

## THE HEALING POWER OF GRATITUDE

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Long before I knew of the Group, they were training me. Much of that took the form of automatic or channeled writing, which I resisted for the longest time. Finally, I gave them twenty minutes a day, every day. That turned out to be a grand gift I gave myself. As I'd quip to my closest friends, they were better than any therapist I'd ever encountered.

At that time, I didn't yet know that's what they truly were.

In one such writing, they helped me through one of those dark nights of the soul the loss of a significant love affair can bring. That day as I sat feeling unloved and unlovable, barely able to hold the pen, they said, "Ask this. Say it out loud: *I want to feel God's love for me.*"

At this point in my life, I wasn't sure there was a God and I figured if there were, he/she/it wouldn't have any time for me. But I did as the Group asked. Expecting nothing, I sat there alone in my kitchen on a cold, gray day and said the line aloud.

*"I want to feel God's love for me."*

In an instant, my heart felt near to bursting with a sensation that left me feeling unequivocally loved. The Group scribbled with my hand:

*Close your eyes and feel your connection to the source. See how light and joy fills you, how your mood of moments before*

*is completely altered? You have this access at all times; your problem – just as many humans – is you're looking for that LOVE that is God's love in congress with another. This is the meditative moment for you – this return to truth, that the connection with the God, the experience of God's love is ever present if you but stop a moment and feel God's arms around you, God's love flowing over you like a stream of living light, God's constancy in the sun at the heart of your being. It is this you can impart, can share.*

What filled me with such awe about this experience, though, was how much like the feeling of gratitude was that feeling of God's love. A profound truth burned within me – *When I feel gratitude, I'm feeling God's love. All I have to do to feel God's love is feel gratitude.*

I circled around that one for a long time, so wondrous were the implications. And then came the memory of myself as a young, nursing mother. I'd been blessed (or cursed) by an overabundance of milk, and at times my breasts were so full they felt rock-hard and sore. Then there was nothing like the relief of having what you have to give taken in such moments as these: such gratitude for such a simple act! It would flood me each time my baby nursed. Thank you thank you thank you became my mantra. And it occurred to me then, at the ripe old age of twenty-two, that maybe this was what God felt like – having so much to give and so grateful to have it taken. I started to image God as a breastfeeding mother, a benevolent, loving presence that would hold anyone in her grateful embrace at being able to share her incredible bounty.

Years later, I came across this amazing statement on Dr. Irene's website ([drirene.com](http://drirene.com)).

*Infants cannot survive without care and feeding by their parents. They do not know the meaning of the word love. But they must experience relief when their hunger is sated, when a wet diaper is changed, when a warm blanket is provided. And we can assume that the child experiences a precursor of love – a profound, primordial gratitude for the continuing gift of life, expressed in finite acts of kindness. Often the kindness is relief from discomfort and pain.*

Gratitude flows both ways in times like these. There is no giver, no taker for in the giving we receive as in the receiving we give.

And that day of saying that simple line – *I want to feel God's love for me* – I believe I truly felt God's gratitude that all that overabundance had finally been requested.

As the days passed, I discovered that just by feeling gratitude, I could bring myself back to that place of *knowing* myself loved and held in loving arms. So gratitude became my daily practice. Not the thought of gratitude, but the feeling of a heart filled to overflowing with the countless gifts I could enumerate. I started each day and ended each day with lists of all I felt grateful for – the food in my belly, the bed I got to sleep in this lifetime.

I was discovering that gratitude itself can bring great joy.

*When we are very thankful and just holds our hands over the food, the energy of life starts flowing into this that we are to eat. Gratitude bursts out. It's almost hard to stop to eat because it feels as though we've eaten already, are eating a manna far finer than our plates can hold.*

*Or when we sit around a table, holding hands before a meal, basking in this glow, how hard to stop to lift the spoon to the soup. It means dropping the hand. Oh, my.*

*This gratitude flows from the simplest moments of joy – a bird tracing across the sky, the waft on the breeze of some delicious scent. In these very private moments, impossible to share, joy can burst forth so powerfully that the **I** we were a second ago can be loosed into oblivion. We become less to become more, empty to be filled.*

The wonder I felt that day just saying that simple line – *I want to feel God's love for me* – has never left me. I began to wish I had known about this years before, for I'd a friend when I was in my mid-20s who taught me a great lesson about love. Most of the time, she was the easiest person to love. And then she'd get into these times when her fear of being unlovable made her act in ways that repelled me totally. If I knew then what I know now, I'd have her cover her heart with her hands and say, "I want to feel God's love for me."

I started to incorporate the Group's line into my Psychospiritual Counseling. With some clients, the word God brought up negative association; they preferred something neutral like Universe or Life. I learned to check beforehand.

*With this clearing the old energy of her massage table, we joined in Joy. She'd already done the clearing while she thought she was still trying to do it. I "reeled" her back to the moment so she could experience the truth of that. Then I had her say, "I want to feel God's love for me." (Goddess works better for her.) When I felt her feeling the love; I pointed out how it's like the feeling of gratitude. AND how both were exactly that feeling when we were clearing the table. This is healing energy.*

I discovered that for years I'd been being shown how healers work with this gratitude that is God's love.

