

# Healing Heart to Soul

One Doctor's Journey of  
HEALTH, HEALING, and LIFE

## Q&A with Peter J. Rappa, MD



When did you first start to see the intricate connections between mind, body, spirit, and health?

During an internship, I assisted in a family medicine clinic and saw many people walk in with illnesses that I perceived to be physical manifestations of something in their mind. I only got a glimpse back then, and I did not understand the depth and scope of the situation. Upon deeper investigation, I saw it everywhere, and I had thus stumbled onto a new meaning for my life. Injury, illness, and disease are part of the spiritual journey of life-health, and healing is a product of the soul. It is in that domain that I am most enriched and fulfilled.

*Healing Heart to Soul* implies that one must work through inner troubles before addressing outer symptoms. Is this always the case, or is it sometimes necessary to work from the outside to the inside?

I spend most of my day assisting people from the outside in—this is comfortable in the traditional doctor/patient relationship. But to really heal requires a change in context; to change context requires expansion of awareness, which is not easy. Very few people are ready to hear a truth that sparks an idea that leads to a change that begins the journey of the soul.

What are some ways we can prevent negative energy from affecting our health?

Medically, I am better at recognizing displaced energy after the fact than at offering prevention. I do not know the answer to prevention, as I do believe life is a spiritual journey and, by design, you will face that which you need to face to evolve. The best way to dissipate negative energy is to become aware, take responsibility, and take action.



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You're a rehabilitation physician. Did you always hope to be involved in this aspect of medicine? If not, what led you to it?

That's the thing about soul work; I would have to answer the question with a resounding NO. Rehab medicine called to me more than I called to it. I was initially interested in sports medicine, but orthopedic surgery was so competitive, I thought I would take a back road into sports medicine via a specialty called physical medicine and rehabilitation. But the minute I started my internship, neurology called to me. I was fascinated—coma, catastrophic trauma, mind, thought, and psychology were all very interesting to me. I want to say I stuck with it, but the truth is that it would not let me go. I tried to step into sports medicine again as a fourth-year resident, but I felt I was of more substantial help working with patients who could not even remember my name.

In the book, you talk about what it means to take a patient's "energy smear." How does this help you determine an appropriate path to healing?

My energy smear is obtained from the automatic, unaware, nonverbal clues that tell of discord, angst, and personality. When you really understand psychology, ego, emotion, consciousness levels, and relationships, being in the presence of another is like hearing the music and reading the lyrics to a song. You get to recognize patterns. My energy smear clues me in to where one might have misplaced energy—a possible point for excavation.

What is the most memorable case you've seen that exemplifies these connections?

The first time I applied these principles successfully to a patient is the most powerful experience I recall. Interestingly, after that first success, I tried the "techniques" again and got shot down big time. A bit gun-shy, I put the principles away and fell safely back into the traditional medical model, and I subtly introduced items and aspects back into practice with select patients at select times. I realized that we are all led to the truth we are ready to hear, which meant some people were not ready for the truth as I wanted to tell it.



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In *Healing Heart to Soul*, you use the term *karmic energy*. How does this force play a part in our daily lives?

When I use the term *karma*, it has special meaning—more than returning to Earth as a cat in your next life. You are your karma: your looks, your genetic code, the family into which you were born. To know is to be, so you cannot know racehorse unless you have four legs and can run the quarter mile in thirty seconds. The soul desires to know: I'd like to know myself as courageous, but try selling that to a cancer patient lying in recovery from chemo and paralyzed by a tumor. Finally, karma is the cycle of life, birth, life, death, renewal, and rejuvenation.

What do you hope readers take away from *Healing Heart to Soul*?

I want the readers to understand my deep yearning for truth—at least what is true for me—and my deep desire to share what I know, to be exposed to expanding awareness, and to learn from my experiences. I have a hard time as a doctor making a difference one patient at a time, but the book exposes my ideas to a much larger audience.

I would like for readers to reduce their own pain and suffering and help themselves heal. I want them to be encouraged to go forward and take on their own soul work, and maybe even do a little spiritual work along the way. I hope they hear me speak from my soul about the divine—a topic that fascinates me and keeps showing up in my life. Lastly, I want readers to be entertained while being educated.

What resources, other than your patients, do you use to actively learn about this topic?

At times, while pondering peacefully during a run or in my car, I am able to connect with the truths of the many authors I enjoy. I find myself immersed in the principles of advanced consciousness research by Dr. David Hawkins, and my favorite authors are Neale Donald Walsch, Carolyn Myss, and Wayne Dyer, as they often offer clarity and provide inspiration.

Is there another book in your future?

I hold my breath and hope to complete *The Soul Work of Life*.

TITLE: HEALING HEART TO SOUL | AUTHOR: PETER J RAPPA, MD

CATEGORY: BODY, MIND & SPIRIT / HEALING

ISBN-13: 978-1-934812-51-8 | HC: \$22.95 | ISBN-13: 978-1-934812-44-0 | PB: \$16.95



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