to scan “subspace”, among other things, on the sci-fi fantasy program, *Star Trek Voyager*. So far, there is no empirical evidence for the existence of tachyons. “If they do exist, tachyons would be extremely difficult to utilize under our current understanding of physics,” says NASA scientist Tom Bridgman. Despite being theoretical and, if real, difficult to utilize, and if utilized, of unknown value, tachyons are the main ingredient in a feature line of New Age products that range from beads, belts and shoe inserts, to sweatbands, power pillows, massage oils and vials of tachyon water.”

(*Tachyons and takionics*, <http://www.skepdic.com/takionic.html>)

“David Wagner, at the age of 7 had a profound spiritual awakening. After this experience he was able to see the movement of energy in trees, animals and humans as well as the movement of electricity inside electrical wires. With this specialised gift he grew up to become a very successful engineer, with over 100 people working under him. On the side, he also actively pursued free energy research. One morning, while sitting in meditation he received a clear message that what would happen later that day would be for the best. Later that day a huge filing cabinet fell on top of him, rupturing three discs in his back. Eight orthopaedic surgeons subsequently declared him to be crippled for life. He tried every type of mainstream and alternative healing he could find and remained in agonising pain. With two years of painful invalidism, he was in a desperate state. He felt frustrated and angry. His successful work life and his marriage had been shattered...”

He opened his heart to spirit while meditating, and asked, “Please help me understand how this experience is for the best?”

In the next instant, in an *intuitive* flash he received the complete blueprint of how to create a machine, which could transform material objects into permanent **Tachyon** antennae. With great difficulty, he created the machine and used the first Tachyonized™ objects he had created to treat his back. Within six months of applying Tachyonized glass cells to his back, he was completely healed. News of this remarkable discovery spread and today there are hundreds of his Tachyonized products being used by thousands of people around the world with tremendous success.

When Tachyonized™ Products are placed on the body or ingested, they help the subtle organising energy fields of the body to absorb as much **Tachyon energy** as is needed to facilitate balance and healing.

David Wagner realised that the raising of consciousness in people is a higher priority than creating a 'free energy device', and has therefore taken his discovery into the direction of holistic healing and the merging of science and spirituality.

He has created workshops to pass on the knowledge of how to use his products for healing and another aspect of teaching, which is designed to accelerate personal development of consciousness.

He then founded the **Tachyon Institute for Science and Spirituality**. In 2005 that institute became a fully recognised accredited distance Learning University known as University of Integrated Science, California."

(David Wagner and Advanced Tachyon Technologies, <http://www.schoolofawakening.com/tachyon-david-wagner.php>)

New Age

"A few enterprising *New Agers* claim that they know **tachyons** exist and they have harnessed its power."

(*Tachyons and takionics*, <http://www.skeptdic.com/takionic.html>)

"**Tachyon** theory unveils the delicate weave of Spirit, kundalini, health, physics, and biology as a subtle dance out of traditional healing. This book explains ... the breakthrough holistic healing technology called **Tachyon energy**... The reader ... will understand profoundly how **tachyon** energy is the source of all frequencies as well as the source of all healing.

According to quantum physics, the material universe is nothing more than a very dense form of energy. Everything that exists in this universe, from the most subtle, refined realms of energetic structures, to the grossest, densest realms of matter, is aligned in an energy continuum. Energy flows constantly from these highly refined subtle realms-starting from the causal or super causal world as it is referred to in Yoga teachings and moving down through the astral, etheric, electromagnetic levels and finally into the material realm of existence...

In India, it is called the Divine Mother. Christianity calls it the Holy Spirit, and in many modern, *New Age* spiritual teachings it is called Cosmic Energy. Modern physics calls it Zero-Point Energy or Free Energy...

Our research reports, and Kirlian photography (read chapter 66) suggests, that **Tachyon** Energy is a non-frequency energy that energizes and strengthens the Subtle Organizing Energy Fields (SOEFs) of all matter..."

(*What Is Tachyon Energy?* by David Wagner in *A New Paradigm in Holistic Healing* by Gabriel Cousens and David Wagner <http://www.life-enthusiast.com/index/Articles/Wagner>)

Chapter 94

Teilhard de Chardin, Jesuit priest and palaeontologist. "Father of the New Age".

New Age guru Marilyn Ferguson found the French Jesuit priest/paleontologist **Teilhard de Chardin** to be the single most influential individual in the thinking of 185 New Agers whom she surveyed when writing '*The Aquarian Conspiracy*', a manifesto on the New Age Movement.

Most named in order of frequency was **de Chardin** followed by psychologist C. G. Jung.

In the 2003 JCBWL Document, world New Ager number 1 is Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, 1881-1951, a Jesuit priest!

"In late 1977, (New Ager) Marilyn Ferguson sent a questionnaire to 210 'persons engaged in social transformation', whom she also calls 'Aquarian Conspirators'. The following is interesting: 'When respondents were asked to name individuals whose ideas had influenced them, either through personal contact or through their writings, those most often named, in order of frequency, were **Pierre Teilhard de Chardin**, C.G. Jung, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Aldous Huxley, Robert Assagioli, and J. Krishnamurti'." (Notes #15)

"No one has contributed more to the merger of science and religion than the French priest/paleontologist **Teilhard de Chardin**. Treated as an apostate by the Vatican, banned from teaching, and forbidden to publish his writings, the controversial Jesuit, who was known as the father of the New Age... expounded 'a new theology' leading to the 'awakening to a collective superconsciousness... a new age of the earth'."

(*The Seduction of Christianity*, Dave Hunt & T. A. McMahon, 1985, page 77)

"In his writings - considered unorthodox and suppressed by the Roman Catholic Church - Teilhard talked about multiplicity and unity; the one, the many. Matter and energy, said the priest, are a single principle, two aspects of one energy. And he considered spirit to be a function of matter... In fact, he was not even afraid to speak of matter becoming spirit: 'There is in the world neither spirit nor matter: the 'stuff of the universe' is rather spirit-matter'."

(*Understanding the New Age*, Russell Chandler, 1988, pages 186, 187)

"Lee Penn in an article "*Beware! The New Age Movement is more than self-indulgent silliness*" (*New Oxford Review*) says that fellow travellers of the New Age also used alarming language, e.g. **Teilhard de Chardin**. In 1939 with Stalin, Hitler and Mussolini in power, Teilhard said: "the modern totalitarian regimes,

whatever their initial defects, are neither heresies nor biological regressions: they are in line with the essential trend of 'cosmic' movement".

In 1946, after the U.S. nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean, Teilhard closed a paean to the bomb, saying: "For all their military trappings, the recent explosions at Bikini herald the birth of the world of a mankind both inwardly and outwardly pacified. They proclaim the coming of the Spirit of the Earth".

Teilhard was obviously a great admirer of Karl Marx, as he believed "the synthesis of the Christian God... and the Marxist God... is the only God... we can adore in spirit and in truth", and again: "who can tell whether in the very interest of the Kingdom of God a good dose of Marxism is not the thing to save us".

No wonder the Fordham University Professor Dietrich von Hildebrand nicknamed Teilhard as "Tryhard the Charlatan" and Karl Barth called him "a Gnostic heretic"! (cf. Dietrich von Hildebrand's book on Teilhard: *Trojan Horse in the City of God*)

So, since Teilhard was so enamoured with Marxism and Gnostic New Ageism, it is little wonder that he was lionised by the U.N. In 1981 UNESCO convened an international symposium and exhibition to mark the birth of Teilhard and issue a commemorative medal.

The occultist, Dr. Robert Muller, ex-Assistant Secretary-General of the U.N.O., wrote in one of his books: "Teilhard had always viewed the U.N. as the progressive institutional embodiment of his philosophy". (R. Muller, *The Desire to be Human*, Hiranana, 1983, p.304)

He also seemed to advocate a one world government when he wrote: "Mankind tomorrow will awaken to a 'pan-organised' world" (Future of Man). This is very alarming as it is an indisputable fact that "all power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely". (Lord Acton)"

(*Karl Marx Satanist*, Fr. Finbarr Flanagan OFM, <http://sine-glossa.blogspot.in/search/label/Karl%20Marx%20Satanist>)

For further reading:

- *Warning regarding the writings of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin*, 30 June 1962
(**Monitum from the Holy Office**)
<https://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/CDFTEILH.HTM>
- *Teilhard de Chardin: False Prophet of a "New Christianity"*
<http://kolbecenter.org/teilhard-de-chardin-false-prophet-of-a-new-christianity/>
- *Critique of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin by Dr. Dietrich von Hildebrand*, Fr. Maximilian Mary Dean FI
<http://absoluteprimacyofchrist.org/critique-of-fr-teilhard-de-chardin-by-dr-dietrich-von-hildebrand/>

- *Challenging the Rehabilitation of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*, Scott Ventureyr
<https://www.crisismagazine.com/2015/challenging-rehabilitation-pierre-teilhard-de-chardin>
- *Unmasking Chardin's Modernist Manifesto*
<http://www.salvemariaregina.info/Reference/Chardin.html>
- *Teilhard de Chardin: The Vatican II Architect You Need to Know*, H. Reed Armstrong
<https://onepeterfive.com/teilhard-chardin-vii-architect/>

Chapter 95

Twelve-step programmes, and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), and Self-help programmes

Origin and developments

“**Alcoholics Anonymous**, as well as the dozens of **12-step self-help programs** modeled on it, owes its origins to a twentieth-century Evangelical movement known as the Oxford Group (not to be confused with the Oxford *Movement* of a century earlier). Founded on a belief in the necessity of personal conversion, a transforming spiritual experience, confession, and restitution, the Oxford Group flourished in the 1920s and 1930s. The alcoholics who later became AA first achieved sobriety through this movement, which sought to practice “original Christianity.” After only a few years, AA broke away to become a more narrowly focused organization whose primary purpose is to help alcoholics recover. Those earliest AAs, including co-founders Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith retained much of the initial vision gained in the Oxford Group, and ... were also deeply influenced by Catholic theology. AA’s emphasis remained on personal conversion, a “spiritual experience” sought through working the 12 steps of recovery—the first of which is to admit that one is powerless to save oneself from alcoholism.”

(*The Catholicity of 12 step programs*, W. Robert Aufill, <https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/the-catholicity-of-12-step-programs>)

“**Twelve Step** exercises were not the first steps used in the field of mind therapy, Ignatius Loyola in the 1500’s established *Steps of Spiritual Exercises* in his Jesuit Order, and later the eminent *spiritualist*, Swedenborg (1688 to 1772) included in his writings a spiritual 12 steps. However, there is no evidence that the steps of Ignatius were copied by Swedenborg or that the 12 step program of Alcoholics Anonymous was in turn copied from Swedenborg.”

(*12 Steps – To where?* Dr. Edwin Noyes MD, MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

New Age

“**Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)** claims not to be religious, only spiritual in nature; is there a difference?

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled November 15, 1999, upholding a lower Appeals Court decision, that the AA program is religious. Its fellowship meetings are religious in nature; they cite the participants as a body reciting the Lord’s Prayer and the Serenity Prayer. They worship a “Higher Power”, confession is a part of the service, testimony is given, and they are instructed to go spread the

word. It has been voiced about that it is Christian in orientation and arose from a Christian organization – Oxford Group and its founders Dr. Bob and Bill W. were near Christians. In several months of reading many books which are under the blessing of Alcoholics Anonymous as well as books written by members who are supporters of the organization *I never once found any sentence or reference that acknowledged in any way Jesus Christ to be the Divine Son of God and that the way to the Father was only through Him*. Forgiveness of sins and removable of character defects happens only through the access of Jesus Christ to God the Father. The program accepts any and all gods placing itself more closely within pantheism by definition than Christianity. Some critics have called it idol worship, I let you decide.

Spiritualistic practices were involved with its cofounders from the beginning and had influence in forming the core program, the **12 Steps**.

“Two fundamental reading texts used by AA were written by spiritualists—Carl Jung’s *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* and William James’ *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, were: ... the sources of many of co-founder of the original AA, Bill Wilson’s profoundest ideas about religion, philosophy, and psychology (in *Bill W. and Mr. Wilson*, Matthew J. Raphael, their biographer; Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 2000, page 192).

“AA early on used the text by Emmitt Fox, *The Sermon On the Mount*, and which the Oxford Group had used regularly for working with alcoholics. This text denied the Divinity of Jesus Christ, denied that the Bible had doctrine.”

(*Alcoholics Anonymous and the 12 Steps – Are they Christian?* Dr. Edwin Noyes MD, MPH, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

Look up **TWELVE STEP PROGRAMS-DR EDWIN A NOYES** at my web site.

“A lot of controversy surrounds **12 step program** such as **Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)** because of it’s emphasis on an unnamed “higher power”, which leaves the door wide open to New Agers who have turned this ambiguousness into an “invent-a-god” concept that is a perfect fit for their esoteric ideology.”

(*How the New Age hijacks 12 step programs*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=875>)

In the JCBWL Document:

“...New Age covers a wide range of practices such as ... **twelve-step programmes** and **self-help groups**.” (#2.2.3)

“The same old New Age marketing pitch known as the human potential movement (read chapter 62), which includes a variety of **self-help** and motivational training programs that promote a human-centered psychology based on the belief that a person is in complete control of their destiny.”

(*Synchronicity: Tuning in to the universe*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=113>)

“There are so many of these **self-help** books out there it would be impossible to read them all, but there are certain qualities that mark them as New Age.

