



## **Physical Behavior and Manifestations/Phenomena: Summary, Practical Applications, & Sample Prayers**

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### **Summary**

It is important to be aware of the significance of physical behavior and manifestations/phenomena. These can provide memory information, drain off emotional energy, distract, be an indicator of some other interference/opposition (internal parts and/or demonic), or indicate the healing work of the Holy Spirit. People can also fabricate and/or embellish manifestations to get attention, and demonic spirits can produce counterfeit manifestations in order to deliberately deceive and confuse. I have been amazed by how often I have noticed each of these once I was aware of the different possibilities and began watching for them. I have also been pleasantly surprised by how easy it has been to identify and address the problematic sources of physical behavior and manifestations/phenomena, once I was aware of the different possibilities and understood the basic principles involved.

### **I. Interference:**

- A. Pressure leaks: Negative emotions often lead us to underlying traumatic memories that cause/contribute to psychological and spiritual problems, but the emotional intensity often has to get to a certain point before important connections are made. Physical behavior and manifestations/phenomena can drain emotional energy and thereby actually hinder the healing process. I have found that if recipients choose to *not* use any of their coping tools (including obsessive behaviors), if they suppress nervous habits, and if they suppress any manifestations/phenomena that are under their control, the emotional intensity builds more quickly and the healing work is enhanced. Likewise, if we address involuntary manifestations/phenomena by binding demonic spirits and/or working with internal dissociated parts, the emotional intensity builds more quickly and the healing work is enhanced.
- B. Distraction: Both internal parts and demonic spirits seem to know how to produce physical manifestations/phenomena in order to distract the person receiving ministry. If they can get you to focus on interesting physical phenomena you may lose your focus on the painful memories and/or strategic targets you were working on. The physical phenomena can also confuse and/or frighten the person receiving ministry, which is especially distracting.
- C. Indication of interference/opposition (internal parts and/or demonic spirits): My perception is that spontaneous physical manifestations/phenomena are sometimes simply the visible physical indicator of interference/opposition on the part of unseen internal parts and/or demonic spirits. The session described in “Emotional Healing, Spiritual Opposition, and Physical Manifestations” provides a good example. The recipient experienced twitching and jerking during prayer at charismatic prayer meetings and also during our emotional healing sessions. The twitching and jerking did not seem to be under her voluntary control,

but did stop immediately when I bound demonic interference. Her perception was that internal emotional healing had stopped when the manifestations began, and had resumed with my commands to bind interference and the cessation of the physical manifestations. My perception was that the physical phenomena were not blocking the healing directly, but rather were external evidence of the demonic opposition that was blocking the process – the physical manifestations were “side effects” produced in the physical body as demonic spirits opposed the Holy Spirit’s healing work.

**II. Human fabrication/embellishment:** The basic principle of behavior-modification theory, “If you reward a certain behavior, it will increase,” is supported by extensive research. My assessment is that most charismatic renewals have created a social environment where physical manifestations are rewarded with positive attention. Even when the leadership consistently teaches a balanced and mature position, my observation is that a handful of common psychological dynamics result in a renewal culture where physical manifestations are rewarded with positive attention.<sup>1</sup>

Many people have not received enough positive attention in their lives. Maybe they are not particularly attractive, and have never excelled at something that made them stand out in a good way. Maybe their wounds and lies have made it difficult for others to be with them – like the ways in which my pressured-speech and constant anxiety made it tiring for potential friends to spend time with me. Even more important, many of us carry lies connected to the wounds of not receiving enough positive attention from key people in our childhoods. For example, “I’m not special enough for him to want to spend time with me,” or “There’s something wrong with me,” or “I am a loser,” or “Nobody wants to hear what I have to say.” In addition to bringing positive attention, the physical manifestations themselves can have strong positive emotional meaning that temporarily soothes these wounds and lies: “Look! The Lord is touching me! I *am* special, He *does* love me, He *is* answering my prayers! I am included – not a reject!”

While I believe it is rare for adults to consciously and deliberately fabricate manifestations, I think it is common for people with dynamics like these to slip into stirring up, leaning into, or embellishing the manifestations, often in ways that they are only vaguely aware of (or even in ways that are completely outside of their conscious awareness).

