

**ALTERNATIVE HEALTH THERAPIES
AMONG MUSLIMS
IN KWA-ZULU NATAL**

BY

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ETHICAL STATEMENT BY
RESEARCHER

With the signature below I, Shamima Kathree, hereby declare that the work that I present in this thesis is based on my own research, and that I have not submitted this thesis to any other institution of higher education to obtain an academic qualification.



Shamima Kathree

22/01/2007
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ABSTRACT

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL

ALTERNATIVE HEALTH THERAPIES AMONG MUSLIMS IN KWA-ZULU NATAL

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This study identifies the most popular alternative health therapies among Muslims who live in Kwa-Zulu Natal. It then examines the philosophies underlying these therapies with a view to establish whether there is conflict between these therapies and the fundamental teachings of Islam. Finally, it determines the responses of Muslim therapists and patients respectively to potential areas of conflict.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
Chapter One	
INTRODUCTION.....	1
A. Research Design	1
B. Literature Review.....	11
Chapter Two	
WHAT IS ALTERNATE MEDICINE?	
2.1 Introduction.....	27
2.2 Orthodox and Holistic Approaches to Medicine.....	28
2.3 Alternate Therapies in the West.....	31
2.4 Alternate Health Care in South Africa.....	33
2.5 Benefits of Alternate Therapies.....	36
2.6 Criticisms of Alternate Therapies	37
2.7 Reasons for Visiting an Alternate Therapist	39
2.8 The Alternate Therapies	41
2.9 Conclusion	44
Chapter Three	
ALTERNATE SYSTEMS OF HEALTH CARE	
3.1 Introduction	45
3.2 Unani Medicine	46
3.2.1 Islamic Contributions to Medicine	50
3.2.2 Ibn Sina and Tibb	51
3.2.3 Healing with Unani	52
3.2.4 Al-Tibb Al-Nabawi (Prophetic Medicine)	54
3.2.4.1 Characteristics of Prophetic Medicine	54
3.2.4.2 Scope and Methodology of Prophetic Medicine	56
3.2.4.3 The Future of Prophetic Medicine	58

3.3	Ayurveda	59
3.3.1	What is Ayurveda	59
3.3.2	The History of Ayurveda	60
3.3.3	The Philosophy of Ayurveda	61
3.3.4	How does Ayurveda Work?	64
3.3.5	Treatment with Ayurveda	65
3.3.6	How can Ayurveda Help?	68
3.4	Chinese Medicine	69
3.4.1	Yin and Yang	70
3.4.2	How can Traditional Chinese Medicine Help?	71
3.4.3	The Treatment	71
3.4.4	Keeping Healthy the Chinese Way	74
3.5	Conclusion	75

Chapter Four

POPULAR ALTERNATE THERAPIES IN KWA-ZULU NATAL

4.1	Introduction	76
4.2	Reflexology	77
4.2.1	Origins	77
4.2.2	The Method	77
4.2.3	Uses of Reflexology	78
4.3	Reiki	79
4.3.1	Origins	79
4.3.2	The Treatment	80
4.3.3	Benefits of Reiki	84
4.4	Yoga	85
4.4.1	Origins	85
4.4.2	Practice of Yoga	85
4.4.3	The Benefits of Yoga	87
4.5	Aromatherapy	88
4.5.1	Origins	88
4.5.2	Treatment in Aromatherapy	89
4.5.3	The Benefits of Aromatherapy	91

4.6	Magnetic Therapy	92
4.6.1	Origins	92
4.6.2	The Method	94
4.6.3	The Benefits	95
4.6.4	Scientific Developments in the Therapeutic use of Magnetism	95
4.6.5	Magnetism in Islam	96
4.7	Conclusion	97

Chapter Five

FINDINGS OF SURVEY ON ALTERNATE HEALTH THERAPIES AMONG MUSLIMS IN KWAZULU-NATAL

5.1	Introduction	98
5.2	Data Collection Process.....	98
5.3	The Research Instrument	99
5.4	Units of Analysis	99
5.5	Data Capturing & Analysis	99
5.6	Reliability of the Study	100
5.7	Interviews with the Therapists	100
5.8	Interviews with the Patients	111
5.9	Conclusion	118

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION

6.1	Summary of Findings.....	119
6.2	Limitations of the Study.....	121
6.3	Recommendations.....	121

BIBLIOGRAPHY	123
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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRES	130
----------------------------------	-----

APPENDIX II: THE REIKI SYMBOLS	137
--------------------------------------	-----

APPENDIX III: THE REIKI HAND POSITIONS	138
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A. RESEARCH DESIGN

According to the Government Gazette, Vol 220, No 21292, 21 June 2000, the Department of Health included an amendment to the Chiropractors, Homeopaths, and Allied Health Service Profession Bill. The amendment to the Bill was an addition to the definition of “Allied Health (service) Profession” of ayurveda, Chinese medication, acupuncture, chiropractic, homeopathy, massage therapy, naturopathy, osteopathy, phytotherapy, therapeutic aromatherapy or any other health profession registered in terms of this act. An examining authority is also stipulated, who would be any person or persons approved by the council to conduct examinations of any profession registered in terms of the Act. The objectives of the council are stipulated as:

1. To assist in the promotion and protection of the health of the population of South Africa.
2. To control the practice of the professions and to investigate complaints relating to the practitioners.
3. To set standards for the training of intending practitioners.

Section 31(1) of the Government Gazette relates to “offences by unregistered persons”. Such persons would be liable to a fine or imprisonment. Due to the rapid increase in the number of therapists in the complementary health-care arena, the South African Department of Health considered it necessary to establish an official body to regulate the alternate health practices. Its main objective would be to safeguard patients from exploitation by bogus therapists who have had no training as well as from qualified therapists. The concerns relate to claims by practitioners that

they could cure diseases such as epilepsy, misdiagnosis of illnesses, charging of exorbitant fees, etc.

Ayurvedic practitioners, naturopaths, osteopaths, phytotherapists, Chinese medicine and acupuncture practitioners, therapeutic aromatherapists, therapeutic massage therapists and therapeutic reflexologists would all be required to belong to a professional council which would regulate all complementary health practices in accordance with the Allied Health Professions Act. The parliamentary review session on 18 June 2004 recommended that The Medicines Control Amendment Act as declared by Minister M. T. Msimang should be revised. Legislation is expected to be before parliament in the year 2006.

1.1. OUTLINE OF TOPIC:

Alternate health therapies have become very popular in the Muslim community and some Muslim practitioners have established thriving practices. However, Muslim scholars have begun to question the validity of these therapies from a theological perspective. They have raised particular concerns about how the belief in phenomena such as energy fields, source of the healing power of therapists, etc relate to the doctrine of *tawhid* (Oneness of God).

1.2. RATIONALE FOR RESEARCH:

In many industrialized societies over the last decade there has been a surge of interest in the potential of alternative medicine. The number of alternate medical practitioners is expanding, as are the forms of healing which are available. From herbal remedies to acupuncture, from reflexology to chiropractic treatments, modern society is witnessing an explosion of health care

alternatives which lie outside the 'official' medical system. The profile of the typical individual who seeks out alternative forms of healing is female, young to middle-aged, and middle class. There are a number of reasons why individuals might seek the services of an alternative practitioner. Some people perceive orthodox medicine to be deficient in relieving chronic pain or symptoms of stress and anxiety. Others are dissatisfied with the way modern health care systems function – financial restrictions, harmful side effects of drugs, intrusive surgery and being a passive patient. They believe that the spiritual and psychological dimensions of health and illness are often not taken into account in the practice of orthodox medicine.

The biomedical model of health defines disease in objective terms and believes that a healthy body can be restored through scientifically based medical treatment. The growth of alternative medicine is a fascinating and compelling sociological phenomenon mainly because it is a reflection of the transformations occurring within modern societies. We are living in an age where more and more information is available for people to draw on in making choices about their lives. Health care is no exception in this regard. Individuals are increasingly becoming 'health consumers', and adopting an active stance towards their own health and well-being. The interest in alternative therapies could also be related to the sociological changing nature of health and illness in the late modern period. Many of the conditions and illnesses for which individuals seek alternative medical treatment seem to be products of the modern age itself. Insomnia, anxiety, stress, depression, fatigue and chronic pain are all on the rise in industrialized societies. While these conditions have long existed, they appear to be causing greater distress and disruption to people's health than ever before. In their desperation to obtain relief, people are willing to try all types of therapies, often being unaware that some of these may conflict with the tenets of their faith.

1.3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:

The purposes of this study are:

- To identify the main alternate health therapies in Kwa-Zulu Natal, specifically those practiced by Muslim therapists.
- To ascertain whether Muslim alternate health therapists belong to a regulating body.
- To determine the ailments that Muslim alternate health therapists treat
- To determine whether Muslim alternate therapists are aware of the philosophies underlying their therapies
- To determine whether there is a conflict between alternate health therapies and the fundamental doctrines of Islam, and if this established, then how Muslim health therapists deal with the conflict between their practice and faith.

1.4. SCOPE OF RESEARCH:

The research was confined to Muslim practitioners and patients and was conducted in the Greater Durban region and the results assumed to be applicable nationally. The majority of Muslim health practitioners in KwaZulu-Natal reside in the major cities, and more specifically in Durban.

1.5. PRIOR RESEARCH:

There is a great deal of literature available on alternate health therapies. Most of these publications are descriptive, and extol the virtues of the therapies. Some are discussed under the literature review. However, I have not come across any academic publication on the popular health care therapies in Kwa-Zulu Natal or on the views of religious leaders or scholars about the validity of

these therapies from an Islamic perspective. These are the gaps which I hope to fill partly through this research. It is hoped that other researchers will be inspired to undertake complementary research in this area so that a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between alternate health therapies and religious doctrines will emerge.

1.6. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

The proposed study has four major components:

- I) Identification of the popular alternate health therapies among Muslims.
- II) Examination of the philosophies underlying these therapies.
- III) Determination of the existence of conflict between these philosophies and Islamic tenets.
- IV) Investigation of how Muslim practitioners resolve conflicts between their faith and practice if such conflicts do exist.

1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH:

This research will be able to contribute to an understanding of the alternate health therapies from an Islamic perspective. The therapist will firstly be able to benefit by being more aware of the philosophies underlying the therapies practiced, and getting an understanding of what conflicts therapists do find. The other benefit is that patients will be made aware of any conflict between therapy and faith, and know how to deal with the situation.

1.8. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH:

The research will not be aimed at participants under the age of eighteen nor will the findings be applicable to other religions. The research will only be confined to practitioners and patients residing or practicing in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

1.9. CRITICAL QUESTIONS RELATING TO THIS RESEARCH:

- What are the most popular alternate health therapies among Muslims?
- What are the underlying doctrines of these therapies?
- Are there conflicts between these therapies and Islamic beliefs?
- If yes, what are the areas of conflict?
- How do therapists and patients deal with conflicts if and when they arise?

1.10. BROADER ISSUES:

From this research it would be possible to answer the following questions

- I) Are all religious groups confronted with the problem of conflict between their fundamental beliefs and the practices of their followers?
- II) How do religious groups deal with this conflict?

1.11. PRINCIPAL THEORIES:

The relationship between the doctrinal underpinnings of alternate health therapies and Islamic tenets will be examined on the basis of the social theory of functionalism. A sociological theory is a set of ideas which claims to explain how society works. According to the theory of functionalism, the various parts of society are seen to be interrelated and taken together, they form

a complete system. This social system has certain basic needs which must be met if it is to survive. These needs are known as functional prerequisites. The function of any part of society is its contribution to the maintenance of society. Many functionalists maintain that the order and stability they see as essential for the maintenance of the social system are largely provided by value consensus.

According to American sociologist Talcott Parsons, “the main task of sociology is to examine the institutionalization of patterns of value orientation in the social system.”¹ Emphasis is therefore placed on the process of socialization whereby values are internalized and transmitted from one generation to the next. Once learned, values must be maintained. In particular, those who deviate from society’s beliefs and values must be brought back into line.

The Islamic doctrine instils numerous values in the person, among them being the principle of *Tawhid* (oneness of God). Islamic society is entirely governed by the Divine Law and has to conform to its dictates. The concept of *tawhid* as propounded by Ismail al-Faruqi will be used as the framework for determining the acceptability or otherwise of the philosophies or doctrines which underpin popular alternate health therapies. The sociologist, Emile Durkheim argues that “social life is impossible without the shared values and moral beliefs provided by religion.”² Together, the members of a religious group express their faith in common values and beliefs. However, some anthropologists have argued that Durkheim’s views on religion are less relevant to

¹ Haralambos, M. 1980. Sociology – Themes and Perspectives, p.11.

² Ibid, p. 456.

modern societies which have a range of new beliefs, practices and institutions thrown at them, in particular the changing nature of health and illness in the modern period.

According to Bronislaw Malinowski, situations of emotional or physical stress will lead an individual to deviate from learned beliefs and values.³ So, when confronted with emotional hurt or physical pain, according to Malinowski, the person desperate for relief will deviate from his religious beliefs and values. The fundamental principle in Islam is that of *Tawhid*, i.e. the belief in one God only and having complete faith in Him. The power of healing is from *Allah* alone. Physicians and alternate therapists should not be seen as having the power to cure, as this power comes only from *Allah*. Putting ones faith in a therapist or anyone else for healing is considered to go against the grain of *Tawhid*. Numerous Eastern therapies utilize higher powers, such as the power of Buddha, for healing. This would go against the doctrine of *Tawhid* underpinning Islam.

1.12. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This research relies heavily on library sources, websites and interviews with alternate health practitioners and patients. The library sources will include books, journals, newspapers, and magazines, as well as internet sites.

Field research will be qualitative. It will include personal interviews with alternate health therapists and patients, as well as observation of the therapists in action. The phenomenological approach would be adopted in these instances.

³ Ibid, p. 457.

1.13. UNITS OF ANALYSIS:

The units of analysis for this study would be:

I) Muslim alternate health therapists.

II) Muslim patients exposed to these therapies.

1.14. DATA ANALYSIS:

The findings would be examined in relation to the hypothesis and the theoretical framework of the research.

1.15. CONTINGENCIES:

Alternate health therapists refusing to be interviewed could have provided obstacles. I used my network of friends, including several therapists, to gain access to a wider group.

1.16. KEY ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY:

By interviewing patients who visit alternate therapists, the assumption is that it will reveal information about what therapies are popular and whether any conflict exists between their faith and the therapy. By interviewing therapists, the assumption is that information will be provided on what therapies are practiced and whether any conflict occurs exists between their faith and the therapy practiced.

1.17. OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS:

Chapter overviews: Chapter one deals with the Research Design.

In chapter two alternate medicine is defined, and its history and benefits are discussed.

Chapter three discusses the alternate systems of health care; Chinese, Ayurveda and Unani medicine, including Al-Tibb Al-Nabawi. The source material will be published literature and websites on the internet.

Popular alternate therapies among Muslims such as Reiki, Aromatherapy, Reflexology and Magnetotherapy in Kwa Zulu Natal are dealt with in Chapter four. This chapter will be based on literature as well as the findings of the survey.

Chapter five explores the possible areas of conflict between the philosophies of alternate therapies and Islamic doctrine by discussing the findings of the survey.

The conclusion will include recommendations on how to separate the theory from the practice and how to locate the therapies within an Islamic framework.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Reiki, Energy Medicine by L. Barnett and Maggie Chambers

This book is an examination of Reiki as an adjunctive therapy to conventional medical approaches. An important suggestion is made to the reader to seek the expertise of a trained health care professional to treat any serious ailments. Taking such a responsible stance is probably due to the fact that both authors' parents are doctors themselves and have instilled in the authors the appreciation of this alternate therapy in conjunction with conventional medicine. This stance that the two authors have taken lends credibility to their book and allows the reader to believe in their approach to wellness.

In this book, Reiki, 'the medicine of the future' is described. Using their experience, Barnett and Chambers show the reader that there is an energy and intelligence behind a person's natural impulse to heal, and Reiki provides access to that energy. The book is an easy read for the lay person needing to understand this system of health. Another benefit of this book are the appendices 1 and 2, which is the Reiki Treatment Series accurately illustrating the form to follow when practicing Reiki.

However, I have found a few flaws in this book. Firstly, due to the fact that the book is written by Canadian authors, the life-world being discussed oftentimes does not have relevance for the South African requiring information on this system of health. Also, this book does not adequately explain that in order to conduct Reiki Treatment on others, one needs to have received the Reiki initiations. (This will be explained in chapter four)

Notwithstanding these flaws, the book is divided into five easy to read chapters that are not too long. The stories in this book are also based on actual experiences of real people which makes Reiki seem easier to follow as a system of health because real people are more credible than just hearsay.

2. The Everything Reiki Book by Phylameanalila De'sy

A lengthy book of 285 pages, *The Everything Reiki Book* claims to provide an alternative to a reliance on pharmaceuticals. Such a claim would get the interest of the reader immediately. *The Everything Reiki Book* explains in simple terms the hands-on therapy that can help relieve stress, promote healing, and enhance quality of life. Reiki techniques are systematically explained, which can be followed to practice this ancient form of art.

Reiki is seen as the source of Universal Life Energy, which accesses and transmits this energy. In applying Reiki to the recipient, healing energies flow out of the practitioner's body through the palms of the hands as they touch the recipient's body. This is the profound claim that is made in the opening chapter of this book, which gets the reader's interest due to the simplicity of the theory being described.

The information in this book was written from the perspective of an Usui Reiki practitioner who was initially trained in Usui Shiki Ryoho, the traditional Reiki system. The book is meant to present Reiki not only as a healing art, but also as a way of life. This kind of suggestion implores the reader to delve further into the book. Upon reading this book, one wonders why there is even a need for the medical doctors or even for that matter,

medicines, because the claims to a disease free body are many in this book. Each of the 22 chapters makes reference to this claim. Coloured blocks of 'E facts' are included for easy reference to short factual snippets.

For the person learning about Reiki and its benefits, this book does provide the learning channel for this. One is able to easily find information on the Reiki attunement process, treating others, treating aches and pains, levels of training, or even other energy-based therapies.

3. Healing with Ayurveda by Angela Hope-Murray and Tony Pickup

Healing with Ayurveda is part of a series of books on complementary therapies. Some of the other books available in this series are *Healing with Colour*, *Healing with Crystals*, *Healing with Essential Oils* and *Healing with Meditation*. Being part of a series of books, makes this book part of a continuum where the reader has access to information on other and related systems of health.

The series introduces a wide range of healing techniques that can be used either independently or as a compliment to traditional medical treatment. The technique of ayurveda can be learnt and practiced alone, encouraging a degree of self-reliance, offering the tools needed to achieve and maintain an optimum state of health. The book opens with information on the history and principles of ayurveda and then goes on to offer practical

and straightforward guidance on ways in which it can be applied. Diagrams and case studies are included in the book. A book of 97 pages, *Healing with Ayurveda* is within the lay-person's ability to read. The beginning of the book explains what ayurveda is, and goes on to explain the history and philosophy of this system of health. Ayurveda is described as the science of life which empowers you to take control of your own life and health with the aim of preventing illness. Such an introduction already guarantees the reader's interest because all persons would like to be in control of their health.