- 1) They involve the use of mental techniques such as visualization, blanking the mind, or other method of achieving an altered state of consciousness
- 2) The methods are used to create a new reality, such as making yourself rich, attracting romance, etc.
- 3) The method claims to be a “secret” – (remember, the meaning of the word “occult” is “secret”)
- 4) The method enables you to manipulate others to get them to do what you want, such as in Silva Mind Control (see <http://womenofgrace.com/newage/?p=85>)
- 5) The method helps you to discover the “divinity within”.
- 6) The teachings surrounding the method contradict Scripture (i.e., *Conversations with God, A Course in Miracles*)
- 7) The method involves “tuning into” vibrations or “energy” in the universe (i.e., Dr. Wayne Dyer, *Synchronicity*)
- 8) It relies on, or incorporates, the use of spirit guides or psychic abilities

There are also specific warning signs to look for before becoming involved in any **self-help** or personal growth seminar (see <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11456>)

Remember, the mind is a critical battlefield in the realm of spiritual warfare, which is why we’re taught to “be transformed by the renewing of your minds” (Romans 12:2), not so that we can become gods, but so that we “may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.” True transformation of the mind comes through following God’s perfect will, not the imperfect and always ego-seeking ways of the world.”

(“Steven Campbell, “*Making Your Mind Magnificent*,” Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=121>)

Self-help and “motivational training” programmes go hand-in-glove with the Human Potential Movement (read chapter 62). To re-cap, some of the self-help gurus, authors, programmes, seminars and books that we have come across in this book are Silva Mind Control (José Silva), Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Transactional Analysis, Dianetics (L. Ron Hubbard), *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (Stephen Covey), est (Landmark, The Forum), *The Power of Positive Thinking* (Norman Vincent Peale), *A Course in Miracles* (Helen Schucman), *The Secret* (Rhonda Byrne), *The Law of Attraction* (Jerry and Esther Hicks), *A New Earth* (Eckhart Tolle), *Conversations with God: an uncommon dialogue* (Neale Donald Walsch), *Your Erroneous Zones* (Dr. Wayne Dyer), *Think and Grow Rich* (Napoleon Hill), *You Can Heal Your Life* (Louise Hay), etc.

Chapter 96

Vibrational Healing or Vibrational Therapy, and Bowen Therapy or Bowen Technique (BT)

New Age

Vibrational therapy or energy healing is the name given to frequency medicine, which is what we would call “mind-body-spirit” therapy. Mind-body-spirit therapies are defined as therapies that treat the whole person, not just the physical body.

“**Bowen Therapy (BT)** is an alternative medicine technique that falls into the category of “**vibrational healing**”. It was developed by an Australian engineer with no medical training named Tom Bowen (1916-1982) and was introduced into the U.S. in 1990.

“**BT** is based on the belief that the underlying cause or source of many musculoskeletal, neurological, neuromuscular and other health or pain problems can be found in the soft tissue or fascia of the body. Fascia is a specific type of connective tissue that forms a kind of web around every tissue in the body. Practitioners describe fascia as the “body organizer” that embraces all nerves, bones, arteries, veins and muscles, which is why treating fascial dysfunction can be so effective.

“During a typical treatment, which lasts about 30-45 minutes, the practitioner uses his/her fingers to make a gentle rolling type of motion on different muscles in the body. The practitioner then pauses, sometimes even leaving the room for a few minutes, to allow the body to “make its own adjustments” or, in a sense, to heal itself.

The Bowen Therapists Federation of Australia says that the actual origins of this type of treatment are unknown but admits “there do appear to be links with traditional Chinese medicine.” Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is based on the alleged existence of a universal life force energy (a pantheistic belief not compatible with Christianity), which could be why so many of the practitioners display the yin-yang symbol on their sites. However, many of them are typically vague about the type of energy involved, which can lead unsuspecting consumers to believe practitioners will be working with the legitimate natural energy systems of the body rather than a universal life force energy that science says does not exist.

For instance, here’s how one practitioner explains it: “**The Bowen Technique** stimulates circulation of energy and clears energetic blocks. Coincidentally, several of the moves are located along acupuncture meridians or on specific

acupuncture points which are known to stimulate and balance the body's energy." (http://www.boweninfo.com/how_it_works.htm)

Notice how the practitioner makes it appear to be only a coincidence that several of the spots on the body targeted during a Bowen treatment correspond to acupuncture meridians.

Another rather serious problem is that independent scientific testing of **BT** has been largely inconclusive and there is no regulation in this field, which means it is open to just about anyone who wants to hang out a shingle.

Some "alternative" medicine techniques are much better than the "'treat the symptom' form of western medicine" but those that have any association with the false god known as a "universal life force" should be strictly avoided by Christians."

(*Bowen Therapy*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=117>)

*"A website claims, "The **Bowen Technique** is unique in the field of bodywork. It's relatively few, gentle "moves" over muscle and other soft tissue address the whole body, stimulating it to reset and heal itself. The healing may occur at all levels as needed: physical, chemical, emotional, mental, energetic, etc. In all human history it is difficult to find any healing art/science modality which is as effective as the **Bowen Technique** in improving human health and well-being from 'conception to the grave'."*

In all human history nothing as effective as the Bowen Technique? That is the language of quackery.

The muscle therapy effecting all sorts of health smacks of acupressure. While massage of certain areas of the body through acupressure, acupuncture, and various other techniques can release various chemicals that mostly affect the pain or pleasure centers of our brains, these techniques do not have the healing powers that are claimed.

This looks to be a regurgitation of oriental muscle/energy therapies. The "hook" with this one, and all of these quacks have a "hook", is the alleged effects of this technique upon fascia. Fascia is the "*sheet or band of fibrous tissue such as lies deep to the skin or forms an investment for muscles and various other organs of the body*" (Source: [Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary](#) [link]). This fibrous tissue is part of the connective tissue that is found throughout the body within and surrounding muscles, bones, nerves, blood vessels, organs, and other structures of the body.

The Bowen Technique is alleged to affect this tissue in a way that will facilitate health. At least fascia actually exists as opposed to the invisible energy flows of acupuncture theory. Nevertheless, this technique seems to be little different than the oriental techniques, just applied in a different way.

Any medical technique that claims “nothing as effective as our technique” is a technique to RUN from. The **Bowen Technique** appears to me to be nothing more than a re-working of the oriental methods that have limited veracity.”

(*The Bowen Technique*, Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM, <http://www.saint-mike.net/qa/sw/viewanswer.asp?QID=538>)

“**Neurostructural Integration Technique (NIT)** is marketed as an advanced form of another New Age healing technique known as **Bowen Therapy** which practitioners claim is “accepted by leading health authorities and practitioners alike”. **Bowen Therapy** was developed by an Australian man named Thomas Ambrose Bowen (1916-1982) who had no background in medicine. It supposedly works by helping the body to remember how to heal itself by sending neurological impulses to the brain which in turn signals the muscles to relax, thereby easing pain. It does this through a type of “light touch therapy” that is said to stimulate circulation of energy and to clear energetic blocks. “Coincidentally, several of the moves are located along acupuncture meridians or on specific acupuncture points which are known to stimulate and balance the body’s energy,” one site (link) proclaims. **NIT** was invented in 1995 by a fellow Australian named Michael Nixon-Livy who took Bowen’s later work and systematized it into the more advanced form. Nixon-Livy is an “applied physiologist” who has a diploma in Solution Focused Therapy, aka Eriksonian therapy. I could find no substantive research done by independent researchers on the effectiveness of NIT, only studies conducted by proponents. (To be scientifically valid, it must be unbiased.) This technique is considered to be pseudo-scientific and is based on the existence of a putative energy that has no basis in science. Stay away from NIT – and all other New Age modalities that are based on the existence of a fictitious energy form. They’re bogus and good for nothing except emptying your wallet.”

(*Neurostructural Integration Technique (NIT) is Pseudo-Science!* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=13489>)

On the Internet, there are New Age sites aplenty offering **Vibrational therapy** or energy healing.

Chapter 97

Visualization techniques and Guided Imagery

“**Visualization** is the use of mental concentration and **directed imagery** in the attempt to secure particular physical, mental, or spiritual (occult) goals. The practice of visualization is ancient and claims to work in a variety of ways. For example, by using the mind to contact an alleged inner divinity or “higher self,” practitioners claim they can manipulate their personal reality to secure desired goals such as optimum health and the acquisition of wealth.

Scientific research on forms of imagery (not necessarily visualization) has provided useful insights into brain/mind interaction and the ability of mental processes to sometimes affect mind-body function. Unfortunately, modern science does not always employ proper guidelines to separate legitimate and questionable research. Such research is easily misused when tied to parapsychological/New Age premises or goals. **Visualization** is often used as a means to or in conjunction with altered states of consciousness and it is often accompanied by occultic meditation. It has long been associated with pagan religion and practice such as shamanism and shamanistic medicine. It is frequently used to develop psychic abilities and in channeling to contact “inner advisers” or spirit guides.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-40/>)

“**Visualization** is essentially a powerful and directed use of the imagination with specific goals and methods that vary widely. The use of visualization has three main aims: 1) the quest for personal power, 2) the quest for inner knowledge or spiritual enlightenment, 3) the quest for physical health.

Visualization can be described loosely under a number of terms: guided fantasy, mental imaging, active imagination, directed daydreaming, and inner imagery. But it should be remembered that visualization is not the same thing as imagery. **Visualization** is not the same thing as **imagery**. Visualization involves imagery, but imagery purposely directed toward a particular goal.

Visualization is never used by itself. Something always informs it. Typical accompaniments of visualization would include relaxation, meditation (sometimes accompanied by yogic-like controlled breathing and postures), the cultivation of willpower, various forms of self-hypnosis, faith or trust in the “guide” (whether human or spirit) and in the process of visualization itself.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/visualization-%e2%80%93-what-is-it-good-for/>)

“New Age **visualization** claims to work by using the mind to influence reality and one’s perceptions. Proponents claim that by properly controlling each person’s alleged mental power, they can influence and change a person’s ideas, consciousness, or even their physical and spiritual environment. Visualization can supposedly be used to change one’s self-image from negative to positive by holding a positive image of oneself in the mind. Visualization may also be used to uncover a claimed “inner divinity” that can allegedly manipulate reality. By creating the proper mental image and environment and then holding it or projecting it outward, practitioners claim they can exercise mental power over every aspect of their lives.

“**Visualization** is used widely in New Age medicine: A central tenet of much New Age medicine is the manipulation of mystical life energies, such as chi and *prana*. Visualization promoters claim that the practice of visualization can “produce” and manipulate this energy. Visualization is also widely used in psychotherapy.

The influential psychoanalyst Carl Jung, a student of the occult, developed his own visualization method called “active imagination.” This potentially dangerous technique is considered a “powerful tool in Jungian psychology for achieving direct contact with the unconscious and obtaining greater inner knowledge.”

Jungian analyst Barbara Hannah is a teacher at the prominent C.G. Jung Institute. In *Encounters with the Soul: Active Imagination as Developed by C.G. Jung*, she frankly admits its danger and reveals in detail how it can powerfully influence the mind. She urges “great caution” before anyone employs this method. Hannah also says that it is a time-honored method for contacting the “gods.” Indeed, there is little doubt that it may facilitate contact with what can only be termed spirit guides. However, these spirits are typically internalized as powerful psychodynamics, that is, they are normalized as part of the internal “structure” of the unconscious mind.

Most popular “think yourself rich” (or healthy, or sexy, or happy) seminars and books endorse and use visualization. Modern New Age seminars have millions of graduates, such as Silva Mind Control and Landmark Education’s The Forum (formerly “est”), and employ visualization techniques. In one’s mind, one can create “projection screens” on which to project desired images, such as greater self-confidence, losing weight, or even seeing one’s white blood cells warding off viral invaders or specific finesses. A secret inner sanctuary or mental laboratory may be created where one may contact “inner advisors,” or spirit guides, for assistance in decision-making and direction.

Thus visualization practices are having substantial impact on modern culture, and people need to be informed on this important subject.

“The **visualization** we are concerned with is an ancient witchcraft technique that has been at the heart of shamanism for thousands of years, yet is gaining increasing acceptance in today’s secular world and now more and more within the church. It attempts to use vivid images held in the mind as a means of healing diseases, creating wealth, and otherwise manipulating reality. Strangely enough, a number of Christian leaders teach and practice these same techniques in the name of Christ, without recognizing them for what they are.” (Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/the-scope-of-visualization-today/>)

“It should be recognized that when the mind is manipulated into novel states of consciousness, there is always a potential for spiritual deception and danger (see our eBook, *Knowing the Facts about Altered States of Consciousness*). This is true regardless of a person’s motive or environment—internal or external. The number of well-meaning people who embarked upon a **visualization** program merely for physical health, psychological understanding, or spiritual advancement and who ended up involved in the occult is not small. Books on visualization carry numerous anecdotes of how even the innocent and benevolent use of visualization catapulted people into the New Age Movement, psychic development, or spirit contact.” (Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/the-potential-for-spiritual-deception-with-visualization/>)

New Age

“Affirmations (read chapter 42) are often used in conjunction with **visualization techniques** (imagining or visualizing the positive outcome) or with Cosmic Ordering (announcing what you want and when you want it to the entire universe with which we are all connected).” (Affirmations, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=238>)

“Hypnotists use a variety of tactics to get us into this trance, such as asking us to use **guided imagery** and imagine ourselves into a “happy place”, to speak in a soothing voice that is timed to the patient’s breathing, and to use repetitive words or phrases (i.e. affirmations, read chapter 42) to bring a person into a trance.

All of these methods are used in popular “prayer” forms today such as mindfulness meditation, transcendental meditation, **guided imagery**, Centering prayer, and a host of other eastern-style meditation techniques. And just as the hypnotized person is left open to suggestion by the hypnotist, so they are left open to the suggestions of Satan and his minions. This is because

a person's will is suspended during an altered state and they are unable to defend themselves."

(*What's so dangerous about an Altered State?* Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=28844>)

"**Guided Visualization** or "**guided imagery**" employs a friend, counselor, or family member in either a therapeutic or occult New Age context. The therapist suggests a scene, such as a meadow or a forest, and the patient imaginatively elaborates upon the scene as a key to his own "inner processes" and "unconscious conflicts." **Guided imagery** may also be done by a leader of a New Age seminar, or practitioner who helps the audience construct a particular mental environment for contacting a spirit guide. Silva Mind Control and The Forum (formerly "est") are examples."

