Tips and Guidelines for Soul-Centered Care

JOY NUGENT OAM

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Tips and Guidance for Soul-Centered Care

No 1

By Joy Nugent OAM

Eastern and Western Insights on Soul

In all traditions the soul within us calls us to discover the truth of who we are and why we are having an earthly experience. Dr Elisabeth Kubler-Ross who taught the world so much about death and dying wrote that a soul chooses its parents before birth. Other spiritual teachers add that a soul also chooses the lessons needed for the personality (mental, emotional and physical bodies) to grow closer to the ideals of Universal Love (God is love). Belief in an afterlife is the most potent medicine for relieving death anxiety.

Soul and personality integration is achieved by:

- Character-building by performing good deeds,
- Healing the emotional and mental bodies

- Connecting with the Universal Mind via meditation
- Service to other lifeforms and the planet

Belief in an afterlife is the most potent medicine for relieving death anxiety. Eastern belief includes reincarnation. Reincarnation means having more than one lifetime to grow from imperfect to perfect (Florence Nightingale agreed with this idea). Western beliefs include various religious teachings and practices as a means of coming closer to God.

From a Chinese perspective, soul (spirit) does not have religious connotations. Rather it refers to the two souls that all of us have. These are the Corporeal Soul (the soul of our body) and the Ethereal Soul which connects a person to the eternal, collective soul world.

Eastern and Western traditions have different concepts of what it means to be a soul. For example, Western beliefs favour the rational conscious mind while in the East the unconscious mind is favoured and the intuitive is dominant.

Father Bede Griffiths was the Benedictine monk who set up an Ashram in Southern India. The Ashram included Hinduism and he wrote that the future of the world depends on the 'marriage' of these two minds, the conscious and the

unconscious, the rational and the intuitive, the active and the passive.

Raymond Moody, American philosopher, psychiatrist, physician and author in *Life After Life* introduced concepts of the bright light, the tunnel, the presence of loved ones waiting on the other side. “All of these patients have experienced a floating out of their physical bodies, associated with a great sense of peace and wholeness. Most were aware of another person who helped them in their transition to another plane of existence.”

There is a constant interconnection of the mind, body, and soul in human health. The widely reported Near-Death Experience confirms the existence of a spirit world which responds to differing vibrations of energy. Such reports are bringing East and West closer together. There are many reports of probing the afterlife – a potent source for relieving death anxiety. We are all One – we are all connected by life energy and what affects one affects all. The soul does not die.

Michael Barbato, Australian Palliative Care Doctor and Author writes:

> I have worked as a palliative care doctor for almost 25 years. The transition from mainstream medicine was more challenging than I had imagined. For the first time I encountered people who, in the course of their dying, described experiences

that defied logic. These included visions of predeceased relatives, prophetic dreams, out-of-body experiences and waking from a comatose state immediately before death. Others exhibited a serenity I had not considered possible.

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No. 2

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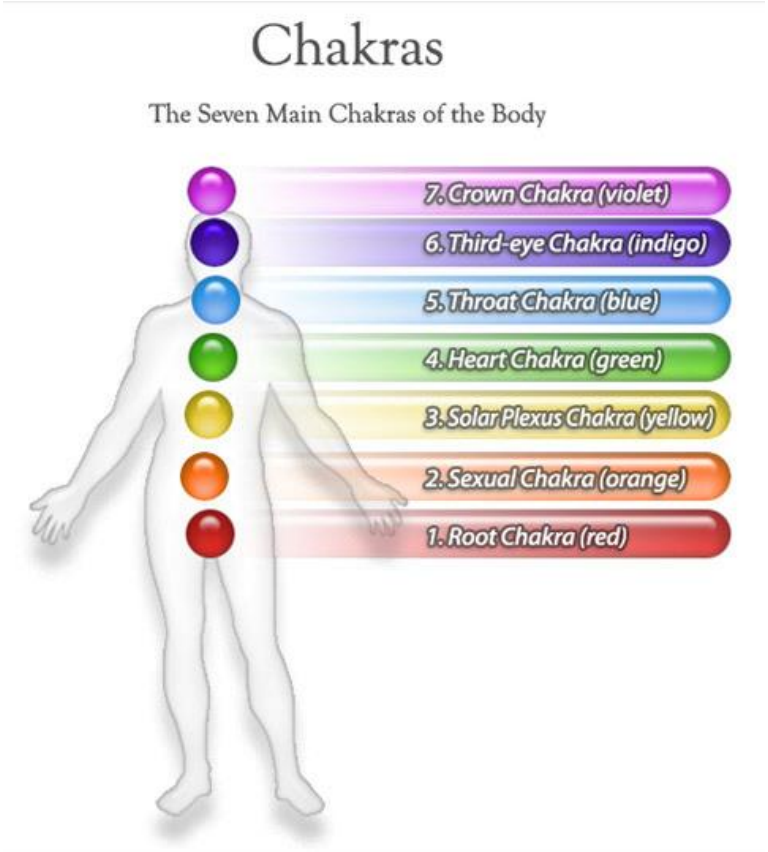
Self-Healing is Soul-Finding