Hope-Murray and Pickup, the authors, take a responsible attitude in advising the reader to seek professional guidance for serious ailments. No claims to complete cure are made. Using real-life case studies makes the therapy seem alive, with success stories showing ayurveda in a positive light. The most compelling chapter of the book is the one on common remedies. Once the reader understands the modality of ayurveda and becomes interested, then using it to help in curing a common ailment such as headaches would be the most effective aspect of this book.

However, a flaw that I found was the language. Although a Sanskrit glossary is included, the uncommon terminology did make reading this book somewhat of a challenge. In ayurveda diet is most important; fruit such as soursop, vegetables such as jicama or kale, grains like quinoa or seeds like psyllium are all foreign to the South African reader which would lead to a waning interest in this modality of health care. Nobody wants to be bothered with added difficulties whilst ill.

4. Principles of Kinesiology by M.La Tourelle and A. Courtenay

Kinesiology is seen as an increasingly popular system of natural health care which combines muscle testing with the principles of Chinese medicine to assess energy and body function. *Principles of Kinesiology* explains this touch therapy which uses a range of healing techniques that can be effective in the treatment of conditions such as backache, fatigue, dyslexia, headaches and skin problems. This introductory guide to kinesiology explains how it works, how to find a practitioner, self-help techniques to keep well and kinesiology's usefulness with other therapies.

At the outset, the place of modern scientific medicine in caring for severe injuries and illnesses is identified in this book. Then common problems such as headaches, which cause loss of productivity and loss of happiness, are described. The complementary method of kinesiology's health promotion and disease prevention is seen as the answer.

Chapter by chapter, the definition of kinesiology, the development of kinesiology, kinesiology as prevention, balancing, as well as other fields of adjunct medicines are systematically discussed. Everything that one needs to know on kinesiology is described and discussed in this book. Due to the short length of the book (172 pages) it has not been possible to receive in depth information in any area. Numerous areas of kinesiology are explained in brief. The aim of the book seems to be that information given will lead the reader to want to explore kinesiology further.

Chiropractic, electromagnetic therapy, acupressure and nutritional balancing are all related to kinesiology. To the reader then, kinesiology is seen as a therapy of exclusivity; one that can be practiced in conjunction with other fields. The many case studies lend themselves to an understanding of the principles of kinesiology.

A flow to this book comes when one reads the Appendix B, to which much reference is made while reading the book. A list of training centres for kinesiology as well as contact details in the US and UK are given. The South African reader, who is trying to understand this new field of complimentary medicine, has no leads for networking upon completion of the book.

5. **What Really Works in Natural Health by Susan Clark**

Written by a health journalist with a science degree, Clark claims her book to be for the person with an interest in natural health. Published in 2004, this is a current book on natural health. Clark professes to have read numerous books on alternate and natural health, which were most informative, but mostly fragmented in their information provided. She claims to remedy that by passing on the extensive knowledge she has gained, in a systematic manner. The claim is that the book will allow the reader to make a truly informed choice about his or her health or well-being after being informed of the options, allopathic or natural.

This book cuts through the confusion, the doubts, and the uncertainties, to offer invaluable guidance on natural health products and how best to use them to achieve optimum physical and emotional well-being. Assistance is provided in the form of both natural medication to

take, as well as relaxation techniques such as aromatherapy or reflexology. There is an easily referenced index for quick access to information and assistance on common ailments such as menstrual pain or headaches, and illnesses such as stroke, abdominal pains, or even cardiovascular diseases. For example, diabetes and hypertension, conditions mentioned in this book, are traditionally treated by allopathic medicine with aggressive drugs that have significant adverse side effects. Advice given in the book is something as simple as a change in diet.

This kind of simple and sensible advice is given throughout the book. One is led to believe that smoking can be stopped by doing yoga. This kind of claim becomes believable because of the case studies where people were treated with these remedies. Numerous natural medicines are prescribed for particular ailments and many websites are mentioned, for example, www.victoriahealth.com, which is easily accessible.

6. **Quantum Healing: Exploring the Frontiers of Mind/Body Medicine**

by Deepak Chopra

The introduction to *Quantum Healing*, describes Dr Deepak Chopra as a respected endocrinologist who practiced in a large hospital in Massachusetts, but then returned to India to study Ayurveda after seeing patients that he treated completely recover after serious illnesses. One becomes compelled to read further to see what powers the mind has that it is able to change the patterns that design the body. Chopra becomes believable due to his 'MD' title. In the book, Chopra brings together research of Western medicine,

neuroscience, and physics with the insights of Ayurvedic theory to show that the human body is controlled by quantum reality which has the potential, through physiology, to defeat cancer, heart disease, or even ageing. This chronicle of hope and healing is what attracts the reader.

Holistic medicine, which includes the mind and the body together, is seen as the key to healing. The foundation for this healing, Ayurveda, involves a level of total, deep relaxation as the most important precondition for curing any disorder. The book includes numerous interesting case studies described at length, with most having success stories to report. The advice given in the book is to continue Ayurvedic treatment with deep relaxation techniques, but also together with one's conventional medicine, example chemotherapy for cancer. This is what Quantum healing is all about; a patient has to get to the level of consciousness of mind over matter.

A problem with the book is that there are no sub-headings apart from the 14 chapter headings in this book of 260 pages. Each chapter is written like a novel, example chapter 2, "The Body has a Mind of its Own" comprises 16 pages. This makes the book difficult for easy referencing on a particular topic. Workshops and seminars in America by Deepak Chopra, the author, are advertised which is a major flaw for the South African reader. Upon reading this book one wants to meet Chopra and delve further into the psyche with him, but this is not possible.

Chopra offers a fascinating intellectual journey and a deeply moving chronicle of hope and healing.

7. **Mind Medicine: The Secret of Powerful Healing by Uri Geller**

Uri Geller is famous for his extraordinary psychic abilities. In his profound book *Mind Medicine*, Geller encapsulates this phenomenon of using the power of the mind for healing. He begins his book by talking about 'Mind power' i.e. the power of the mind over body, using scientific research of the body. He then takes you on an unforgettable journey to discover the workings of your core being and he shows you how to unlock the secrets of your own healing powers. Popular complementary therapies such as acupuncture, feng shui, crystal therapy, and colour therapy are mentioned as catalysts to allowing the mind to heal the body.

Because Uri Geller is better known as a performer of psychic feats, one expects his book to make much reference to the powers of telepathy and psycho kinesis. However, to the contrary, the book gives a great deal of very sensible advice for improving general health and wellness and gives practical guidance for taking advantage of the body-mind connection to access healing. The history of Western medicine is surveyed, with its benefits and pitfalls described. Complimentary therapy as an alternative to allopathic medicine is explained, albeit very superficially. (In just 2 pages)

There are chapters in the book such as "Mind-Body Symbiosis", "The Rhythm of Life", and "Let Your Spirit Dance", which aim to empower the reader of the reality of his own natural healing ability. The flaw that I see here is that the reader may require more tangible

help toward understanding the power of his/her mind. To the reader in the UK, such help is provided through a list of useful addresses and telephone numbers of health and wellness centres. Once again, the South African reader becomes disadvantaged.

A great plus to the book is the emphasis of religion and a belief system being the key to healing. Major religious beliefs of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, and Buddhism are described and their ability to help the mind heal the body is described. This is a book that is written for the layperson for easy understanding and also quick referencing on particular aspects.

8. Illustrated Elements of Aromatherapy by Clare Walters

Aromatherapy is the use of therapeutic oils extracted from trees, flowers, plants and bushes from all over the world used to encourage better health for the whole body. The exceptional healing effects of the oils used in aromatherapy are described in detail in this book. The book claims that aromatherapy is one of the most widely used and most popular holistic health care system for the treatment of many common ailments such as stress, insomnia and emotional problems.

Using just stress as an example, almost every person that would pick up this book to read, either suffers from stress himself or has someone in his/her home who does; hence this book would make for ideal reading. It is a practical book which is an ideal introduction to a unique and natural way of restoring balance to mind, body and spirit.

The book begins with the definition of aromatherapy, as well as the origins of aromatherapy. The use of different essential oils, massage techniques, properties of the oils and even home-made preparations are described chapter by chapter. Illustrations for the techniques of massage make for easy understanding. Also, essential oils are alphabetically listed with each oils uses being described. This is a most user-friendly book, particularly for the person who is just being introduced to the art of aromatherapy. At the end of the book there is a list of the properties of all essential oils, with an explanation of each property. This book seems to bring aromatherapy into focus because of its step by step sequences which shows one how to practice a simple aromatherapy massage.

9. **Alternative Healing by R. Airey and J. Houdret**

This book provides an effective guide to improve your health and well-being naturally with alternate health care. Whether you are hoping to boost stamina, get a better night's sleep, lift depression, or soothe a cold, this accessible handbook looks at ways to keep on top of life, without the use of medicines.

The handbook is split into easy-to-follow sections detailing innovative and long-lasting treatments for body and mind. Every healing method is included in this book, from aromatherapy and healing energies to yoga and healing through meditation. The reader is equipped with the knowledge on how to grow medicinal plants for use in ointments, creams and tinctures, how to prepare juicy fruit soothers or flower tisanes to boost immunity, remedy

for back pain via contact with clear quartz, method of meditation to focus the mind, or how to use colour therapy for healing. In addition, the holistic methods of yoga, Ayurveda, massage and aromatherapy, reiki, and reflexology are all described as a means to achieve optimum physical health.

Alternative Healing pinpoints the signs of emotional and physical stress, and identifies the natural remedy which would be suitable for particular ailments in order to heal and restore balance. Specific treatments for common ailments such as colds, allergies, muscular pain, sprains, fatigue, depression and skin complaints are given using simple terminology and which can be easily incorporated into a person's everyday life. The use of illustrations in the book makes for easy referencing of a particular ailment or therapy.

This book is a user friendly guide for the person wanting to know more about alternative healing with its many facets of maintaining well-being.

10. **Absolute Beginner's Guide to Alternative Medicine by K. Fontaine**

This book claims that no prior alternate medicine experience is necessary. The *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Alternative Medicine* is an easy to follow comprehensive resource detailing more than thirty diverse therapies. Written in easy-to-understand language, this book guides you through the many alternate therapies, explaining how each therapy works, how diagnoses are made in each field, and what treatments work best for which ailments.

The book makes reference to an extensive list of common health concerns and the best applications of alternate medicine to help that condition. One can learn the basics of non-Western healing, including traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic medicines as well as herbal remedies. The reader can further discover the power of botanical healing with naturopathy, homeopathy, and aromatherapy. Chiropractic treatment, massage, pressure-point therapy, and energy-balancing techniques are explained in detail with illustrations for easy understanding. The reader will be able to decide if yoga, meditation, hypnotherapy, dreamwork, or biofeedback will be of benefit for his or her particular ailment. A “try this yourself” chapter allows the reader to delve into the world of alternate therapies, by reading first and then being able to experiment with the specific techniques before actually visiting a trained practitioner. This is a most useful aspect of the book.

The chapter that I found most interesting was the one on faith and prayer. The ancient and modern links between religion, spirituality and healing are explored. Certain effective healing practices that are fostered by faith and religious observances are explained. This is all explained from a Christian perspective. The major flaw that one expects and does find is that there is no reference in this book on Islamic views of alternate therapies. For that matter, there is no literature available at all.

11. **Caring for Muslim Patients ed. A. Sheikh and A. R. Gatrud**

Muslim patients customarily have particular ways of approaching health and healthcare. This book addresses common misunderstandings and bridges cultural gaps. It includes a profile of the Islamic worldview and explores the concept of health and disease within this paradigm. Muslim practices and customs of direct relevance to healthcare are also explored and illustrated with case histories.

This book offers practical advice to enable all healthcare professionals to provide care in a culturally appropriate manner. The reader looking for advice on how to treat the Muslim patient in alternate therapies can find some valuable assistance. However, the advice is mainly applicable to the allopathic healers, and not alternate healers.

The chapter that was the most informative was the Islamic worldview that all Muslims function within. This is described in great detail. An Islamic framework of health and disease is discussed using the *Qur'an* as reference. A most useful list of websites on the World Wide Web is included as an appendix. Unlike other books, this book even mentions a South African website, viz. Islamic Medical Association of South Africa. This can be considered a valuable book for any health care practitioner, whether allopathic or alternate, as general guidelines when caring for a Muslim patient are given.

12. Towards Understanding Islam by Abul A'La Mawdudi

Towards Understanding Islam is one of Mawdudi's most popular books. The Urdu original was intended as a first introduction to Islam for students and laymen. This book is a religious text with a difference. It offers a simple exposition of the essential teachings of Islam – its approach to life, the articles of faith, method of worship and prayers, and the Islamic social order. It offers in summary form the essential teachings of Islam. Its methodology is steeped in the *Qur'an*. The aim of the book is to provide a comprehensive view of Islam for both Muslims and non-Muslims.

Mawdudi saw the crisis of the twentieth century creating a need for values and beliefs to be redefined due to a new social order. He re-examines the structure of society, looking at the social ideals and values of religion being able to restore the challenges facing humanity. He is described as having the ability to bring out the relevance of Islam to the problems and concerns of man in the present age.

The book consists of seven chapters, each dealing with a particular aspect of the religion of Islam. For example, chapter one deals with the meaning of Islam, chapter four with the articles of faith, and chapter seven with the principles of the *shariah* (code of conduct of a Muslim). The book is effective at answering questions about Islam in a simple and logical manner.

13. **Al Tawhid: Its implications for Thought and life by I.R. al Faruqi**

The concept of tawhid *is* central to Islam. The work by al Faruqi affords the reader a look at the doctrine of Islam from a number of different perspectives. Whilst explaining the doctrine of unity, al Faruqi touches upon a broad spectrum of subjects, drawing elements from history, comparative religion, anthropology, philosophy, ethics, archaeology, and other disciplines.

This book serves to describe Islam as a vision of reality for the reader, and particularly the Muslim youth. It seems to be the author's hope to guide the youth towards self-reform. The relevance of Islam to the various fields of human thought and activity is analyzed with the hope of reform. The essence of Islam is seen as being *al tawhid*.

The book consists of twelve chapters of discourse on the religion of Islam. Each chapter is devoted to a particular theme, explained for easy comprehension. A glossary of all foreign terms is included, as is a detailed index. Another important feature is that all the *Qur'anic* verses quoted in the text appear in the footnotes in the original Arabic. This kind of detail enhances the quality of the book.

CHAPTER TWO

WHAT IS ALTERNATE MEDICINE?

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As the decade of the 90's drew to a close and we moved towards the new millennium, many South Africans became aware of a profound shift in thinking patterns around key life issues. This shift has been a worldwide phenomenon, but has been particularly evident in South Africa with the change of political systems from apartheid to democracy leading every person to review the different facets of society. New plans have been put in place for education, the economy and the health system. However, the health system remains expensive and inaccessible, both for people suffering from 'incurable' conditions ranging from aids to cancer and those dealing with depression and conditions caused by everyday stress. This has led to a growing interest in the new alternate health therapies that have become established in South Africa over the last two decades. ⁴

In an age where modern scientific medicine appears to be reaching its zenith, with spectacular breakthroughs in technology for curing, it is remarkable that so many people are showing an increasing interest in alternative healing. From the second half of the twentieth century, a growing number of middle-class people who traditionally consulted western health professionals started

⁴ Fenn, C. 1998. *A Guide to Complementary Therapies in South Africa*. Struik Publishers, Cape Town, p. 7.

consulting alternative healers.⁵ Increasingly, consumers are seeing the benefits of the non-invasive treatments of alternative medicine. This chapter aims to inform the reader about alternate therapies and how it is different from conventional medicine. Allopathic medicine has continued to gain success in treating conditions like broken bones, heart problems and diseases of the brain, whilst conditions such as mental and spiritual illnesses are effectively treated by a wide array of alternate therapies. The public is always asking questions about alternate therapies since there has been an awakening in taking care of one's health oneself rather than only letting a doctor do the job. The alternate health care system in South Africa is elaborated upon with the reader gaining a better understanding of how this health care system is regulated. The chapter ends with a listing of the most common therapies practiced in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

2.2. Orthodox and Holistic Approaches to Medicine

There is a great deal of misunderstanding around the exact nature of alternate therapies mostly because medical doctors have been opposed to methods that to their scientific way of thinking has little validity. Alternate medicine is seen as one based on holistic principles. To explain them it may help to compare the orthodox and holistic approaches.

Conventional medicine is based on very detailed scientific knowledge. Health is seen as an absence of symptoms, and ill-health as a malfunction in the body that has to be put right with the use of drugs, surgery, or even hard treatment of the mind. The mind and the body are seen as

⁵ Bhikha, R.2000. *Tibb-Traditional Roots of Medicine in Modern Routes to Health*. Mountain of Light, South Africa, p.14.

separate entities and are treated by different disciplines, whilst the spirit is ignored. The person is viewed as a physical body only. The focus is on symptoms of disease and it is the symptoms that will be treated. It is highly effective in emergencies, traumatic injuries, bacterial infections and surgery. Treatment is fast, aggressive and goal-oriented, with the responsibility for cure falling on the practitioner. The priority of intervention is on opposing and suppressing the symptoms of illness. Other needs of the person will be largely ignored: needs such as help to cope with fear, depression, or anxiety, for example. The doctor is assumed to have knowledge of the patient's disease while the patient may remain ignorant of his or her own problem, with all the power and responsibility being handed to the doctor. Conventional medicine does save lives but is expensive and may have serious side effects. Some treatments are invasive and can even go badly wrong.⁶

Holistic medicine aims to deal with the patient as a whole, not merely as one with physical symptoms. It takes into account not only the body but also the mind and spirit of an individual. Homeostasis is seen as a state of balance of the mind, body and spirit. This equilibrium may be upset by undue emphasis being placed on one part of the whole. The holistic practitioner focuses on the underlying cause rather than on symptoms of an ailment.⁷ When there is a problem, the healer's function is to work closely with the individual on a long-term basis to help achieve a healthy body, mind and spirit to promote self-healing. It is the individual, not the practitioner, who is seen as the prime healer, who is actively involved in healing with the help of a remedy or some form of mechanical treatment. Holistic practitioners believe that drugs to control symptoms would

⁶ Petter, F.A. 1997. *Reiki Fire – New Information About the origins of the Reiki Power*. Lotus Light Publications, USA, p. 78.

⁷ Brown, L. 1999. *Alternative Medicine*. NTC/Contemporary Publishing, U.S.A, p. 65 – 68.

not be able to deal with the underlying disturbances that are creating these symptoms. They believe that drugs prevent elimination of impurities and add to the toxins already in the body. While it is accepted that bacteria or a virus may trigger an illness, it is thought that an imbalance in the mind results in a susceptibility to disease. Symptoms of illness are believed to be an expression of the body's wisdom as it reacts to cure its own imbalance or disease. However, this kind of treatment does take time before a patient sees results. Emphasis is placed on teaching the patient preventative medicine to avoid a relapse and on providing support during the healing process.⁸

The following is a tabulated representation of the paradigms of medicine:⁹

View	Conventional Medicine	Alternative medicine
1. Mind/body/spirit	are separate	are one
2. The body is	a machine	a living unit
3. Disease results when	parts break	energy is unbalanced
4. Role of medicine	to combat disease	to restore harmony
5. Approach	treat/suppress symptoms	search for imbalance
6. Focuses on	parts of the body	the whole body
7. Treatments	to fix broken parts	support self-healing
8. Primary intervention	drugs, surgery, radiation	diet, exercise, herbs, social support, stress control
9. System	sick care	health care

⁸ Ibid, p.69.