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/visualization-%e2%80%93-what-is-it-good-for/>)

"The usual function of the Erhard seminar trainings' (est) seminars (read chapter 58), which is not advertised, is to break down the identity and world view of the participants, and replace it with a new paradigm for reality and self-identity based on the philosophies belonging to the founders of these programs," writes Marcia Montenegro, founder of the New Age research organization Christian Answers for the New Age. "In effect, it is mind re-programming." This mind-reprogramming is accomplished through a variety of mind-altering techniques such as deep relaxation, **guided imagery**, and **visualization**.

"Trance-induction techniques are also employed and involve closed-eye exercises, a form of **guided imagery**, and the "dyad", which is the pairing off of participants who are told to stare into each other's eyes for several minutes at a time. During these "trances" trainers may encourage participants to recall their most powerful memories as a way of conquering their past, something that can cause dangerous psychotic episodes in fragile individuals."

(*The Dangers of Landmark*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=11456>)

"Silva Mind Control (read chapter 90) is a method invented by José Silva. The Silva Method – incorporates a variety of occult practices such as clairvoyance and the development of psychic abilities, the use of spirit guides, **visualization** and **guided imagery**, as well as very New Age mind control techniques. Other problematic teachings for Christians concern sin, which José Silva explains away as ignorance or failing to think properly. Silva's course also emphasizes the self and "looking inward" in order to teach one how to better "use the untapped power of the mind to accomplish whatever you desire" and to work

toward the betterment of humanity. The idea that the “mind is god” ... is one of the foundations for the New Age human potential movement.”
(*Silva Mind Control*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=85>)

Chapter 98

Bert Hellinger and Family Constellation Therapy

Origins and Development

“**Bert Hellinger** is considered by many to be Europe’s most innovative and provocative psychotherapist. Described as the ultimate empiricist, Hellinger acknowledges several important influences on his life and work: his 20 years as a priest, particularly as a missionary to the Zulu; and his participation in interracial, ecumenical training in group dynamics led by Anglican clergy. After leaving the priesthood, he studied psychoanalysis, and eventually developed an interest in Gestalt Therapy (read chapter 33) and Transactional Analysis (read chapter 38). It was in Hellinger’s later training in family therapy that he first encountered the **family constellations** that have become the hallmark of his therapeutic work—an approach to which he has added new levels of meaning and possibility. Hellinger, who lives in Germany, is an immensely popular figure in Europe. His best-selling books and videos include *Looking Into the Souls of Children – The Hellinger Pedagogy in Action*, *Acknowledging What Is*, *Love’s Hidden Symmetry – What makes Love Work in Relationships*, *Touching Love – A Teaching Seminar... ,To the Heart of the Matter – Brief Therapies*, *Farewell – Family Constellations with Descendants of Victims and Perpetrators*, *Love’s Own Truths - Bonding and Balancing in Close Relationships*, *Rachel Weeping for her Children – Family Constellations in Israel*, etc. “

(<http://www.systemicfamilysolutions.com/aboutbert.html>)

“Amongst the many offers within today’s health and therapeutic market place, we have for the last several years also seen the so-called “**Family Constellation** according to Bert Hellinger”. Even though this approach enjoys great popularity and in all its variants is highly accepted by many people, it is necessary to critically assess this practice too, not only because experts reject this method as untrustworthy, but also because many questions arise, which touch on pastoral care and Christian Faith.

“**Suitbert (Bert) Hellinger** was born as Anton Hellinger in Heidelberg (Germany) in 1925. After the war he entered into the religious congregation of the White Fathers and took the name Suitbert, which he kept even after leaving the congregation. After his theological studies, Hellinger was consecrated as a Catholic priest in the year 1952. Afterwards he worked for many years as a missionary in South Africa where he also taught in schools. In 1968 he returned to Germany, but no longer felt comfortable in the changed circumstances – after the second Vatican Council – and finally left his congregation in 1971. He married and started with diverse psychological training courses, none of which he

completed. Within these training courses, he also got to know various methods of working with families. Out of the respectable forms of psychotherapeutic family treatments, he chose the element of "**Family Constellation**" as an isolated practice. From the mid-90s on he went more and more public with this approach. Over the following years, he continued to develop and refine his own form of so-called "Family Constellation", and found numerous imitators for it.

"Bert Hellinger does not care how his imitators deal with his practice. He denies any responsibility for anything which is being taught or practised by others in his name. This leads to the fact, that "**Family Constellation** according to Hellinger" is practised and understood in very different ways.

There are no general standards or guidelines in this field. There is no barrier to the fantasy of the "therapists". The original theory behind Hellinger's practice claimed that many problems a person experiences, whether in the area of health, of personal relationship, or at work, are caused by unsolved problems within the family. Within the frame of a **family constellation** the patient is requested to find within a group of people (this can also be carried out in front of a large public) substitutes or surrogates for personalities within his or her family. These people are then allocated within a room, as to how the patient sees them in relationship to each other. Finally a surrogate for the patient himself is also chosen. Thus the patient has done all he can and from that point on he or she only passively follows the developments. The surrogates will then - one after the other - state what they feel and what kind of impression they have. The constellation's moderator changes the position of the surrogates within the room and sometimes suggests sentences that they are to speak out aloud. This continues until everyone concerned "feels" that everything finally fits. The picture developing thus is meant to be the solution for the patient's problem. It is not permissible to discuss the situation, since this would endanger its validity and the therapy might lose its power.

"The Theory behind the Practice

According to Hellinger, for each family, each tribe, there is a kind of family soul, which represents a "knowledgeable field". In the moment of setting up the constellation, the surrogate personalities link into this "field" and - like a medium - they are able to reproduce or reflect what the real person, who they are surrogate to, is actually feeling. The aim of this constellation is to recognise fateful entanglements within the family and to accept one's fate."

(From an article emailed to this writer by Fr. Clemens Pilar COp, Vienna)

New Age

“Criticism by Psychologists

“**Family Constellation**” according to Hellinger is defined as an untrustworthy and insufficient therapy by the German Society for Systematic Therapy and Family Therapy (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Systematische Therapie und Familientherapie or DGSF), because:

- An esoteric-magical belief in fate is being communicated;
- The moderator’s instructions are passed on in an authoritative way, without an adequate and thorough reflection which might lead to a thorough solution of a pending problem being offered;
- The “solutions” mostly consist of some rather general advice, without taking into account the concrete real persons;
- Psychically unstable people can be seriously damaged by such a “Family Constellation”. Cases of suicide after a family constellation have happened and have been testified to;
- “**Family Constellations** according to Hellinger” are deemed to be a spiritistic approach with shamanic overtones and this “therapy” is not suited as a psychotherapeutic treatment.

“Criticism from the Viewpoint of Pastoral Care

In his statements and publications, the former Catholic theologian has more and more distanced himself from the Christian understanding of God:

- In place of the personal God, Hellinger sees a blind power of fate, which man has to bow to.
- He claims that in the end there is no absolute difference between good and evil.
- He rejects the biblical God as a God of “violence”, and he equally rejects the idea of salvation through the cross of Jesus Christ.
- The idea of a “reconciliation” with one’s ancestors in the case of sinful behaviour by perhaps parents or grandparents is repudiated as presumptuous. It is not up to those born later to judge the actions of the earlier generations. The younger ones are only to accept all that was. Only through this kind of acceptance of fate can peace be found again.
- The approach to Hellinger’s solutions is nourished by the kind of thinking which is irreconcilable with Christian thinking and with the Christian belief in salvation. It is thus inadvisable to take part in a “**Family Constellation** according to Bert Hellinger”.

(From an article emailed to this writer by Fr. Clemens Pilar COp, Vienna)

“According to Hellinger, we have “unconscious connections with the fates of family ancestors” that must be revealed if psychotherapy is to be effective.

He thinks that [New Ager] Rupert Sheldrake's idea of morphic resonance best explains how we get "entangled" in the fates of our ancestors. "Fields of energy" have "memory and influence" that connect us in the present with people, places, and animals from the past. In short, Hellinger's "unconscious connections" are not genetic influences, nor are they repressed memories. They are thought of as psychic fields of energy. Like many New Age therapies, this one hypothesizes a psychic energy that must be in harmony to function properly, whose imbalance is the cause of physical and mental ill health, and whose structure is somehow related to quantum physics. One of Hellinger's models, Dr. Albrecht Mahr calls this field of energy "the knowing field." He puts it this way:

The constantly surprising findings particularly in quantum physics brings science ever closer to spirituality, i.e. the consciousness of our deep interconnectedness and of love being our original quality and our essence. Quantum physics and spirituality are teaching us that we are deeply connected ("entangled" in quantum language) to all and everything: what happens to others happens equally to us in a very concrete and by [sic] times even measurable way.

Physicists call this quantum quackery, as there is no good reason to believe that there are quantum effects at the biological level. At best, the notion of entanglement to explain complex psychological problems might serve as a metaphor, but even then it would be a poor one. It may be true that because humans are members of the same species, in some abstract sense whatever one of us does any of us is potentially capable of doing. But it is certainly not true that "what happens to others happens equally to us in a very concrete... measurable way."

The existence of these "**family constellations**" is questionable, but the way in which they are accessed and "disentangled" in therapy sessions is truly bizarre. Hellinger thinks that "constellation work results in movement on a very deep level—the level of the soul." One of his early influences was family therapist Virginia Satir who believed "that human beings across our planet are all connected ... [and] ... that healing of the human spirit and reaching out to connect with others through the universal life force...is essential to world peace." Lovely sentiments, perhaps, but based on what evidence? The universal soul that Satir and others believe in is identified with Sheldrake's morphic resonance as a field that stores all the world's emotional information and can be tapped when a "**family constellation**" is created.

Anyway, Hellinger writes:

In setting up a **family constellation** at a workshop, a client chooses workshop attendees to represent members of his or her family, then places them in relationship to each other, without comment, based on how it "felt" to be in

the family. Despite not knowing each other or having much information about the family members or their relationships to each other, the representatives become a living model of the original family system...

As Albrecht Mahr puts it:

We are inflicting on ourselves what we reject, fight, and destroy. And the practice of compassion, loving kindness, and perceiving the human being in the opponent are the intelligent expression of our very own self-interest.

We might say that **family constellations** is a New Age quantum energy application of the advice to "love your enemies.

In 2004, nearly 200 Hellinger practitioners signed a proclamation distancing themselves from Hellinger as he had distanced himself, in their view, from systemic therapy. This, however, is the pot calling the kettle black.

More telling criticisms are found in the complaints against his treatments that have sent people over the edge, leading to obsessions, mental problems, or even suicide. We've seen this before with other New Age therapies and personal growth programs: some of the people who sign up for these things have serious brain disorders or psychological issues and are likely to be harmed rather than helped by the mythologies and rituals engaged in.

A more likely harm caused by **family constellations** is shown in this comment from a participant in South Africa:

I'm embarrassed to say I've been in a family constellation workshop. It cost a few thousand rand (I think it was about two thousand rand [\$275], about two years ago) for a single day workshop. Not only was it not helpful, it was also damaging because it said a lot of negative things about my family that have no basis in reality, and I believed them at the time. Which is not to say there's no validity in understanding how family structure and history can influence people, but the workshops are way beyond that, based on a set of so-called "universal laws".

Not only can Hellinger's ideas either help or screw up your personal life, they can help or screw up your business as well."

(*Bert Hellinger and family constellations*, <http://www.skeptdic.com/hellinger.html>)

"Family Constellation Therapy is an extremely troubling form of therapy that is steeped in New Age beliefs based on the concept that people become entangled in the fates of their ancestors through "unconscious connections".

These unconscious connections have nothing to do with repressed memory or genetic traits, but are thought to be psychic fields of energy which contain memories and therefore influence us in ways that connect us with people, places and even animals from the past. It's all quite bizarre and totally unsubstantiated by science.

The inventor of this theory was the German-born Bert Hellinger (b. 1925) a former priest turned psychotherapist. The author of more than 30 books, he is best known for this therapy technique which is popular throughout Europe.

A typical **family constellation therapy** session involves participants in groups of 10 to 30, led by a facilitator, who sit in a circle. One participant (referred to as a client) is chosen to work on some personal issue while the others participate either by serving as “representatives” of the client’s family or by watching closely.

The client brings to mind the issue he or she wants to resolve, usually some traumatic event from the past that is believed to have “systemic resonance” such as premature death, abortion, murder, suicide, etc. The facilitator then asks the client to select members of the circle to serve as representative members of their family. The client stands behind each member and, after placing his/her hands on their shoulders, moves them into places representing family relationships. Once they are positioned, the client – and the rest of the group – sit and observe. There is no talking or role playing, just silence.

During this time, it is believed that members of the circle are “tuning into” the resonance of the family energy field or “family soul” of the client. The participants then describe what they’re feeling, which supposedly reveals what someone in the client’s real family may be unconsciously expressing that descends from a previous generation. It is thought that the living family member may be repeating the fate, or compensating for, what happened in the past. Facilitators then seek some kind of healing resolution.

To date there has been no rigorous scientific research done on these methods.

“It is also important to note that Hellinger subscribed to many disturbing and controversial ideas. For instance, he believed that the perpetrators of incest should not be punished because it is commonly caused by a wife who withdraws sexually from her husband, causing a daughter to step in, even though she may not be consciously aware of why she’s doing it.

He also believed breast cancer victims might have a death wish due to a woman’s “unconscious war with her mother.”

He believes homosexuality resulted when a boy felt he had to assume the feelings of a dead sister when there were no other female siblings in the family to do it.

Perhaps most controversial was his poem dedicated to Adolf Hitler in which he asks readers to identify something of themselves in Hitler, then learn to respect that part of themselves.”