Reference: Heal Your Mind by Mona Lisa Schultz M.D. Ph.D. and Louise Hay

Understanding the mental and emotional aspects of soul is facilitated by observing the area of the body where discomforts arise. A knowledge of the flow of energy through the body is essential. The energy centres are called chakras and there are seven main chakras. These are located from the base of the spine to the top of the head and afford insights into Soul-Centered Care.



This energy is sometimes thought of as the life force and if there is a blockage in the flow of energy symptoms will appear in the physical body at the site of the energy blockage. For example, if there are problems with the immune system, skeletal frame, blood or skin disorders the representations of the first or base chakra need to be considered.

- The second chakra affects the lower back, fertility, and bladder trouble

- The third chakra may result in issues with digestion, weight, kidneys, and addictions
- The fourth chakra indicates heart, breast and lung problems
- The fifth chakra is related to the thyroid, neck, jaw, mouth, and dental disorders
- The sixth chakra is associated with brain, ear, and eye disorders
- The seventh chakra indicates genetic disorders, life-threatening illnesses

The energy body is referred to as the etheric body and is the energy that leaves the physical body at the time of death. The etheric body carries soul particles into the Astral world where it is believed that soul school continues. The etheric body holds the memories and experiences of a lifetime. The etheric body is an exact replica of the physical body.

When we receive energy healing, Acupuncture, Sound Bath Yoga or Reiki, its primary impact will be on the etheric body. Healing therapies help the etheric body to function more effectively. Prayers and intention, also positively impact on the health and vitality of the etheric body.

Viktor Frankl was an Austrian neurologist, psychologist, philosopher, and Holocaust survivor, who founded logotherapy. In his book *Man's Search for Meaning,* he writes that a search for a life's meaning is the central human

motivational force, and that despair is suffering without meaning.

These tips for soul-centered care are given with the intention to promote self-healing and remove the despair of death anxiety.

No. 3

By Joy Nugent OAM

Healing Base Chakra Thoughts and Emotions

The soul which is energy talks to a person via the physical body and is a pointer to healing emotional, mental, and spiritual pain. Diagnosis is helped by listening to the area of the body where discomforts are felt. As thoughts and emotions are energy the answer lies in the Chakra system.

Thoughts and emotions that do not serve wellbeing can be changed and released. This is the work of a counsellor who may use Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. This therapy teaches coping skills and focuses on how thoughts, beliefs and attitudes affect a person's feelings and actions.

Raising the vibration of personal energy is the work of a lifetime. Author Louise Hay writes that if a person has a health problem it's considered an excess of fear, anger, or sadness, or a deficiency in love and joy. What follows are tips for healing the First or Base Chakra for those who are preparing to graduate from earth school.