⁹ Fontaine, L.K. 2000. *Healing Practices: Alternate Therapies for Nursing*, p.7.

Is it then possible for the two systems to merge? Possibly. Integrative medicine refers to a symbiotic partnership between conventional medicine and alternate medicine, each bringing out the best in the other. Acute illnesses and trauma could be treated with conventional drugs or surgery, and chronic illnesses (e.g. arthritis, insomnia, and migraines) could be helped with one of the various alternate therapies. The World Health Organization (WHO) states that

the existing definition of health should include the spiritual aspect and that health care should be in the hands of those who are fully aware of and sympathetic to the spiritual dimension.¹⁰

2.3. Alternate Therapies in the West

Alternate therapies come from all over the world. Some, such as Ayurveda from India, acupressure, acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine from China, known collectively as traditional Chinese medicine, and western herbal medicine from Europe are ancient traditional practices in the west. Others such as homeopathy from Germany and osteopathy from the U.S.A, originated over a hundred years ago. Aromatherapy, whose origins are in France, have developed during the twentieth century. In some countries such as Australia and the U.K, the word “complementary” is used to describe those therapies that are outside the aegis of allopathic medicine.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 9.

During the last 20 years, and particularly during the 1990's, the growth of alternate therapies in the west has been remarkable. This has been due to a number of factors:¹¹

- Advances in medicine as well as general public health in the twentieth century meant that people in western countries no longer have to be solely preoccupied with survival. Health is perceived to be a positive quality of living rather than only the absence of disease.
- There is a fear of conventional drug treatment and surgery.
- Patients are becoming aware of the limitations of orthodox medicine, and their side-effects.
- Patients want more information from their doctors than they normally receive. Patients find that they can communicate better with holistic alternative therapists who are prepared to spend more time talking to patients about their perceived needs.

Patients are growing tired of pharmaceuticals as the “cure all” and are yearning for a more holistic approach that would enable them to use more natural products. People's perception of the chemical industry is acrid smells and toxic waste products, not an enticing prospect.¹² The mainstream medical community can no longer ignore alternative therapies. The public interest is extensive and growing. One has only to look at the proliferation of popular health books, newspaper articles, and health food stores offering healing therapies to realize that this is a growing industry. South Africans want something more than biomedicine, and they are willing to pay for it.

¹¹ Buckle, J. 2003. *Clinical Aromatherapy—Essential Oils in Practice*. Library of Congress Cataloging – in – Publication Data, USA, p. 2 - 4.

¹² *Ibid*, p.4.

2.4. Alternate Health Care in South Africa

While allopathic health care in South Africa constitutes the dominant and official form of health care, it does not constitute the total health care supply. A large portion of the health care in South Africa comprises the alternative systems of health which have acquired scientific features, but for the greater part they are still unscientific or not scientifically verified. Alternative therapies have gained increasing popularity in the past two decades. Practitioners of holistic health care differ from orthodox, allopathic practitioners by virtue of their adherence to the concept of health rather than a narrow concern with disease, as well as their focus on the patient as the subject of the treatment rather than the object. Its essence is the importance of wellness, which not only entails the absence of clinical disease, but also the existence of a positive state of well-being which embraces the physical, emotional and spiritual aspects of health.¹³

The South African Medical and Dental Council was the first official body regulating medical practice in the country. By 1913 this allopathic controlling body started to compile a code of ethics for health care delivery within the Union of South Africa. The practitioners of alternative therapies were excluded from this. After World War II the stream of immigrants included several alternative medical practitioners. Consequently, the Medical Association of South Africa came to realize during the late 1940's that the issue of alternate medicine should be addressed. After deliberation, these therapies were declared illegal and unscientific in 1953, and a clause was included in the allopathic medical code which prohibited any co-operation between allopathic and alternative

¹³ Van Rensburg, H.C.J. et.al. 1992. *Health Care in South Africa: Structure and Dynamics*. Academica, Pretoria. p.310 - 314.

medical practitioners. This principle is to this day reflected in legislation: Government Notice 2278, dated 3 December 1976, as amended in Notices R884 of 27 May 1977, R394 of 27 February 1987 and R2543 of 13 November 1987.¹⁴

Despite the negative attitude of orthodox medicine, several local training institutions for various forms of non-allopathic medicine were established countrywide. However, this type of health care consistently came under fire, culminating in the terminal legislation launched in parliament in 1971. In 1974, the Mental, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Act 56 of 1974 provided for registration of practicing alternate practitioners and not any new practitioners. The government, however, agreed to reconsider the situation if these alternate professions could standardize their training, arrange the registration of their members, and design an ethical code of conduct. The different alternative professional associations were commissioned to fulfill this task. By 1981 the associations were unable to execute this task, and approached the minister with a request that a statutory council be established. In 1982 the Associated Health Service Professions Act was promulgated according to which a statutory council, the South African Council for the Associated Health Service Professions was established. The council was entrusted with three responsibilities:

- To devise the rules for ethical behaviour.
- To define the different occupations.
- To control the situation regarding dispensing of medication.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 316.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 317.

An amendment Act (Act 101 of 1985) was accepted which empowered the South African Council for the Associated Health Service Professions to lay down stipulations for a South African qualification and to get training facilities established at tertiary institutions. The legal position of this council was on par with that of the South African Medical and Dental Council. This became a turning point for the alternate health industry both locally and internationally, as South Africa set an example to other countries in respect of the process of legitimation of alternate medicines. This development also aligns South Africa with the WHO (World Health Organization) proposal in this regard:

Approval of proved useful techniques, such as acupuncture and yoga, (be solicited) for use in public health services.¹⁶

Legitimation by legal sanctioning is a form of social recognition and acceptability of this new method of holistic healing. Public acceptance, tradition and patients' utilization of such services are also important elements of social acceptance. The allopathic medical practitioners however, maintain a negative stance towards the alternate medical practitioners. Little information regarding the public acceptance of alternate therapies is available. Only one study on how acceptable the services of alternate therapists are to White South African society was undertaken by the Human Sciences Research Council in 1983.¹⁷ The legitimation of alternate health care in South Africa can be viewed as a definite step in the direction of 'demedicalization' where the allopathic healer assumes the privileged, dominant and controlling position.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 317.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 318.

2.5. Benefits of Alternate Therapies

Alternate therapies focus on good health and prevention of disease. They operate a health-orientated care system rather than a disease-orientated cure system like allopathic healers.¹⁸ Each individual is seen as unique with unique lifestyles, tastes, stresses and relationships. The patient will be encouraged in matters such as emotional stresses, work problems, sexual relationships, relationships with your parents and your medical history. Emphasis is placed on a healthy lifestyle, positive attitude and prevention of disease. Treatment could be in the form of exercise, massage, manipulation and remedies, which are all far less drastic than allopathic medicine. Mental, emotional, and spiritual components of well-being are considered to play a crucial and equal role in a person's state of health which is the basis of treatment in the alternate therapies.

The person visiting an alternate therapist is assured of gaining a degree of wellness not supported by biomedicine. Any person that prefers a high personal involvement in the decision making for healing should benefit from an alternate method of healing. Unlike allopathic medicine where the practitioner is the only knowledgeable one, the alternate therapist involves the patient in the healing process. People are then responsible for making their own decisions regarding their health care. In the alternate therapies the focus is on the cause of an illness rather than just treating the symptoms. This then provides long-term healing for the patient. The focus is on the health potential of the person rather than the disease problem. This alternative perspective is a lifelong process focusing on optimal development of a person's physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual

¹⁸ Brown, p. 13.

selves. People are encouraged to adopt healthier lifestyles, to accept increased responsibility for their own well-being and to learn how to handle common health problems on their own through greater self-reliance.¹⁹

2.6. Criticisms of Alternate Therapies

There has been very little scientific research conducted on alternate therapies to prove their effectiveness. This is partly because of the understandable antipathy of some allopathic healers who are not prepared to fund investigations of therapies that are a potential threat to their profession. It is also partly because alternate therapists are reluctant to use scientific methods that are for the most part alien to the basic principles of holistic medicine. However, in recent years, as alternate therapies have gained in strength and popularity, advances have been made in this area. In Britain, for example, Aromatherapy is practiced in many hospitals as a therapy, and many nurses are now also trained aromatherapists.²⁰ Also, research is now being done in many of the alternate therapies. For example, research into the chemical properties of essential oils has shown that chemical compounds in the oils have certain healing properties.

The lack of qualifications is another area of criticism of the alternate therapies. Because alternate therapy is so new, and is still developing in South Africa, many people set up as therapists with only minimal training. For example, it is possible to call yourself an aromatherapist after attending a weekend workshop and setting up in business. This is in contrast to a trained aromatherapist who would have undergone at least a year's training, which would include a detailed anatomy and

¹⁹ Fontaine, K.L. 2004. *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Alternative Medicine*. Sams Publishing, USA, p. 12.

²⁰ Fenn, p. 9.

physiology course as well as extensive practical work. The difference in levels of expertise would be obvious. In South Africa there is a general controlling body for alternate therapies called COCHASA (Confederation of Complementary Health Associations of South Africa), which was established in 1992.²¹ The purpose of COCHASA is to:

- Represent the interests of all therapies that are widely defined under the titles of natural or complementary.
- Publicise their contribution to health care.
- Optimise their relationship to the health system, the government and the public.²²

There are also many problems, such as infectious diseases, that allopathic medicine can diagnose and treat more effectively than any alternate therapy. Invasive diseases such as cancer, or accidents that involve broken bones, all require immediate treatment by a doctor. Inexperienced alternate practitioners may attempt to treat a serious underlying illness and not refer the patient back to a medically qualified doctor. This can be very detrimental to the image of the alternate therapy industry.

Another criticism of the alternate therapies is that there are no recorded 'cures'. Allopathic medicine aims to 'cure' through surgery or drug therapy, and this is proven by the alleviation of symptoms and the subsequent return to normal functioning of the patient. The alternate therapist will aim to 'heal' by facilitating the patient's own self-healing mechanisms, since the belief is that ultimately all healing is self-healing. Doctors and therapists are merely facilitators for the wonderful self-healing mechanisms of the human body. A doctor might see immediate results with a drug therapy; an alternate therapist knows that it takes time for a system that is out of balance to

²¹ Ibid, p. 9.

²² Ibid, p. 129 (Appendix B).

regain its balance. Ultimately the difference is between the quick-fix approach that we have come to expect as part of a highly technological consumer society, and a lengthier but more nurturing process that recognizes that if it took five years to create imbalance in a person's body, it will not be healed in two weeks. 'Cures' can take a while to become effective to the degree that healing is permanent. The term 'imbalance' is a key concept in alternate therapy, since therapists believe that illness is a result of imbalance caused by stress, and they aim to restore balance and harmony to the system as part of the healing process. Hence the aim is not to look for a cure so much as a rebalancing and a healing of the body. Once the body is balanced, it is better able to heal itself.²³

However, there are some alternate therapies, for example, aromatherapy and reflexology that have proved to be extremely beneficial in alleviating the stress and anxiety associated with surgery, or the severe side-effects caused by some drugs. Healing can take place much faster than would have been the case without such alternative treatments, which do not affect or counteract the oral medication of the allopathic doctor.

2.7. Reasons for Visiting an Alternate Therapist

Patients are seeking something different when visiting an alternate therapist. Some have the same goal for both types of medicine, such as the use of pain medications and acupuncture to cure chronic pain. Other patients may have a different expectation for each approach, such as seeing a conventional practitioner for antibiotics to eradicate an infection and using an alternate practitioner

²³ Ibid, p. 10.

to improve natural immunity through a healthy lifestyle. It is important to understand the reasons patients choose alternate therapists. Some utilize alternative healers because of financial, geographic and cultural barriers to conventional medicine. Many turn to alternative healers for a sense of hope, control, personal attention, physical contact and regards for the whole person that seems to be overlooked in conventional medicine. Some of the common reasons for seeking alternative practitioners are listed below:

- Recommendation from friend, advertisement, radio, magazine, etc.
- Lack of counselling and support in conventional medical consultations.
- A wish to be cured 'holistically', not just the removal of symptoms.
- A wish for a firm diagnostic label for each illness.
- An attraction to remedies based on ancient beliefs that retain a degree of mystery.
- A wish for 'natural' therapies.
- Prescription of 'nice' rather than 'nasty' treatments by therapists.
- Knowledge and awareness of the benefits of a holistic treatment, by patients.
- Effectiveness of alternate therapies in the treatment of mild to moderate long-term conditions such as eczema, sinuses, headaches, body pain, and other related illnesses.
- Positive effect of alternate therapies on the quality of life, even for severe conditions such as diabetes.²⁴

²⁴ Ibid, p. 11 – 12.

2.8. The Alternate Therapies

When choosing an alternate therapy, the individual looks for a therapy that is most suitable for treating a particular problem. Choice of therapy is also dependent on which therapy the individual thinks he or she might like, which therapy he or she has most knowledge about and even which therapy is being most advertised as is evident by the following newspapers or magazines containing information on certain mentioned alternate therapies.

a) Sunday Tribune, April 17, 2005

“The Healing power of a little poison”

This article provides information on Homeopathy. Mention is made of celebrities like David Beckham and Queen Elizabeth II using Homeopathy and approving of it.

b) Sunday Magazine, Sunday Tribune, June 5, 2005

“What your body needs now”

This article concerns a review of an alternate health book entitled, *What Really Works*, by Susan Clark, which distills some of the most effective strategies and remedies to well-being. Pilates, aromatherapy, shiatsu and meditation are discussed and explained. Also, workshops that one can attend to get a better understanding of any of the therapies are listed.

c) Sunday Tribune, April 10, 2005

“Alternate Healers turn to Tapping”

The alternate healing modality of tapping is discussed in this article. Due to a very simple explanation of this healing method, the reader becomes interested.

d) Workplace, Daily News, May 4, 2005

“Traditional Healers: To pay sick leave or not”

Here traditional healing is mentioned as being recognized by employers in the workplace as an alternate method of healing.

e) Weekly Gazette, June 30, 2005

“Feng Shui”

Feng Shui tips on how to achieve a happier home are described.

f) Al-Ummah, June 2005

“Alternate Healing: The Pros and Cons”

Practical advice on alternate healing methods, and what the Muslim patient should look out for when considering one of the vast array of therapies available, is provided.

From the above cited newspaper and magazine articles, one is aware of the extensive number of therapies available, and the dilemma that one is faced with when choosing. Some of the therapies practiced in Kwa-Zulu Natal are listed below: ²⁵

a) Creative Therapies

- Art Therapy
- Colour Therapy
- Music Therapy
- Psychodrama

b) Exercise Therapies

- Alexander Technique
- Pilates
- T'ai Chi

²⁵ Ibid. p. 13 – 108.

- Yoga

c) Manipulative Therapies

- Acupressure
- Aromatherapy
- Chiropractic
- Kinesiology
- Reflexology
- Reiki
- Shiatsu

d) Mind Therapies

- Hypnotherapy
- Meditation
- Autosuggestion

e) Oral Therapies

- Chinese herbal medicine
- Homeopathy
- Unani medicine
- Ayurveda
- Western herbal medicine

f) Water Therapies

- Flotation therapy
- Hydrotherapy

2.9. CONCLUSION

There seems to definitely be something in the power of the mind over the body as well as relaxation as a method to aid healing. The vast number of therapies all work on the premise of relaxation of the mind, and healing when there is dis-ease rather than when the body is already plagued by disease. As is evident by the newspaper articles, alternate healing and taking control of one's health has become very popular in Kwa-Zulu Natal. Although major alternative medical systems may not have a great deal of quantitative research, they are generally not experimental. They rely on well-developed clinical and observational skills and experience that is guided by their explanatory models.²⁶

Most alternate therapies are seen as focusing on releasing the healing powers within the body, rather than creating healing through the application of outside forces like surgery, technology, or pharmaceuticals. For optimal wellness, the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual components of health need to be balanced, and equilibrium is needed among all the components.

The next chapter discusses the alternate systems of health care, viz. Unani medicine, Ayurveda and Chinese medicine.

²⁶ Fontaine, *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Alternative Medicine*, p. 14.

CHAPTER THREE

ALTERNATE SYSTEMS OF HEALTH CARE

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the alternate systems of health care, viz. Unani medicine, Ayurveda and Chinese medicine are discussed. In each of the systems of health care, the origins are explained as well as the method of healing in the particular system.

Ibn Sina, the founder of Unani medicine, integrated all the ancient traditions of medicine into one system of thought for the creation of this principal of healing. At present the Unani system of medicine, with its own recognized practitioners, hospitals, and educational and research institutions, form an integral part of the national health care systems in certain countries. Since 1976, when the World Health Organisation (WHO) formally adopted its policy of promoting traditional medicine, Unani Tibb has begun to enjoy increased interest world-wide, and is currently being practiced, taught and researched in 25 countries. The Ibn Sina Institute of Tibb in South Africa aims to offer a holistic, affordable, client centred therapy focusing on the health of the person.²⁷

²⁷ Bhikha, p. 37.

Ayurveda is a holistic and sophisticated system encompassing the balance of body, mind and spirit. This Indian health system sees the body functioning through the interaction of vital energies, body tissues and waste products. Ayurveda uses eating practices, herbal treatments, massage, meditation and postural and breathing exercises to balance the interaction of the three agents. Knowing one's body type, or dosha, is the first and most important step in adopting an Ayurvedic lifestyle. This system of healing is dealt with in detail in this chapter.

Traditional Chinese medicine is primarily concerned with the detection and correction of imbalances within and around the body. Chinese medicine uses diet, breathing, acupuncture and herbal treatments to correct imbalances. The method of treatment in this system of healing is discussed in this chapter.

3.2. Unani Medicine

The fathers of modern medicine, Hippocrates, Galen and Ibn Sina elaborated on an approach to health that most modern practitioners had not even heard of. Their theory and practice of medicine came to be known as Greco-Arabic medicine. In 1994, South Africa's new National Health Plan which highlighted the country's need to provide effective, affordable healthcare to all people stressed the inclusion of all role players, including traditional healers and prioritized the promotion of primary health care. Greco- Arabic medicine or Unani medicine was found to be in keeping

with the requirements of the National Health Plan, as well as that of the World Health Organization's objectives- to empower individuals to take care of themselves. ²⁸

India is committed to the World Health Organization's goal of 'Health for all'. And in order to achieve this objective the Government of India is trying to make optimal utilization of all the available resources. Unani Medicine (or Tibb), along with other India systems of medicine, forms an important health resource. For centuries, this system has been serving a large section of the population, but is becoming popular in South Africa in this decade. For maintaining the faith of the people in Unani Medicine, it is most essential that the drugs are efficacious and safe. Since Unani drugs are drawn from natural sources they are quite safe, but their efficacy depends on authentic drug material and the quality of the finished products. In 1969 a Central Council for Research in Indian Medicine and Homeopathy (CCRIMH) was established to develop scientific research in different branches of Indian systems of medicine viz. Unani Medicine, Ayurveda, Siddha, Yoga, Naturopathy and Homeopathy. ²⁹ The research activities in these systems continued under the aegis of the CCRIMH till 1978 when it was split up into four separate research councils, one each for Unani Medicine, Ayurveda and Siddha, Yoga and Naturopathy, and Homeopathy. This was done to further develop the systems according to their basic philosophies. The Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine was established in 1979 to provide scientific basis for the system, to find viable solutions to the health problems of the people and to undertake research work on the standardization of Unani medicines. A workshop on standardization of Unani drugs was held in

²⁸ Ibid, p.9.

