

TO AWAKENING, PART 17

Edgar Cayce's Secret of Curing Diseases and Changing Destiny

In the last part, we talked about Edgar Cayce's supernatural powers and the origin of supernal power from a Buddhist perspective. We realize that there are certain risks to pursuing supernal power, and the best way is to recover our capacity within our self-nature by purifying our mind. Since Cayce had treated over 14,000 cases in his lifetime we will cite a few more to explore issues related to reincarnation. From these cases we can see through Cayce's secret of curing disease and changing destiny.

Examples of the Karma of Poisoning Others and Blinding Others

A forty-year-old woman suffered from serious allergies. Doctors had told her there was no way to cure her. Cayce observed this woman in his self-hypnosis state and pointed out that in one of her lifetimes, she had been a chemist who studied and developed chemical drugs. Many people had allergic reactions to these drugs, especially with some that polluted the air. Her allergies were due to this karma. Cayce instructed her to repent and gave her a prescription, which finally cured her.

In another case, a professor who had been blind since birth came to Cayce. Many experts had given her treatment, but to no effect. She had heard of Cayce while listening to a radio program called "Miracle of the Mind," which discussed supernatural topics and claimed Cayce's healing was magical.

Cayce observed the professor's past lives and saw that in 1000 BC, she had lived in Persia, where Iran is today. She had been a member of a barbaric tribe who tortured and mutilated their enemies, including burning their eyes with red-hot iron rods. This professor had blinded many people during that life, so she received the retribution of being born blind.

Cayce also instructed her to repent. Within three months, she was able to acquire 10 percent vision. The Buddhist sutras state, "If you want to know your past life, look into your present conditions. If you want to know your future life, look into your

present actions.” What goes around comes around. Understanding the truth of reincarnation, we must be vigilant and prevent ourselves from taking the wrong step.

Examples of how “doing evil deeds begets evil retribution” are many, but in fact, we also beget retribution by simply having evil thoughts. The following two cases explain this.

Creating Karma by Using the Bible to Denounce Others

A woman sought Cayce’s help for a gynecological disease. Since puberty, she had to lie in bed for two weeks to recover from her monthly cycle of great bleeding. She felt ashamed to see people and became introverted and withdrawn.

Cayce observed her past lives and found that, in one life, she had been a Catholic nun in the age of King Louis XIV in France. She was very familiar with the Bible and the religious classics, but regretfully, she did not use that wisdom to regulate herself! Instead, she used the classics as the basis to severely criticize others and made them feel ashamed and afraid to see people. So in this life, she received the retribution of being ashamed to see others.

Real practitioners must not use sage classics to regulate others, because if we used the classic norms to regulate others, our learning would have no merits but create a great sin. The Sixth Patriarch of Zen Buddhism, Master Hui Neng, said, “He who treads the path in earnest sees not the mistakes of the world.” If we strive to improve our own virtues, how would we have the idle time to care about others’ business?

The Effect of Blaming Fate and Everyone Else

The second case is about a thirty-four-year-old patient named Paul Durbin who suffered from multiple sclerosis. His nerves were affected to the extent that he experienced atrophy in his right leg and hand. He lost his ability to work, causing his finances to be in a bad shape. Friends sympathized with his situation, offering him help and sometimes even paying his medical expenses. But this patient complained about his doctor for not curing his disease and even about the people who helped him. He would vent his emotion on anyone around him. His attitude made his friends sad. Some even regretted ever helping him.

Cayce said that in one of his past lives, he had excessively immersed himself in negative emotions. His heart was full of selfishness, resentment, and grudges. His negative energy carried over into this life and had caused his disease in this lifetime. This patient had not committed any sinful deeds—but his mentality led him to illness. Cayce said that only by correcting these mental problems can one's physical problems get better. The following is the excerpt of Cayce's "prescription":

"You must get rid of these negative emotions from your heart, everything has its retribution, precise to a hair's breadth. This nerve atrophy disease is caused by karma. As long as there is hatred, viciousness, and selfish thoughts, the disease will not be cured. To change your physical condition, you must change the state of your mind, changing your attitude towards people, things, and the environment. Any treatment would not lead to a complete recovery, you will have hope only if you purify your soul."

Since his illness had been caused by his complaining about fate and blaming everyone else, Cayce gave him a mental prescription: to purify his soul! A mental illness requires the cure from one's own heart. Cayce had him purify his soul, repent his evil thoughts, and eliminate these evil thoughts completely. Cayce explained that only by repenting can it be possible for him to restore his health.

What Is A Genuine Repentance?

In Buddhism, there is a verse specifically explaining the theory and method of repentance:

*Sins arise from the mind and must be repented from the bottom of the heart,
they are eliminated only when the sinful thoughts in our minds have vanished.
As both thoughts and sins are eradicated and return to the void,
it can then be deemed as a real repentance.*

According to Mahayana Buddhism, cultivation underscores substantial practice rather than superficial action. Genuine repentance is to never do it again, this is the same as Confucius saying, "Never repeat the same mistake the second time." We must know that we all have innumerable creditors throughout our infinite reincarnations from the beginningless kalpas. The creditors of the closer lifetimes have a stronger desire for revenge, so we must put resolving our enmity with them our priority. In other words, resolving the enmity should be done from the near creditors to the farther ones. We should treat this matter with utmost sincerity, we should feel ashamed for having done

something wrong to harm them, and we must have our substantial merits and virtues in cultivation to dedicate the merits to them.

The famous Dr. Brian Weiss also said that we should check our vices, because if we don't, we will carry them over with us to another life. Only we can rid ourselves of the bad habits that we have accumulated, and only when we are strong enough to master the external problems, then we will no longer have them in our next life.

In Buddhism, the karma from mind is considered to be the heaviest because karmas of body and speech all originate from mind. Buddha-Dharma regards purifying the mind as primary cultivation, so we must practice to observe our arising thoughts constantly. Because even after hundreds of thousands of kalpas, the karma we have created will never disappear, when the cause and conditions are all in place, the retribution will still manifest and make us suffer. Even if there was only one evil thought in our life, that evil thought will still lead to retribution in the future. We can absolutely not escape from it.

In the next part, through some of the most startling reincarnation stories, we will introduce to you two famous poems from the *Surangama Sutra* that are related to the origin of reincarnation.