

## Writing Spiritual Mind Treatments

We invite newcomers to Science of Mind to look at prayer in a new way. No longer is it begging or beseeching; instead it's an affirmation of truth. Its purpose is to change the mind of the person praying. By the time the one praying releases their prayer (treatment) they are convinced that it is so.

When we teach the five steps of spiritual mind treatment we emphasize that it's personal to the one praying. Therein lies my question. In class when the participant who's written the treatment receives it back to find suggestions as to how it may be improved, what does that say to them? That they were mistaken in their conviction? That the personal relationship they're fostering with their own Wisdom missed the mark? If the bottom line is having everyone nurture his or her own relationship with God, why are we correcting it? There's something very final about a teacher's comments written on paper.

We all know that many newcomers struggle to understand and utilize the five steps of treatment, so certainly guidance is in order. May I suggest that there's a different way to guide this learning process other than "correcting" their treatments? By actually modeling the writing of a variety of effective treatments, and giving the participants license to make the steps personal to their lives, they will intuitively choose what works for them.

### Group Learning as an Alternative to Correcting Treatments

- As treatments are reviewed and areas of variance emerge, take note to incorporate those areas into the group lesson instead of making written corrections on their papers.
- Instead of a written suggestion on a participant's homework paper, look for one area where you can make a positive comment and do that, "What a beautiful visual!" or "This is a well-worded affirmative statement."
- It's also possible to make a more neutral comment such as, "I'm grateful that you've shared your thoughts with me."

### Group Learning: Preparation and Guidelines for the Facilitator

- Suggested time: 45-60 minutes the first time, 20-30 thereafter, as the class gets the hang of it.
- This focused dialog can be "as needed" or written into the agenda 2-3 times during the duration of a class.

- It's important to say nothing about your concerns. Instead, simply pull those areas into your objectives.
- Participants should have a handout which may include the following:
  1. The basic 5 steps of treatment
  2. An ongoing list of the attributes of God – a result of a previous brainstorming activity
  3. Guidelines for writing treatments such as:
    - Stay in the present tense, as if it's happening now. "I enjoy prosperous, creative employment."
    - Keep it affirmative, stating that it's already yours. "I am healthy and full of energy," instead of, "I want to be healthy and full of energy."
    - Since we know God is within us, your treatment is directed to yourself. Keep it in the first person. Say "I," as if you're talking aloud and no one else is in the room to hear you. "Today I am peaceful and grateful for what I have."
- Using a flip chart, write down each step covered. Make sure you use a dark colored marker and write large enough so that it's easily seen, minimum 1" tall. Printed capital letters are better than longhand (cursive). Hang the papers where they are clearly visible.
- Go slowly enough for participants to copy what's written. Allow some time between each step so that they have time to absorb the process, consider what they've written and make adjustments.
- It's imperative that the process is kept positive – no one is corrected. Once you have implied that someone is "wrong" it sets up an atmosphere of mistrust – I wonder if what I say will be wrong, too?
- Treat each participant's input equally; no one is the "shining star." Don't use phrases like "great comment" or "good contribution". When these descriptors are not used for all participants, those for whom they are not may feel their contributions are less valuable.
- Welcome and encourage questions as they come up.

### The Process

1. Review the guidelines for writing treatments.
2. Have the class choose a situation, hypothetical or real. "*What's the reason we're writing the treatment?*" Write it on chart paper, remembering to write large enough so that it can easily be copied. "I need a job." Give them time to copy it.
3. Say, "*What is the purpose? Remember it's what we want to affirm about this situation.*" Write down the one-sentence affirmation (purpose). It will become the focus of the treatment and will be incorporated into the

- realization stage. "I am gainfully, happily employed now." Again, allow time for it to be copied down.
4. Say, "*Recognition is the stage where the presence of God is acknowledged and experienced. What are some of the attributes of God that might fit into this situation? What are some ways we know God is all there is? What does it look like to you?*" These questions trigger possibility. Ask the participants not to write anything at this point, instead when this stage is done you'll give them plenty of time to process and write down their thoughts. This allows them to be fully present with the energy of the collective group.
  5. Ask for 2-3 suggestions for the realization stage. If a suggestion is an effective role model, write it on the flip chart.
  6. If a suggestion doesn't model what you're after, you might ask, "*Can you tell me more?*" Then you gently guide the comments. "*What I hear you saying is \_\_\_\_\_. Is that correct? Would it be okay if I added \_\_\_\_\_? Does that compromise your ideas?*" You might also ask, "*Can anyone add to that?*" gaining further clarification from the group.
  7. Once you have a couple of appropriate ideas written on the chart paper you might say, "*Now it's time for you to make this personal to you. If this were your situation, what would you say to make the presence of Spirit real in your life? Feel free to use part or all of what's written here, or connect with your own Wisdom and write what's true for you.*"
  8. Follow this procedure for each of the steps of treatment.
  9. When you're done, ask volunteers to read their treatments, applauding after each is finished.
  10. Another possibility is to have pairs read their treatments to each other.
  11. Ask for feedback. *What worked? How was the pace of the exercise? What else might be helpful?*
  12. Show your excitement! They will feel it and take that feeling home with them.

Participants walk away from this process empowered and you've grown as a facilitator. Everyone wins.