²⁹ <http://www.iiim.org/iiimim.html>

India in 1995, where techniques of standardization and quality control of Unani drugs were discussed.³⁰

A holistic system of medicine, Tibb has been practiced across vast areas of the world for thousands of years. It is the main source of medicine in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Malaysia and the Middle East. Tibb incorporates knowledge from ancient Egyptian and Greek medicine, from Chinese and Indian traditions, and from the ancient healing wisdom of Persia and the Middle East. Tibb recognizes vital energy in the body. It works on the concept that medicine needs to be holistic and it uses herbal remedies to combat modern ills. The Unani system of medicine as well as Ayurveda, Siddha and Yoga form an important part of the Indian cultural heritage.³¹ Unani medicine was introduced about 1000 years ago by the Arabs. Unani physicians settled in India, and through experimentation added numerous native medicines to their system, which became popular in Indian society. Today, India is the leading country in the world having the largest number of educational, research, and health care institutions of Unani medicine, all well-developed and fully functional. However, it is only in the last 4-5 years that Unani medicine has been made popular in Kwa-Zulu Natal by the Unani practitioners.

Unani medicine is able to treat diseases such as malaria, hepatitis, rheumatoid arthritis and asthma. The Unani physician is called a *Hakim*. Mostly plant origin drugs are used in medicines, though drugs of mineral and animal origin are sometimes used. Medicines could be in the form of syrups, ointments, powders, tablets, salts or extracts, as in Homeopathy. Recognising the relationship

⁰ Workshop on Standardization of Unani Drugs, New Delhi, 24-25 January, 1995

¹ <http://www.iiim.org/iiimim.html>

between the medicines of Unani and Homeopathy, a National Conference on Unani System of Medicine and Homeopathy was held in New Delhi in 1989.

In older days, *Hakims* used to prepare individualized doses for particular patients which ensured that each patient received the dose that was exactly required by him. When drug manufacturing became commercialized, dosage of uniform potency became necessary. At present, *Hakims* use commercially available Unani remedies. Such practitioners start by trying to adjust a person's breathing. Next, they attend to emotions, i.e. what a person thinks can affect his or her health. Finally, they investigate sleep patterns, eating patterns and bowel movements. Then only will herbal remedies be prescribed.³²

Rashid Bhikha, author of *Tibb-Traditional Roots of Medicine in Modern Routes to Health*, founded the Ibn Sina Institute of Tibb to promote the practice of Unani medicine in South Africa and to provide an opportunity for health care professionals and lay-people to learn its principles. According to Bhikha the value of Unani medicine is as follows:

- It follows a holistic/systemic rather than a reductionist approach to health;
- It focuses on the constitution of the individual rather than generic approaches to disease;
- There is early diagnosis of 'syndromes' long before the appearance of symptoms, preventing more serious disease;
- It focuses on the empowerment of the client rather than paternalistic control over the client;

³² Alexander, J. 2001. *Mind Body Spirit – A Complete Guide to Holistic Therapies for Maintaining Optimum Health and Wellbeing*. Carlton Books, London, p. 33.

- It is an inexpensive, low-tech easily accessible means to achieving health rather than expensive high-tech interventions (but not excluding these when necessary);
- It is a core philosophy which animates its practice, adds value to the humanness of its clients and presents an ethical challenge to practitioners.³³

The South African Tibb Association, a national body, was founded in 1977 to obtain formal recognition by the Department of Health under the auspices of the Chiropractors, Homeopaths and Allied Professional Health Services Council of South Africa.³⁴

3.2.1. Islamic Contributions to Medicine

While Europe experienced the 'Dark Ages', Arabic physicians were exploring the writings of Galen, Aristotle, Paul of Aegaeia and other Greek sources. Recent discoveries of manuscripts by an Egyptian physician Mohiuddin al-Tantawi have shown that Islamic Physicians not only possessed excellent knowledge of anatomy and physiology from the Greeks, but added some challenging new concepts. Muslims contributed extensively in the field of botany, pharmacology, pharmacognosy and pharmacy. One of the most authoritative books on herbs was written by the famous scholar and philosopher, Abdullah Ibn Ahmad Al-Baitar, entitled *Kitab al-Nabat* (The Book on Herbs).³⁵ Modern *Hakims* still use recipes that were tried and tested by Galen and the Arab physicians. Surgery has always been an inseparable part of Tibb medicine. The Muslim physician Abu Al Qasim Al Zahrawi, developed many of the surgical instruments still in use today. Another significant Islamic achievement was the development of hospitals and hospital-

³ Bhikha, p. 9-10.

⁴ Ibid, p. 10.

⁵ Ibid, p. 31.

based clinical training of medical practitioners. These hospitals were structures built for the practice of integrative medicine.³⁶

1.2.2. Ibn Sina and Tibb

Tibb medicine was presented as a fully developed system of therapeutics by Ibn Sina- known as Avicenna in the west. He was born in 980 A.D. in Russia. As an ardent scholar, he became well versed in the study of the Qur'an and by the age of ten he had become a *Hafiz* - one who has committed the entire Qur'an to memory. He became famous for his healing skills at a very young age. He was the most famous physician, philosopher, encyclopaedist, mathematician and astronomer of his time. His main source for knowledge was Greek Medicine. Unani actually means 'Greek' in Arabic. He also integrated other systems, like those of the Europeans, East Indians, Persians, Arabs, Chinese, Ayurvedic and Tibetans. He refined all this knowledge into 'The Standard Principles of Medicine'. Of particular significance was his theory on the relationship between the mind and the body, suggesting that many physiological phenomena were the product of suppressed thoughts.

The Ibn Sina Institute of Tibb in South Africa believes that the value of Tibb cannot be withheld from the health care system. Not only does Tibb offer holistic, low-tech, affordable, client centred therapies, it actively restores an ethical element to medical practice.³⁷

³⁶ Ibid, p. 31.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 32-38.

1.2.3. Healing with Unani

For any process in the universe to transpire there has to be a transfer of heat. Heat is restored in a body through nutrition which generates energy, bringing warmth to the body. Emotional states, stress, environments and illnesses can use up heat resources. While heat and moisture is the natural state of all human bodies, Tibb acknowledges a continuum of hot and cold and a continuum of moist and dry.³⁸ Every individual is said to be one of the four major temperaments or combinations of qualities: hot and moist, cold and moist, cold and dry, and hot and dry. Using this system of categorizing patients, the Tibb practitioners are able to find quick and reliable ways of identifying and treating illnesses. Of even more significance is their ability to prevent potential illnesses long before they occur. Tibb focuses on the ideal state of health for a specific individual and not a plan of health applied to all.³⁹ Central to the practice of Tibb is the diagnosis of temperament which is done by looking at the person's muscle, fat, hair, colour of body, response to heat, cold, dryness and moistness, patterns of sleep, expulsive faculty, emotions, dietary habits, occupation, age, gender, and exposure to climatic conditions.⁴⁰ A patient is then diagnosed as being one of the four temperaments, which need to be maintained in order to remain healthy. Tibb has identified six determining factors that are necessary for natural healing:⁴¹

³⁸ Ibid, p. 54.

³⁹ Ibid, p. 59.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 60.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 72-88.

- The air we breathe neutralizes any excessive heat and maintains ideal body temperature. One should be aware of the seasonal changes and the adverse effect that exposure to extreme elements can have on one's health.
- For Tibb practitioners, the chief medicine at their disposal is food. Food is the major factor in the maintenance of health, and it is one that is completely under our control. A person is assigned a food program depending on what temperament he or she is, e.g. if a person is diagnosed as having a cold and moist temperament, then foods that are hot and dry, are recommended in order to balance the system.
- Movement and rest can also aid in healing. Voluntary movements such as walking and swimming have an effect on involuntary movements such as blood circulation, digestion, metabolism and excretion of waste products. Rest is also seen as a healing phenomenon. Different people have different needs of movement and rest. A balance to suite a particular temperament is necessary.
- Different personality types need different hours of sleep to restore and maintain balance in their temperament. Sleep renews and maintains physical and psychological performance.
- Tibb places emphasis on the emotions of a person in healing. The temperament of a person is affected by his or her emotions, according to the quality of these emotions. For example, grief is associated with a cold and dry temperament. Excessive grief is an acute condition of the nervous system and weakens the nerve impulses and produces negative effects on the brain, lungs, heart and liver.
- Elimination is the process of detoxification of waste products from the body. Tibb philosophy believes that the ultimate cure is possible only when the elimination of toxins takes place from within the body.

The difference between modern medicine and Tibb can be summarised as follows:

Modern medicine aims at controlling symptoms and managing illnesses, whereas Tibb aims at curing illnesses and managing health.⁴²

3.2.4. Al-Tibb Al-Nabawi - Prophetic Medicine

Prophetic Medicine refers to guidelines given by the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) with a bearing on disease, treatment of disease, and care of patients. The principles of Prophetic Medicine are thus derived from the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* which stipulate moderation and emphasise the dignity of humankind. These principles are geared towards the promotion of health and the prevention of disease. According to Dr Omar Hasan Kasule, Dr Mohamed Coovadia and Dr Goolam M. Karim, the goal of Prophetic Medicine is not only to treat illnesses but rather to prevent the onset of illnesses – a situation which has only lately been implemented in the West.⁴³

3.2.4.1. Characteristics of Prophetic Medicine

Prophetic Medicine refers to the words and actions of the Prophet (PBUH) with a bearing on disease, treatment of disease, and care of patients. Included are general guidelines on physical and mental health that are applicable to all places, all times, and all circumstances. It covers preventive medicine, curative medicine, mental well-being, spiritual cures, and medical and surgical treatments. It integrates mind, body, matter and spirit. The Prophet (PBUH) enunciated a basic

⁴² Ibid, p. 105.

⁴³ Kasule, O.H. et al. 2000. *Prophetic Medicine Al-Tibb Al-Nabawi*. Islamic Medical Association of South Africa, South Africa, p.ii.

principle in medicine that for every disease there is a cure.⁴⁴ Thus, the Prophetic medical tradition does not only look at the medical teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) but encourages humans to search and experiment with new treatment modalities.

Prophetic Medicine has several sources:

- Revelation – *wahi*
- Empirical experience of the Prophet(PBUH)
- Folk medicine of that time in the Arabian peninsula
- Medical knowledge of other communities at the time of the Prophet (PBUH)
- Books of *Hadith*
- *Sirah* – biography of the Prophet (PBUH)
- *Imam* al – Bukhari’s *Ahadith* related to medicine - He devoted two books to medicine: *Kitab al –Tibb* and *Kitab al –Marda*.
- *Ahadith* related to available medical knowledge by authors Abu Nu’aym, Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyah and Jalal al – Din al – Suyuti.⁴⁵

The classification of traditions relating to medicine depends on the state of knowledge and changes with time and place. Jalal al–Din al–Suyuti published a book on *al–Tibb al–Nabawi* and divided medicine into three types: traditional, spiritual and preventive. Most of *al–Tibb al–Nabawi* is preventive medicine which is an advanced concept given the level of scientific knowledge at the time of the Prophet (PBUH). Preventive medical measures include food and exercise. The spiritual

⁴⁴ Fazlul Karim, 1939. *Al-Hadis Vol II*. The Book House, Lahore (An English Translation of Mishkat-ul- Masabih), p.71.

⁴⁵ Kasule, p. 2.

aspects include prayer, recitation of the *Qur'an* and remembrance of *Allah* (SWT). Curative medicine involves prophetic teachings about treatment of wounds, use of honey and the black seed for several ailments.

There are three therapeutic modalities used in Prophetic medicine: natural, spiritual and mixture of both. The treatments could be honey for treating infected wounds, cold water for fever, diet, milk, camel milk, camel urine, cupping for headaches, cauterization and the black seed. However, because the type and severity of illnesses could have been different in the time of the Prophet (PBUH), and because of changes in humans, medicinal plants and the environment, we can conclude that the teachings of Prophetic medicine can only be a foundation to guide and encourage scientific research for remedies that are suitable for our times.

3.2.4.2. Scope and Methodology of Prophetic Medicine

Nearly every branch of medicine contains elements of Prophetic medicine. The injunctions of Prophetic medicine are such that they are easy to understand and easy to practice, they enshrine the principle of moderation and emphasize the dignity of man. They are geared towards the promotion of health and the prevention of disease. The wisdom of this is only now realized. It is a fact that the mortality rates of the Third World and the industrially advanced countries can only effectively be reduced by way of prevention of disease – rather than by spending more money on high technology, hospital based, curative medicine. In the *Hadith*, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) proclaimed that “*for every disease there is a cure*”.⁴⁶ Thus Muslim Physicians such as al-Razi, al-Biruni, al-Ghazali, Ibn-Sina and Ibn al-Nafi set out to learn using the principles of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*, together with their intellect, and gave to the world a system of health care which is yet

⁴⁶ Fazlul Karim, p 71.

without parallel. The two fundamental institutions, on which modern medicine rests, namely the university and the hospital, were largely Muslim contributions to humankind.⁴⁷

Prophetic medicine enshrines the principle of moderation and emphasizes the dignity of a person. Free of harmful effects, Prophetic medicine works on the premise of health promotion and disease prevention. Hence Prophetic medicine works at a primary preventative level. In Africa what is currently required is preventative medicine in the form of elementary public health measures such as clean water, proper sanitation, better housing and improved nutrition. Thus it seems that much of Africa can benefit from the merits of Prophetic medicine. Islamic teachings on matters relating to health need to be weighed and analysed, so that people can then react proactively to challenges of illnesses.

There are six essentials which are to be considered in the treatment and causation of illness. They are:

- Climate- including the effects of air, water and soil.
- Food-its quality and times of eating.
- Bodily rest and movement/exercise.
- Sleep
- Emotional effects-which enhance or hamper cure.
- Excretions and retentions.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Kasule, p.10.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 21.

These principles are the basic ‘tools’ that are used when practicing Prophetic medicine. The causation of disease was known to the Prophet (PBUH) since he advised that all vessels containing water should be covered. This Prophetic principle was well enshrined in medical practice in the early days of Islam. The *Hadith* concerning the dipping of a fly into milk is based on sound principle in medicine. The Prophet (PBUH) said that one wing contained the disease and the other the healing.⁴⁹ The immunological principle of the body building up immunity when exposed to small doses of any illness is enshrined in this *Hadith*. The Prophet (PBUH) also knew that leprosy was not contagious, when he invited a leper to have a meal with him. This fact was only discovered in the last century. Robben Island, for example, was initially a Leper Colony.

Sickness was seen as the strongest incentive for a believer to repent and do penance for sins. The Prophet (PBUH) declared that illness and fever were purifiers of sin, and that for every illness there is a cure. The latter strengthened the person’s resolve to recover and seek treatment. This positive attitude goes a long way towards aiding recovery.

3.2.4.3. The Future of Prophetic Medicine

There are five areas that Prophetic medicine can assist in underdeveloped countries as well as developed societies:

- Preventing disease through the supply of clean water and proper disposal of sewage in both urban and rural areas.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 31.

- Campaigning against alcoholism and drugs in informal settlements as well as in all developing countries.
- Educating the population on a balanced nutrition programme which can alleviate and prevent or cure many diseases in the developing world.
- Encouraging rituals such as *dhikr* and its social structure for their inherent tranquilising properties.
- Deriving new techniques for treating the mentally ill from the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*.

3.3. Ayurveda

3.3.1. What is Ayurveda?

Ayurveda means 'the science of life'.⁵⁰ It is an ancient Indian medical system which is holistic in that it gives priority to the involvement of the patient in his or her own well-being. Ayurveda empowers one to take control of one's own life and health, with the aim of preventing illness. This is in stark contrast to the method of treating disease after it has arisen. For example, with a headache you will be given medication, but you will also be asked to look at the imbalance in your lifestyle, your environment, diet and mind that has given rise to the pain. Once the imbalance is identified, traditional remedies are helpful in the short term, but in the long term, the person is enabled to live in such a way that the cause of the pain never returns. A perfect balance can be achieved with Ayurveda where illness disappears. This balance is an integration of body, mind and spirit, leading ultimately to perfect bliss.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Godagama, S. Dr. 1997. *The Handbook of Ayurveda*. Kyle Cathie Limited, London, p. 13.

⁵¹ Verma, V. Dr. 1995. *Ayurveda – A Way of Life*. Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data, USA,

p. 21,143.

The Elements

Health may be defined as a perfect balance between body, mind, spirit and the environment. The basic tenet of Ayurveda is that the human body is composed of the elements earth, air, fire, water and ether together with the food we eat and anything else we come into contact with. Excesses or deficiencies in our diet, environment, or thoughts lead to excesses or deficiencies of particular elements in the body, creating imbalance, and hence disease.⁵²

Imbalance and Illness

Ayurvedic medicine is founded on the belief that all diseases stem from the digestive system and are caused either by poor digestion of food, which is the body's major source of nourishment, or by following an improper diet for your nature. The aim of Ayurveda is to avoid excesses in life and to supplement what is deficient. All diseases are seen as caused by imbalance which needs to be restored. It is important for the actual cause of the imbalance to be removed on an ongoing basis by appropriate attention to diet and lifestyle. The Ayurvedic practitioner seeks to balance the body by using a combination of lifestyle advice, diet, exercise and herbal medicine. The principles and practices of Ayurvedic medicine are being increasingly employed by people in India, Europe, Australasia and North America as part of a holistic approach to disease and everyday life.⁵³

3.3.2. The History of Ayurveda

In the period from *circa* 3000 B.C. until 1500 B.C. it was probably the Aryans invading and mixing their systems with those of the Harappa, who introduced Ayurveda. The earliest written

⁵² Ibid, p. 11.

⁵³ Alexander, p. 11.

knowledge of Ayurveda was from a book known as the *Atharva Veda*. Around 1000 B.C. knowledge in the classical texts of Ayurveda was further refined, giving rise to two textbooks, the *Charaka Samhita* and the *Sushruta Samhita*. Next came the Buddhist period, when knowledge of Ayurveda improved greatly. The Greeks were aware of Indian culture and their medical systems, but the invasion of Northern India by Alexander the Great in 326 B.C. was responsible for the spread of Ayurveda into Europe. A book on diagnostics appeared in the eighth century and universities were set up to teach Buddhism and medicine. When Northern India was invaded the universities were destroyed and libraries were burned. Some Buddhist monks escaped to Tibet, hence a number of ayurveda texts being preserved only in Tibetan translation.