Questions related to the Base Chakra to ask might include:

- Have you lost connection with family and friends?
- Are you feeling safe?
- Are you struggling with your life anchors or beliefs?
- Are there childhood traumas you need to heal?
- Are you able to connect with nature?
- How well were you parented and were you yourself a parent?
- Is there a card or note you wish to send to someone regarding an unresolved matter?
- How were your school days?
- How do you wish to be remembered?
- Do you wish to record a message or insight for those who follow you in this journey called life?
- Do you have issues with bone, joint, blood, immune-system, or skin?

How the questions are answered will give the person an indication of the soul work to be done

before they die. This is a time for remembering to say, “I’m sorry” and “I forgive you.”

One of the great surprises on the human journey is that we come to full consciousness precisely by discovering our hidden shadow and discovering our own contradictions and making friends with our own mistakes and failings. Forgiveness includes self-forgiveness.

Meditation
Make yourself comfortable and take in three deep breaths followed by a pause before breathing out slowly and calmly. See yourself walking through a mist which is coloured red. In this red cocoon you feel safe and secure. Memories of childhood, parents, and ancestors enter your mind. As the mist clears it takes away all hurts and misunderstandings.

Affirmation
I am grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow.

No 4

By Joy Nugent OAM

Second Chakra Awareness

This chakra is where creativity, control, passions, and pleasures reside. The colour is orange. When viewed from the perspective of Soul-Centered-Care and healing in the last phase of life the following questions need consideration.

- Did you make the most of your creativity?
- Were you true to yourself in a variety of relationships?
- Did you respect other cultures, races and religions?
- Was having freewill an issue?
- Were you comfortable with your sexuality?
- Did you parent a child?

- Did you have issues with self-control or addiction?
- Were you honest in financial undertakings?
- Did you suffer from compulsive behaviour?
- Were you supported in your endeavours?
- How are you celebrating your life?
- Do you have problems with your lower back, pelvis, fertility, and bladder?

On Relationships

There are three relationships to reflect upon.

1. The relationship with oneself
2. The relationship with others
3. The relationship with Soul

The first relationship considers self-awareness, self-healing, and self-responsibility. My mentor Florence Nightingale was an advocate for self-responsibility and wrote that a person must accept the consequences of their actions for that is how they grow. The relationship with oneself calls for an appreciation of the conscious self and the unconscious self. Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung taught that the individual unconscious was connected to the collective unconscious which may be understood as the Akashic Records.

The second relationship is with others. Florence Nightingale recommended reform rather than punishment and prized freedom of thought and saw it as a privilege for oneself and to respect in others. Spiritual teacher Ram Dass recommended loving everyone and telling the truth. The Golden

Rule is another signpost – do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Dr Elisabeth Kubler-Ross recommended giving unconditional non-judgemental love.

The relationship with Soul is fostered in meditation and revealed in dreams.

> What a great thing it would be if we in our busy lives could restore into ourselves each day for at least a couple of hours and prepare our minds to listen to the voice of the great silence.
>
> - Mahatma Gandhi

Meditation
Make yourself comfortable and breathing slowly visualise yourself walking across a green meadow with soft grass interspersed with wildflowers. You pick a small bunch of the flowers and proceed into the nearby forest where you come across an area with a fallen log. In your mind's eye you see a loved one sitting on the log and your heart fills with regret and sorrow for a previous encounter. You give the flowers to this person and sitting beside them you share your thoughts and feelings about your relationship with them.

Affirmation
I can now love everyone truthfully

No. 5

By Joy Nugent OAM

Looking at the Solar Plexus or Third Chakra

This chakra is yellow and is important for understanding the meaning of life. A life without meaning is commonly referred to as a 'dark night of the soul'. Deep grief can be a trigger. Rising above a dark time requires resilience and transformation. The true nature of things is defined and explained in different ways, but in classical Buddhism it is understanding all phenomena as Oneness.

Margaret Caine, who was a Dominican nun, stressed the fact that life has meaning when we give ourselves meaning. When viewed from the

perspective of Soul-Centered-Care and healing in the last phase of life the following questions need consideration.

