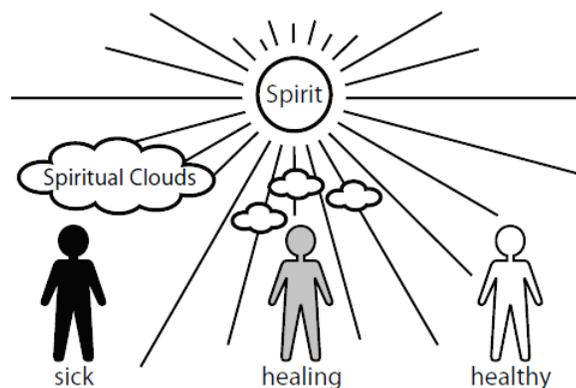


## Spiritual Clouds

*The clouding of the soul that we talk about is in fact a deficiency of power, of Light, making it through from the divine spirit. – An Evil Person Is a Sick Person. HT*

Our spiritual nature is like the sun in the sky. On sunny days, our spirit, the sun, shines brightly, but on cloudy days it is obscured and there is less brightness. According to Meishusama, these clouds superimposed over our spirit cause inner darkness, resulting in a dulling of awareness and a corresponding increase in suffering. The amount of spiritual clouding polluting the aura determines its overall size and thickness. Spiritual clouds are created by environmental toxins that have accumulated in our body, and also from impressions left in our aura as a result of our wrongful thoughts and actions.

Although all human souls were originally created innocent and pure, over time, as a result of errors and misdeeds in the world, we all became corrupted by negativity and spiritual pollution. Our thoughts and actions create immediate changes in our personal energy fields, which, by radiating outward, influence the world around us. The way that we view the people and circumstances in our lives determines the types of responses we make. Negative thoughts lead to negative actions, whereas positive thoughts lead to positive actions. Appreciation, empathy, gratitude, love, and humor magnify the aura and promote greater awareness and happiness, whereas resentment, worry, judgment, jealousy, and hate create spiritual clouds that weaken the aura and promote dullness and unhappiness.



Three Stages of Purification

This same principle also applies to our actions. Everything we do either brightens or darkens our aura, depending on its overall effect on the world. We are literally a product of our past actions, which is summarized in the common expression, “character is destiny.” Helping others with kindness and consideration is a powerful way of improving our own lives because of the effect it has upon our consciousness and character. By serving others we also serve the greater good.

As you enter into a faith and turn to God, Divine Light flows into your soul through the spiritual cords, increasing the radiance within and dispelling the clouds. – *An Evil Person Is a Sick Person. HT*

The spiritual clouds that we create continue to affect us until they are purified by either our actions or by painful external events. By covering and diminishing the radiance of our spirit, spiritual clouds can burden our thoughts and moods as well as attract unfortunate events into our lives. Based on this principle, we can say that the radiance of our soul is the primary determinant to the quality of our life.

People whose minds are heavily polluted by spiritual clouds fail to see the essential unity of all things, but instead see only division and separation. Coming from a place of lack, they are driven by compulsive desires and bound by personal attachments. They imagine the world to be a hostile place full of potential enemies and are quick to attack others or withdraw in fear. Some will compensate by striving to succeed in the world, hoping to demonstrate their superiority over their competitors. Others try to escape their pain by becoming addicted to alcohol or drugs, developing co-dependent relationships, or burying themselves in obsessive reading or compulsive work. All of these clouded people are easily subject to fear, anger, or depression based on deeply held insecurities, alienation, or low self-esteem.

When we see things in this light, the reason for a person becoming evil is to be found in the clouding of his soul, and he is really a sick man. Of course, the violence with which he is purified depends on how evil he has become, and a very evil person can suffer greatly, even to the extent of becoming seriously ill. – *An Evil Person Is a Sick Person. HT*

This is not to equate being ill with being evil, but to make the connection between spiritual clouds and suffering in some, and spiritual clouds and evil reaction patterns in others. Most of this behavior is reactionary, and fails to bring a clouded mind any real sense of peace or happiness. These people tend to project all sorts of false images, fantasies, and motives onto others, instead of seeing them for who they really are. Additionally, because of their limited self-awareness, they are subject to delusions and self-deception. This condition is a breeding ground for neuroses, emotional instability, and mental confusion. These are all symptoms of the negative influence that spiritual clouds can have on the mind of an individual.

Not only do thoughts and actions have this influence, but toxins from the outer environment can also create spiritual clouds by polluting our physical bodies and poisoning our blood. Additionally, we inherit spiritual clouds from the genetic inheritance of our parents and ancestors, as well as from the social conditioning received from our childhood upbringing. Also, because we are not separate from our outer environment, the spiritual clouds generated by society affect us as well. The more repressive or dysfunctional a culture or society is, the greater the damage. (Countries that oppress women, minorities, and other nationalities are good examples of this.) Finally, we are subject to spiritual clouds carried over from our past lives. All of these factors influence our behavior to an enormous degree.

Toxins and spiritual clouds block the beneficial influences of our divine spirit and guardian spirit, allowing the animal spirit to drive us towards destructive behavior,

resulting in increased personal suffering. According to Meishusama, delinquents and criminals are spiritually sick people whose ability to distinguish between right and wrong is severely clouded. Individuals who are mentally ill also suffer from oppressive spiritual clouds that confuse their minds, disturb their emotions, and generate irrational cravings, leaving them vulnerable to domination by evil animal spirits.

Meishusama teaches that all suffering is caused by impurities existing in the spiritual world. Physical toxins contribute to impurities in the spiritual body, since the physical and the spiritual are related. However, the most important point to consider is that the primary cause is in the spiritual world, not the physical. Thus, if we trace it backwards to the fundamental reason for why we were exposed to toxins in the physical world, we find that the reason originated in the spiritual world. This is why it is always useful to look to the spiritual world to find the meaning and purpose behind outer events.

When impurities accumulate to a sufficient degree, a natural process of elimination occurs that can be unpleasant or painful to experience. *The essence of Meishusama's teachings focuses on removing spiritual clouds as gently and pleasantly as possible rather than through suffering.* We can avoid suffering by doing things that create more Light in the spiritual body, and by not indulging in activities that create more spiritual clouds. The healing energy of Jyorei is an especially powerful way to eliminate clouds and to infuse Light within the spiritual body. The overall movement of the universe is towards greater unity, harmony, and consciousness, and from this perspective, all forms of purification can be seen as necessary occurrences brought on to further this ongoing evolution.

*Refine your spirit and soul to serve as a part of God's work of transforming the world.  
– Refining Body and Soul. MK*