Nonetheless, Ayurveda survived as a system of medical practice for many centuries. During their rule over India, the British used local ayurveda medicines because of the expense and difficulty of importing western medicine. However, due to the edict in 1835 that only European knowledge should be taught, Ayurveda lost its popularity. However, since Indian independence in 1947, Ayurveda began to receive recognition as one of the six systems officially recognized by the government.

3.3.3. The Philosophy of Ayurveda

Ayurveda is based on the Indian *samkhya* philosophy of creation. According to this philosophy, the observable universe is only one of the many manifestations of the absolute reality. All of creation is present only to glorify the absolute reality or absolute self. The universe is governed by a set of rules where everything is constantly changing regardless of the illusion of stability. The environment too, is also changing. The aim of Ayurveda is to make sure that the self is in harmony

with the environment. Ayurveda advocates the Buddhist doctrine of ‘the middle road’, or moderation in all things. ⁵⁴ One should adhere to the Ayurvedic rules for healthy living: resist negative thoughts, abstain from verbal abuse, abstain from physical abuse, do not give in to greed and shun pride, arrogance and ego. ⁵⁵

Prakruti

The primary aspect of the created universe is nature or *prakruti*. It is this difference between absolute reality and nature which gives rise to the feeling of separateness that makes the “I” different from the next person. This “I” is known as the “ego” or *ahamkara*.

The Gunas

The *ahamkara* encompasses order or equilibrium. The energy that creates this equilibrium has three qualities known as *gunas*.

They are;

Sattva (purity and subjective consciousness); *Tamas* (darkness, inertia); and *rajas* (activity, passion, the process of change). According to *samkhya*, these *gunas* are continuously separating and uniting, and are present in everything that makes up the physical world. ⁵⁶

Sattva:

In the human being, *sattva* is the ability of the five senses to react in the way they do. The expression of soul which is part of absolute consciousness is determined by the state of health of the body; the soul itself remains pure and unaffected. The soul’s expression in the outside world then becomes modified by health or illness. *Sattva* is the essence of what is

⁵⁴ Godagama, p. 16.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 16-18.

⁵⁶ Verma, p. 170.

needed to create bliss. It is an individual's cause of existence that can be compared to the state of wakefulness. *Sattva* is one's ability to overcome worldly desires, to gain control over the senses, to get rid of anger, to get rid of attachments to people and objects, and to be free from greed or other activities.⁵⁷

Tamas:

Tamas represents all that has form and inertia, or resistance to being moved. It is a state that corresponds to deep slumber and inactivity. *Tamas* is divided into five parts which give form to five senses: sound, touch, form, taste and odour. These forms make up the universe. They are: ether, air, fire, water, and earth. These are the elements of the environment and of ourselves. *Ether* has the character of *space*, *air* has the character of *gas*, *fire* the character of *change*, *water* the character of *liquidity* and *earth* the character of *solidity*. In Ayurveda, a person is composed of these five elements, plus consciousness. Since consciousness is affected by the state of health of our bodies, one would expect devotion to well-being to be our primary objective. Desire is more the primary objective, which is also the force which causes imbalance in the body and which results in "illness". Emotions like greed, jealousy, laziness, telling lies, stealing, etc., are *tamas* qualities of the mind. *Ayurveda* enables a person to be aware of what he needs and so make informed choices for himself as to how to live and remain healthy.⁵⁸

Rajas:

Rajas is the kinetic energy that links together *tamas* and *sattva*. *Rajas* is compared to the dream state.⁵⁹ It denotes the activities of life that take place with inner subtle energy. This represents action or movement. It is an expression of all transfers of energy from one state

⁵⁷ Ibid. 172.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 170.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 171.

to another. It provides the link between *tamas* (matter or inertia) and *sattva* (the subjective consciousness). *Rajas* and *sattva* unite together to produce eleven sense and motor organs which are the functioning structure of the human body. People's lives are predominantly *rajas* where the focus is on earning money, having a place to live, getting food, education and other means of survival. There is a vital co-existent balance between *sattva* and *rajas* and *tamas* that is the central tenet of Ayurveda.

3.3.4. How does Ayurveda work?

In Ayurveda health is defined as perfect balance between body, mind, spirit and the environment; Ayurvedic techniques focus on achieving that balance. Our bodies normally cause us to lose sight of the correct measure in a particular circumstance; the most common desires causing this problem are those such as lust, hatred, fear, envy, arrogance or greed. This is what causes imbalance. According to Hope-Murray desire causes lack of measure, which results in imbalance of the body and mind and so leads to disease; if everything is in balance then health prevails.⁶⁰ There are three principal "energies" or doshas which are responsible for achieving and maintaining balance of the mind and body. These doshas are called *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* which each have specific activities in the body. *Vata* is responsible for motion in the mind and body. *Pitta* is in charge of any form of change. *Kapha* produces lubrication as well as insulation. When we are in balance, the five elements function together healthily and when they are out of balance then the body functions abnormally and we become ill. What is necessary is to decrease the influence of the dosha that is in excess. The doshas also affect every other process in the body, and for the Ayurvedic physician the next most important system is the primary waste disposal mechanism- the lower bowel and the

⁶⁰ Hope-Murray, A. et al. 1997. *Healing with Ayurveda*. Gill & Macmillan, Dublin, p. 15.

production of faeces. Disturbances in the bowel functioning leads to problems elsewhere. An unbalanced *vata* and *pitta* and *kapha* constitution is almost always associated with health problems.⁶¹

The maintenance of balance is the primary goal of Ayurveda, the secondary goal being to bring back into balance the area that has gone out of balance. According to Ayurveda, we are what we think we are, we are what we eat, and we are what we do. So we have it within our power to choose to be healthy and ultimately to experience peace and bliss. To do this we need to explore the nature of the items we eat and our everyday experiences so that we can predict whether an imbalance will occur. An Ayurvedic physician will be able to detect imbalances in the doshas and by re-balancing them, prevent disease that would have occurred in the future.

3.3.5. Treatment with Ayurveda

According to Hope-Murray,

Starting any form of treatment without first dealing with the toxins in the system that has caused the disease will only make matters worse.⁶²

Toxins may either be eliminated or neutralized on both the physical and emotional level of disease.

⁶¹ Verma, p. 53.

⁶² Hope-Murray, p. 66.

The first and foremost consideration in Ayurveda is to lead a healthy and harmonious life which will keep diseases away. This needs to be learned, for the person needs to listen to the needs of his/her body, and make an effort to follow the Ayurvedic way of life. All this helps a person to detect an illness before it manifests.

However, despite the successful management of health, one may become prey to certain ailments due to tiredness, stress, bad weather, or travelling. Some of the most common ailments are hay fever, piles, chronic pains, stomach ulcers, etc. Learning the Ayurvedic lifestyle, and the medication to take, helps handle the ailment and gets a cure in due time. Before treatment begins, a full medical history, family history, allergies, current medication, social history (smoking, alcohol, and occupation), sleep patterns, diet and personality is taken. This is followed by a physical examination. The practitioner will then formulate a remedy to suit the individuality of the patient. The two important factors in healing are appropriate sleep and rest and the correct nutrition. Often people expect medicines to “repair” them immediately so that they can run their “body-machines” once again.⁶³ Strong medicines, like allopathic drugs which give quick relief, also give a series of side-effects. In Ayurveda, there are also some strong drugs, but the Ayurvedic practitioner will then recommend specific nutrition to counteract the side effects. For example, if a drug is strong and increases *pitta*, a *pitta*- decreasing diet is prescribed with it.⁶⁴ In fact, medicines in Ayurveda are generally meant to be taken with something specific like yoghurt, buttermilk, ghee (clarified butter), honey, etc.

⁶³ Verma, p. 186.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 186.

The Emotional Level:

Ayurveda teaches us that anger, fear, jealousy and greed are incorrect thinking and these emotions must be released or else imbalance in the doshas will occur, leading to a build up disease creating toxins. A person needs to observe himself carefully to understand his emotions. For example, if anger arises, the person should be aware that he is experiencing this emotion and then try to find out how it arose and what it resulted in. Just by observing and being aware of this emotion of anger will enable its release. According to Verma,

If you are suffering from fatigue, and you are not doing anything about it, remind yourself: “It is time now to have a break, to slip into inactivity, to rest, to take it easy, to transcend into restfulness and tranquility.”⁶⁵

The Physical Level:

The guiding principal of Ayurveda is that each person has the power to heal himself. Much can be done to remove or neutralize toxins in the body by balancing the doshas, using an appropriate diet as part of a program.⁶⁶ Such dietary adjustments will also maintain the balance of the doshas and thus perfect health. What is eaten should be chosen to balance the individual constitution. In the process of eating, you are feeding not just the body but the mind and spirit as well. It is important therefore, to feed all five of the senses by preparing and consuming food which is attractive to look at, good to taste, inspiring to smell, pleasant in constitution. The sense of hearing can be satisfied by the sound of food being cooked. Everything you eat will affect your mind as well as your body. Fresh foods are identified as being the best to eat. The person should also not over eat; he/she

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 203.

⁶⁶ Hope-Murray, p. 67.

should only eat until satisfied. Three well defined meals should be eaten per day, with a gap of at least four to six hours between them. Avoid fried foods, because the process of frying adds intense heat to the food; rather eat raw foods. Meat should be avoided, especially seafood, which is said to be “hot” and can cause allergies. Here everything that you eat can be seen to affect your well-being. This is the basis of Ayurvedic treatment.

3.3.6. How Can Ayurveda Help?

Ayurvedic medicines can help the following ailments:⁶⁷

- Digestive problems such as ulcers, gastritis, indigestion, heartburn, and constipation.
- Gynaecological problems such as menstrual and menopausal difficulties.
- Weight problems such as weight loss and weight gain.
- Skin complaints such as eczema, dermatitis, psoriasis and acne.
- Allergic conditions such as asthma, hay fever and sinus.
- Problems with joints such as chronic pain, muscle tension, sciatica, rheumatism, arthritis and osteoporosis.
- Psychosomatic illnesses such as sleep disturbances, migraine, depression and anxiety attacks.
- Heart and blood-circulation problems such as angina, high blood pressure, palpitations and an irregular pulse.
- Addictions such as those to alcohol, smoking and drugs.

⁶⁷ Alexander, p. 13.

There is even current research to determine whether Ayurveda can be effective in the treatment of HIV/AIDS.

3.4. Chinese Medicine

Traditional Chinese Medicine originated in Chinese culture more than 3000 years ago and has spread to other continents of the globe. As a comprehensive health system, it has a range of applications from preventive health care and maintenance to diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic disorders. Traditional Chinese medicine is associated with early Taoists and Buddhists who observed energy within themselves, in plants and animals, and throughout the cosmos. This philosophy stresses the constant search for harmony and balance in an environment of constant change. The underlying philosophy behind traditional Chinese medicine is that good health revolves around the correct flow of *chi*, the energy of the body. *Chi* flows around the body in channels called meridians, and along the meridians lie hundreds of points which link the various organs and functions of the body. If we look after ourselves, eat the right kinds of foods and undertake the right kinds of exercise, we can increase the amount of *chi* in our bodies. If we fall prey to bad ways, our levels of *chi* drop and the consequence is lack of vital energy, emotional distress or even disease. In contrast to much of Western medicine, traditional Chinese medicine is a preventative practice, strengthening the immune system to ward off disease.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 27.

3.4.1. Yin and Yang

According to traditional Chinese medicine, the world can be divided into two forces, *yin* and *yang*. Yin is considered to be dark, cold, negative, passive and feminine, while yang is light, warm, positive, active and male. Disturbing the balance of yin and yang results in disharmony, and possibly ill health. Yin uses fluids to moisten and cool our bodies. It provides for restfulness as we slow down and sleep. It is associated with the symptoms of coldness, paleness, low blood pressure, and chronic conditions. People with excess yin tend to catch colds easily. Yang is the general category for activity and aggressiveness. Symptoms such as fever, high blood pressure, and acute conditions are associated with yang. People with excess yang tend to be nervous and agitated and cannot tolerate much heat. Yin and yang cannot exist independently of each other. It is the interaction of yin and yang that creates a balance in a person. It is this yin and yang that are both used in diagnosis and treatment of illness. For example, if a person is experiencing too much stress, usually understood as an excess of yang, more yin activities, such as meditation and relaxation, are the appropriate treatment.⁶⁹

In addition, every person contains the five elements of fire, earth, air (known as metal), water and wood. These five elements make us as one with the universe. Chi flows into our bodies, up from the earth in its yin form and down from the heavens in its yang form. The traditional Chinese medicine practitioner checks for the flow of chi, as well as how much of each element is within the

⁶⁹Fontaine, *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Alternative Medicine*, p. 37-38.

body when making his diagnosis. It is then possible to stimulate or quieten unbalanced organs through food, exercise, massage, herbs or acupuncture.⁷⁰

3.4.2. How Can Traditional Chinese Medicine Help?

- Chinese herbs have become famous for treating eczema and other skin conditions.
- Acupuncture is well known as an aid to dieting and giving up smoking.
- Acupuncture also has good effects on emotional and psychological problems.
- Other problems which respond well to acupuncture include acute problems such as headaches, coughs and colds, chronic conditions such as angina, irritable bowel syndrome, rheumatism and eczema, as well as relief from pain in general and childbirth in particular.
- Good results have even been reported with infertility.
- Tuina or Chinese therapeutic massage has been used successfully in dealing with mechanical problems.⁷¹

3.4.3. The Treatment

The treatment initially involves a diagnosis as well as lifestyle counselling. The simplest and most accessible treatment is diet. Dietary interventions are individualized on the basis of the individual's pattern of disharmony. Foods are used to rebalance the body by bringing warmth to coldness, or cooling off too much heat. A diet to maintain health should be varied and must include a minimum of seven different fruit and vegetables a day to avoid a cold or hot imbalance. Foods are

⁷⁰ Alexander, p. 27.

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 28.

categorized according to one of six tastes, each having a specific function in the body. *Sweet* foods are used to aid digestion and *chi* and influence the spleen and stomach. *Salty* foods affect the kidneys and bladder. *Sour* foods such as lemons and tomatoes are used to dry mucous membranes in the intestinal, urinary, reproductive or respiratory surfaces. *Pungent* foods such as garlic and onion are used to aid digestion, stimulate circulation and promote sweating. *Bitter* foods such as greens also help digestion and are used to regulate the bowels. *Astringent* foods such as beans or potatoes stop the flow of bodily secretions such as tears, saliva and sweat. Each food has both yin and yang energies but often one predominates. Traditional Chinese medicine practitioners recommend certain foods for balancing and improving certain conditions.⁷²

Acupuncture involves stimulating specific anatomic points using fine needles, pressure, friction, suction, heat or electromagnetic energy. The primary goal of acupuncture is the manipulation of energy flow throughout the body following a thorough assessment by a Chinese medicine practitioner. Treatment is offered in the context of the total person and with the goal of correcting the flow of *chi* to restore health. Acupuncture and tuina are carried out while lying on a couch fully clothed. The patient will be asked questions about his or her health and past medical history. The practitioner will be able to make a diagnosis by taking the person's pulse, and looking at the face, eyes and tongue. If having acupuncture, then sterilized needles are inserted at certain acupressure points to relieve the blockage of *chi* in that point. The person may feel a tingling sensation or a surge of released energy when a needle is inserted. Acupuncture is effective in the treatment of acute and chronic pain and motion disabilities. In addition, it is used in respiratory and cardiovascular conditions (e.g. asthma, hypertension), eye, ear, nose, and throat disorders (e.g. conjunctivitis, sore throat), gastrointestinal problems (e.g. ulcers, irritable bowel syndrome),

⁷² Fontaine, *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Alternative Medicine*, p. 44.

urogenital conditions (e.g. endometriosis, incontinence), skin disorders (e.g. eczema, shingles), psychiatric problems (e.g. anxiety, depression) and in addictive disorders.⁷³

With Chinese herbs, there can be very swift results. Herbs may be taken in the form of tea or the substances may be powdered and made into pills, pastes or tinctures for internal or external use. Just as in food, some herbs are warming (e.g. cinnamon) and some are cooling (e.g. mint). With the exception of conditions that require surgery, herbs can be used to treat almost any condition in the practice of traditional Chinese medicine. The healing benefits of the herbs used results from an interaction of all the components of the plant. For example, a cold will clear almost instantly once herbal treatment is started, or the patient will experience a sudden rush of energy.⁷⁴

Traditional Chinese massage can be energizing or sedative, and is used to treat and relieve many medical conditions. The major techniques used are rubbing, tapping, pinching, pressing, twisting or pushing. Widely varying illnesses are treated with traditional Chinese massage including the common cold, insomnia, leg cramps, painful menses, diarrhea, abdominal pains, headache, asthma, stiff neck, colic and throat pains. Massage increases circulation of blood to the skin and underlying muscles, bringing added nutrients and pain relief. Massage can help restore proper movement to injured limbs and joints and help restore a sense of balance. Massage is an effective method of reducing stress and tension that usually leads to a feeling of relaxation.⁷⁵

Qigong is the art and science of using breathing, movement, self-massage and meditation to cleanse, strengthen and circulate vital life energy. In India the comparable practice is called yoga.

⁷³ Ibid, p. 46.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 45.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 46.

This tradition of self-healing is called moving meditation. T'ai Chi is a more physical form of qigong. In China, millions of people practice qigong daily. The techniques are easy to learn and simple to apply for people who are both well and sick. Qigong decreases fatigue and forgetfulness and generates energy by enhancing bodily functions. It is known that taking a deep breath triggers a sense of relaxation. By adding the intention to relax with the breath, the effect is even greater. Then adding gentle movements or self-massage to the deep breathing and relaxation generates increased self-healing abilities. The focus on deep and intentional relaxation allows for release of emotional stress, for a sense of tranquility and for one's natural spirituality to arise.⁷⁶

3.4.4. Keeping Healthy the Chinese Way

Chinese medical practitioners recommend simple changes to one's lifestyle to help us live healthier, and even longer lives. A good diet is crucial. The first rule is to eat sparingly. The Chinese advocate that a person should eat until 70 – 80 % full. All food should be thoroughly chewed to assist in digestion. Extremes of temperature should be avoided. Ideally, food should be steamed, poached or stir fried. The traditional Chinese diet is one that is high in complex carbohydrates, vegetables, fish and fruit with meat being eaten only in small quantities. Grains are rated very highly, with rice considered to be the most nourishing of all grains. Cooked vegetables are believed to build up the body, while cold vegetables have an eliminating action. Red meat is

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 47.

very rarely eaten and then only when the body is depleted and in need of nourishment, e.g. after a period of illness.⁷⁷

3.5. CONCLUSION

The alternate systems of health, i.e., Unani, Ayurveda and Chinese medicine are all mind-body medicines which have been covered in this chapter. In all of these systems the benefits of good nutrition, good exercise, good breathing and how to cultivate a healthy mind and spirit are explained. In the next chapter the popular alternate therapies in Kwa-Zulu Natal are listed and discussed.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 48-49.