Spontaneous energetic healing has been a conscious part of my life since at the age of eight when I felt the rush of it toward a neighbor who'd been hit by a car.

It's often like this:

One Sunday, I was walking across the empty University of New Mexico campus toward my favorite restaurant, just enjoying the glorious day, and all of a sudden I stopped there in my path and spontaneously raised both of my hands as I would to do in a healing and connected with a new friend so instantly it almost bowled me over. I felt all this healing energy moving out of me and into me, like he and I had created this universe of healing energy between the two of us.

I arrived at the restaurant at 10:06 a.m., so this happened right before.

At 10:17 a.m. that same morning, my new friend who lived an hour away sent me this email, saying that he "felt compelled to quickly tell you about my morning."

*Among the birthday phone calls, two were from friends who are newly dealing with cancer, both of whom are seeking counsel about just letting it run its course vs doing the whole invasive western approach. While speaking with my very close and longtime friend – , I felt a golden, or more to the point, equanimous, glow behind me which I associated with you.*

Being the conduit of energetic healings like this one always felt natural to me. I've often found myself sitting in a room with other people and then notice that healing energy has been flowing from me. Sometimes I know where it's flowing, and other times I don't. I think it works like this, though: we humans aren't that different from dolphins and whales. We're "sounding" all the time, sending out energetic pulses that tell

our story. When someone is sick, a healer feels that energy – consciously or unconsciously – as it interacts with her own energy, entering her body. Within her body, the Universal Healing Energy gives the "hurt" energy a homeopathic dose before it circles back to the other to be taken in, assimilated.

People ask why I'd want other's "sick" energy in my body like this. First, I have no choice. I read energy; that's what I'm wired to do. And second, when the *healing* energy moves through me, it feels good. I recorded such an experience with healing after an accident near the market where I was shopping.

*One of the clerks came through the door awash with fear/worry/anxiety to get another worker to tell him his girlfriend had just been hit by a car. I watched as they ran out to the sidewalk where she lay, police standing over her. Everyone who saw, peaked the emotion up to "oh, my!" worry. I could see all that image-speculation adding to the injury (death, maiming, broken bones, internal injury). Instead, I sat down on a bench outside and sent her healing energy. I felt it incredibly powerfully, and instantly, in my hands. I felt such love and gratitude that this could flow from me. I felt like what a world it could be if one could just go over and lay on hands right there on the street. But I also knew this wasn't necessary. More important was to convert some of the imagination to a positive outcome. I wished in that moment that I could get everyone there to do that instead of like the mother who interrupted me to ask what had happened, her fear pouring over her sides like syrup.*

That gratitude at getting to be the conduit of this powerful energy can at times feel almost overwhelming.

*In the midst of sending healing to Barbara, I had a burst of gratitude so sweet that it was almost painful. In the MIDST of! And I realized, that's how it usually is. I got the idea of starting there because this happens when I send healing energy.*

*Doing yoga, my inner guides tell me to have "soft eyes" –I soften like one does with the Duchenne smile and notice my heart softens, too. I keep forgetting, though, and I would be in a posture, holding it with effort, wanting yoga to be over. Then they'd remind me, soft eyes. As soon as I'd soften my eyes, my heart would also soften and energy would flow through my nadis – my auric field & body would be energized and the posture was instantly effortless.*

And it made sense. Gratitude opens our hearts and our hearts are powerful photon generators, pulsing out the body's message at the speed of light. As Yogi Bhanjan said, "When the heart gets in the prayer, every beat creates a miracle."

When I started teaching Shamanistic Creative Writing, I included *The Healing Power of Gratitude* as part of the syllabus, which I described like this:

*Those of you who have been in groups with me know how important I think it is to share the healing potential of the group for those in need of a healing. Here we'll go beyond the healings we'll be doing each week with techniques that soften the heart and allow the healing to flow more fully. The in-class writing will focus on a time in your life when you yourself felt this great gratitude that you yourself got to be the vessel of this healing.*

For me such a time came when I first started as a volunteer in the emergency room of a large teaching hospital. I wrote of

my experience with an old, dying woman while my students did their in-class writing:

*She opened her eyes wide as my hands cupped the air near her feet. "Do you mind if I touch you?" I asked. Barely perceptibly her head twitched a shake back and forth. I fitted the blanket around her feet, cupping her heels in my hands. "How's that?" She nodded, light rising in her eyes.*

*I stood holding her heels, smiling into those eyes that never left mine. Her body thawed and my gratitude grew into a big, "Thank you, God, for getting to be here in this moment for this woman because there's no where else I'd rather be than have this energy flowing through me like this."*

*Her love-filled eyes never left mine.*

My desire for using the healing power of the group grew out of a suggestion by a wonderful man named Tommy, who has since passed over. I met him when Sally Rhine Feather and I were co-facilitating a "Paranormal Experiences Group" at the Rhine Research Center in Durham, North Carolina.