(*Family Constellation Therapy*, Susan Brinkmann, <http://womenofgrace.com/newage/?p=235#more-235>)

Chapter 99

Bruno Gröning, Healing Waves, and The Circle of Friends

Origins and Development

“Bruno Gröning (May 30, 1906, Danzig – January 26, 1959, Paris) was a German mystic who gave lectures on faith healings. He was active in Germany in the 1940s and 1950s after World War II.

Gröning claimed that his ideas were not a new teaching or religion, but rather an ancient knowledge that had been lost, saying that people had forgotten “the most important thing,” that there is a Higher Power or Force that is available to help people. At the center of his teachings was the importance of love, both for God and for others, saying “A human being is a creature of love. What’s created in love can live only in Love. *Love is God!*” [Love is NOT God!]

“Gröning regarded health (rather than illness and disease) as the natural state of all living things and asserted that one can maintain health and heal from illness by absorption of a Divine life force that he called “Heilstrom,” which translates into English as “**Healing Wave**” or “Healing Stream”. To connect with and receive this energy, Gröning taught a technique he called “*einstellen*” (German for “tuning in”.) He said that human beings were like batteries that used energy. To maintain health, one needed to daily renew themselves by tuning into the Healing Wave. The practice of *einstellen* consists of sitting in an upright position with arms and legs uncrossed, and palms facing upwards. He stated that it was very important for the back to be straight and to not have any kind of backrest if possible. Inwardly the practice consists of having the wish to receive the *heilstrom*, having faith that healing is possible, and then focusing on the body, observing the sensations and feelings thereof.

He told people to “take on health” and that in this one regard, in regard to healing that it was permissible, even necessary to be selfish in a manner, that is, to focus on oneself.

“Gröning claimed that when one tunes into the healing stream, healings can occur spontaneously or slowly, depending on variables such as the quantity of life force flowing through the body, accelerated during “*einstellen*.” Sometimes the symptoms may worsen or increased pain is experienced, before a healing occurs. Gröning called this occurrence “*Regelungen*” (German for “regulation”,) and stated that it is sometimes a necessary part of the healing process

Bruno Gröning emphasized the importance of not thinking about negative things, especially dwelling on an illness one was hoping to heal, in maintaining a positive attitude and having faith, especially the faith that healing was possible. Gröning said that, "Thoughts are energies which will come true! If now you take up the firm intent in your mind to regain your health and the belief that this is possible, with God's help, you have built up the right mental attitude for healing to begin." In his teachings, he emphasized that negative thinking and dwelling on problems interferes with the healing process.

Mr. Gröning often stated that people needed to "Trust and believe--the Divine Power helps and heals." He went so far as to say that the act of having faith in the Divine, or in healing, is an essential part of the healing process.

"Gröning's concept of himself was that he was an "appointed person," given the task and capacity to help people by God. He spoke of himself also as a "mediator" and a "transformer," in terms of his role and ability to help people connect with the Healing Stream. Gröning never took credit for the healings, saying that he was only an instrument and servant of God and that it was God who accomplished healing, not himself.

He said often that he was calling humanity to the "Great Reversal" or "Great Turnaround," - to live a life connected to the Divine and to live in harmony with nature. "The sole purpose of my deeds and workings is to guide all people on this earth once again onto the right path, onto the divine path. This is the great reversal."

The particular religion people followed was not considered important by Gröning; rather, what was important was that people had a type of spiritual or religious orientation, saying "To be connected with God, that is all." Gröning spoke of God as the Father of all people, who sends help and healing through the "Healing Stream," regardless of their religion or nationality. He encouraged people to strengthen their connection with whatever faith or denomination they adhered to, and to practice their faith or religion with more diligence, saying "It makes absolutely no difference how the person finds God; the main thing is, that he finds God!" Gröning was a strong advocate of vegetarianism, on the grounds that he was against killing of all kind.

"Bruno Gröning had no formal medical training. After working as a carpenter and pursuing some other occupations, he was conscripted during World War II. After being drafted, he stated that he would not kill another human being, and came close to being executed for this stance at a court martial. Later, Bruno Gröning was made a prisoner of war in Russia; he argued with his captors for better conditions in the prison. Gröning came to public attention in 1949. In Herford, the father of a young boy named Dieter Hulsmann, claimed that

Bruno Gröning had healed his son of muscular dystrophy, and told many people of his belief. News of this story circulated and soon crowds gathered in front of the Hulsmann residence, seeking healing. Soon newspapers began covering the story, which drew larger crowds of up to 5,000 people.

As he traveled around Germany, Austria and Switzerland he would often draw similar size and larger crowds. In September 1949, up to 30,000 people daily came to the city of Rosenheim to see him. Once again, newspapers ran stories about him, even printing entire special editions about the gatherings there.

Gröning died at the age of 52. The death certificate states the cause of death as "stomach cancer."

"Media coverage of Bruno Gröning was mixed, with contradictory reports. Some called Gröning a "miracle doctor", others "charlatan." Gröning faced many legal challenges. In many towns he was forbidden to heal or speak to people. Reasons for this varied. One charge brought against him was that he was practicing medicine without a license. At other times officials were concerned about the large crowds that gathered. He went on trial twice. He was unable to take part in the second trial because he was undergoing surgery at the time.

"Various groups continue to promulgate Bruno Gröning's teaching, including the "Circle of Information", the "Bruno Groening Trust", the Bruno Gröning Friends, the "Association for the Advancement in Germany of Spiritual and Natural - Psychological Foundations for Living", "Help and Healing Sessions", the Association for Natural Spiritual Living", the "Bruno Gröning **Circle of Friends**," and Help and Healing Sessions.

The Association for the Advancement was founded in 1958 by Bruno Gröning to replace the "Gröning Association." The "Circle of Friends" was founded in 1979 by Grete Hausler, an Austrian school teacher who worked closely with Gröning. "The Circle of Information" was created by Thomas Busse, who has written a number of books about Gröning and directed the documentary film "The Gröning Phenomena." Help and Healing Sessions is an association of independent Bruno Groening groups and hosts online meetings. To date the **Circle of Friends** is the largest organization. It has produced two movies, *The Miracle Apostle*, and the *Bruno Groening Phenomena*."

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruno_Gr%C3%B6ning)

New Age

India's leading New Age journal, *Life Positive*, ran an article on Bruno Gröning: *Tapping the Healing Stream* by Armgard Traulsen, a member of the Bruno Gröning Circle of Friends, <https://www.lifepositive.com/tapping-the-healing-stream/>.

“This communication will focus on the reactions of Christian communities and churches when they face the challenge of alternative and complementary medicine and therapies spread by new religious and magical movements. Official statements, mainly by the Anglican Communion, Roman Catholic Church and Russian Orthodox Church, will be examined. Particular attention will be focused on TM, **Bruno Gröning spiritual healing**, Reiki, Yoga, and enneagram.

Fr. Alessandro Pennesi will discuss how the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations have addressed the challenges posed by cultic and other forms of alternative medicine.”

(*Christianity and Alternative Medicine* by Dr. Fr. Alessandro Pennesi - The 2010 International Conference “*Changing Gods. Between Religion and Everyday Life*” - International Conference organized by CESNUR, Italian Association of Sociology (AIS) - Sociology of Religions Section, and the School of Political Science - University of Torino, Torino, Italy, 9-11 September 2010, http://www.sosabusipsicologici.it/wp-content/uploads/cesnur_session2010.doc)

“Again and again invitations for the film “*The Miracle Apostle*” are distributed everywhere, even in churches. This is how the “Bruno Gröning **Circle of Friends**” advertises its movement and allures new recruits. Bruno Gröning followers like to use church owned rooms for their gatherings, to thus give the appearance that they are a Christian movement. But in reality they are organised like a sect and are a spiritual healing movement, which is irreconcilable with the practice of the Christian faith.

In 1948 Bruno Gröning was condemned due to a breach of the law applying to healing practitioners and was sentenced to a financial penalty as well as to a period of imprisonment on probation. Nevertheless Bruno Gröning saw himself as someone sent by God. He claimed to heal with divine power, while complying with God’s divine will. In 1954 he was forbidden to appear in any public performances throughout the whole of West Germany. After completing a course in becoming an “assistant to a healing practitioner”, which he did in order to carry on his work, he continued his activity. That is when he invented his tin foil balls, which were meant to concentrate his healing powers.

Gröning saw himself as a mediator of a “divine flow of healing” which is constantly surrounding man, as do radio waves. He said he would take into himself this healing flow and pass it on. According to Gröning, there are no incurable illnesses, as long as a person is not placing any barriers in the way of the divine healing flow. In order to better bundle this healing flow, he gave out to his followers little tin foil balls, which - like antennas - were to receive the healing flow. His followers were to tune themselves into receiving this healing flow, as a radio is tuned into the correct radio relay reception.

“The veneration of Bruno Gröning continues within the “Bruno Gröning **Circle of Friends**”. This organisation continues to gather ever more numerous adherents and spreads the “teachings” of Bruno Gröning.

In the opinion of the “Circle of Friends”, Bruno Gröning is a chosen mediator of the healing flow, which he – like a current transformer – receives from God in order to change the “infinitely high divine energies into human energies”.

Within the meetings of the Circle of Friends, receiving this healing flow has nowadays been ritualized – similar to a liturgical act. Gröning’s words are read, petitions are directed at Gröning, he is called upon as a mediator of healing and thanked for his actions.

The “Circle of Friends” is seemingly very Christian, but Christ is only considered to be a “teacher”, not the Redeemer. The real mediator between God and man is taught to be Bruno Gröning.

While Gröning himself just appeared as an isolated “healer” and encountered the gullibility of many people, the “Bruno Gröning Circle of Friends” must be defined as a “spiritistic-esoteric group”, within which elements of a Gnostic Christianity have been integrated into the system as such.

“Since followers of the Bruno Gröning **Circle of Friends** claim that a critical, doubting attitude will hinder the effectiveness of the healing flow, a prosaic, down-to-earth scrutiny of the cult is suppressed from the very start

Members are advised to keep away from critical friends, acquaintances or even family members, since doubts could negatively influence the one looking for healing. These guidelines can lead the persons concerned into isolation and can have a detrimental effect on marriage and family.

The so-called “proofs” by a group of “medical-scientific experts” are misleading. They are nothing more than a collection of anecdotes on healing, but no real proof of an effective “healing flow”. The so-called “proofs” can cause a deceptive trust in the case of the credulous.

There is a real danger that in case of a serious illness, a reputable treatment will be delayed for too long, and that as a consequence the afflicted might suffer serious harm.

The church does not recognise any “healers” and does not know of any mediators of any healing flow. The Christian healing ministry consists solely of intercessory prayer. Thereby it is up to God how he answers such prayer.

According to Christian understanding, illness is not the result of a lack of faith or a distorted adjustment to the divine flow of healing. Within the Christian faith is also seen the importance of suffering and the cross. People are granted a share in Christ’s redemptive suffering and in the burden of his cross. Suffering for a Christian is never simply seen as a negative.

Neither Bible nor tradition of the Church know anything about a healing perspective due to a divine "healing flow".

According to the Christian faith, the only mediator between man and God Father is Jesus Christ alone. This position cannot be taken by any man."

(From an article emailed to this writer by Fr. Clemens Pilar COp, Vienna)

Chapter 100

Chelation Therapy

Origins and Development

“**Chelation therapy** is claimed by its practitioners to be a safe and effective method for drawing toxins and metabolic wastes from the bloodstream. Chelation therapy is used to rid the body of unnecessary and toxic metals, and is employed by a growing number of physicians to reverse the process of atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries). The reversal is accomplished in part through the removal of the calcium content of plaque from the artery walls through the injection of chelating agents. By restoring good circulation to all the tissues of the body, chelation therapy can help to avoid bypass surgery, reverse gangrene, alleviate intermittent claudication (cramps) of the legs, and restore memory.”

(A Dossier of Alternative Therapies available around the world,
http://www.lifepositive.com/Body/Healing/Holistic_Healing42005.asp)

“**Chelation therapy** is a series of intravenous infusions containing disodium [EDTA](#) (link) and various other substances. It is sometimes done by swallowing EDTA or other agents in pill form. Proponents claim that EDTA chelation therapy is effective against atherosclerosis and many other serious health problems. Its use is widespread because patients have been led to believe that it is a valid alternative to established medical interventions such as coronary bypass surgery. However, there is no scientific evidence that this is so. It is also used to treat nonexistent “lead poisoning,” “mercury poisoning,” and other alleged toxic states that practitioners diagnose with tests on blood, urine, and/or hair.

The proponents’ viewpoints have been summarized in four books: *The Chelation Answer: How to Prevent Hardening of the Arteries and Rejuvenate Your Cardiovascular System* (1982), by Morton Walker, D.P.M., and Garry Gordon, M.D.; *Chelation Therapy: The Key to Unclogging Your Arteries* (1985), by John Parks Trowbridge, M.D., and Morton Walker D.P.M.; *A Textbook on EDTA Chelation Therapy* (1989), by Elmer M. Cranton, M.D.; and *Bypassing Bypass: The New Technique of Chelation Therapy* (2nd edition, 1990), by Elmer Cranton, M.D., and Arline Brecher. The scientific jargon in these books may create the false impression that chelation therapy for atherosclerosis, and a host of other conditions, is scientifically sound. The authors allege that between 300,000 and 500,000 patients have safely benefited. However, their evidence consists of anecdotes, testimonials, and poorly designed experiments.

“Early History

The term chelate, from the Greek *chele* for claw, refers to the “claw-like” structure of the organic chemical ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA), first synthesized in Germany in the 1930s. With this claw, EDTA binds di- and trivalent metallic ions to form a stable ring structure.

EDTA is water-soluble and chelates only metallic ions that are dissolved in water. At pH 7.4 (the normal pH of blood) the strength with which EDTA binds dissolved metals, in decreasing order, is: iron⁺⁺⁺ (ferric ion), mercury⁺⁺, copper⁺⁺, aluminum⁺⁺⁺, nickel⁺⁺, lead⁺⁺, cobalt⁺⁺, zinc⁺⁺, iron⁺⁺ (ferrous ion), cadmium⁺⁺, manganese⁺⁺, magnesium⁺⁺, and calcium⁺⁺.