- What work did you do? Was it a calling?
- What is important to you at the time of death?
- What do you want your obituary to say?
- What old mental and emotional patterns need to change?
- How well do you understand your personality?
- Are you energised by events outside you, or do you prefer to go within yourself?
- Are you intuitive or did you value facts obtained from your five senses?
- Do you make decisions from your heart or your head?
- Do you like to explore all options before deciding?
- Do you come to conclusions quickly?
- How community minded were you?
- Can you recognise when your ego is calling the shots?
- How do you nourish your soul?
- What do you value?
- Do you have old beliefs that need to change?
- Do you have issues with digestion, weight, kidneys, and addictions?

On Beliefs

Florence Nightingale believed that men and women have souls to unfold and have a part to play in God's great world. Her mystical path to God was to go within. She wrote that a man is restless until he finds his true purpose.

The mystical Sufi poets Hafiz, Kabir, and Rumi encourage us to talk about dying and to learn the art of dying and letting go early, so as to not miss out on the peace, contentment, and liberation of life lived in your Larger and Lasting Identity, which most of us call God.

Physical Concerns

Physical concerns with the third chakra include issues with digestion, weight, kidneys, and addictions. Mona Lisa Schulz MD PhD in the book *Heal Your Mind* writes that addiction is an attempt to use something, anything, to cover up a feeling – maybe an emptiness- inside you… Addictions rewire the brain. According to Louise Hay addictive behaviour is another way of saying, "I'm not good enough."

Meditation

Make yourself comfortable and begin by taking three deep breaths in and holding for a second before releasing slowly. See yourself walking down a gravel path and coming to a small dam of still clear water. Enter the dam slowly with the intention of stirring up and washing away old thoughts that have been bothering you. See

ripples spread out over the dam. They represent your old thoughts. Return to the bank feeling lighter, fresher, and happy.

Affirmation

I release all my old self-deprecating thoughts and love myself

No 6

By Joy Nugent OAM

Reflections on the Heart Chakra – the Fourth Chakra

The colour of this chakra is green, and it lies between the lower chakras and the three chakras above. It mediates between the body and the soul and determines health, strength, and balance. It is the seat of unconditional love, empathy, and generosity.

Questions for self-reflection

- Do you feel loved?
- Do you feel personal acceptance and emotional support?
- Are you able to show or share affection?
- Do you seek to release/forgive old hursts and past resentments?

- Can you create/accept relationships that are emotionally fulfilling and supportive?
- Have you experienced a 'broken heart' or endured grief?
- What emotional injuries do you need to forgive?
- What relationships do you need to reconcile?
- What have relationships taught you?
- What are your feelings on forgiveness?
- What are your physical reactions to loss and grief?
- Can you give unconditional love?
- Do you think that it is better to have loved and lost than not to have loved at all?
- Did you put heart and soul into your work?
- Do you have problems with your heart, breast, or lungs?

Finding common ground for conversations between those being supported and the caregivers.

Consider childhood memories, place of birth, travels, grief experiences, marital status, professional life, stories from real life, state of health, personality type, preferences for living (city, country, by the sea), schools attended, hobbies, languages spoken, world view/beliefs, art and music that spoke to the soul.

When a caregiver is supporting a person who is dying it is the energy from their heart chakra that

reaches out and connects with the heart chakra of the dying person. When two people shake hands there is an exchange of energy and the quality of this energy exchange can trigger thought forms. E.g. “I like this person” or “I don’t trust this person.”

The relationship between caregivers and those being supported is primarily an exchange of energy. Nature is a place of healing not to be underestimated.

On grief

Grief is the active process required to adjust to a loss. This may include the death of a loved one, death of a pet, divorce, health, job, family home and retirement. Painful feelings that are ignored or suppressed gain strength.

> “*An emotion in present time can trigger a similar emotion from the past as past and present blend*”
>
> – Naomi Feil, founder of Validation Therapy

Meditation

Make yourself comfortable and take three deep healing breaths in and imagine breathing out all the pain collected in the heart. Close your eyes and in your mind’s eye look up to the vast blue sky and remember a time when your heart felt pure bliss. Hold that feeling and breathe in a green cloud and feel that you are loved.

Affirmation

I can love and be loved.