Also, while it is probably rare for a person’s adult-self to consciously and deliberately fabricate manifestations, people with significant dissociation may have internal child parts who are more susceptible to positive attention, and more readily respond with embellishment and/or even fabricating physical phenomena.

**NOTE:** If you are feeling resentment, condemnation, or self-righteous judgment towards the people you think may be fabricating or embellishing their manifestations, *then you should not be the one to address the problem. Please* deal with any judgment on your part before attempting to address these concerns.

For those who would like additional material regarding the phenomena of human fabrication

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<sup>1</sup>My perception is that the senior leadership in the Toronto renewal consistently teaches a balanced position, encouraging participants to focus on the Giver (our heavenly Father) and not the gifts, on lasting fruit in their lives and not on the physical manifestations during services.

and/or embellishment, I have found Dr. John White's comments to be particularly helpful, balanced, and non-judgmental.<sup>2</sup>

**III. Demonic counterfeit manifestations intended to cause confusion, fear, and division in the church/community:** As mentioned above, physical phenomena can disrupt emotional healing work by confusing and/or frightening the individual recipient. My perception is that the enemy also produces counterfeit manifestations in charismatic renewal group settings in order to cause confusion, fear, and division in the Church. As also mentioned above, physical manifestations have strong positive emotional meaning for many of us. In fact, all of the dynamics that make one susceptible to embellishment and/or fabrication also make one susceptible to deceiving spirits that produce counterfeit manifestations. These dynamics, in combination with our personal wounds, lies, psychological defenses, and sins, can open the way for counterfeit manifestations. As described in "Deceiving Spirits and Counterfeit Manifestations: How Wounds, Lies, Internal Parts, Repression, and Denial Can Give Them a Place," it was sobering and humbling to discover how easily my own needs, desires, wounds, lies, defenses, and sins combined to give the enemy space to produce counterfeit manifestations in my own life.<sup>3</sup>

My assessment is that counterfeit manifestations are often the physical phenomena that feel the most odd, inappropriate, disturbing, and disruptive.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the *timing* of manifestations I perceive to be counterfeit seem designed to maximally disrupt the larger ministry purpose of the service.

**IV Physical memories:** The recipient experiences physical memories when the brain plays the memory track that stores the movements or sensations of the person's body from the traumatic memory. The physical movements and/or sensations will replay aspects of the traumatic event, and can provide valuable clues and/or confirmation regarding the traumatic memories being addressed.

## **V. Physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit's presence:**

**A. "Side effects" of the Lord's healing work:** I have observed situations in which physical manifestations seemed to correspond to the Holy Spirit's healing work. The physical manifestations did not appear to contribute to, or be a part of the healing process, nor did they appear to interfere with the healing process in any way. "Side effects" in medicine provide a good analogy: there are many medical treatments that cause "side effects" – physical manifestations that are not inherently a part of the intended healing benefit, but are the natural effect of the treatment on some other part of the body.

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<sup>2</sup>See John White, *When the Spirit Comes With Power*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), p. 58-72.

<sup>3</sup>See "Deceiving Spirits and Counterfeit Manifestations: How Wounds, Lies, Internal Parts, Repression, and Denial Can Give Them a Place" in the "Kclehman Website Archives" section of the "Special Subjects/Advanced Topics" section of [www.immanuelapproach.com](http://www.immanuelapproach.com) for a discussion of the internal dynamics that can open the way for the enemy to produce counterfeit manifestations, and also a case-study example from my own experience.

<sup>4</sup>I do not perceive that certain manifestations are always from the Holy Spirit while others are always demonic counterfeit, but rather that a given manifestation (for example, laughing) can sometimes be from the Holy Spirit and sometimes demonic counterfeit.

- B. “Side effects” of the Lord’s presence in worship:** There are many examples, in the Bible and in church history, of people experiencing physical manifestations in association with a special visitation of the Lord’s presence.<sup>5</sup> Many of these accounts do not mention any healing, but rather indicate that physical manifestations are simply the response of the physical body to the Lord’s overwhelming presence. Personal acquaintances who have experienced physical manifestations during intense worship describe feeling as if their nervous system is directly affected by the power of the Lord’s presence and glory.
- C. Play, especially with internal parts:** Over the past fifty years, I have observed thousands of people displaying physical manifestations in different charismatic renewal settings. In some of these situations, the overall feeling I got was that the Lord was *playing* with His children. Just as human fathers play with their children – not to “get something done,” but because play is fun, they love their children, and they like to put the two together. Many of us have internal child parts that had to grow up much too quickly. When I have observed the “silly” manifestations that have sometimes occurred during renewal services, it sometimes seemed that the Lord was playing with these “inner children.”