CHAPTER FOUR

POPULAR ALTERNATE THERAPIES IN KWA-ZULU NATAL

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Alternate medicine employs many “hands-on” therapies and modalities two of which are discussed in this chapter, viz. Reflexology and Aromatherapy. These ancient therapies date back over thousands of years and can help to improve health, relieve stress, promote relaxation and prevent disease. The mind-body technique of Yoga is an Indian system of health, postures and living that aims to produce a state of perfect health and bliss. The focus is on the physical exercises and postures, which promotes the flow of blood and energy through the body and can promote deep relaxation and health. This therapy is explained in this chapter. Another mind-body method of healing, Reiki, is also discussed in this chapter. This is a method of natural healing which is centred upon *Universal Life Energy*. Magnetic therapy seeks to influence health and well-being by modifying the electromagnetic fields created by the earth, our bodies, and special crystals and magnets used in the healing process. Through magnets, the healing force of the entire planet is utilized. This method of healing is dealt with in the chapter.

Each of these therapies is discussed in detail in this chapter, and their benefit in healing the complete person is discussed.

4.2. Reflexology

4.2.1. Origins

Reflexology 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. It is thought to have originated about 5000 years ago in China and was also used by the ancient Egyptians. It was introduced to Western society by Dr. William Fitzgerald, who was an ear, nose and throat specialist in America. He applied ten energy channels to the surface of the body, and these channels were considered to be paths along which a person's vital energy flowed, and which ended at the hands and feet. Thus, when pain was experienced in one part of the body, it could be relieved by applying pressure elsewhere in the body. It is a method for activating the natural healing resources of the body. The science of reflexology as it is practised today was developed fairly recently, and its use as a complementary therapy has been on the increase.⁷⁸

4.2.2 The Method

Reflexology does not use any sort of medication, merely a specific type of massage at the correct locations on the body. It works on the principle that the body is divided into ten zones that run lengthwise from head to toe, where the reflex areas for all the organs, glands and body parts are found. The body's energy flow is thought to follow certain routes, connecting every organ with a pressure point on the feet, hands or another part of the body. When the routes are blocked, then it indicates some ailment or condition in the body. The massaging of particular reflex points enables

⁷⁸ *Alternative Therapies*. 2000. Geddes & Grosset, Scotland (No Author), p. 76.

these channels to be cleared, restoring the energy flow and at the same time healing any damage. The whole process of reflexology is one of calm, gentle movements in a relaxed state. The foot is used most in reflexology. The best method involves placing the thumb in the middle of the sole of the foot. The thumb then passes with a circular motion for a few seconds before moving to another reflex. Reflexology works on the whole body, stimulating the reflexes to the internal organs, glands and body parts, as well as massaging the outside of the body. Through working on the feet, healing is stimulated throughout the body.⁷⁹

4.2.3 Uses of Reflexology

Working along holistic principles, reflexology takes into account body, mind and spirit, as they are all interrelated. If a person is under pressure or stressed, the effect on the body will be detrimental as muscles remain tense and taut, constricting circulation and nerves, and compromising their functioning. Reflexology is especially effective for the relief of pain (such as backache, headaches and toothache), treatment of digestive disorders, stress and tension, colds and influenza, asthma and arthritis. It is also possible to predict a potential illness and give preventive therapy. The massaging action of reflexology creates a soothing effect that enhances blood flow, to the overall benefit of the whole body. Reflexology, however, cannot be used to treat conditions that require surgery. Reflex massage initiates a soothing effect to bring muscular and nervous relief. There are certain conditions for which reflexology is inappropriate, including diabetes, some heart disorders and osteoporosis.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 91-92.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 105-113.

4.3 Reiki

4.3.1. Origins

Reiki is a complementary therapy and one of the many facets of alternate medicine that is available. It is a method of natural healing that is centred upon *universal life energy*, the meaning of the Japanese word Reiki. The therapy was named after Dr. Mikao Usui, a Japanese theologian, who rediscovered the art of healing using this *universal life energy*. Following a prolonged period of meditation, Dr. Usui acquired the ability of transferring Reiki energy. He was then able to help others to act as channels for this energy. Reiki was brought to the West via Hawaii, just before World War II. It has spread widely in the United States, and was brought to South Africa via Europe in the last decade. It is now widely used and taught in South Africa.⁸¹ In order to practice Reiki, one has to be initiated into the Reiki energy by a Reiki master. This attunement or initiation into Reiki energy is merely a means whereby the *universal life energy* is bestowed through the Reiki master. The master acts as a channel and a link with God to release the healing power. According to Reiki practitioners, one need not commit to a belief system in order to channel Reiki, or enjoy its benefits; all that is needed is the desire to heal or be healed. Petter, the author of *Reiki Fire – New Information About the Origins of the Reiki Power* said the following about Reiki:

Reiki is energy pure and simple. It has nothing to do with religion, astrology, New Age, psychology, personal growth, channeling, bodywork, or even healing.⁸²

⁸¹ Fenn, p. 41.

⁸² Petter, p.71

4.3.2. The Treatment

Because no one part of the body exists independently, and because a disorder in one area will inevitably affect the whole body, the use of Reiki is best applied in a whole-body way to cleanse and revitalize the complete system. It is a holistic system for healing body, mind, emotions and spirit, and it can also be used to encourage personal and spiritual awareness. When transferring Reiki energy, the practitioner recites a prayer asking for healing and the ability to concentrate on the person being healed. During a Reiki session, the hands pass along the length of the person's body which becomes energized via the root chakra. The hands are the instrument of healing in Reiki. When channeling Reiki for a recipient, the person needs to be in touch with his *higher self* or *spirit guides*, and asks his *Reiki angels* to bless the session. It is vital in a Reiki session to ask the *spirits* for their help or blessing. This is important because the angels will only become active when asked for help.⁸³ Reiki practitioners get an indication that a spirit guide, angelic being, or Ascended Master is visiting the session.⁸⁴ This spirit guide could be Dr. Usui, Dr. Hayashi Hawayo Takata (Reiki grand masters who started the therapy), Allah, Buddha, Jesus, Reiki guides, or any other spiritual beings.⁸⁵

Reiki training could be in different levels or degrees. The First Degree is the basic course suitable for anyone, from people who wish to use Reiki on themselves, friends and family, to those who

⁸³ Fernandez, C. 2003. *Step by Step Reiki*. Anness Publishing Ltd, p. 28.

⁸⁴ Desy, P.L. 2004. *The Everything Reiki Book*. Adams Media, p. 20.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p.39.

wish to go on to become practitioners. Reiki First Degree courses traditionally include four attunements and cover a comprehensive explanation of the *Usui System of Reiki Natural Healing*, including the story of how it was rediscovered by Dr. Usui. The training is given in the form of treatment. The patient then receives his first initiation. He/she is shown photographs of the twelve hand positions that are used to transfer energy from practitioner to the receiver. See Appendix III for the pictures.⁸⁶ The patient is asked to feel the energy flowing from the hands of the practitioner. Then in the second initiation, the patient practices on himself. Reiki does not require the receiver to believe in it at all.⁸⁷ In the third initiation, the trainee finds the energy getting stronger and stronger. The trainees thereafter group up in pairs and exchange a full session with each other. This is followed by the fourth initiation. Hence the first degree training has the four initiations as its training.⁸⁸

The Second Degree course is recommended for people who have already completed First Degree, those who want to become Reiki practitioners, and for those who wish to use Reiki more effectively on their own inner development. Sacred symbols and their mantras, and a range of special techniques are taught. The second degree Reiki teaches the trainee how to make direct contact with his or her subconscious mind by using symbols. The trainees are taught the symbols but told to keep them absolutely secret. Symbols such as the power symbol, mental healing symbol, and the absentee healing symbol, are taught.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Petter, p. 54 – 58.

⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 39.

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 39.

⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 43.

The Third Degree is the level of a Reiki master and is intended for those who have already practiced at Second Degree level and who want to learn more advanced techniques to become a Master. In the third degree workshop, the student is initiated into the Reiki master symbol which consciously connects a person to the divine spark or higher self.⁹⁰ During the attunement process by the Reiki master, the student sits on a chair with eyes closed, and hands in the Buddhist prayer position.

After being attuned, anything you place your hands on will receive Reiki simply by the intention to heal, and you can even bless things with Reiki hands, including your food and drink. During attunement, the student is shown pictures of symbols used in healing. The Reiki symbols are kept as secrets and only explained to students by a teacher on the basis that the student will keep all information of the symbols confidential. The Reiki symbols act as an activator to focus the energy of a certain quality on a specific spot. The symbol then becomes this energy when used by the person being initiated.⁹¹ The actual word Reiki comes from an ancient Shintoist mantra to protect the one who chants it. This mantra has been passed on from Shinto teacher to student only and cannot be shared with just any person. The second degree Reiki symbols originate from ancient Shintoism and ancient Buddhism. The Reiki master symbols origin lies in Buddhism. Much of how the Reiki symbols are actually used is cloaked in secrecy as the teacher makes the student promise not to pass on anything learned to someone else.⁹² See Appendix II for pictures of the symbols.⁹³

⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 47.

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 109.

⁹² Ibid, p. 109 – 110.

⁹³ Fernandez, p. 27.

The person attuned to Reiki creates the energy “God is here” after learning about the first symbol. Due to this phenomenon, the person can bless himself, other people, pets, or even inanimate objects. The third symbol of healing is seen as the only one needed to send Reiki healing to another person over distance or time. The symbol may be interpreted as “May the Buddha in me reach out to the Buddha in you to promote harmony and peace”.⁹⁴ Upon completing a Reiki session, and healing a person, the Reiki practitioner should send thanks to the Universe. Group healing sessions could also be practiced on an individual, where the group works together during treatment. A group healing meeting may begin with a Reiki circle ritual, a prayer to *spirit angels* or a chant or song to invoke love and unity for the duration of the healing meeting. However, Reiki is not seen as a religion, but a healing connection to the *universal life force*, so it is believed to be appropriate for anyone of any religious or spiritual background. This *universal life force* is an energy that is channeled and is thought to be the source of all creation. The Reiki flows through a *pure channel* and is pulled by the recipient, the energy coming from a “Higher Intelligence” or a divine being.⁹⁵ This higher intelligence is said to be some kind of god-like voice or agency that talks to you, comforts you, and gives you guidance.⁹⁶ According to Dr. Mikao Usui, he was given five spiritual principles to balance the physical aspect of his healing work:

1. Just for today, do not anger;
2. Just for today, do not worry;
3. Honour your parents, teachers and elders;
4. Earn your living honestly;
5. Show gratitude to every living thing.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 36 – 37.

⁹⁵ Petter, p. 51.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 111.

⁹⁷ Fernandez, p. 140.

Reiki can be a very gentle introduction to the inner world of meditation. The most common and easy meditation technique is observing ones own breath. In the Buddhist tradition, this is called *Vipassana* or insight meditation. ⁹⁸

4.3.3. Benefits of Reiki

In most complementary therapies, the body cannot be treated in separate parts. This is so in Reiki as well, where Reiki is used not just to counteract a particular symptom, but to treat the whole body to remove blockages in energy flow and the dispersal of toxins. A Reiki treatment session has the following benefits:

- It enables the *universal life energy* to be received,
- It creates a feeling of deep relaxation,
- Energy blockages are removed, allowing a flow of *life energy* throughout the body,
- Toxins are removed from the body.
- Reiki penetrates beyond obvious systematic conditions of the body and treats the underlying causes of illness. ⁹⁹

Reiki therapy can be a very useful adjunct therapy for anyone taking a course of drugs. It helps to reduce the side effects and aids the body in recovery. Post operative recovery will benefit from Reiki and it can also help after chemotherapy. In all these cases Reiki therapy supplies extra life

⁹⁸ Petter, p. 71.

⁹⁹ Desy, p. 31-32.

energy, enabling the body to bounce back more quickly from the burdens of surgery and chemicals. Reiki also bestows a greater ability to deal with stressful situations. It can lead to a more relaxed approach to life and greater harmony with the total environment.

4.4. Yoga

4.4.1. Origins

Yoga originated in India 4000 years ago, but has become more widespread in this century. Yoga has an effect on the whole person, combining the physical, mental and spiritual side. The word yoga is derived from a Sanskrit word that means union. The basics of yoga were defined by a yogi called Patanjali who lived about 300 B.C. He classified yoga into eight different parts. The first two concern a person's lifestyle, which should be serene with the days spent in contemplation. Avarice or greed or anything that is harmful to others should be avoided. The third and fourth parts concerns the physical side with exercises designed to promote peace and infuse energy into both the mind and body. The remaining four sections are concerned with the advancement of a person's soul and mental faculties by being able to isolate himself from worries and normal life.¹⁰⁰

4.4.2. Practice of Yoga

Nowadays the practice of yoga is not restricted to India alone with millions of people worldwide being followers. The most popular type of yoga outside of India is *hatha* which involves the use of exercises and certain positions. The basic belief of yoga is the importance of mental attitudes in establishing the physical movements from exercise. It is also a belief in yoga that the body's

¹⁰⁰ *Alternative Therapies*, p. 154.

essence of life, or *prana*, is contained in the breath. Through a change in the way of breathing there can be a beneficial effect on general health. There are a variety of exercises, each promoting different types of breathing, such as the rib cage, shoulder and diaphragm. These exercises aim to increase freedom of movement and make the person aware of the various parts of the body and any stress that may be present.

The various methods of yoga all have the same goal; to attain a state of pure bliss and oneness with the universe. The aim of yoga is to integrate the mind and the body. It is not seen as a religion requiring adherence to any particular dogma, but is seen basically as a technique for personal development, enabling people to explore and fulfill their physical and spiritual needs. This is done through meditation where the focus is inward. Breath control, detachment and concentration lead to the state of meditation. Meditation occurs when a person becomes absorbed into the object he or she is concentrating on. This concentration leads to pure consciousness which is the basis of the tradition of many religions. For example, Christianity refers to pure consciousness as 'pure love' and Judaism as the 'divine nothingness'.¹⁰¹ Practiced regularly, yoga creates mental clarity, emotional stability, deep relaxation and body awareness. It is seen as a conceptual system that recognizes that "every human being is a unique, holistic, interdependent relationship of body, mind, emotions and spirit".¹⁰²

Yoga involves poses, breath control and meditation. A typical yoga session will last 20 minutes to an hour. Caffeine and other stimulants should be avoided when engaging in yoga treatment as they may interfere with the goals of relaxation. Yoga is tailored to the individual and can be done with

¹⁰¹ Fontaine, *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Alternative Medicine*, p. 191-194.

¹⁰² Fuller, R.C. 1989 *Alternative Medicine and American Religious Life*, Oxford University Press, New York, p.10.

great benefit at the beginner level as well as the most advanced level. When practiced regularly, yogic exercises alone make a great difference in people's health and well-being. Poses can be slow and careful or more vigorous. Strain or force is avoided because yoga is a non-violent approach that is done comfortably. After one assumes a pose, it is held for as long as it can be done comfortably. Each pose includes a pose and its opposite, such as a forward bend and a backward bend, so the body stays physically balanced. Breathing should be easy, fluid, continuous and used to facilitate the poses. ¹⁰³

4.4.3. The Benefits of Yoga

Yoga was used in the main to encourage health in the physical and mental states and hereby act as a preventative therapy. Yoga exercise aims not at developing muscles but at toning up the whole body system for proper circulation, nourishment of tissues and cells, removal of waste products and restoration of metabolism. Regular practice of yoga then keeps the muscles healthy and the joints and spine supple. Deep abdominal breathing makes the lungs elastic, and keeps the air passages clear. Yoga is effective in treating disorders such as hypertension, bronchitis, back pain, headaches, asthma, heart disorders premenstrual tension and an acid stomach. Since the effects of tension are shown by the tightening and contraction of muscles, the stretching of exercises performed in yoga are able to release it. Yoga can help to relieve symptoms, decrease pain and improve the quality of life. It helps prevent disease by reinforcing lifestyle changes such as positive health habits and attitudes. ¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Fontaine, *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Alternative Medicine*, p. 195.

¹⁰⁴ Goel, S. Dr. 1997. *Nature: Cure for Health and Happiness*. Diamond Pocket Books, New Delhi, p. 103.

Yoga offers a number of health benefits with virtually no risk of injury. The physical and psychological benefits of yoga can be summarized as follows: ¹⁰⁵

- Increases flexibility of muscles and joints.
- Tones and strengthens muscles.
- Improves endurance.
- Increases circulation.
- Lowers blood pressure.
- Increases lymph circulation.
- Improves digestion and elimination.
- Promotes deeper breathing.
- Increases brain endorphins, enkephalins and serotonin.
- Increases mental acuity.
- Promotes relaxation.
- Manages stress.

4.5. Aromatherapy

4.5.1. Origins

Aromatherapy is a method of healing using very concentrated essential oils that are highly aromatic and are extracted from plants. ¹⁰⁶ Any part of a plant- the stems, leaves, flowers, fruits, seeds, roots or the bark- may produce essential oils. The ancient civilizations of Egypt, China and Persia used plant essences for healing. Plant essences have been used throughout the ages for

¹⁰⁵ Fontaine, *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Alternative Medicine*, p. 195-196.

¹⁰⁶ Wildwood, C. 1991. *Aromatherapy – Massage with Essential Oils*. Element, USA, p. 1.

healing- in incense for religious rituals, in perfumes and embalming ointments and for culinary purposes. There are also many Biblical references that give an insight into the uses of plant oils and the high value attached to them. Throughout the course of human history the healing properties of plants and their essential oils has been recognized.¹⁰⁷ Herbal oils were first made by infusing herbs in castor or olive oil, but by A.D. 1000 the Persian physician and philosopher Ali ibn-Sina had developed the method of distillation. The Crusaders brought his methods to Europe, where by the Middle Ages essential oils were popular as medicines and perfumes. In 1910, Rene-Maurice Gattefosse, a French chemist, accidentally burnt his hand. He applied lavender oil to the burn, which healed quickly and with little scarring. This prompted him to study the therapeutic actions of plant oils. His work was published in 1936, and was then developed in the 1960's in France by Dr Jean Valnet and Marguerite Maury, a biochemist and beautician. Doctors in France soon began to use essential oils alongside conventional drugs, though their use worldwide within mainstream medicine is still limited. With the developments in science and orthodox medicine, in particular the manufacture of antibiotics and synthetic drugs, interest in this method of healing declined. However, in the last two decades there has been a rekindling of interest in the practice of aromatherapy with many people turning to this form of treatment.¹⁰⁸

4.5.2. Treatment in Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy involves the prevention of major illness and the symptomatic treatment of minor ailments. The emphasis is on aromatherapy massage, which is one of the main techniques for alleviating the detrimental effects of stress. Aromatherapy massage uses essential oils, which are

¹⁰⁷ *Alternative Therapies*, p. 168.

¹⁰⁸ Wildwood, p. 16-18.

extracted from aromatic plants and trees.¹⁰⁹ This alternate therapy works on the principle of promoting mental serenity and bodily health through the treatment of the person as a whole entity. Essential oils can affect mood, alleviate fatigue, reduce anxiety and promote relaxation. Inhalation, application and bathing are the three main methods used in aromatherapy. When inhaled, the volatile oils enter the olfactory system, and permeation of the skin occurs when the oils are diluted and applied externally. By bathing in essential oils, the patient can inhale and absorb the oils through the skin simultaneously. Little is known about how essential oils actually affect the mind and the body, although research is currently being done in the U.S.A. and the U.K. However the effectiveness of aromatherapy has been supported by recent research in central Europe, the U.S.A., the U.K. and Australia. Most essential oils are antiseptic and bactericidal, whilst some are even effective in fighting viral infections.

