

# Aspects of Friendship Healing Power in Social Reforms

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**ABSTRACT:** Friendship relations between people have healing power at all social dimensions if the right approach is displayed. The natural environment creates a healing space and a relational healing perspective for those with emotional distress. At all social levels, human beings can develop better relations with others and reform how they perceive the people around them. This paper explores several ways that friendship can bring about healing. It highlights how simple acts like smiles and hugs can uplift spirits, while activities like dance can boost emotional well-being through physical expression. It also emphasizes the importance of dialogue, suggesting that meaningful conversations can deepen connections and foster understanding. Additionally, the paper discusses the power of shared experiences, showing how coming together around common challenges can strengthen bonds and promote social reform. Each of these methods is presented as a valuable tool for enhancing emotional health and building supportive communities.

**KEYWORDS:** social reforms, friendship healing power, bullying, restorative justice

## 1. Introduction

Human relationships were severely affected during the time of COVID-19 Pandemic (Rotaru 2020, 71-82), and many people experienced loneliness, sadness, despair and even depression. In order to heal, listening was a great tool to reach the hearts of the people who experienced such deep feelings of despair and sadness. We all can be friends with those who experienced loss, sickness, or death. We all can be a friend in times of need. Asking the question, "How can I be of support?" is a meaningful starting point. The collection of essays titled *Allies in Emancipation: Moving from Providing Service to Being of Support* (Bowen 2021, 596) explores how people who have focused on providing services can move to "being of support." Humans are relational beings and need connection with other humans in order to live fruitfully and satisfactorily.

Choices we make have an important impact on the immediate future, and many of us experience a full variety of feelings when things do not go as planned. Generally, people choose what the brain says because it is based on the things that are known, but recent studies indicate that more people are interested to learn how to follow their heart. A lot of suffering came from the cause-effect, entropic-logic way of life which is based on brain choices, so listening the hearth, a syntropic way of life, can enhance the understanding of the feelings of anticipation and attract more life satisfaction. When we choose what to eat, what to work, how to live, and how to socialize following the heart, accomplishment, and satisfaction can be increased (Vannini and Di Corpo 2008, 297).

## 2. The power of friendship. A global social reform

The people who visibly show up for you, champion your cause, give you a chance and are unwavering in the belief that you have something to offer mean everything (Armstrong 2020, 41). True friendship can start when people validate others' value and

respect human dignity. Next, I would like to express a few of the means that humans can express love and hope for people in need.

*Smiles.* Smiling can lift a dying soul up, offer the proper worth recompense for people's efforts, motivate, give hope, and make them believe that this life is worth living (Cherifi 2024, 29).

*Hugs and well-being.* We have seen that the power to heal ourselves is literally 'within our grasps'. Hugs are rich in oxytocin, serotonin, and dopamine. While hugs are rich in these pleasure hormones, they also lower basal cortisol levels. A hug can soothe a newborn infant, mend a broken heart, heal the sick, calm a troubled spirit, or strengthen the bonds of trust and generosity. With enough hugs (and one can never get enough), our children will grow up to be balanced, well-adjusted, loving adults who appreciate the world they live in. Maybe we can even heal our broken hearts (literally) with those oxytocin-laced hugs, and face the future with a renewed sense of belonging and balance, "living in harmony with ourselves and others" (Myrna and Hadley 2008).

*Dance and healing.* Dance involves the culturally mediated body, emotion, and mind. So do illness and pain. Dance may promote wellness by strengthening the immune system through muscular action and physiological processes (Hanna 1995, 323).

*Dialogue and healing.* When the aim of education is transformative learning and psychological healing, dialogue approach is the right way for students to engage in practical philosophy in intercultural and interfaith educational contexts. The Gandhi project was designed for three months and succeeded in conceiving human relationships and friendships between students who, prior to the project, were completely hostile and rejective or xenophobic and racist to others (Helskog 2014, 79).