No 7

By Joy Nugent OAM

Fifth or Throat Chakra Considerations

> I tell you everything that really nothing, and nothing of what's everything, of what's crying within me. So, when I'm through my routine, do not be fooled by what I'm saying. Please listen carefully and try to hear what I'm not saying.
>
> - Source unknown

The fifth chakra is the centre of will and communication. When a person speaks their truth, they are able to connect with their Higher Truth which many call God. The will to feel the fear and do it anyway can give way to feelings of powerlessness – a feeling commonly felt in aged care facilities by their very nature.

Communication skills and personal 'presence' are the building blocks of the caring relationship'

The following questions may bring clarity and understanding:

- Can you communicate your needs effectively?
- Are you able to talk about feelings?
- Do you have the ability to say, "I'm sorry," "I forgive you," "I love you"
- Do you speak truthfully or selectively?
- How strong is your willpower?
- Are you able to surrender to the force of nature and accept life's ending?
- Do you gossip?
- Do you take responsibility for your words and actions?
- In what situations do you feel powerless?
- What do you want to do before you die?
- Is support needed for "unfinished business"?
- Do you have the will to 'let go' and travel to the next world?
- Do you have thyroid, neck, jaw, or dental problems?
-

It is important for all those in a supportive role to be aware of their own unconscious projections. Developing sensitive and effective non-judgemental listening and responding skills is essential for carers.

On dementia

> Dementia in all its forms shortens life. It is incurable progressive and terminally life-shortening, and commonly complicated by other illnesses that further threaten life.
>
> - Dr Phil Henscke

When it comes to communication with a person who has a dementia diagnosis it is important to talk feelings and make general statements rather than ask questions which have the potential to cause anger and feelings of being powerlessness. Promote love and laughter rather than sad and lonely.

> *Nurses cannot deal with dying unless they have their own view of life and death*
>
> - Mary Vachon

Meditation

Make yourself comfortable and take three deep breaths in, hold for a second before breathing out slowly and gently. Imagine that you are preparing to abseil down a steep cliff face. You trust your supporters and your equipment before collecting the courage to step over the edge. At the bottom of the cliff, you feel pride in your achievement and rest in the knowledge that you with the support of others can be daring.

Affirmation

I can dare and succeed

No. 8

By Joy Nugent OAM

Sixth or Third Eye Chakra Guidance

The colour of this chakra is indigo, and it is found in the area of the brow. It is the seat of intuition. Intuition has been described as irrational knowing. It is the centre for the clear thought and insight obtained in meditation. It is the voice of the Higher Self. It affects inner and outer vision. It is the centre of wisdom gained in yoga and spiritual practice.

A blockage may occur when old emotional and mental wounds are retained, and non-rational solutions are not accepted as possibilities. Blockages are cleared when the non-rational is accepted and solutions cease reliance on the five senses alone.

The following questions may bring understand and insights:

- Does your intuition have a track record that you can trust?
- What does your intuition tell you about life after to death?
- Does the future generate fear?
- Do you sometimes get goose bumps and feel that your intuition is responsible?
- Do you need proof to believe?
- Are you apprehensive about the future?
- Do you feel that you know yourself better than anyone else?
- Are you respectful of other's beliefs and insights?
- Can you be non-judgemental of the actions of others?
- Do you reflect on what influences your decisions?
- Can you consider events and feelings not grounded in reality?
- Are there decisions that you would like to change?
- How was your childhood?
- Do you have disorders in the brain, ear, or eye?

It is interesting to note the number of times angels or guides appear in the Bible and the number of time dreams have provided solutions. Today common expressions include, "I had a light-bulb moment", "I felt a presence", "I heard a voice".

Louise Hay in the book *Heal Your Mind* says that when we grow up, we have a tendency to re-create the emotional environment of our early home life… "We are all victims of victims." However, most parents do the best with the knowledge they have at the time.

The past cannot be changed but a person can change their attitude to the past. The path to healing is through forgiveness and changing thoughts. The subconscious mind does not distinguish between right and wrong. It accepts what a person chooses to believe.