Tommy was one of our group members from the very early days of our gathering in the old white house across from Duke University's magnolia-filled campus. When he suggested – no, stressed would actually be the better word – that we had an obligation to use the power of our group for healing, I liked this idea very much.

We started pretty simply – just sending healing energy to those we knew were in need. From the very beginning, we got plenty of confirmations of the effect of that healing. Here's one courtesy of my co-facilitator, Dr. Sally Rhine Feather, who emailed a friend who lived over a thousand miles away to tell her that we'd sent her healing the night before.

*Oh my! Sally! this is so interesting. yesterday I had a really bad day...bleeding and in great pain. then last night...all of a sudden...it stopped. I could hardly believe it. I woke up this morning feeling much, much better and NO bleeding for the first time since the surgery. I could not believe it, but now I do. ohhhh thank you so much. . . . and please tell everyone in the group that I am soooooo appreciative. thank you, thank you, thank you.*

So thrilled was I by our success, that I started to incorporate a healing circle into every class or workshop I taught. The success of these healings fired up even my non-psychic students.

When one of my Shamanistic Creative Writing students called to apologize for again missing class, I asked her if she'd felt the healing the group had sent her the week before when she'd had oral surgery.

"Oh, it was you!" she exclaimed. And then she launched into how she'd come out of the meds utterly pain-free. That seemed so incredible given all that mouth stuff she'd just gone through that she knew someone must be sending her healing and even called a girlfriend to ask if it was her prayer group doing it. (It wasn't.) She was tickled to learn the source; and the class lit up with pleasure at the acknowledgment that all that healing energy had been received.

Slowly, I evolved a guided meditation for the healing circle that seemed to boost the effect. It went like this – and I share this freely with any who would like to use it.

*Close your eyes and feel your body in the chair. Notice how the energy flows through you. You might need to shift now, placing both feet on the floor, sitting more erect so that the energy can flow more freely. But get comfortable.*

*Now I'd like you to feel gratitude that you get to be a conduit for this incredible healing energy. And know that as this healing energy of the Universe flows through you, it also heals you. **As you heal, you yourself will be healed.***

*Say a quick thank you to whatever you hold as divine. I say, **"Thank you, God, that I get to be a vehicle for your healing energy today."** You might actually feel as you say this a softening in your heart, a melting. Know that it's your heart that heals, sending out this healing energy with each beat **at the speed of light.***

Here I would look at my list of names of those the group had offered up for healing and I'd pick one.

*Breathing comfortably, I'd like you now to ask soul-to-soul if Samuel would like a healing from you today. Know that a "no" feels like a **"Pass Not"** and a "yes" will feel like your energy can move toward the person. If it's okay, just allow the energy to flow through you to Samuel, bringing a healing of mind, a healing of body, a healing of soul, a healing of spirit. Knowing there's nothing else you need to do. And don't worry because if the person doesn't want a healing, the energy will bounce right back at you.*

Over the years of doing this, I discovered that not a lot of time was required. Healing can be instantaneous. I used my sense of how long we should spend on each name. Usually it would be less than a minute.

*Now, allow this incredible healing energy to flow through you to Rita . . .*

After we'd sent energy to the names on the list. I'd focus on the people in the room, but not individually or by name.

*Now allow the energy to flow through you to anyone in the room who might be in need of a healing of mind, a healing of body, a healing of soul, a healing of spirit. You don't need to know to whom it flows, just allow the energy to move through you to where it needs to go.*

When spontaneously I first suggested to a group that they now heal whoever in the group might be in need, I felt concerned that there might be too many crosscurrents of energy and that it might feel like a jangle. But in actuality, this crisscrossing of energy ribbons in the group feels so incredible. It's like an orgy puddle, pure bliss. My third eye glows, my body pulses. It's healing magnified exponentially. I never want it to stop, and I find myself dragging the group away from this bliss!

But I do drag myself away because I save the best for last:

*Now breathing comfortably, allow this gorgeous healing energy to flow into you from the Universe, bringing to you a healing of mind, a healing of body, a healing of spirit, a healing of your soul – whatever you may need. Or just a tune-up. Just allow yourself to be filled, every part of you, with this glorious healing energy.*

I once had a most extraordinary experience with this healing of self. At first, I was the healer healing the self. But then, as if by grace, the allowing came, and it was as though healing flowed down from above, into me, without my having thought it through, directed it, or anything! I noticed that healing came only when it wasn't I healing me, but when I open with

gratitude to healing as it was flowing in from above, from all around, even from within.

*Now, send thanks to all those who allowed you to be a conduit of this healing energy today, for as you send healing, you yourself **are** healed.*

Because some people go way out or into a trance-like state during healings, remember to bring them back into their bodies.

*Feel yourself coming back now. Shrug your shoulders . . . wiggle your toes . . . scratch your nose.*

After these healings, any group becomes more energetically cohesive, more bonded. For this reason, I've found it valuable to start all my workshops with a healing such as this. The glow left in the room wraps around us like a blanket on a cold night. The gratitude makes all things possible.