*Sharing the same pain.* People facing infertility often discover common ground through shared experiences: "meeting each other, sharing our art, telling our stories, meeting others, collecting a series of infertility narratives, we have begun to embrace our infertility. No longer do we find shame in it, but we understand it has a reorientation from a pronatalist culture. At times this reorientation can be tiresome, but it is no longer lonesome. Our friendship helps us get through the good and the bad. It has given us happiness, purpose, and, most of all, a connection to each other through art. Art has helped us heal" (Novotny 2019).

### **3. Friendship healing power and natural elements**

Human relationships are powerful and have the potential to heal, but they must correlate this to the environment and the healing potential of nature and natural elements. A day with a friend in nature can be a medicine for the heart, mind and soul. Talking and receiving the benefits from natural sun, water, music, etc., is a complex way created in order to restore human well-being and relationships.

*Sunlight, colors, and healing.* Dr. Igor Micunovic, the internationally known specialist in integrative medicine and personal transformation, highlights the power of sunlight and colors in healing, saying: "Religion teaches that light was God's first creation. Even if this is not believed by all, we learned that life (especially vegetal) grows where there is light in order to create food for animals and humans." Ancient civilizations like Egypt, Greece, China, and India have used sunlight to heal from different affections and it is today studied with growing interest. Colors like red, orange, green, blue, yellow and violet have direct healing effects on the human body (Micunovic 2024). Recent breakthroughs in the use of color as a healing agent for rapid recovery from trauma, depression, physical pain, and spiritual blockages have elevated the power of color for healing (Vazquez 2006, 191). Exposing people in need to the natural environment that can elevate body and spirit is a simple and accessible way to be a friend to those in need.

*Food.* As a major formula in both food and traditional medicine, soup delivers health benefits besides the stomach-filling nutrients. Soups have been an inevitable part of cuisine in almost every civilization. With a history that dates back to 4,000 B.C., soup is probably as old as cooking. The English term 'restaurant' is derived from the French verb *restaurer*, meaning 'to restore', which refers to the restorative soup served in the 16th century in France. Furthermore, some soups are not only nutritious and filling food, but also very important as remedies for different conditions before the age of modern medicines. Even in this post-genome era, herbal soup is the dominant and favorite formula in the practice of traditional Chinese medicines (TCM) (Ke et al. 2012, 275). Food is an excellent way for people to interact and create friendships. From ancient times, food united people at the same table creating interaction and long-lasting relationships.

*Hydrotherapy.* Water procedures have a beneficial effect on many organs and systems, such as skin, cardiovascular, nervous, respiratory, and excretory systems. Hydrotherapy also affects the excitement and tone of the muscles, metabolism and regeneration of the tissues (Alieva et al. 2018, 306). Spa treatments, swimming and other related activities can be for the body and soul the restoration needed. Can overcome negative feelings and anxiety or depression.

*Aromatherapy and Flower Essence Therapy.* Stressful social relations are high risk factors for illness and early death; immune response to viruses is strongly influenced by a variety of stress factors like anxiety and illness; high levels of hostility increase the risk of heart diseases; depression is notably linked with type II diabetes; early childhood trauma can trigger the onset of asthma; cancer patients who are able to express their emotions are more likely to have immune activity at the site of their lesions. Flower essence therapy demonstrates that natural substances can be used to heal the body as well as the soul (Rai and Jayachandran 2005, 48).

*Music.* One of the most attractive hobbies is music. Learning it, singing, playing an instrument, or just listening to great music, and drinking in this sheer nectarine beauty is one of the most exquisite pleasures of life. Cultivating a love for music does not bring just pleasure. It can also be turned into a profitable occupation, bringing fame, riches and social status (Singh 2016, 496).

*Poetry* is the healer of hurts and emotional wounds. Since time memorial, the world has witnessed humans undergoing mental trauma, and poetry has played a remedial role in curing it. For ages, literature has served as a tool to absolve patients of their mental and psychological disorders. The paper, however, explores the healing and therapeutic potential of poetry in general and literature composed to address people's pain, plight, and psychic problems. Art and literature have resolved the issues of solitude, depression, agony, anguish, and many issues related to mental health. The poems hovering around the themes like the serenity of nature and mind, hope, love, aspirations, forbearance and redemption, etc., showed readers miraculous effects to combat scathing pain, agony and anguish (Beg 2023, 36). Also, Geri Giebel Chavis, a long-time leader in the expressive art of poetry therapy, shares her collected wisdom and experience in *Poetry and Story Therapy: The Healing Power of Creative Expression*. This volume is a significant contribution to the growing literature about the expressive literary arts (Bowman 2011, 261).