When inhaled, essential oils molecules are received by receptor cells in the lining of the nose, which sends signals to the brain. These signals stimulate the release of neurochemicals into the blood, which will then be transported around the body. When massaged into the skin, essential oils permeate the pores. From there, they can readily pass into the blood vessels and then travel around the body. Aromatherapy is used as an effective method of alternate therapy for common ailments such as anxiety, shock, depression, fatigue, skin conditions, and period pains.¹¹⁰

During therapy, a full medical history is taken, including personality and possible contra-indications to certain oils. Once a diagnosis is made, the aromatherapist blends certain oils with a carrier oil (usually wheatgerm, grapeseed or almond oil). Different patients may receive different

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 2.

¹¹⁰ Wildwood, p. 34 – 36.

blends for the same condition. The skill of the aromatherapist lies in the blending of the oils and knowing their properties, uses and contra-indications. The method of using the oils could be: ¹¹¹

- A few drops of oil added to bath water.
- Oil added to an oil burner.
- Massage of the body.
- Used as an inhalant on a handkerchief or pillow.
- In hot water as a steam inhalant.

4.5.3. The Benefits of Aromatherapy

A wide range of conditions and disorders may benefit from aromatherapy and it is considered to be a gentle treatment suitable for all age groups. It is especially beneficial for long-term chronic conditions, and the use of essential oils is believed by therapists to prevent the development of some illnesses. Conditions that may be relieved by aromatherapy include painful limbs, muscles and joints due to arthritis, respiratory complaints, digestive disorders, skin conditions, throat and mouth infections, urinary tract infections and problems affecting the hair and scalp. Also, period pains, burns, insect bites, headaches, high blood pressure, menopausal symptoms, poor circulation and gout can benefit from aromatherapy. Aromatherapy is of great benefit in relieving stress and stress-related symptoms such as anxiety, insomnia and depression. ¹¹² Hence the therapeutic properties of essential oils can be listed as: ¹¹³

- Antiseptic

¹¹¹ *Alternative Therapies*, p. 177.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 174.

¹¹³ Buckle, p. 162,172,182,186,203,223.

- Antiviral
- Anti-fungal
- Anti-inflammatory
- Stress-relieving
- Sedative

The advantage of aromatherapy as an alternate therapy is that it is safe, usually non-invasive, popular with the general public and is a skill that is easily self-taught and self-treated hence making it affordable. According to Clare Walters in her book *Illustrated Elements of Aromatherapy* the claim is that Aromatherapy is one of the most widely used and most popular holistic health care system for the treatment of many common ailments such as stress, insomnia and emotional problems.¹¹⁴

4.6. Magnetic Therapy

4.6.1. Origins

According to Dr Ken Wianko, a prominent American physician: “Magnets are not magic. Their function is very simple.”¹¹⁵ Magnotherapy helps the body regain its self-healing balance naturally, because each organ and cell in the body is influenced by magnetic fields.

¹¹⁴ Walters, C. 1998. *Illustrated Elements of Aromatherapy*. Element Books, Great Britain. (no page)

¹¹⁵ Vegari, G. 2002. *Magnetic Therapy*, Caxton Editions, London, p. 6.

In the year 2000 BC the health care system was based on the understanding that good health depended on the circulation of vital energies which would follow prescribed pathways through the body. This energy was called *chi*. The Chinese healers spoke of yin and yang which are the two opposites that balance each other. Their theory was that when the yin and yang became out of harmony, then the natural flow of *chi* was blocked, causing an unnatural balance in the body resulting in illness. During this period magnetic stones were used to correct imbalances. The Greeks were also the first to understand the properties of magnetite and how this grey stone could attract items made of iron. They saw the effects these special stones could have in healing, believing the gods used them to intervene and help mankind. At the time of Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, the Aesclopians powdered gemstones to access their magnetism for the purpose of healing. Until today, Unani Tibb, which is the ancient Greek naturopathy adopted and progressed by Muslim physicians, uses magnetism in this way. Through the Dark Ages, the understanding of magnets assisted in the healing of humans and animals. In the 18th and 19th century scientists and physicians experimented with magnetic fields and electricity. They became aware that energy medicine could point the way to the next generation of healing.¹¹⁶

Today magnetic therapy is practiced as an effective method of therapy in countries such as Japan, China, Russia, Germany and the USA. In the last decade South Africa has begun to realize the benefits of Magnotherapy. Kwa-Zulu Natal too has trained practitioners in this field of therapy.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 12-14.

4.6.2. The Method

When a magnet is applied to the body, muscles and soft tissue lengthen and relax, waves pass through the tissue and secondary currents are induced. When the currents clash with magnetic waves they produce heat that is effective in reducing muscle swelling and pain. A person's blood is cleansed and circulation is increased. There is also significant evidence of a pain-blocking mechanism in nerve fibres when subjected to magnetic fields.¹¹⁷ Normally an injured site, whether arthritis, torn muscles or another condition, will be surrounded by inflammation. The increase in blood flow due to Magnotherapy, allows the body to generate its own healing. The tissue becomes relaxed, there is an increase in blood flow, and the area starts to detoxify. The ions in the blood become agitated and are attracted to the magnet. This allows the body to kick in with its own beta-endorphin (pain-relieving) system.

Magnetic therapy assists conditions such as acne, sprains, arthritis, backache, bladder problems, low/high blood pressure, broken/fractured bones, bruising, circulatory problems, colds/flu, diabetes, eczema, headaches, period pains, stress, etc. In all of these conditions treatment is in the form of either placing magnets on strategic painful spots of the body, drinking magnetized water, sleeping on a magnetized mattress/pillow, wearing magnetic insoles in the shoes, massaging magnetized oil into the area, or bathing with magnetized water to alleviate the painful condition. Magnetic healing works best in combination with other healing modalities and are considered to be adjunct treatments to conventional medicine.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 21.

4.6.3. The Benefits

The benefits of magnetic therapy are numerous, and can be summarized as follows: ¹¹⁸

- It helps alleviate pain and improve mobility of arthritic joints.
- Recovery of nerve sensation.
- It aids recovery of torn ligaments, muscles and tendons.
- It reduces bruising and swelling.
- It speeds recovery in sports injuries.
- Greater resistance to infection.
- It improves circulation.
- It increases energy and strength.
- It speeds healing, i.e. bone fractures.
- It alleviates migraine and headaches.
- It improves overall health.

4.6.4. Scientific Developments in the Therapeutic use of Magnetism

When magnets are applied to the body, they treat the entire system, normalizing the functions of all the different organs. Through magnetism the equilibrium between the cells and tissues is restored. Magnetotherapy can aid in treating these illnesses: ¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p. 24.

¹¹⁹ Dr. Iqbal Badat – *Magnetotherapy and Islam*, p.7.

- Malaria-researchers at the University of Washington have discovered a method of treating malaria with magnetism. The malaria parasite plasmodium appears to lose its energy and can die when exposed to a magnetic field.
- Pain relief-the greatest application of magnetic therapy in healing is for the relief of various types of pain, including osteoarthritis. The positive effects of magnetism are accomplished by inhibiting pain-signal transmission and increasing local circulation and oxygen delivery to the body's tissues.
- Fractures-Dr Robert Becker, an American orthopaedic surgeon, has done pioneering work using electro-magnetic fields to stimulate the healing of broken bones.
- Cancer- researchers have used magnetic attraction to target specific areas of the body where cancer has been diagnosed.

The aim of this type of therapy is to treat the entire system, normalizing the functions of all the different organs.

4.6.5. Magnetism in Islam

An interview was conducted with Dr. Iqbal Badat on Magnotherapy in January 2007. Dr. Iqbal Badat had the following to say about the effects of magnetism in Islam: ¹²⁰

- The *Hajr Aswad*-this paramagnetic stone (if exposed to magnets, it would become magnetic) was the first medicine given to Prophet Adam by Allah (SWT) for its healing and for light. It was used from the time of Adam (AS) to Nuh (AS) for healing.
- The *Sunnah* fast of *Ayaame Beeth*-on the 13th, 14th and 15th of the lunar calendar. The moon's magnetic field has an impact on the tides of the sea as well as the fluids of the body

¹²⁰ Ibid, p. 8-9.

around full moon. Therefore it is useful to fast at this time as it provides the body with a detoxification.

- The water of *Zam Zam*-highly magnetized and healing properties have been attributed to it.
- Sajdah-when Muslims perform *Salaah* at prescribed times during the day and night, the pineal gland is brought in contact with the earth's magnetic field. The earth's magnetism is absorbed through the pineal gland which contains minute magnetite crystals. This movement brings harmony and good health to the physical body. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: Allah (SWT) loves that sajdah which is performed closest to the earth.
- The *Kulanji* seed-was prescribed by the Prophet (PBUH) for all ailments. Science has described it as a miracle seed because it contains all the essential amino acids. It is one of the most highly magnetized seeds in nature with extraordinarily high oxygen content.

4.7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter the popular alternate therapies in Kwa-Zulu Natal were discussed. The therapies mainly practiced are Aromatherapy, Reflexology, Yoga, Reiki and Magnetic therapy. Chapter five deals with the analysis of the research, as well as the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS OF A SURVEY ON ALTERNATE HEALTH THERAPIES

AMONG MUSLIMS IN KWA-ZULU NATAL

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the interviews that were conducted shall be explained and analysed. The data will be interpreted and their significance explained. It is hoped that questions posed at the beginning of this dissertation will be adequately answered.

5.2. Data Collection Process

A survey was conducted in order to answer questions posed in this dissertation. A sample of participants identified as stakeholders connected with alternate therapies were chosen. These participants were carefully selected on the basis that they were either therapists practicing an alternate therapy or patients who have visited an alternate therapist at least once. This survey was conducted among a random selection of Muslim males and females residing in Kwa-Zulu Natal who were over 18 years of age during the period September 2006 to January 2007. Fifteen therapists and forty patients were interviewed. The sample interviewed was from the greater Durban area and voluntarily participated in the surveys. The researcher personally contacted each therapist or patient interviewed and explained the purpose of the study as well as the fact that information given shall be used in the study. The participants were asked to sign a consent form in this regard. They were all very accommodating and willing to give up their time to discuss the

alternate therapies that they practice. Only one therapist declined to be interviewed. This was due to the fact that she had just found out that she was not pregnant as she had assumed, and was in an unfit state to participate. She apologised for this.

5.3. Research Instrument

A structured interview sheet was used as the research instrument; one for the therapists and one for the patients. (See Appendix I). Each participant signed a consent form which informed them that information gained in the interview will be used in the research process, but no names would be used.

5.4. Units of Analysis

The units used for analysis were both therapists who practiced alternate therapies and patients who visited alternate therapists.

5.5. Data Capture and Analysis

Fifteen therapists and forty patients were interviewed. The period over which these interviews were conducted was from September 2006 to January 2007. I telephonically contacted each interviewee, made an appointment with them, and filled in the survey sheet myself whilst asking the questions. All the participants contacted agreed to be interviewed, save one who declined to be

interviewed because she had just found out that she was not pregnant. Amongst the therapists, most understood the questions, with only a few requiring clarification of some questions. With the patients as well, most understood the questions, with only a few requiring clarification of questions. The researcher met with the participants at their homes or place of work. Each of the participants was visited just once. The qualitative approach was used to collect and analyse the data.

5.6. Reliability of the Study

The study is confined to participants in Kwa-Zulu Natal only, and the results assumed to be applicable nationally. This might prove to be a limitation where different results could be obtained if the study were to be done in a different province. The major limitation that this researcher found was that because the study dealt with Muslims, the participants could be influenced to give the “correct” answer because he/she did not want to be seen as doing anything that went against the grain of Islam. The therapists, in particular, wanted to be seen as knowing exactly what the limitations in a particular therapy are from an Islamic perspective.

5.7. Interviews with the Therapists

The Profile of the Therapists

The therapists who were interviewed all had qualifications ranging from durations of one month to five years, with most of the therapists falling in the range of one to five years. (Approximately

60%). Most of the therapists were qualified in three or more therapies, with two (Approximately 13%) having a qualification in seven therapies. There were only four therapists with less than three qualifications. (Approximately 22%). All the therapists mentioned that the reason they had multiple qualifications was because the duration of each course was very short, and that they had to have many therapies in order to make themselves more marketable. Also, when a new therapy is mentioned then the patients wanted to try that one so the therapists are often compelled to study a course on a new therapy.

Therapies in Order of Popularity

The therapies that the therapists were qualified in are listed here in order of popularity:

Table 1

<u>Therapy</u>	<u>No. of therapists that practice the therapy</u>
Aromatherapy	8
Reflexology	6
Indian head massage	4
Reiki	4
Journey therapy	4
Counsellor	4
Swedish massage	2
Beauty therapy	2
Ayurvedic	2
Somatology	1

Hypnotherapy	1
Complete cellular mind body alignment	1
Complete cellular soul memory clearing	1
Metaphysical therapy	1
Massage therapy	1
Crystal healing	1
Bowen therapy	1
Nutritionist	1
Body talk practitioner	1
Panche karma	1
Light therapy	1
Hands-on healing	1
Hot stone therapy	1
Tai chi	1
Chi gong	1
Yoga	1
Felun Dava	1
NLP practitioner	1

The therapists are qualified in, and practice a varied combination of these therapies. Aromatherapy and Reflexology have proven to be the most popular therapies, with most patients using these two therapies for their relaxation potential.

Membership of a Health Care Body

Eight (Approximately 60%) of the therapists did not belong to an official health care body with most citing that they were still going to register. The rest of the interviewees, seven of them (Approximately 40%), all belonged to an official health care body. Five of the seven belonged to the Allied Health Professions Council, which is a regulating body following a code of ethics. The therapists that belonged to official bodies felt that their profession now seemed more credible, and afforded them a renewed respect in the health care industry. The remaining two therapists belonged to the Ayurvedic Society of South Africa and the International Nutritionist Association respectively.

Conditions Treated by the Therapists

A wide array of conditions are treated by the practitioners, ranging from minor ailments to some severe ones. The conditions that the therapists have treated are listed below:

Table 2

Ailments treated by therapists

headaches/migraines	depression	past traumas
back pain	relationship problems	asthma
arthritis/rheumatism	children with learning	diabetes
cancer	problems	injuries
sinuses	stress	rape/sexual abuse

suicide	bed wetting	inability to fall pregnant
kidney stones	high blood pressure	flu/cold
fatigue	heart conditions	nausea
detoxification	ovarian cyst	menstrual cramps
no serious illness	eczema	fibrositis
anorexia	sleeping disorder	candida
weight problems	stroke	
osteoporosis	lupis	

The therapists informed me that patients come to them for this wide range of conditions, and are increasingly requiring help for emotional problems. The patients are keen to prevent illness and maintain a balance between the body and mind. This is substantiated in the literature review where most of the books reviewed make mention of preventing rather than curing illness.

Religion incorporated in Healing

On being questioned as to whether religion was incorporated in healing, twelve (80%) of the fifteen replied in the affirmative. Some of the reasons that therapists cited for incorporating religion in their healing were:

- spirituality is always involved in the healing process,
- healing is from the *Qur'an* so verses from the *Qur'an* are recited when healing,
- when healing, the therapist needs to ask for divine help as he/she is not the healer but rather a medium for Allah,
- for healing to begin the patient needs to have faith in the process by asking for *Allah's* guidance,
- recitation from the *Qur'an* opens up the energy centres for healing,
- prayer is required for the therapist to get connected to *Allah*,
- prayer allows the therapist to be an instrument for healing.

Three (20%) of the therapists did not incorporate healing in their therapies saying that it was not a necessity for the type of therapy they practiced. Incidentally, these

three therapists practiced mainly Aromatherapy and Reflexology. Hence the deduction can be made that Muslim therapists in Kwa-Zulu Natal in general are incorporating religion in their healing. According to Uri Geller, in his book *Mind Medicine: The Secret of Powerful Healing*, the emphasis on religion and a belief system, whether Christianity, Islam, Hinduism or Buddhism, is the key to healing.

Use of Religion Explained

Of the twelve therapists that do incorporate religion in their healing, nine (75%) said that they do explain to the patient that they are using religion in the therapies that they practice because:

- the patient needs to understand that healing is from a Higher source so as to prevent a dependence on the therapist,
- the patient should realize that he/she is the active participant in the healing via a connection with the source of all healing,
- the patient needs to make an intention for healing using prayer and the patient needs to know that his/her rights are not violated by the therapist in using religion.

Three (25%) of the therapists did not explain the use of religion to their patients giving the following reasons:

- religion is personal and there is no need to explain it
- all that the patient requires is to be made to feel comfortable

- the patient does not even know that a prayer is being said because it is silently done.

Awareness of Philosophies Underlying Various Therapies

The interviewees practiced a large range of therapies with each one having a different philosophy underlying the therapy. All 15 respondents were aware of the philosophies underlying the therapies that they practiced. They were aware that healing is via a source which they all referred to as *Allah*. During the survey, the therapists were asked to elaborate on the philosophy in at least one of the therapies that they practiced, and these were their responses:

- In Aromatherapy, the aim is to bring the body to a state of homeostasis through massage.
- Reflexology involves the massage of pressure points on the feet which opens up the energy channels, allowing positive energy to flow through.
- Reiki was the one therapy where some respondents were uncomfortable with the use of symbols taught in the initiation process. They were unsure of the roots of the symbols in Reiki, and have altered the symbols for an Islamic relevance.
- The journey therapy is a non-faith therapy which allows healing to take place by looking at past traumas.
- Acupuncture's aim is to unblock energy pathways and rebalance the body.
- Swedish massage is a Chinese based massage therapy.
- Somatology is also a massage therapy, but is more vigorous than Aromatherapy.

- Light therapy involves the body responding to different colours for healing.
- Felun Dava is an exercise therapy where exercises are done. Background music plays and the Buddha is called on for healing. However, although one of the therapists was trained in this method of healing, she does not practice it as she is aware that it would go against the grain of her religious beliefs.
- In yoga, mantras such as '*aum*' are recited which opens up the energy centres for healing. In this therapy, the therapists changed the mantras to *Zikr*.
- There is spiritual healing in Cranio Sacral therapy where the philosophy is not to deal with a problem at symptom level, but through spirituality to heal the core of the person.