Mercury, lead, and cadmium cannot be metabolized by the body and, if accumulated, can cause toxic effects by interfering with various physiological functions. These substances are called “heavy metals,” a term applied to metallic elements whose specific gravity is about 5.0 or greater, especially those that are poisonous. Aluminum is not a nutrient, but iron, copper, nickel, cobalt, zinc, manganese, magnesium, and calcium are essential nutrients that are needed for normal metabolic activity.

After EDTA was found effective in chelating and removing toxic metals from the blood, some scientists postulated that hardened arteries could be softened if the calcium in their walls was removed. The first indication that EDTA treatment might benefit patients with atherosclerosis came from Clarke, Clarke, and Mosher, who, in 1956, reported that patients with occlusive peripheral vascular disease said they felt better after treatment with EDTA.

In 1960, Meltzer et al., who had studied ten patients with angina pectoris, reported that there was no objective evidence of improvement in any of them that could be ascribed to the course of EDTA chelation treatment. However, during the next two months, most of the patients began reporting unusual improvement in their symptoms. Prompted by these results, Kitchell et al. studied the effects of chelation on 28 additional patients and reappraised the course of the ten patients used in the original trial. They found that although 25 of the 38 patients had exhibited improved anginal patterns and half had shown improvement in electrocardiographic patterns several months after the treatment had begun, these effects were not lasting. At the time of the report, 12 of the 38 had died and only 15 reported feeling better. (This “improvement” was not significant, however, because it was no better than would be expected with proven methods and because there was no control group for comparison.) Kitchell et al. concluded that EDTA chelation, as used in this study, was “not a useful clinical tool in the treatment of coronary disease”.

(*Chelation Therapy: Unproven Claims and Unsound Theories*, Dr. Saul Green Ph.D., <https://www.quackwatch.org/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/chelation.html>)

“Chelation therapy has long been recognized as an implausible, dangerous treatment based on a simplistic misunderstanding of atherosclerosis. A recent review of the entire literature of its use for coronary artery disease, performed by a well-known enthusiast for “alternative medicine,” concluded: “The most striking finding is the almost total lack of convincing evidence for efficacy. Given the potential of chelation therapy to cause severe adverse effects, this treatment should now be considered obsolete.” (Ernst E. Chelation therapy for coronary heart disease: An overview of all clinical investigations. *Am Heart J*. 2000 Jul; 140(1): 4-5).”

(Naturopathic Misrepresentations, <http://www.quackwatch.org/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/Naturopathy/misrep.html>)

“Chelation therapy has not been shown to be beneficial for the treatment of ischemic heart disease,^v though it is still promoted as a treatment.

^v Knudtson ML, Wyse DG, Galbraith PD, et al. The Program to Assess Alternative Treatment Strategies to Achieve Cardiac Health (PATCH) Investigators. Chelation therapy for ischemic heart disease: a randomized controlled trial. *JAMA* 2002 Jan 23-30; 287(4):481-6.”

(*United States White House Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy*, 2002, <http://www.whccamp.hhs.gov/tc.html>, <http://www.whccamp.hhs.gov/tl.html>)

New Age

“Chelation therapy is total New Age quackery. Also known as **Quantum Holographic Therapy**, it supposedly works via a machine known as a BICOM® 2000.

This is how one proponent’s website http://quantumchelationtherapy.com/The_Therapy.html describes how the therapy works: “The BICOM® 2000 is a receiver-amplifier-broadcaster. The therapy vial containing the quantum information needed to clear the particular toxic metal from your body is placed in a brass input container which the machine reads, then broadcasts into your ‘blood spot’.”

Practitioners (http://quantumholographichealing.com/Therapy_Vials.html) say a person needs anywhere from 6 to 10 therapies, each lasting anywhere from 30 to 90 minutes. “The first therapy is always a major balancing therapy which resets your health field, almost like a re-booting, if you will. This resetting is so thorough, so powerful, that you will immediately begin to clear the toxins in your body. If a chemical doesn’t support your good health, then your body will eliminate it. Your Quantum Hologram will be re-written, too, so that the toxin will no longer be tolerated.”

Supposedly, this machine is so powerful “it will reach you anywhere in the world,” one proponent claims.

There is absolutely no scientific evidence to support any of these claims.

“Chelation therapy itself, which involves a series of intravenous infusions or the ingesting of pills containing disodium EDTA (ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid) and various other substances to rid the body of heavy metal toxins, is questionable. Proponents claim that EDTA Chelation therapy is effective against a variety of serious health problems such as atherosclerosis, coronary heart disease, and peripheral vascular disease and many believe it to be an alternative to coronary bypass surgery, but there is no scientific evidence that this is so. In fact, none of the studies cited in this report <http://www.quackwatch.org/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/chelation.html> found Chelation therapy to be effective.

Even more interesting is the machine itself, the BICOM 2000, which is also used in bioresonance therapy (which appears to be an earlier version of the updated “quantum” variety).

The manufacturer’s website <http://www.regumed.com/com.html> makes it quite clear that there is no science behind any of this: “Just like homeopathy, acupuncture and other methods of complementary therapy, Bicom bioresonance is a form of regulatory medicine. Within complementary medicine, Bicom bioresonance therapy is recognized as an effective tried and tested method. Within conventional medicine, however, Bicom bioresonance has not been subject to scientific research and is, therefore, not yet approved”.

(Latest New Age quackery promises to rewrite your Quantum Hologram, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=1169>)

J.

Miscellaneous groups and ideologies related to New Age philosophy and practice

I. Theosophy

JCBWL has many references to **Theosophy** which greatly influenced New Age thought and has strong **astrological links**.

The late nineteenth century saw the secularization of Christianity and the founding in the West of religions like Theosophy which promoted many occult practices like astrology. Theosophy is a belief system with origins in Hinduism, founded in 1875 by the occult Ukrainian-born seer, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891).

Alice Bailey (1880 - 1949), a follower of Theosophy, wrote *Esoteric Astrology* which included channeled information from her 'Tibetan' spirit guide, *Djwal Khul* or 'D.K.'

These spiritual ideas, which were the forerunners of the New Age Movement, promoted reincarnation, the belief that one returns after death many times in order to evolve; a spiritual hierarchy of Ascended Masters who guide those on earth to higher spiritual understanding; and pantheism, the monistic belief that god is all and all is god. Thus, everyone has an inherent divine nature and is evolving toward godhood.

I have in my personal library a book titled *A Study in Astrological Occultism - An Astrological Approach to Vedantic Philosophy and Yogic Discipline* by Bepin Behari. Its author says, "The inner depths of astrology, alchemy, yoga, tantra, and rituals are known only to those who have acquired higher levels of initiation." Behari quotes not only the teachings of the Theosophical Society founders but also of their spirit-guides, like Alice Bailey's entity Djwal Khul.

"The essential matrix of *New Age* thinking is to be found in the esoteric-**theosophical** tradition which was fairly widely accepted in European intellectual circles in the 18th and 19th centuries. It was particularly strong in **freemasonry**, spiritualism, **occultism** and **theosophy**, which shared a kind of esoteric culture. In this world-view, the visible and invisible universes are linked by a series of correspondences, analogies and influences between microcosm and macrocosm, between metals and planets, between planets and the various parts of the human body, between the visible cosmos and the invisible realms of reality.

"People can be initiated into the mysteries of the cosmos, God and the self by means of a spiritual itinerary of transformation. The eventual goal is *gnosis*, the highest form of knowledge, the equivalent of salvation. It involves a search for

the oldest and highest tradition in philosophy (what is inappropriately called *philosophia perennis*) and religion (primordial theology), a secret (**esoteric**) doctrine which is the key to all the “exoteric” traditions which are accessible to everyone. Esoteric teachings are handed down from master to disciple in a gradual program of initiation.

“19th century **esotericism** is seen by some as completely secularised. Alchemy, magic, **astrology** and other elements of traditional esotericism had been thoroughly integrated with aspects of modern culture, including the search for causal laws, evolutionism, psychology and the study of religions. It reached its clearest form in the ideas of Helena Blavatsky, a Russian medium who founded the *Theosophical Society* with Henry Olcott in New York in 1875. The Society aimed to fuse elements of Eastern and Western traditions in an evolutionary type of spiritualism. It had three main aims:

1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, caste or colour.
2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
3. To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

The significance of these objectives... should be clear. The first objective implicitly rejects the ‘irrational bigotry’ and ‘sectarianism’ of traditional Christianity as perceived by spiritualists and theosophists... It is not immediately obvious from the objectives themselves that, for theosophists, ‘science’ meant the occult sciences and philosophy the *occulta philosophia*, that the laws of nature were of an occult or psychic nature, and that comparative religion was expected to unveil a ‘primordial tradition’ ultimately modelled on a Hermeticist *philosophia perennis*.” (JCBWL #2.3.2)

“**Theosophy**: an ancient term, which originally referred to a kind of mysticism. It has been linked to Greek Gnostics and Neoplatonists, to Meister Eckhart, Nicholas of Cusa and Jakob Boehme. The name was given new emphasis by the Theosophical Society, founded by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and others in 1875. Theosophical mysticism tends to be monistic, stressing the essential unity of the spiritual and material components of the universe. It also looks for the hidden forces that cause matter and spirit to interact, in such a way that human and divine minds eventually meet. Here is where theosophy offers mystical redemption or enlightenment.” (JCBWL #7.2)

II. Anthroposophy and Anthroposophical Medicine

“**Anthroposophical medicine** is an occult medicine based upon the philosophy of anthroposophy developed by necromancer Rudolph Steiner. It variously incorporates a belief in reincarnation, magic, astrology, animism, spiritism,

and pantheism. Anthroposophical medicine claims to work by treating patients “spiritually” (occultly) not just physically.

For example, by including concerns relative to patients’ alleged past lives (health problems supposedly related to karma) and “spiritual” issues of their present life, anthroposophical doctors believe they can offer patients a more comprehensive “holistic” approach to health. Even though over 1000 medical doctors employ it in their practice, anthroposophical medical theories and methods are based upon largely questionable, false, or occultic concepts which incorporate dubious medical theories of diagnosis and treatment. Patients run the risk of false diagnosis, occult treatments, or conversion to occultism.”

(Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/general/holistic-health-practicespart-4/>)

“**Anthroposophy**: a theosophical doctrine originally popularised by the Croat Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), who left the **Theosophical Society** after being leader of its German branch from 1902 to 1913. It is an esoteric doctrine meant to initiate people into “objective knowledge” in the spiritual-divine sphere. Steiner believed it had helped him explore the laws of evolution of the cosmos and of humanity. Every physical being has a corresponding spiritual being, and earthly life is influenced by astral energies and spiritual essences. The *Akasha Chronicle* is said to be a “cosmic memory” available to initiates.” (JCBWL #7.2)

“Spiritualism, **theosophy**, **anthroposophy** and *New Age* all see reincarnation as participation in cosmic evolution. This post-Christian approach to eschatology is said to answer the unresolved questions of theodicy and dispenses with the notion of hell.” (JCBWL #2.2.3)

“The doctrine of the Christ spread in *New Age* circles is inspired by the theosophical teachings of Helena Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner’s **anthroposophy** and Alice Bailey’s ‘Arcane School’. Their contemporary followers are not only promoting their ideas now, but also working with *New Agers* to develop a completely new understanding of reality, a doctrine known by some observers as ‘**New Age** truth.’ ... Blavatsky claimed to have contact with the *mahatmas*, or *masters*, exalted beings who together constitute the Great White Brotherhood. She saw them as guiding the evolution of the human race and directing the work of the Theosophical Society.” (JCBWL #4)

III. Swedenborgianism

“The author Nevill Drury claimed there are “four key precursors of the New Age,” who had set the way for many of its widely held precepts. The first of these was **Emanuel Swedenborg** (1688–1772), a Swedish scientist who after a religious experience devoted himself to Christian mysticism, believing that

he could travel to Heaven and Hell and commune with angels, demons and spirits, and who published widely on the subject of his experiences. The second person was **Franz Mesmer** (1734–1815), who had developed a form of healing using magnets, believing that there was a force known as “animal magnetism” that affected humans.”

(*History of the New Age Movement*, Anette Ignatowicz, <http://newagemess.blogspot.in/p/history-of-modern-new-age-movement.html>)

“Though many helped to spread New Thought, the origins and development of New Thought are often attributed to three major figures: **Emanuel Swedenborg**, physician hypnotist **Franz Anton Mesmer** and Phineas P. Quimby (1802-1866), trained as a clockmaker, but who soon became a healer after studying Mesmer’s teachings.

Emanuel Swedenborg: Although he died in the 18th century, Swedenborg’s long shadow reaches into the very nooks and crannies of twenty-first century religion, healing practices, and philosophy. **Swedenborg** abandoned science to listen to beings he called angels, and stated that the invisible spiritual world had more reality than the visible one. Everything in the visible world had a correspondence to the invisible world, though the material world is a cruder version of the spiritual. The Bible was viewed as being an esoteric book whose words are symbolic of higher truths understood only by the enlightened. Heaven and hell, Swedenborg declared, are states of mind. Swedenborg founded the Church of the New Jerusalem, still in existence today.

Anton Mesmer: ... Mesmer’s ministrations caused a person to fall into what were apparently hypnotic trances, which was first called mesmerism, or mesmeric sleep. The verb ‘to mesmerize’ comes from **Mesmer’s** name.”

