



## Divine Presence in Healing: A Kabbalistic Approach to Compassionate Care

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In practical terms, this means I take time to learn my patients' stories, to remember details about their lives beyond their medical conditions, and to acknowledge their emotional and spiritual needs alongside their physical symptoms. I recognize that healing often begins with the simple act of being fully present, of conveying through my attention that this person matters deeply.



### Introduction

As healers, we stand at the intersection of science and spirit, technique and presence. The way we conceptualize the divine whether as a personal being or an impersonal force profoundly shapes our approach to patient care. Drawing from Kabbalistic wisdom, I have found that integrating both Western and Eastern understandings of divinity can transform the healing relationship. This synthesis offers a framework for compassionate care that honors both personal connection and transcendent awareness in the sacred space between healer and patient.

### The Personal Divine in the Healing Encounter

When I approach a patient with the Western conception of a personal God in mind, I recognize the profound significance of each individual before me. Just as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knows each person by name, I strive to truly see my patient not merely as a collection of symptoms or a medical case, but as a unique soul worthy of attention and care.

This perspective transforms the clinical encounter into a sacred meeting. Each conversation becomes a form of covenant, each therapeutic intervention an act of divine service. When a patient shares their suffering with me, I understand this as an act of profound trust, similar to a prayer offered to a God who listens and responds. My responsibility is not simply to treat, but to bear witness to hold space for their pain with the same attention that a personal God gives to human prayers.

### The Impersonal Divine and Clinical Detachment

Yet there are moments when the Eastern understanding of an impersonal divine offers essential wisdom for my practice. When facing overwhelming suffering or seemingly senseless disease, the concept of transcendent reality beyond human categories provides necessary perspective. Like the Buddhist practitioner who recognizes both compassion and emptiness, I must balance deep care with a certain therapeutic detachment.

This is not emotional coldness but rather a recognition that both my patient and I are part of something larger than our individual selves. The Taoist physician sees illness not as a personal affront but as a manifestation of imbalance in the natural flow of energy. The Hindu healer recognizes both the relative reality of suffering and the ultimate reality that transcends it.

This perspective helps me maintain equanimity when confronted with medical challenges or emotional intensity. It reminds me that healing follows patterns and principles beyond my personal control, and that sometimes my role is to align with these forces rather than impose my will. It also protects against the compassion fatigue that can arise when identifying

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too closely with patients' suffering without a larger framework to contain it.



**The Kabbalistic Integration: Ein Sof and Sefirot in Patient Care**

Kabbalah offers a unique integration of these approaches through its conception of Ein Sof (the infinite, unknowable divine essence) and the Sefirot (the ten divine emanations through which God interacts with creation). As a healer informed by this tradition, I recognize both the ultimate mystery beyond all understanding and the specific divine qualities that can manifest through the healing relationship.

When sitting with a patient, I hold awareness of both transcendence and immanence. There is the unknowable mystery of each person's unique experience what I cannot and should not pretend to fully grasp. Yet there are also specific divine qualities I can embody in response:

- Chesed (Kindness): Offering warmth and unconditional positive regard
- Gevurah (Strength): Providing clear boundaries and honest assessments
- Tiferet (Beauty): Finding the balanced, harmonious approach for this unique situation
- Netzach (Endurance): Persisting with hope even in chronic or difficult cases
- Hod (Splendor): Acknowledging my limitations and the patient's wisdom about their own body
- Yesod (Foundation): Creating a reliable, trustworthy therapeutic relationship
- Malchut (Kingdom): Taking practical action in the physical world

By channeling these qualities, I become not just a technician but a vessel for divine energy. The healing encounter becomes a microcosm of the divinehuman relationship—both deeply personal and connected to transcendent reality.



**Tzimtzum: Creating Space for the Patient's Healing Journey**

The Kabbalistic concept of Tzimtzum—God's self-contraction to make space for creation offers a profound model for

therapeutic presence. Just as Ein Sof withdrew its infinite light to allow finite reality to exist, I must contract my own presence, opinions, and agenda to create space for my patient's experience. This divine contraction teaches me that sometimes the most powerful intervention is stepping back. By restraining my impulse to fill silence, to fix immediately, or to impose my understanding, I create a void in which the patient's own healing wisdom can emerge. Paradoxically, this therapeutic selflimitation often proves more healing than my active intervention.

Tzimtzum reminds me that healing isn't something I do to patients but rather a process I facilitate within them. My technical knowledge matters, but equally important is my capacity to create conditions in which natural healing processes can unfold. Sometimes this means actively contracting my professional certainty to make room for mystery, ambiguity, and the patient's own understanding of their experience.



**Devekut: Attachment and Presence at the Bedside**

The Hasidic emphasis on Devekut cleaving to God through joyful, sincere devotion transforms my understanding of clinical presence. Rather than approaching patient care as merely a professional obligation, I can infuse even routine clinical tasks with intentionality and devotion. Taking vital signs, reviewing lab results, changing dressings all become opportunities for sacred connection. Above all a sense of humor and irony permeates my every interaction no matter how dire the diagnosis or how much anguish my patient is suffering, humor bathes it in a balm of kindness.