This is consistent with observations from emotional healing sessions. Many people doing emotional healing work have had “childhoods” that weren’t childhoods – childhoods that were full of pain and fear, with little or no play. With a number of people I have worked with, at some point in the healing process they described Jesus initiating play with their child-self (or internal child parts) that never got to play during their “real” childhoods (often much to the person’s surprise). One of the most dramatic examples of this phenomena was a man who described his “child self” going camping with Jesus, playing tag with Jesus, going fishing with Jesus, riding on the Space Mountain roller coaster at Disney Land with Jesus, going on a cruise with Jesus, and going on a safari with Jesus.<sup>6</sup> See also John Arnott’s *The Father’s Blessing* for additional examples of the Lord “playing” with His children.<sup>7</sup>

## VI. Practical Applications/Tips:

- Simply being aware of the importance of physical behavior and physical manifestations/phenomena is helpful. Keep your eyes open, with the awareness that physical behavior and manifestations/phenomena can provide memory information, drain off emotional energy, distract, be an indicator of some other interference (internal parts and/or demonic), or be an indicator of the Lord’s presence and work. I was amazed at how often I discovered these different patterns once I began watching for them.

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<sup>5</sup>The description of the Apostles appearing drunk on the day of Pentecost is one of the best examples (Acts 2:1-13). Biblical characters sometimes fell down and were unable to move when they encountered the Lord’s near presence (Ezekiel 43:1-4, 44:4; Dan 8:17,18, 10:1-9; Rev 1:12-17). The Bible clearly teaches that we would die if we looked upon the unshielded glory of God – death being a dramatic “side effect” of the Lord’s full, unshielded presence (Ex 33:18-20). For examples in Church history, see *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. I (New York: S. Converse, 1829), p.133-34; *Memoirs of Rev. Charles G. Finney* (New York, 1876) p.12-23. Guy Chevreau, Th.D. provides a lengthy summary of physical phenomena in the Great Awakening in *Catch the Fire* (Toronto, Canada: HarperPerennial, 1995) p.70-144.

<sup>6</sup>For additional description and discussion regarding this particular example, see Karl Lehman, *An Introduction to the Immanuel Approach* (Evanston, IL: Immanuel Publishing, 2024), pages 36-38.

<sup>7</sup>John Arnott, *The Father’s Blessing* (Orlando, FL: Creation House, 1995), p. 13, 25, 26, 124.  
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- Whenever you observe physical behavior and/or manifestations/phenomena, it is important to consider all of the possibilities as you discern what to do. (Especially as you are learning, you might find it helpful to refer to the outline included on the ministry aids page below.)
- I don't worry about physical phenomena as long as the person is consistently moving through the Immanuel Approach process to healing. I observe (especially for clues that physical memory can provide), and I sometimes check in with the recipient regarding her perception of the meaning of the physical phenomena, but I don't intervene in any way unless the recipient perceives that the phenomena correspond to interference/opposition from demonic spirits and/or internal parts.
- Be especially careful to watch for and eliminate pressure-leak behavior and phenomena when the person "can't get a-hold of anything" and/or when the process keeps bogging down for lack of emotional intensity.
- Suspect that a physical phenomena is providing a pressure leak when the physical phenomena is brief (usually seconds) and the person experiences relief/decreased intensity immediately after the phenomena.<sup>8</sup>
- Look carefully for internal parts and/or demonic interference when there are a lot of physical manifestations but the person does not move through to healing.
- Especially consider underlying opposition when physical manifestations are prolonged. Before I learned to discern and bind underlying demonic interference, clients would frequently experience physical manifestations for extended periods during emotional healing work.
- People with nervous habits and obsessive behaviors will need reminders: Clients usually understand the concept and agree to do anything that will turbo-charge the process, but during the actual healing work they will often become immersed in the work and forget. You will often need to gently remind them to keep letting go of the pressure leak behavior.