(*New Thought: Making the straight ways crooked - A Warning for Christians*, Marcia Montenegro, http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_NewThought1.html)

“The eighteenth-century medium **Emanuel Swedenborg** spent an entire lifetime associating with spirits. In the Western world perhaps no one had more experience with the spirit world than he did. Yet Swedenborg warned that the spirits were so cunning and deceitful that it was almost impossible to determine their true nature. As an occult authority, Swedenborg told people that demonic spirits are gifted actors who routinely imitate the dead. Thus, in a frightening way, Swedenborg still speaks to us today by saying: “When spirits begin to speak with a man, he ought to beware that he believes nothing whatever from them; for they say almost anything. Things are fabricated by them, and they lie... They would tell so many lies and indeed with solemn affirmation that a man would be astonished... If a man listens and believes they press on, and deceive, and seduce in [many] ways... Let men beware

therefore [and not believe them].” Unfortunately, despite all his cautions, **Swedenborg** himself fell prey to deceiving spirits by thinking that God had given him special permission to contact the spirit world. Swedenborg ignored the Bible’s warning against all forms of spirit contact.

“The reason Swedenborg ignored the Bible was because he believed that “good” spirits had taught him the truth. Yet the “*Church of the New Jerusalem*” Swedenborg founded as a result of these “good” spirits’ teachings has always promoted spiritistic revelation that ranks among the most unbiblical material ever printed.”

(*The Link between Channeling and the Spirit World*, Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon, <https://www.jashow.org/articles/new-age/the-link-between-channeling-and-the-spirit-world/>)

“The author of many books, **Swedenborg** claims to have visited heaven, hell, five known planets and five planets outside our solar system. (I’m not making this up.) According to a biography of Swedenborg written by Martin Gardner for the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry, he claims to have spoken to inhabitants of these planets during his out-of-body travels and documented these trips in his book, *Life on Other Worlds*.”

(*Dr. Mehmet Oz’s Connections to Reiki and Swedenborgian Cult*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=477>)

“While every natural element in traditional esoteric doctrine had the divine life within it, for **Swedenborg** nature is a dead reflection of the living spiritual world. This idea is very much at the heart of the post-modern vision of a disenchanted world and various attempts to “re-enchant” it.” (JCBWL Notes 24)

IV. Mesmerism

A little known fact: Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of Homoeopathy (read chapter 13) **was a follower of Swedenborg and Mesmer.** I have many Catholic citations to support that. One of them - an article contributed by Dr. Vladimir Biba, State Department of Drug Control of the Czech Republic, and Fr. Ales Franc, former member of the Czech Homoeopathic Society in the December 2003 issue of the Slovak charismatic magazine *Zivoy Pramen* (Living Spring). A summary of the article: The activity of Hahnemann to make use of *mesmerism* opened his mind for demonic contacts ... Hahnemann admired Swedenborg who was himself a **Gnostic**.

“Franz **Mesmer** ... founded the doctrine of *animal magnetism* often called *mesmerism*. What Mesmer uncovered was actually an occult art that had been used for centuries by shamans (witch doctors) to bring people under their control. Mesmer learned the technique that allowed him to produce an

abnormal condition resembling sleep in another person. During this state, the mind of the person remained passive and was subject to the will of the operator. Mesmer used this hypnotic state to heal persons that were sick. In fact, in his homeopathic bible, the *Organon*, Hahnemann compared the similarities between the practice of homeopathy and mesmerism. Consider this quote from the 6th edition of the *Organon*:

‘I find it yet necessary to allude here to **animal magnetism... or rather Mesmerism...** It is a marvelous, priceless gift of God... by means of which the strong will of a well-intentioned person upon a sick one by contact, and even without this, and even at some distance, can bring the *vital energy* of the healthy mesmerizer endowed with this power into another person dynamically ... The above-mentioned methods of practicing mesmerism depend upon an influx of more or less vital force into the patient’.” (*Organon of Medicine*, Samuel Hahnemann, Jain Publishers, 1978, pages 309 and 311)

“Spiritualism developed against the background of the ideas of **Swedenborg** and **Mesmer**.” (JCBWL #7.2)

V. Freemasonry

“When one examines many *New Age* traditions, it soon becomes clear that there is, in fact, little in the *New Age* that is new. The name seems to have gained currency through Rosicrucianism and **Freemasonry**, at the time of the French and American Revolutions, but the reality it denotes is a contemporary variant of Western **esotericism**. This dates back to **Gnostic groups** which grew up in the early days of Christianity, and gained momentum at the time of the Reformation in Europe. It has grown in parallel with scientific world-views, and acquired a rational justification through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It has involved a progressive rejection of a personal God and a focus on other entities which would often figure as intermediaries between God and humanity in traditional Christianity, with more and more original adaptations of these or additional ones.” (JCBWL #1.3)

“Initiation: in religious ethnology it is the cognitive and/or experiential journey whereby a person is admitted, either alone or as part of a group, by means of particular rituals to membership of a religious community, a secret society (e.g. **Freemasonry**) or a mystery association (magical, **esoteric-occult**, **gnostic**, **theosophical** etc.)” (JCBWL #7.2)

Freemasonry has undeniably infiltrated mainstream Catholicism right to the very top, (See H. Reed Armstrong, http://www.christianorder.com/features/features_2015/features_may15.html), with not a few modern day Cardinals and Popes suspected

of being high-ranking Freemasons (<http://mumbailaity.wordpress.com/2011/01/27/masons-control-the-vatican-and-the-roman-catholic-church/>, <http://themasonicilluminati.blogspot.com/p/masons-control-vatican.html>).

Acknowledging the lamentable rise and spread of Masonry in the Catholic Church, the Popes down the ages have issued no less than five Documents: 1738 (Clement XII), 1751 (Benedict XIV), 1826 (Leo XII), 1829 (Pius VIII), and the most recent decree by the CDF (*Declaration on Masonic Associations* signed 26 November 1983 by Cardinal Ratzinger,

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19831126_declaration-masonic_en.html).

Since 1738, at least eleven popes have made pronouncements (excluding many other mentions by Rome) about the incompatibility of Catholic doctrines and Freemasonry (<http://www.io.com/~janebm/churchlaw.html>) and Catholic Masons were subject to *latae sententiae* excommunication. Even under the 1983 code, Catholic Masons are “subject to a number of canonical penalties including excommunication, depending on the facts and circumstances”.

VI. Gnosticism

The term “**gnosticism**” -- and its derivatives -- appears thirty-nine times in the JCBWL Document.

“There is increasing nostalgia and curiosity for the wisdom and ritual of long ago, which is one of the reasons for the remarkable growth in the popularity of esotericism and **gnosticism** ... An adequate Christian discernment of *New Age* thought and practice cannot fail to recognize that, like second and third century **gnosticism**, it represents something of a compendium of positions that the Church has identified as heterodox. John Paul II (in his book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 1994) warns with regard to the “return of ancient **gnostic ideas** under the guise of the so-called *New Age*:

We cannot delude ourselves that this will lead toward a renewal of religion. It is only a new way of practising **Gnosticism** - that attitude of the spirit that, in the name of a profound knowledge of God, results in distorting His Word and replacing it with purely human words. **Gnosticism** never completely abandoned the realm of Christianity. Instead, it has always existed side by side with Christianity, sometimes taking the shape of a philosophical movement, but more often assuming the characteristics of a religion or a para-religion in distinct, if not declared, conflict with all that is essentially Christian.” (JCBWL #1.4)

“Some of the traditions which flow into *New Age* are: ancient Egyptian occult practices, Cabbalism, early Christian **gnosticism**, Sufism, the lore of the

Druids, Celtic Christianity, mediaeval alchemy, Renaissance hermeticism, Zen Buddhism, Yoga and so on.” (JCBWL #2.1)

“In what might be termed a classical *New Age* account, people are born with a divine spark, in a sense which is reminiscent of ancient **gnosticism**; this links them into the unity of the Whole. So they are seen as essentially divine, although they participate in this cosmic divinity at different levels of consciousness. We are co- creators, and we create our own reality.” (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)

“**Gnostic** belief in cosmic powers and some obscure kind of destiny withdraws the possibility of a relationship to a personal God revealed in Christ.” (JCBWL #3.3)

“It is difficult to separate the individual elements of *New Age* religiosity – innocent though they may appear – from the overarching framework which permeates the whole thought-world on the *New Age* movement. The **gnostic** nature of this movement calls us to judge it in its entirety. From the point of view of Christian faith, it is not possible to isolate some elements of *New Age* religiosity as acceptable to Christians, while rejecting others.” (JCBWL #4)

“**Gnosis**: in a generic sense, it is a form of knowledge that is not intellectual, but visionary or mystical, thought to be revealed and capable of joining the human being to the divine mystery. In the first centuries of Christianity, the Fathers of the Church struggled against gnosticism, inasmuch as it was at odds with faith. Some see a rebirth of gnostic ideas in much *New Age* thinking, and some authors connected with *New Age* actually quote early gnosticism. However, the greater emphasis in *New Age* on monism and even pantheism or panentheism encourages some to use the term *neo-gnosticism* to distinguish *New Age* gnosis from ancient gnosticism.” (JCBWL #7.2)

“**Gnosticism**, which gets its name from the Greek word *gnosis* (“knowledge”) was a religious movement beginning, possibly, before the time of Christ and extending into the first few centuries of the Christian era. Gnostics viewed themselves as ‘those who know.’ Their heretical teachings varied from group to group and can’t be pinned down with specificity, but common gnostic beliefs included these:

- Although Christ appeared to be human, his humanity was merely an illusion.
- Christ appeared to die, but did not really die. The Crucifixion was really a *crucifiction*.
- Christ was not truly God, the second Person of the Trinity. He was merely a created being who was the lowest of the *aeons*, a group of semi-divine beings between God and man. Each lower *aeon* was given power by a higher *aeon*.

- Christ, the *aeon* furthest removed from God, created the world because God was too pure to dirty himself with matter.
- Matter is evil, so one can do anything one wants with one's body, including killing it to release the soul from its imprisonment.
- The God of the Old Testament is evil, as evidenced by the fact that he created the material universe. He is not the same as the God of the New Testament, who is the God of Love, as Jesus and his apostles taught (1 John 4:8, 16).

"People are saved by acquiring secret knowledge (*gnosis*), which is imparted only to the initiated. Gnosticism was similar in some ways to the modern New Age movement. Like New Agers, gnostics used Christian terminology and symbols, but placed them in an alien religious context that gutted the essential teachings of Christ. It's unclear when Gnosticism began.

"Many Church Fathers thought Gnosticism was founded by Simon Magus, the Samaritan sorcerer who converted to Christianity (Acts 8:9-24). Some contemporary scholars think Gnosticism started a few centuries before Christianity and then invaded it from the outside through the conversion to Christianity of Jewish and Gentile gnostics. Other scholars believe Gnosticism started as a Christian heresy.

"It seems clear, though, that the apostles themselves had to contend with a form of Gnosticism (Colossians 2:8, 18, 1 John 4:1-3, Revelation 2:6, 15). Paul said, 'Avoid profane babbling and the absurdities of so-called knowledge [*gnosis*]. By professing it some people have deviated from the faith' (1 Timothy 6:20-21)."

(*Gnosticism*, Catholic Quick Questions, [Catholic Answers](#) (link) in This Rock magazine, June 1993 issue)

For further reading:

Gnosticism and the Struggle for the World's Soul, Fr. Alfonso Aguilar LC <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/catholic-contributions/gnosticism-and-the-struggle-for-the-world-s-soul.html>

VII. Occultism

The terms "**occult**" and "**occultism**" occur seventeen times in the JCBWL Document.

The word '**occult**' describes those tools, skills, and rites which the Bible forbids because they are satanic in origin and power. When the Church outlawed all occult practices because they were condemned by God, they had to be done in secret. Hence the Latin word *occultus* which means '*hidden*' or '*unseen*' was used

to describe them. People became involved in occult practices like astrology for one or all of the following reasons:

- (i) To gain supernatural knowledge of the future.
- (ii) To gain supernatural power to change one's present condition and the future.
- (iii) To gain access to the spirit world to contact the dead
- (iv) To contact Satan and the demonic host.

St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, said (*City of God*, 5.7, 9) that any remarkable successes in astrological prediction were due to the inspiration of astrologers by evil spirits.

"Occultism: occult (*hidden*) **knowledge**, and the hidden forces of the mind and of nature, are at the basis of beliefs and practices linked to a presumed secret "perennial philosophy" derived from ancient Greek magic and alchemy, on the one hand, and Jewish mysticism, on the other. They are kept hidden by a code of secrecy imposed on those initiated into the groups and societies that guard the knowledge and techniques involved. In the 19th century, **spiritualism** and the **Theosophical Society** introduced new forms of occultism which have, in turn, influenced various currents in the *New Age*." (JCBWL #7.2)

VIII. Esotericism

The word "**esoteric**" -- and its derivatives -- appears more than forty times in the JCBWL Document.

"Esotericism: (from the Greek *esotéros* = that which is within) it generally refers to an ancient and hidden body of knowledge available only to initiated groups*, who portray themselves as guardians of the truths hidden from the majority of humankind. The initiation process takes people from a merely external, superficial, knowledge of reality to the inner truth and, in the process, awakens their consciousness at a deeper level. People are invited to undertake this "inner journey" to discover the "divine spark" within them. Salvation, in this context, coincides with a discovery of the Self." (JCBWL #7.2)

***Note:** esoteric=secret. The opposite is exoteric=known to everyone.

"It is useful to distinguish between *esotericism*, a search for knowledge, and *magic*, or the **occult**: the latter is a means of obtaining power. **Some groups are both esoteric and occult.** At the centre of **occultism** is a will to power based on the dream of becoming divine." (JCBWL #2.3.4.1)

"(New Age) spirituality consists of two distinct elements, one metaphysical, the other psychological. The *metaphysical* component comes from *New Age's* **esoteric** and **theosophical** roots, and is basically a new form of **gnosis**. Access

to the divine is by knowledge of hidden mysteries, in each individual's search for "the real behind what is only apparent, the origin beyond time, the transcendent beyond what is merely fleeting, the primordial tradition behind merely ephemeral tradition, the other behind the self, the cosmic divinity beyond the incarnate individual". **Esoteric spirituality** "is an investigation of Being beyond the separateness of beings, a sort of nostalgia for lost unity". "Here one can see the **gnostic** matrix of **esoteric spirituality**. It is evident when the children of Aquarius search for the Transcendent Unity of religions. They tend to pick out of the historical religions only the **esoteric** nucleus, whose guardians they claim to be. They somehow deny history and will not accept that spirituality can be rooted in time or in any institution. Jesus of Nazareth is not God, but one of the many historical manifestations of the cosmic and universal Christ". The *psychological* component of this kind of spirituality comes from the encounter between **esoteric** culture and psychology." (JCBWL #.3.1)

YouCat 356: "Is **esotericism** as found, for example in New Age beliefs, compatible with the Christian faith?"