The Baal Shem Tov and his disciples taught that divine service could be performed through everyday acts infused with kavvanah (intention). Similarly, the compassionate healer transforms ordinary medical procedures into vehicles for healing presence. This doesn't require elaborate ritual or spiritual language; rather, it emerges from the quality of attention I bring to each moment with the patient.

At the same time, Hasidic teachings on Bitul (self-nullification) remind me that true presence requires ego transcendence. When I temporarily set aside my personal concerns, professional identity, and need for recognition, I can be fully available to the person before me. This balanced approach both deeply attached through devotion and detached through self-transcendence creates the conditions for authentic healing encounter.



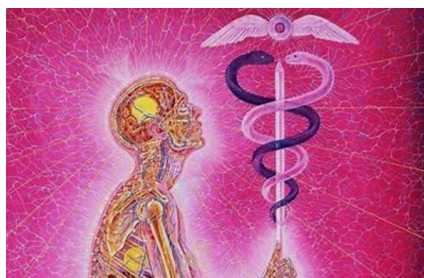
### Prayer and Intention in Medical Practice

Prayer takes on new dimensions when viewed through this integrative lens. Rather than simply petitioning a divine being for specific outcomes or passively accepting an impersonal fate, prayer becomes a complex dialogue that honors both divine personality and transcendence.

When facing a difficult case, I might pray in the Western mode speaking to a God who cares personally about this specific patient's suffering. This prayer might include requests for guidance, strength, or healing. I say a meditation of intent prior to a procedure that centers the interaction and its risk in a vertical plane. Yet I simultaneously hold the Eastern understanding that there is wisdom beyond my comprehension operating in this situation, and that my role is alignment rather than control.

This integration transforms not just formal prayer but the healing intention I bring to each encounter. Before entering a patient's room, I take a moment to center myself to become aware of both divine presence within me and transcendent reality beyond me. This brief practice helps me approach the interaction with both personal warmth and spacious awareness.

I've found that patients intuitively sense this quality of presence. Without necessarily using spiritual language, they often respond to the combination of personal care and transcendent perspective. Many report feeling "seen" not just as bodies to be fixed but as whole beings worthy of reverence.

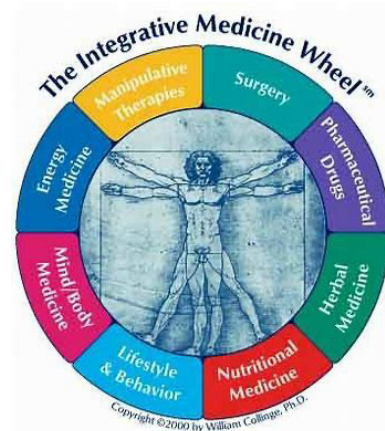


### Understanding Suffering: The Healer's Perspective

Perhaps the greatest challenge in compassionate care is making sense of suffering. Why do good people experience terrible illness? How can we reconcile a loving God with the reality of pain? The Kabbalistic synthesis offers no simple answers but provides a framework for holding these questions.

Through the lens of Tzimtzum [1], I understand that contraction and concealment are built into the very structure of reality. Just as God's self-limitation was necessary for creation, certain forms of limitation including illness may serve purposes

beyond my understanding. This doesn't mean dismissing suffering as "meant to be," but rather holding it within a larger context that includes both divine care and cosmic pattern. When sitting with a patient receiving a difficult diagnosis or facing chronic pain, I don't offer platitudes about divine plans. Instead, I create space for their authentic response anger, fear, confusion while maintaining a quiet confidence that even this experience exists within a meaningful universe. Sometimes the most compassionate response is simply acknowledging the mystery together. The Kabbalistic perspective also reminds me that healing doesn't always mean cure. Sometimes it means finding wholeness within limitation, connection amid isolation, or meaning within suffering. As a healer, my role includes helping patients navigate not just physical symptoms but existential questions that arise in illness.



### Conclusion: The Integrated Healer

By integrating Western and Eastern conceptions of divinity through a Kabbalistic lens, the compassionate healer develops a practice that is both

deeply personal and transcendentally aware. This integration manifests in several practical dimensions:

- **Relational Presence:** Engaging with each patient as a unique individual worthy of full attention while recognizing the universal patterns that connect all beings
- **Balanced Intervention:** Offering both active treatment based on medical knowledge and receptive awareness that creates space for natural healing processes
- **Spiritual Companionship:** Walking alongside patients as they navigate not just physical symptoms but questions of meaning, purpose, and connection
- **Self-Care:** Maintaining both compassionate engagement and healthy boundaries through practices that nurture both personal devotion and transcendent awareness

In my years of practice, I've found that this integrated approach sustains not just effective patient care but my own resilience and joy in the healing profession. By holding both the personal and impersonal dimensions of the divine, I avoid both the burnout that can come from over-identification with suffering and the detachment that can lead to clinical coldness. The patient-healer relationship becomes a sacred space where divine presence can manifest both as personal care and transcendent wisdom. In this space, technical competence and

spiritual presence merge, creating the conditions for healing at multiple levels. Through this Kabbalistic integration, the compassionate healer becomes not merely a medical provider but a vessel for divine healing energy, honoring both the intimate personality and infinite mystery of the divine. I have listed below source material for further research.

## References

1. <https://www.jyungar.com/healing-essays>