**VII. Judgmental attitude:** If you feel resentful, condemning, or self righteous judgment regarding pressure-leak behaviors, interference/opposition from internal parts, or fabricated/embellished manifestations, *then you should not be the one to address them. Please* deal with any judgment on your part before attempting to address these issues. This caution is especially important regarding concerns that someone may be fabricating or embellishing their manifestations.

#### **VIII. Comments Regarding Physical Phenomena/Manifestations in the Context of**

**Renewal:** My study of the history of renewal movements indicates that physical manifestations/phenomena have consistently been one of the largest sources of confusion, fear, and division in the wider Church regarding each of the renewal movements. My hope is that a better understanding of the different possible causes, and preparation of ministry teams that can non-anxiously and non-judgmentally deal with each of the different causes, will dramatically decrease the problems associated with the physical phenomena/manifestations that often come

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<sup>8</sup>Of course this does not include relief indicating completed emotional healing.

with renewal.

**IX. The Church as a Grace-Based rather than Shame-Based Family:** One very significant achievement of many churches who embrace charismatic renewal, even with all of its messy manifestations, is the establishment of the church as a place of safety and welcome for all. For those who can receive it, this grace-based atmosphere is a refreshing change, and a major avenue of healing in itself. All too many of us are familiar with the opposite characteristics – the characteristics of shame-based families, where appearance is everything, and acceptance and belonging are constantly in jeopardy if one acts outside of family expectations. While I do think it is wise to identify and address the various sources of manifestations, I also advise caution to those who find themselves constantly focusing on all of the potential problems and how to manage them. I suspect that some of what gets labeled as discernment is actually reaction to triggered shame and/or fear.

**I would appreciate feedback:** I would appreciate feedback, especially from those of you who participate in charismatic worship and/or prayer ministry sessions where there are a lot of physical manifestations. It would be particularly valuable to get reports back from anyone who is willing to try the sample prayer in appropriate worship and/or ministry settings.

## **Physical Manifestations: Possible Causes, Summary Outline**

### **I. Interference**

#### A. Pressure leaks

1. Learned, voluntary coping behavior
2. Nervous habits
3. Obsessive compulsive behavior
4. Spontaneous phenomena that can be suppressed (parts and/or demonic)
5. Spontaneous phenomena that cannot be suppressed (parts and/or demonic)

#### B. Distraction

#### C. Indicators of interference/opposition (internal parts and/or demonic spirits)

### **II. Human fabrication/embellishment**

### **III. Demonic counterfeit manifestations intended to cause confusion, fear, and division**

### **IV. Physical memories**

### **V. Physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit's presence**

- A. "Side effects" of the Lord's presence
- B. "Side effects" of the Lord's healing work
- C. Play, especially with internal parts

### **Physical Manifestations: Sample Prayers**

“Lord, I want to receive anything that is of you. I want to be free of pride and pretense – I want to be free to worship You in any way You lead me to, I want to be free to play in your presence. I also want to release and/or remove any way in which physical manifestations in my life are in the way of your better plans.

“Lord, reveal to me the meaning of the physical manifestations in my life.

- Help me to recognize manifestations that are evidence of Your presence, that I may open my heart to you more fully. Help me to recognize manifestations that are play, or some other gift, so that I may embrace them and receive all the blessings You have prepared for me.
- Help me to recognize physical memory, so that I may go with You to the underlying wounds You want to heal.
- Help me to recognize and release any manifestations that are pressure leaks. Please give me the courage and grace to stay with any painful emotions You bring forward. Give me the courage and grace to go with You to any sins and/or issues and/or wounds You want to deal with.
- Help me to recognize and release any way in which I turn to physical manifestations as a substitute for intimacy with You.
- Help me to recognize and release any manifestations that are distracting me from sins and/or issues and/or wounds that You want to expose and deal with.
- Help me to recognize any manifestations that I am fabricating and/or embellishing, consciously or unconsciously. Give me the grace to confess and release this behavior. Show me how to participate in Your plans to address the underlying needs.
- Help me to recognize manifestations that indicate demonic interference. Please expose the underlying demonic interference, so that I can stand with the authority You have given me and remove it.
- Help me to recognize demonic counterfeit intended to bring confusion, fear, and division. Please expose the wounds, lies, defenses, and sins in my life that make it possible for the enemy to produce these counterfeit manifestations. Give me the grace to deal with these wounds, lies, defenses, and sins.”