No. Esotericism ignores the reality of God. God is a personal Being; he is love and the origin of life, not some cold cosmic energy. Man was willed and created by God, but man himself is not divine; rather, he is a creature that is wounded by sin, threatened by death, and in need of redemption. Whereas most proponents of esotericism assume that man can redeem himself, Christians believe that only Jesus Christ and God's grace redeem them. Nor are nature and the cosmos God (pantheism). Rather, the Creator, even though he loves us immensely, is infinitely greater and unlike anything he has created. (CCC 2110–2128)"

(<http://www.youcat.org/catechism/faith-believe-under-review/question-of-the-month/>)

"**Esoteric Christianity** is said to be a version of Christianity which can only be understood by those who have acquired secret knowledge. Supposedly, only a small number of people ever achieve this kind of enlightenment which believes say is the only way to crack the code of the Bible and truly know God. Purveyors of this pseudo-Christianity are usually theosophists, Gnostics, Rosicrucians and other New Age/occult enthusiasts. They assert that Christianity is a mystery religion in which there are esoteric practices that the general public is not aware of and which can only be understood by a select group of believers. The teachings of esoteric Christianity are heretical."

(*A Heresy known as Esoteric Christianity*, Susan Brinkmann, <https://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=58804>)

IX. Spiritualism

Many people are not able to distinguish between “spirituality” and “spiritualism”.

“What is **spiritualism**? It consists of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. It is also the belief that the dead can communicate with the living. A spiritualist is one who holds such belief and may practice it as a medium.”

(*Exposing Spiritualistic Practices in Healing*, Dr. Edwin A. Noyes M.D., MPH, 2011, spiritualisticpractices.com, edwinnoyes.com)

The word “**spiritualism**” appears seventeen times in the JCBWL Document.

“The Age of Aquarius has such a high profile in the *New Age* movement largely because of the influence of theosophy, **spiritualism** and **anthroposophy**, and their **esoteric** antecedents ... Here is what is “new” about *New Age*. It is a “syncretism of esoteric and secular elements”. They link into a widely-held perception that the time is ripe for a fundamental change in individuals, in society and in the world.” (JCBWL #2.1).

“One of the most common elements in *New Age* “spirituality” is a fascination with extraordinary manifestations, and in particular with paranormal entities. People recognised as “mediums” claim that their personality is taken over by another entity during trances in a *New Age* phenomenon known as “channeling” (read chapter 50), during which the medium may lose control over his or her body and faculties. Some people who have witnessed these events would willingly acknowledge that the manifestations are indeed spiritual, but are not from God, despite the language of love and light which is almost always used... It is probably more correct to refer to this as a contemporary form of **spiritualism**, rather than spirituality in a strict sense.” (JCBWL #2.2.1)

“**Spiritualism**, **theosophy**, **anthroposophy** and *New Age* all see reincarnation as participation in cosmic evolution. This post-Christian approach to eschatology is said to answer the unresolved questions of theodicy and dispenses with the notion of hell.” (JCBWL #2.2.3)

“The essential matrix of *New Age* thinking is to be found in the esoteric-theosophical tradition which was fairly widely accepted in European intellectual circles in the 18th and 19th centuries. It was particularly strong in **freemasonry**, **spiritualism**, **occultism** and **theosophy**, which shared a kind of esoteric culture.” (JCBWL #2.3.2)

“**Spiritualism**: While there have always been attempts to contact the spirits of the dead, 19th century spiritualism is reckoned to be one of the currents that flow into the *New Age*. It developed against the background of the ideas of **Swedenborg** and **Mesmer**, and became a new kind of religion. Madame

Blavatsky was a medium, and so spiritualism had a great influence on the Theosophical Society, although there the emphasis was on contact with entities from the distant past rather than people who had died only recently. Allan Kardec was influential in the spread of spiritualism in Afro-Brasilian religions. There are also spiritualist elements in some New Religious Movements in Japan." (JCBWL #7.2)

For Christians, indulging in astrology, augury, fortune-telling and consulting of spirits, is a most grievous sin, as serious as involvement in any other New Age practice.

For the Catechism of the Catholic Church #2115 to 2117 on "Divination and Magic", read in Introduction - "After JCBWL".

In this section, one has observed that there is an almost inseparable link between Astrology (and the Age of Aquarius), Theosophy, Freemasonry, Anthroposophy, Spiritualism, Gnosticism, Occultism and Esotericism in the New Age Movement. (In this book, I have not examined AMORC (the *Ancient and Mystical Order of the Rosae Crucis*), the Arcane School, Hermeticism, the Illuminati, Rosicrucianism, etc. The list is seemingly endless. The New Age is indeed a vast subject.)

K.

Leading New Age "portals", communes and sites

Esalen (California, USA), Findhorn (Scotland), Glastonbury (Somerset, England), Monte Verità (Switzerland), Nimbin (NSW, Australia), Sedona (Arizona, USA), Totnes (England), etc.

There's also the great annual (since 1977) Mind Body Spirit Wellness Festival, London, England.

L

Leading New Age Gurus and Influencers

José Argüelles, Robert Assagioli, Sri Aurobindo (India), Gregory Bateson, Ruth Benedict, David Bohm, Kenneth and Elise Boulding, Martin Buber, Rhonda Byrne, Eileen and Peter Caddy and Dorothy McLean who founded Findhorn, Fritjof Capra, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin SJ, Deepak Chopra (India), Paul Davies, Levi Dowling, Wayne Dyer, Albert Einstein, Werner Erhard, Marilyn Ferguson, Heinz von Foerster, Matthew Fox OP, Erich Fromm, Buckminster Fuller, Rene Gaudette, Linda Goodman, Bede Griffiths OSB Cam. (India), F.C. Happold, Willis Harman, Werner Heisenberg, Hermann Hesse, Christopher Hills, John Holland, Jean Houston, Barbara Marx Hubbard, Aldous Huxley, Oscar Ichazo, C.G. Jung, Alfred Korzybski, J. Krishnamurti (India), John Lilly,

George Lucas, Shirley MacLaine, Marshall McLuhan, Abraham Maslow, Margaret Mead, Thomas Merton OCSO, Richard Moss, Swami Muktananda (India), Gardner Murphy, Carolyn Myss, Joseph Chilton Pearce, Karl Pribram, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar (India), Swami Sachidananda Bharathi (India), James Redfield, Jane Roberts, Carl Rogers, Richard Rohr OFM, Miguel Ruiz, Helen Schucman, E.F. Schumacher, Rupert Sheldrake, David Spangler, Frederic Spiegelberg, Rudolph Steiner, D.T. Suzuki, Thich Nhat Hanh, Paul Tillich, Eckhart Tolle, Sir George Trevelyan, Tarthang Tulku, Luis SR Vas (Mumbai, India), Neale Donald Walsch, Alan Watts, Alfred North Whitehead, Ken Wilber, Marianne Williamson, Oprah Winfrey, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (India), Gary Zukav, etc.

M.

Biblical verses commonly abused by New Agers

“If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.” -Matthew 6:22

All accepted Bible translations say, “If your eye is sound/whole/good...” I have not seen a version that uses the word “single”, but it is a favourite with those who need it to justify from the Bible the existence of the psychic ‘third eye’, the sixth energy centre of the chakra system.

“Ye are gods.” -John 10:34

This verse is used to justify the New Age belief in the divinity of man or self-deification.

Jesus is actually quoting Psalm 82:6 which a reference to Exodus 21:6 which again refers to “the judges of Israel who ... exercised the divine prerogative to judge (Deuteronomy 1:17)” and so were described as “gods”, (New American Bible, notes)

“A person will reap only what he sows.” -Galatians 6:7

New Agers and reincarnationists appeal to this Bible verse to support their claim that Jesus believed in the Law of Karma.

Karma Yoga, is based on the idea that every action causes either good or bad karma. Furthermore, the soul of a person remains locked in a series of rebirths or reincarnations (samsara) until all karmic debt is paid off. So the object of Karma Yoga is to live such a perfect life that there is no karmic indebtedness. At that time, release (*moksha*) from physical existence is achieved.

Jesus did not teach this. He taught one life and then a resurrection, not karma and reincarnation. However, He did teach a certain concept of cause and effect. He warned that the measure we deal out to others will also be dealt back to us. (See Matthew 7:2) Later on, St. Paul, the apostle, restated this concept with

the words, "A person will reap only what he sows." (Galatians 6:7) These statements describe a general truth that is somewhat predictable concerning life and relationships in this world. For instance, if we show hatred toward others, they will normally respond with hatred toward us. If we express love toward others, they will usually react with love toward us. If we bless others selflessly, they will often bless us in return – and God Himself will often reward us with outpoured blessings for our generosity. If we drink or do drugs, we will end up destroying our bodies and minds. If we involve ourselves in sensuality and immorality, it will destroy family relationships. If we rebel against God's laws, we will suffer the consequences. *What we sow, we reap.* That's just the way things work in life. However, Jesus never intended to convey the karmic concept that every action must result in an exactly matched counter-action. Neither did he teach reincarnation and the cycle of rebirths because of karmic debt. Believing this doctrine leaves no room for forgiveness coming from God, which was a major emphasis in Jesus' teachings. Man instead is required to work out his own destiny by the strength of his own choices.

"Power had gone out from him." -Mark 5:30

This verse is a favourite of those who practise and promote healing using the putative life force energy. They point out that when the hemorrhaging woman came up behind Jesus and touched his cloak, Jesus was "aware at once that power had gone out from him." That power -- which they manipulate, balance and transmit in their healing systems -- they say, is the cosmic energy of the universe that is all and is in all.

The footnote in the New American Bible explains that her "inner conviction ... accompanied by faith in Jesus' saving power could effect a cure and was rewarded." "**Jesus' saving power**". That's a whole lot difference from the New Age lie.

Appendix I

Books on the New Age in the English language authored by Catholics

1. *Cults, Sects and the New Age*, Fr. James J. LeBar (with Introductory Comments by Cardinal John J. O'Connor and Cardinal John J. Krol), Huntington, Our Sunday Visitor, 1989, 288 pages.
2. *The Unicorn in the Sanctuary*, Randy England, Manassas, Trinity Communications, 1990, 164 pages.
3. *The New Age: A Christian Critique*, Ralph Rath, Southbend, Greenlawn Press, 1990, 347 pages.
4. *Ungodly Rage: The Hidden Face of Catholic Feminism*, by Donna Steichen, San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 1991.
5. *Catholics And The New Age- How Good People Are Being Drawn into Jungian Psychology, the Enneagram, and the Age of Aquarius*, Fr. Mitchell Pacwa, S.J., Servant Publications, 1992, 234 pages. Fr. Pacwa is a self-confessed former New Ager.
6. *The New Age Counterfeit*, Johnnette S. Benkovic, The Riehle Foundation, 1993, 132 pages.
7. *Overcoming the Power of the Occult*, Terry Ann Modica, Faith Publishing, 1997, 244 pages
8. *Esoteric Practices and Christian Faith-An Aid to Discernment*, Fr. Clemens Pilar COP, first published in German in 2001, translated into English in 2003, 127 pages.
9. *Primer on New Age*, Prepared for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines by the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus, 2004, 57 pages.
10. *Ransomed from Darkness: The New Age, Christian Faith and the Battle for Souls*, Moira Noonan, 176 pages
11. *Yoga, Tai Chi and Reiki: A Guide for Christians*, by Br. Max Sculley, DLS, (with a Foreword by Bishop Julian Porteous of Sydney), Connor Court Publishing, 2012, 180 pages.
12. *Cor Jesu Sacratissimum: From Secularism and the New Age to Christendom Renewed*, Roger Buck, 2016, 631 pages
13. *Women in the Priesthood? A Systematic Analysis in the Light of the Order of Creation and Redemption*, Manfred Hauke, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1988
14. *Christian Mysticism: The Art of the Inner Way*, William McNamara OCD, Amity House, New York, 1981
15. *An Approach to the New Age*, Stratford Caldecott, CRUX Publications Ltd., June 26, 2002

16. *The New Age Movement: A Challenge of our Time*, Sr. Epifania Brasil OP (not dateable; a chapter [pages 82-105] of the book was sent to me by Bishop Frederick D'Souza of Jhansi in the year 2000.
 17. *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness*, Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens, Foreword by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Malines Document IV, 1983
 18. *New Age – Theological Response to the Vatican Document*, ed. Fr. Sebastian Painadath SJ, Jeevadhara, May 2004
 19. *Evangelizing the New Age*, Paul McGuire, Servant Publications, 1989.
 20. *Orientierung in den Abgrunden der Pseudoreligionen*, Erika Gibello (in German), July 2013 <https://www.amazon.de/gp/product/3936004021/>
- The “Learn to Discern: Is It Christian or New Age?” series of booklets by Susan Brinkmann OCDS and Johnnette Benkovic, published by Oldsmar (USA), Simon Peter Press, Inc., A Women of Grace study series, 2008 <https://shop.womenofgrace.com/product/1888/books>
 - 1) Magick
 - 2) Channeling
 - 3) Wicca/Witchcraft
 - 4) Enneagrams
 - 5) Labyrinths
 - 6) Reiki
 - 7) Therapeutic touch
 - 8) Meditation: Centering prayer
 - 9) Meditation. Yoga
 - 10) Mind Control: A Course in Miracles
 - 11) Eco-Spirituality
 - 12) Goddess worship
 - 13) Astrology. Horoscopes
 - 14) Glossary of New Age terms