Conflict between Therapy and Religious Doctrine

All fifteen respondents found no conflict between the therapies they practiced and their faith. In the therapies where there was something that seemed to go against the belief of the therapist, then the therapist altered the therapy or did not practice it. An example of the latter is the therapist who gave up practicing Felun Dava and an example of the former are the therapists who adapted Reiki or Yoga. The main problem that the therapists practicing Reiki found was the use of the symbols which they felt was unislamic. Appealing to a Higher source for healing did not pose a problem for the therapists because they felt that the Higher source was *Allah*. One of the therapists reported that in Reiki healing is done by calling upon one's Reiki guide to help. Only one of the therapists mentioned this about Reiki. In the theory on Reiki in Chapter Four

mention is made that the Reiki practitioner calls upon his/her Reiki guides for healing. The fact that only one therapist mentioned this as a worrying aspect of Reiki would suggest that other therapists either do not see calling upon guides for assistance as a problem or that they automatically appeal to *Allah* for assistance. The author's opinion is that the therapists do only look to *Allah* for guidance. The therapists who practiced the massage therapies, e.g. Aromatherapy, Reflexology, Indian head massage and Swedish massage, all felt that there was definitely no conflict with their faith because all they do is massage; there is no connecting with a Higher body or use of religion for healing.

Response in the event of a Conflict between the therapy and Islamic doctrine

The three therapists who did not incorporate religion in their healing found no conflict at all, claiming that their therapies were non-religious. One of the therapists mentioned that almost every alternate modality's origin has a non-Islamic basis but what therapists do is use the concept of the modality and align it with Islamic values. In the Reiki therapy, the attunement process that every practitioner goes through has been discussed in Chapter Three where spiritual Guides are called upon to help in the healing process. The therapists interviewed did not find a problem with their attunement and did not mention this as a reason for conflict. Those therapists who practiced Yoga replaced the mantras used with words from the *Qur'an*. The deduction that one can make is that all the therapists are aware of the philosophies underlying the therapies that they practice and that where they find areas of concern, they alter the therapies to align them with Islamic values.

Reaction upon Awareness of Conflict

When asked the question about what a therapist would do if he/she became aware that a conflict existed between the philosophy of the therapy practiced and their Islamic beliefs the respondents had the following to say:

- Six (40%) of the respondents said that they would immediately stop the therapy. One of these respondents said that such a therapy would not aid in healing as it would be going against the teachings of Islam and would therefore be useless. Another said that she would stop the therapy but thought it quite unlikely that there would be a conflict because she only practices aromatherapy and reflexology.
- Another three (20%) of the respondents also said that they would stop the therapy if a conflict was found, but that they would first find out what the conflict is and then take a decision to stop the therapy if the conflicting part of the therapy cannot be excluded.
- The remaining six (40%) respondents were certain that there was no conflict as they had already made changes to aspects of the therapies that they felt were un-Islamic. They claimed to have read a lot of literature on the therapies and their philosophies.

Finally, all the therapists felt that they were providing a valuable service to the Muslim community. They all loved being able to help people to heal and felt most comfortable

with the therapies that they practiced. They all mentioned that they are not the ones doing the healing because healing is only from *Allah*.

5.8. Interviews with the Patients

Profile of Patients

Among the patients interviewed thirty three (Approximately 80%) were female and seven (Approximately 20%) were males. The respondents interviewed all fell in the age category from 18 to 55+. Since there was no significant difference in the responses of male and female interviewees there was no need to distinguish between them.

A tabulation of the respondents' categorised according to age is listed hereunder:

Table 3

<u>Age</u>	<u>Number of Patients</u>	
<u>Percentage</u>		
18-25	5 (2 male)	12,5
26-40	11 (all female)	27,5
41-55	18 (5 male)	45
>55	6 (all female)	15

From the table above one can observe that the greatest number of respondents were female and fell in the 41-55 age category. These are the patients who seek alternate medical treatment. This is in keeping with the profile of the typical individual who seeks out alternative forms of healing, i.e. female and young to middle aged.

Reasons for Visiting Alternate Therapists

The reasons that patients gave for visiting an alternate therapist ranged from just wanting a relaxation session, due to allopathic medicine being unable to cure the problem or due to its adverse side effects, and wanting to try out a particular therapy after hearing about it in the media or studying about it. The findings are tabulated below in order of the number of responses:

Table 4

<u>Reason for Visiting an Alternate Therapist</u>	<u>No. of Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Heard/read/studied/advised about the therapies	16	40%
Inability to get relief from allopathic doctors	11	27,5%
Pampering/relaxation	6	15%
Unhappy with side effects of medication	3	7,5%
Want to contain the problem	2	5%
Natural healing is the Islamic way	2	5%

The main reason that the interviewees gave for visiting an alternate therapist was that they were influenced by the media (40%). This result is in keeping with the information recorded in Chapter 1.7 of this dissertation where mention is made of the alternate therapies becoming popular due to media coverage of the particular therapies and alternate therapies in general.

Therapies Received

The therapies that were received by the patients were varied and included the following, in the order of their popularity:

Table 5

<u>Therapy</u>	<u>No. of respondents receiving the therapy</u>
Aromatherapy	20
Reflexology	16
Reiki	12
Yoga	7
Magnetic therapy	7
Unani Tibb	6
Homeopathy	6
Indian head massage	3
Journey therapy	3
Acupuncture	3
Light therapy	2

Bowen therapy	1
Crystal healing	1
Ayurveda	1
Chiropractic	1

The respondents reported visiting an alternate therapist for a variety of illnesses, with a pampering session being the least serious and cancer being the most serious.

Conditions for Visits to Therapists

Patients manifested the following conditions for which alternate healing was sought:

Table 6

<u>Conditions requiring treatment</u>	<u>No. of respondents</u>
Stress/fatigue	13
Back/body/joint pain	10
Headache/migraine	8
Neck/shoulder pain	6
Sinuses	5
Menstrual problems	3
Asthma	3
Cold/flu	2
Arthritis	2

Osteoporosis	2
Acne	2
Eczema/psoriasis	2
Diabetes	2
Emotional problems	2
No real illness/ pampering	2
Nausea	1
Menopause	1
Cellulitise	1
Kidney stone	1
Depression	1
Weak immune system	1
Cancer	1
Sprain	1
Frayed nerves	1
Colic- for baby	1
Bladder problem	1

Concurrent Consultation with Allopathic Practitioner

Most patients seem to be taking a responsible attitude towards their illnesses by visiting allopathic doctors as well. Of the 40 respondents, 24 (60%) recorded visiting their allopathic doctor for medication, x-rays, initial diagnosis, hospitalisation, medical aid

usage and to rule out any major problems. The rest of the respondents - 16 (40%) of them - did not visit an allopathic doctor for the following reasons: “no real illness”, “too much medication given”, “the doctor and medication unable to help and causing more side effects”, “wanting to take control of own life” and “learn how to heal oneself”.

Usefulness of Therapy

All the patients interviewed reported that the therapy which they tried has helped them. They made the following claims: the pain was totally gone, they felt more relaxed and hence the pain was considerably reduced, they were feeling more energetic, their symptoms were reduced, and they felt happier because there were no side effects to the treatment.

Conflict identified between Therapy and Religious Doctrine

In order to investigate whether areas of conflict exist between the philosophies of the therapies received and Islamic beliefs the patients were all asked questions about whether any symbols or utterances were used by the therapist, if they were whether they were explained by the therapist, and whether they raised questions in the mind of the patient. Finally the patients were asked what they would do if they became aware that a conflict did exist between the philosophies of the therapies received and their Islamic beliefs. Below is a tabulation of these results:

Table 7: Symbols/Utterances Used

<u>Symbols/utterances used</u>			<u>Explained</u>		<u>Raised questions</u>	
<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't know</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
14	19	7	7	7	3	11

Table 8: Awareness of Conflict

<u>Become aware of a conflict</u>	<u>No. of respondents</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Stop the therapy	24	60%
Find out more, and then stop	6	15%
Confident that no conflict	5	12,5%
Don't know	2	5%
Change the problematic part	1	2,5%
Glad I already tried it, but will stop	1	2,5%
Would continue the therapy	1	2,5%

The respondents were generally aware of the therapies that they received and were taking a more active role in their health by finding alternatives and being proactive, even before an illness manifested itself. In the main, the respondents were aware of the philosophies underlying the particular therapy, and wanted a healing methodology that did not go against the grain of Islam. The respondents were very pleased with the success of the therapies in healing and felt that the therapists were more caring and informative than the traditional doctor. The respondents were convinced that the therapies that they practiced

did not go against their religious beliefs. All the respondents made mention that they were pleased with the success of the therapy in healing, and would continue the treatment. Some patients mentioned that they ensured that they only sought treatment with Muslim practitioners because they wanted to be certain that the therapy they practice is Islamically valid, hence absolving them from doubt. They believed that the alternate therapies are the best method for preventing illnesses, and allows one to keep a healthy mind and body.

5.9. CONCLUSION

All the interviewees were unanimous in their opinion that any therapy that provides relief cannot be wrong as *Allah* meant for healing to take place. The survey has demonstrated that both the therapists and patients were aware of conflicts between the therapies and Islamic doctrine. The therapists were able to separate theory from practice quite competently and located the therapies they practiced within an Islamic framework. Patients tended to avoid therapies that they were unsure about.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

One of the main aims of the study was to identify the most common therapies practiced by Muslim alternate health therapists in KwaZulu Natal. These were found to be Aromatherapy, Reflexology, Reiki, Yoga and Magnetic therapy. Another aim was to determine which ailments are most commonly treated by such practitioners. These were found to include stress, body pain, headaches, neck pain and sinuses. The third aim was to determine whether there is conflict between alternate therapies and Islamic doctrine. Though this seems to be the case for certain therapies, both patients and therapists claimed to be aware of the conflict. While therapists altered the therapy to be in conformity with Islamic doctrines, patients assumed that Muslim therapists would not practice therapies that were theologically questionable.

The essence of Islam is *al Tawhid*, which means not only believing that there is One, Universal Creator (*Allah*), but also that Allah is the source of all power, including the power of healing. Medical practitioners, therapists, etc are regarded as simply the instruments through which Allah cures the sick. Any notion that the power of healing originates elsewhere is tantamount to ascribing divine qualities to that object and is viewed as violating the fundamental concept of *tawhid*.

Our research reveals that both therapists and patients are conscious of this issue predicament. While therapists avoid therapies or adapt them if they find them to conflict

with the doctrine of tawhid, patients consult only Muslim therapists in order to ensure that they do not transgress this fundamental Islamic doctrine.

The results of this study do not support Bronislaw Malinowski's theory that when a person is desperate for relief he will (knowingly) deviate from his religious beliefs and values. To the contrary, patients were found to have deliberately sought Muslim therapists to ensure that the therapy they receive is valid in terms of Islamic teachings. Furthermore, as many as 75% of the patients made it clear that if they were to become aware of a conflict between their beliefs and the therapy they sought, they would stop it immediately, while 12.5% were certain that there was no conflict.

The relationship between the doctrinal underpinnings of alternate health therapies and Islamic tenets was examined on the basis of the social theory of functionalism. According to this theory, sectors of society are interrelated and form a system. Order and stability are seen as essential for the maintenance of the social system and this is provided by a value consensus. This study proves the functionalism theory because therapists and patients have a value consensus, i.e. *al Tawhid*, and work within this framework even when patients are desperate for relief from pain.

The study also supports the theory of Talcott Parsons which states that through the process of socialisation, values are internalised and transmitted from one generation to the next. All participants claimed that they would stop a therapy if it was found to contradict the teachings of Islam.

Emile Durkheim's theory of a shared value system being provided by religion is found to be true. This is despite the fact that modern societies which have a range of new beliefs, practices and institutions thrown at them, in particular the changing nature of health and illness in the modern period, have not succumbed to the idea that relief for an illness can be obtained by any means, even if it goes against the doctrines of Islam.

6.2 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The research was not aimed at participants under the age of eighteen and the findings were not applicable to other religions. The research was only confined to practitioners and patients residing or practicing in Kwa-Zulu Natal. These limitations are assumed to be negligible because the premise is that Muslims anywhere would provide the same kind of responses as the participants in this survey did.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The reasons that patients gave for visiting alternate therapists, amongst others, were that orthodox medicine was deficient in relieving chronic pain and symptoms of stress and anxiety. There was a general dissatisfaction with the way modern health care systems functioned; there were financial restrictions, harmful side effects to drugs, intrusive surgery, having to be a passive patient and non consideration of the spiritual and psychological dimensions of health and illness. The recommendation that the allopathic

doctors work in conjunction with alternate therapists would go a long way towards bridging this gap. This would ultimately be to the benefit of the patient requiring any form of medical intervention.

The therapists should also do more research into the therapies that they practiced and identify them from an Islamic perspective, so as to be sure that the therapy is not in conflict with Islamic doctrines. The patient should not remain dependent on the therapist's views but needs to be assured for himself/herself that there is no conflict.

More research needs to be undertaken on the therapies from an Islamic perspective so that informed decisions could be taken on the acceptability of the therapies. It is hoped that the researchers will be inspired to undertake complementary research in the field of alternate therapy so that a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between the therapies and religious doctrines will emerge.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRES

TITLE: A STUDY OF THE ALTERNATIVE HEALTH THERAPIES

AMONG MUSLIMS IN KWA-ZULU NATAL

University of KwaZulu-Natal

I, Shamima Kathree, am currently busy with my master's dissertation in the School of Religion and Theology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

My research deals with popular alternate health therapies among Muslims in KwaZulu-Natal and aims to determine the following:

Firstly, to find out which are the most common therapies practiced by Muslim alternate health therapists in KwaZulu Natal.

Secondly, to identify the ailments that are most commonly treated by such practitioners.

Thirdly, to determine whether there is conflict between alternate therapies and Islamic doctrine.

The research includes an empirical component of which this questionnaire is one of the research instruments used for data gathering.

Please note:

The data you provide will be recorded anonymously and your participation in this study will be held in the strictest confidence. If a summary of the results is used for educational or publication purposes, individuals will not be identified.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw from the survey at any time. For ethical reasons, this research is aimed at adult participants only (persons aged 18 and above).

I shall appreciate it if you assist the project by providing your personal views or opinions in the questionnaire.

Informed Consent

I hereby give my permission for the use of my views and opinions for research purposes.

.....
Signature

.....
Date

My address is:

My contact details are 031 2072227 (home) or 0844657680 (mobile)

My Supervisor's details are as follows:

Name : Prof S E Dangor

Address : Hut 7

School of Religion & Theology

Howard College Campus

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Contact details : 031 2607488 (office) or 0837887112 (mobile)

Questionnaire to Alternate Health Therapists

Locality of practice: _____

Years of training: _____

Qualification: _____

1. Do you belong to any official health care body? Yes No

If yes, name the body and state its purpose. _____

2. What healing modality/s do you practice? _____

3. Name a few ailments/conditions that you have treated. _____

4. Do you incorporate religion in your healing? Yes No

If yes, explain how you use it in therapy. _____

5. If you do use religion in your therapy, do you explain it to your patients?

Yes No

Give reasons:

6. Are you aware of the philosophies underlying the therapies you employ?

Yes No

Elaborate:

7. Do you find a conflict between your practice and your faith?

Yes No Don't know

Explain:

8. If you become aware that there is a conflict between the philosophy of the therapy you use and Islamic beliefs, what will be your reaction?

9. Is there anything further that you would like to mention?

Thank you for your co-operation
Shamima Kathree

Questionnaire to Patients

Sex: Male Female (tick the appropriate block)

Age: <18 18 – 25 26 – 40 41 – 55 >55

1. What has been your reason for visiting an alternate therapist? _____

2. Which therapies have you tried? _____

3. What condition/s have you been treated for? _____

4. Do you visit an allopathic doctor as well? Yes No

Give reasons for your answer? _____

5. Has the therapy/s helped? Yes No

If yes, in what way? _____

6. Does the therapist use religious symbols or utterances during the therapy?

Yes No Don't Know

If yes, describe:

7. If the therapist uses religious symbols or utterances, does he/she explain this to you?

Yes No

8. If the therapist uses religious symbols or utterances, does it raise questions in your mind? Yes No

9. If you become aware that there is a conflict between the philosophy of the therapy you receive and Islamic beliefs, what will be your reaction?

10. Is there anything further that you would like to mention? _____

Thank you for your co-operation.
Shamima Kathree

APPENDIX II: THE REIKI SYMBOLS

REIKI SYMBOLS



The first Usui symbol, cho ku rei, or the power symbol, with a clockwise spiral



The second Usui symbol, sei hei ki - god and man are one.



The third Usui symbol, hon sha ze sho nen - for distant healing.



Cho ku rei with a counter clockwise spiral.



Kundalini - the life force symbol from raku-tibetan reiki.



Antahkarana, the ancient male symbol for increasing male energy.



Antahkarana the ancient female symbol for increasing female energy.

APPENDIX III: THE REIKI HAND POSITIONS

**Basic Head
Positions**



Position 1



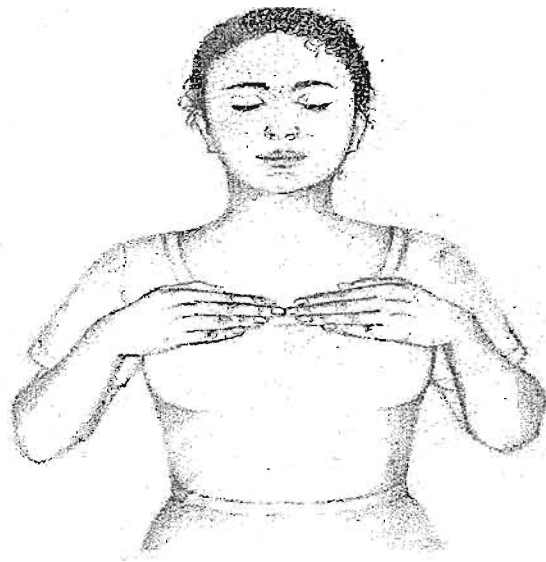
Position 2



Position 3



Position 4



Position 1



Position 2



Position 3



Position 4

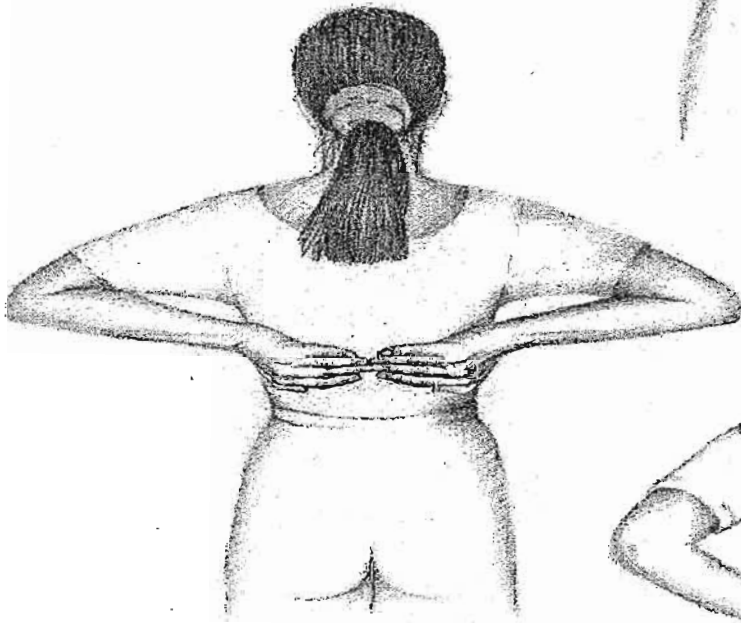
Basic Front Positions



Position 1



Position 2



Position 3



Position 4

Basic Back Positions