

For many of us the idea of praying for someone to be healed physically or emotionally can be quite intimidating. What do we say? What do we do if nothing happens? What do we do if something *does* happen? Below is a simple model for praying for healing adapted from *Everyday Supernatural: Living a Spirit-led life without being weird*, by Mike Pilavachi and Andy Croft. This isn't a list of rules but hopefully a model of prayer that is accessible to anyone. It is primarily tailored for praying for physical healing, but the principles can as easily be applied to praying for emotional healing.

PRACTICE 1 – PRAYING FOR HEALING	
1	<p>Remember who is responsible for what</p> <p>When praying for healing it is important to remember where our responsibility begins and where it ends. We are like waiters or waitresses taking orders and then in prayer taking them to the chef (God).</p> <p>Only a chef cooks a meal and only God can heal. This takes all the pressure off us when we pray because we can't make anything happen on our own. It is our responsibility to ask and pray; it is God's responsibility to heal.</p>
2	<p>Pray in a team</p> <p>It is always best when praying for physical or emotional healing for someone, to pray with at least one other person rather than on your own. If a woman is being prayed for, one of the two people praying should always be a woman. This provides a safe and transparent context for prayer and is also beneficial as one person can be listening to / discerning what the Holy Spirit is doing whilst the other person is praying (see step 5).</p>
3	<p>Ask: 'Where does it hurt?'</p> <p>This may seem obvious but sometimes we get so excited (or scared) about praying for healing that we just jump straight in without finding out what the person wants. Even if you think you know or it's obvious, take a moment to ask. That's what Jesus did (see Mark 10:51).</p> <p>If the person starts giving you their full medical history, stop them. We don't need to know everything, just what they want healed today. A brief, simple description is all we need in order to pray.</p> <p>If the person is in physical pain, it can be helpful to ask them to rate their level of pain out of ten. This is helpful because it means we are more easily able to discern if God is bringing any measure of healing or relief once we have prayed. Sometimes God doesn't bring total healing straight away (see Mark 8:24), but sensing a reduction in pain can bring faith that God is doing something which prompts us to pray again.</p>
4	<p>Pray for healing</p> <p>When we see Jesus ministering to the sick in the gospels, there are two common things he tends to do that we can follow his example in:</p> <p>a. Lay hands</p> <p>In the gospels, we see that Jesus often placed his hands or fingers on the wounded, broken parts of people's bodies (see Mark 1:40, 8:23) when bringing healing. Though mysterious, it does seem that there is some impartation or conduit of power that happens through the laying on of hands.</p> <p>When laying a hand on someone, always ask their permission first. If the healing required is in a place where it would not be appropriate to lay a hand, then simply lay a hand on the person's shoulder if they are happy with that.</p> <p>b. Speak to the condition</p> <p>Jesus often spoke to the conditions people suffered with to command healing (see Mark 3:5, 7:34) and so did the early church (see Acts 3:6). We don't have any power in ourselves to heal, but as Jesus' ambassadors we carry something of His authority in us. When we speak, we speak on behalf of the King and so we can pray boldly and confidently, speaking healing and restoration in His Name.</p>

	<p>We don't need lots of words or long sentences to get God's attention. Pray simple, direct prayers for the pain to go / condition to be healed in Jesus Name. Try to avoid saying 'Jesus, if it's your will, please heal...'. We can be tempted to do this because we don't want the person to feel bad if they don't get healed (or we don't want to look silly!) but it doesn't really inspire faith and we can often use it as a bit of a safety net.</p>
5	<p>Follow the lead of the Spirit</p> <p>When we pray it is really important we are listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. What is the Father telling us to do? Invite the presence of the Holy Spirit upon the individual, ask Him to guide us, and watch and listen to what the Father is doing. For this reason is it a good idea to pray with our eyes open.</p> <p>Sometimes you may begin to see the Spirit physically meeting with the person (tears, shaking, fluttering eyes) but not always – everyone has a different response to God's presence. If you're not sure what God is doing, ask the person (see step 6 below).</p> <p>Whilst you are praying you may get a prophetic word or a picture. Sometimes there is a connection between spiritual / emotional healing and physical healing; asking God to help us discern the cause of the condition can help us know what needs to be prayed into.</p>
6	<p>Check in</p> <p>We want to make space for the Spirit to meet with the person we're ministering to and so lots of talking isn't necessary. Ultimately, we aren't going to talk someone into being healed!</p> <p>At the same time, it can be helpful to check in with the person after a while, by asking them a simple question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are they feeling? (negative thoughts or emotions may reveal spiritual strongholds that need to be broken in Jesus' Name). • Has the pain level reduced at all? • Have they been healed? • Is God starting to speak to them about anything else? <p>If the individual hasn't been healed or doesn't have anything to say, we don't have to worry or panic. Just keep praying until you sense the Spirit has finished ministering or the person has had enough.</p>
7	<p>Follow up</p> <p>As the time of prayer comes to an end, the important thing is that the person knows they are loved. Regardless of whether someone has been healed, we need to make sure they feel valued.</p> <p>When you have finished praying, it may be appropriate to ask the person to move or test the painful area to see if there is any improvement. It is important to be sensitive and use discernment here. Don't pressure anyone to feel they have to pretend something has happened if it hasn't.</p> <p>If they haven't been healed, don't tell them it's because they don't have enough faith or because they must have secret sin in their life.</p> <p>Instead make sure they feel assured of God's love for them and free to ask for prayer again. Jesus teaches us that persistence in prayer is important (see Luke 18:1-8) so, if appropriate, encourage the person to keep seeking prayer and asking for healing, and commit to continuing to pray for them.</p> <p>Then follow up with them some time in the week to see how they are doing, if there has been any change to their condition or reduction in pain.</p>