Other good Christian books on the NAM (most of the books in the Catholic list further above, as well as many in the following list are available in my personal library)

- Amano, J. Yutake and Norman Geisler, *The Infiltration of the New Age Movement*. Tyndale House, 1989.
- Ankerberg, John and John Weldon, *The Facts on Spirit Guides*, Harvest House, 1988.
- Ankerberg, John and John Weldon, *The Facts on Psychic Readings*, Harvest House, 1997.
- Ankerberg, John and John Weldon, *The Facts on the Mind Sciences*, Harvest House, 1993.
- Ankerberg, John and Craig Branch, *Thieves of Innocence*. Harvest House, 1993

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- Ankerberg, John and John Weldon, *The Facts on the New Age Movement*. Harvest House, 1988.
- Ankerberg, John and John Weldon, *The Facts on UFOs and Other Supernatural Phenomena*, Harvest House, 1992.
- Baer, Randall N., *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, Huntington House, 1989.
- Berry, Prof. Harold J. *New Age Movement, Back to the Bible*, 1988.
- Burnett, David, *Clash of Worlds*, MARC, 1990.
- Carr, Joseph, *The Lucifer Connection*, Huntington House, 1987.
- Chandler, Russell, *Understanding the New Age*, Word, 1988.
- Clark, David and Norman Geisler, *Apologetics in the New Age: A Christian Critique of Pantheism*. Baker, 1990.
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- Clifford, Ross and Philip Johnson, *Sacred Quest*. Albatross Books, 1993.
- Clifford, Ross and Philip Johnson, *Taboo or to Do?* Darton, Longman and Todd, 2016.
- Cumbey, Constance, *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*, Huntington House, 1983
- Drane, John, *What is the New Age Saying to the Church?* Marshall Pickering, 1991.
- Drane, John, *What is the New Age Still Saying to the Church?* Marshall Pickering, 1999.
- Edwards, Brian H., *What is the New Age?* Day One Publications, 1992.
- Eidsmoe, Dr. John, *Basic Principles of New Age Thought*, New Leaf Press, 1991.
- Ellis, Roger and Andrea Clarke, *The New Age and You*, Kingsway, 1992.
- Frost, Rob, *A Closer Look at New Age Spirituality*, Kingsway Pub. 2001
- Goertz, Dirk, *Transcendental Typology*, Destiny Image, 1990.
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- Greene, Michael, *The Dawn of the New Age*, IVP, 1982.
- Groothuis, Douglas, *Confronting the New Age*, IVP, 1988.
- Groothuis, Douglas, *Deceived by the Light*, Harvest House, 1995.
- Groothuis, Douglas, *Unmasking the New Age*. IVP, 1986.
- Halverson, Dean C., *Understanding and Reaching New Agers, Crystal Clear*, Navpress, 1990.
- Harris, Doug, *Occult Overviews and New Age Agendas*, Reachout Trust, 1997.
- Herrick, James, *The Making of the New Spirituality*, IVP, 2003.
- Hillstrom, Elizabeth L., *Testing the Spirits*, IVP, 1995
- Hoyt, Karen, et. Al., *The New Age Rage*. Revell, 1987.
- Hunt, Dave, *Occult Invasion*, GLS Publishing India, 2004.
- Hunt, Dave, *Peace, Prosperity and the Coming Holocaust*, Harvest House, 1983.
- Hunt, Dave, and T.A. McMahon, *America. The Sorcerer's New Apprentice*, Harvest House, 1988.

- Hunt, Dave, and T.A. McMahon, *The New Spirituality*, Harvest House, 1988.
- Hunt, Dave, and T.A. McMahon, *The Seduction of Christianity*, Harvest House, 1985.
- De Haan II, Martin R., *What's the Appeal of the New Age Movement?* Discovery Series, 1990.
- James, Jonathan D., *The Great Deception*, Genesis 1994.
- Jones, Peter, *Capturing the Pagan Mind*. B&H Publishing, 2003.
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- Livesey, Roy, *Understanding Deception, New Age Teaching in the Church*, New Wine, 1987.
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- Livesey, Roy, *More Understanding the New Age*, New Wine, 1990.
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- Logan, Kevin, *Close Encounters with the New Age*, Kingsway, 1991.
- Lucas, Ernest, *Science and the New Age Challenge*. IVP, 1996.
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Appendix II

Seventeen Documents of the Catholic Church's Magisterium on aspects of New Age and New Thought Spirituality

<http://www.newagedeception.com/new/free-resources/25-17-documents-of-the-catholic-churchs-magisterium-on-aspects-of-new-age-and-new-thought-spirituality.html>

Sharon Lee Giganti, 2011

The Vatican Document on New Age, "Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life" (2003) lists the following documents in Section 8, under the heading, "*Resources; Documents of the Catholic Church's Magisterium*"

Some of these documents may require that you search for an English translation.

1. John Paul II, Address to the United States Bishops of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska on their "Ad Limina" visit, 28 May 1993.
2. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter to Bishops on Certain Aspects of Christian Meditation (Orationis Formas), Vatican City (Vatican Polyglot Press) 1989.
3. International Theological Commission, Some Current Questions Concerning Eschatology, 1992, Nos. 9-10 (on reincarnation).
4. International Theological Commission, Some Questions on the Theology of Redemption, 1995, I/29 and II/35-36.
5. Argentine Bishops' Conference Committee for Culture, Frente a una Nueva Era. Desafio a la pastoral en el horizonte de la Nueva Evangelización, 1993.
6. Irish Theological Commission, A New Age of the Spirit? A Catholic Response to the New Age Phenomenon, Dublin 1994.
7. Godfried Danneels, Au-delà de la mort: réincarnation et resurrection, Pastoral Letter, Easter 1991.
8. Godfried Danneels, Christ or Aquarius? Pastoral Letter, Christmas 1990 (Veritas, Dublin)
9. Carlo Maccari, "La 'mistica cosmica' del New Age", in Religioni e Sette nel Mondo 1996/2.
10. Carlo Maccari, La New Age di fronte alla fede cristiana, Turin (LDC) 1994.
11. [Archbishop] Edward Anthony McCarthy, The New Age Movement, Pastoral Instruction, 1992.
12. Paul Poupard, Felicità e fede cristiana, Casale Monferrato (Ed. Piemme) 1992.

13. Joseph Ratzinger, *La fede e la teologia ai nostri giorni*, Guadalajara, May 1996, in *L'Osservatore Romano* 27 October 1996.
14. Norberto Rivera Carrera, *Instrucción Pastoral sobre el New Age*, 7 January 1996.
15. Christoph von Schönborn, *Risurrezione e reincarnazione*, (Italian translation) Casale Monferrato (Piemme) 1990.
16. J. Francis Stafford, *Il movimento "New Age"*, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 30 October 1992.
17. Working Group on New Religious Movements (ed.), *Vatican City, Sects and New Religious Movements. An Anthology of Texts from the Catholic Church*, Washington (USCC) 1995.

Appendix III

Helpful Magisterial Documents

Where to find sound clarifications and refutations of New Age and other popular erroneous teachings

<http://www.newagedeception.com/new/free-resources/24-helpful-magisterial-documents.html>

Sharon Lee Giganti, 2011

1. "Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life, *A Christian Reflection on the 'New Age'.*"
By: Pontifical Council for Culture, and Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_doc_20030203_new-age_en.html
2. "A Call to Vigilance: Pastoral Instruction on the New Age"
By: Archbishop Norberto Rivera Carrera (Became a Cardinal in 1998)
<http://www.ourladyswarriors.org/dissent/newage1.htm>
3. "Guidelines for Evaluating Reiki as an Alternative Therapy"
By: Committee on Doctrine, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
http://www.usccb.org/doctrine/Evaluation_Guidelines_finaltext_2009-03.pdf
4. "Statement on *Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God by Sister Elizabeth A. Johnson*"
By: Committee on Doctrine, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
<http://www.usccb.org/doctrine/statement-quest-for-the-living-god-2011-03-24.pdf>

5. "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of Christian Meditation"
By: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
<http://www.ourladyswarriors.org/teach/meditation.htm>
6. "Notification on the book, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* by Father Jacques Dupuis, S.J."
By: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20010124_dupuis_en.html
7. "Notification Concerning the Writings of Father Anthony De Mello, S.J."
By: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19980624_demello_en.html
8. "Notification on the works of Father Jon Sobrino, S.J."
By: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20061126_notification-sobrino_en.html
9. "Declaration 'Dominus Iesus' On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church"
By: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000806_dominus-iesus_en.html
10. "Notification Regarding Certain Writings of Fr. Marciano Vidal, C.Ss.R"
By: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20010515_vidal_en.html
11. "Notification on the Book '*Jesus Symbol of God*' by Father Roger Haight S.J."
By: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20041213_notification-fr-haight_en.html
12. "Responses to Some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine on the Church"
By: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (*note: This document seeks to answer the question, "Did the Second Vatican Council change the Catholic doctrine on the Church?" Hint: NO it did not!*)
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20070629_responsa-quaestiones_en.html
13. "Declaration in Defense of the Catholic Doctrine on the Church Against Certain Errors of the Present Day"

By: Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19730705_mysterium-ecclesiae_en.html

Appendix IV

Compiled writings on New Age themes by Catholics (with a few exceptions), several of whom are former New Agers - at my web site in the "New Age" section

Amy Welborn; Andrew Walther; Anette Ignatowicz; Archbishop Edward McCarthy of Miami; Archbishop Norberto Rivera Carrera, Primate of Mexico; Archbishop Stanislaw Rylko, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity; Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami; Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York; Bishop Donald W Montrose of Stockton, California; Bishop Julian Porteous of Sydney (now Archbishop of Hobart); Bishop Nicola de Angelis CFIC of Peterborough, Ontario; Bishop Thomas Dabre of Vasai, Poona, Chairman-CBCI Doctrinal Commission; Bishops of Korea; Bishops of the Philippines; Bro. Ignatius Mary OMSM; Bro. Max Sculley DLS; Cardinal Georges Cottier, Theologian of the Pontifical Household; Cardinal Paul Poupard, President, Pontifical Council for Culture; CatholicFidelity.com; Catholics United For the Faith; Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR, Massimo Introvigne); Cheryl Dickow; Clare McGrath Merkle, Crossveil; Constance Cumbey (Protestant), Former New Ager; Cornelia Ferreira (Traditionalist); David MacDonald, Former New Ager; David W Pentrack; Donal P. O'Mathuna; Dr. James Hitchcock; Dr. John Shea, CatholicInsight.com; Dr. José Maria Baamonde, Advisor to the Argentine Bishops; Dr. Peter Kreeft; Errol C Fernandes; EWTN; Dr. Fr. Alessandro Olivieri Pennesi, Professor, Lateran University; Fr Alfonso Aguilar LC; Fr. Bernard D Green; Fr C. C. Martindale SJ; Dr. Fr. Clemens Pilar COP; Fr Gareth Leyshon; Dr. Fr James Manjackal MSFS; Prof. Fr. Jose Vidamor B Yu LRMS; Dr. Fr Louis Aldrich SJ; Fr Mitch Pacwa SJ; Dr. Fr. Paolo Scarafoni LC, Rector of the Pontifical University Regina Apostolorum; Dr. Fr Peter Joseph; Fra John Carlo Rosales; Prof. Harold J Berry, (Protestant) as in ewtn.com; International Theological Video Conference; Irish Theological Commission; Jocelyn Girard; Lee Penn; Margaret Anne Feaster; Mark Shea; Marino Restrepo; Mary Jo Anderson; Michael Akerman; Michael H Brown; Michael Whelton (Orthodox Church); Mike Shreve (Protestant); Moira Noonan, Former New Ager; Pope Benedict XVI; Pope John Paul II; Pope John XXIII; Randy England; Robert D. Fath; Roberta Grillo; Roger Buck (Traditionalist), Former New Ager; Sharon Lee Giganti; Stratford Caldecott; Susan Beckworth; Susan Brinkmann; Teresa Osorio Gonçalves; Terry Ann Modica; The Michael

Journal; The Working Group on New Religious Movements in the Vatican; New Religious Movements-Cardinal Francis Arinze; The Vatican Response to the New Religious Movements-John A. Saliba.

There's no such thing as a free lunch with Satan. He'll give you anything you want – for a price.

You've likely heard the anecdote about the frog in hot water. Simply put, it states that if a frog is placed in hot water, it will instantly jump out, but if it's placed in cold water that is slowly heated, it will not perceive the danger and be slowly cooked to death. The premise is that if a frog is put suddenly into boiling water, it will jump out, but if the frog is put in tepid water which is then brought to a boil slowly, it will not perceive the danger and will be cooked to death. The story is often used as a metaphor for the inability or unwillingness of people to react to or be aware of sinister threats that arise gradually rather than suddenly.

<https://www.thetappingsolution.com/blog/hot-water/>

Once a frog fell into a vessel of hot water which was starting to heat on a gas stove. As the temperature of the water started to rise, the frog managed to adjust its body temperature accordingly. As the water neared boiling point, the frog was no longer able to adjust its body temperature to that of the water. It tried to jump out of the vessel but couldn't make it. What was the reason that a frog couldn't make it?

The frog couldn't make it due to its own inability to decide when it had to jump out. We all need to adjust according to the situations but there are times when we need to face the situation and take the appropriate action and get out before it's too late.

<https://www.moralstories.org/frog-hot-water/>

Don't be like the frog. If you dabble in the occult, esotericism, New Age, etc., you will experience spiritual death.