Remember the Serenity Prayer inspired by Reinhold Niebur.

> God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

Meditation

Make yourself comfortable and begin with three deep breaths and release all thoughts that do not bring acceptance to your life on slow outbreaths. Visualise being held closely by an angel who pours love and understanding into your whole body. The colour indigo fills the vast sky. You feel at peace with yourself and the world.

Affirmation

I move past all hurts with forgiveness and accept that I am deserving

No. 9

By Joy Nugent OAM

The Crown Chakra is the Connection with the Divine

The colour of this chakra is violet, and it is found at the top of the head. From this centre currents of energy flow through the body and may leave the body via this chakra at the time of death. The energy leaving the body at the time of death is soul consciousness which is a record of deeds, thoughts, and emotions. Everything is energy. Love has the highest vibration. From Albert Einstein:

> We are slowed down sound and light waves, a walking bundle of frequencies tuned into the cosmos. We are souls dressed up in sacred

biochemical garments and our bodies are instruments through which our souls play their music.

The following questions may bring clarity to your beliefs:

- Are you living a meaningful life?
- Do you believe in an afterlife?
- What books or poetry inspires you?
- Does art, music and poetry speak to you?
- What events in your life have been character building?
- Do you belong to a particular faith community?
- Are you able to quieten your active mind and just BE in the moment?
- What prayers did you learn as a child?
- Do you believe in the power of prayer?
- Do you have a favourite mantra? E.g. “the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want”
- What books inspire you?
- What beliefs do you live by?
- Can you feel a connection with all of life?
- Do you follow ‘the religion of love’ (a description from a Sufi?
- Would you describe yourself as spiritual rather than religious?
- Do you have a genetic disorder or life-threatening illness?

From Florence Nightingale

For Florence Nightingale, spirituality involved the sense of a 'presence higher than human.' She described that presence as a divine intelligence that creates, sustains, and organizes the universe. She had an awareness of our connection with this Higher Reality.

Like Greek philosophers and mystics, she found God by going within herself and felt she needed to be in an appropriate state for God to visit her there. In her search for God Florence Nightingale studied comparative religions and combined mysticism and scientific universal law.

Meditation

Make yourself comfortable and take three deep breaths in through your heart chakra and breath out though the crown chakra. See yourself standing under a waterfall in a green forest setting. As the water cascades over your body be aware that the thoughts and emotions not grounded in love and light being washed away. Stay in the stillness for a few more minutes and just BE.

Affirmation

I am loved unconditionally – all is well!

This is a gem of a book for all those who seek to find meaning and purpose in life. Joy Nugent's life experiences have given her an appreciation of Eastern and Western beliefs on the nature of soul.

The New Age Movement distinguishes between soul and personality and suggests that only the ego, or false self, fears death and is the cause of suffering. Meditation is a means of
disconnecting from thoughts and feelings resulting in soul awareness and healing *'unfinished business'*.

Dr Elisabeth Kubler-Ross who coined the phrase *'unfinished business'* was an advocate for unconditional, non-judgemental loving care. Joy Nugent is an advocate for soul-centered care.

Fear of death exists only in those who are ignorant of their own souls.
- Pythagoras -

The framework for Joy's Tips for Soul-Centered Care is a fusion of Eastern and Western beliefs about our existence, soul and afterlife. We are each asked to honestly review our life, to reflect and meditate. Self-healing, peace, and the relief of death anxiety are the desired outcomes.

- Roger Hunt -
M.D. pioneer of palliative medicine, South Australia

The author, *Joy Nugent* , was bestowed a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for services to nursing, particularly palliative care in this year's King's Birthday Honours. At the age of eighty-five she has an appreciation of what it means to offer soul-centered care to those in the last phase of life. She is actively promoting practical tips for soul-centered care and training Hunab Ku Oneness Companions and volunteers for her charity Soul Talks. Awareness for this work comes from more than three decades at the bedside of people who were graduating from earth school and seeking to be free from death anxiety.

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soultalksbooks.com
hunabkuoneness.com.au