*Literature and healing.* One of the most exceptional historical-fiction that we have is *The Book Thief*. The book follows the story of a young German girl, Liesel Meminger, and her struggle to survive during World War II. Liesel faces the atrocities of war when her brother dies, and her mother abandons her to the care of her foster parents. These atrocities rattle the foundation of her developing identity, destroying her personal narrative. Though Liesel may not always bear direct witness to the gruesome violence of war, she nevertheless faces the violence of death. Recounted through the voice of Death,

The Book Thief presents a story of trauma recovery as Liesel learns to cope with her loss. In this way, her story—as part of the developing canon of Holocaust Literature—exposes the destructive power of trauma and affirms the importance of community in the rehabilitation of the traumatized. The relationships that Liesel develops on Himmel Street are vital to her recovery. Having experienced a traumatic encounter with Death and the abandonment of her mother, Liesel severs herself from the people around her. Many theorists conclude that after a traumatic event, victims display this same disconnection. In order to begin the recovery process, these victims must rebuild their lost relationships. First, Liesel finds safety in the soothing presence of Hans Huberman. The safer Liesel feels, the freer she becomes to develop close friendships with Ilsa Herman and Max Vandenburg. Through these defining friendships, Liesel learns once more what it means to feel safe and empowered (Jerusha Yoder 2018, 5, 32-33). Reading is a powerful way to emphasize other people's emotions and living experiences. Another book that tells an incredible life story and experience is *The book of Job*. *The Book of Job* has long served as an invitation for reflection upon some of the deepest existential questions affecting the human heart, especially about the nature and purpose of human suffering, loss, and pain. Beyond the limits of reason, Divine Beauty persuades Job in the most holistic sense of the word, moving him from his prior relation to his suffering into a new relationship, not just to his suffering, but to the Creator himself (Arnold 2019, 32).

#### **4. Social Reforms in justice system and education**

##### ***4.1. Violence and Healing***

Collective occupation as a concept that invokes intent with regard to what individuals do in order to build or negate social cohesion is thus affirmed, suggesting its potential to furthering our understanding of how, on the one hand, violence is a collective act that dehumanizes, and on the other healing is a process that involves creating spaces for humanizing interactions with others (Motimele and Ramugondo 2014, 400). Restorative Justice has strong transformation potential in changing the paradigm of the justice system from a focus on punishment to a therapeutic approach oriented towards reconciliation, responsibility, and communal recovery. Beneficial Justice principles, such as reconciliation, accountability, and participation, are critical cornerstones in changing the judicial paradigm. Restorative Justice has a significant impact on both the perpetrator and the victim. This approach encourages reflection and positive behavior change for perpetrators, while for victims, it allows for recovery, more satisfying justice, and reconciliation (Karimullah 2023, 688).

##### ***4.2. Bullying and healing in the educational system***

Approximately 10% of elementary and middle-school children have been identified as being victimized by their peers on a regular basis. The victimization is highly stable, indicating that many of the same children express verbal and physical attacks from peers over several years. Later, this victimization was linked with anxiety, depression, loneliness, low self-esteem, school avoidance, poor academic performance, peer rejection, and a limited number of friends (Hodges and Boivin, Vitaro, Bukowski 1999, 94). A study in two schools in South Australia found that for children who attend school, it is a true challenge to make friends and integrate into the community (Riggs and Due 2010).

## 5. Conclusions

All people can have a more human-related interaction embodied by empathy and love. Human experience is diverse, and negative feelings occur, but better life satisfaction can be achieved with the right approach at all levels. From the justice system to the educational system (Rotaru 2021, 87-92), human interactions must focus on the true reason for incompatibilities. Acceptation and friendship have healing power over broken relationships and create a healthy and human reasoning space.

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