

CHAPTER 2

THE LIFE OF EMMET FOX

2.1 HIS LIFE

Emmet Fox was a layman who became a great exponent of New Thought. As an Irishman who worked in the field of electrical engineering, he soon became very well known and popular as a New Thought minister. Fox was born in Ireland on 30 July 1886. He was educated in England, lived out his career in America, and died in France, on 13 August 1951. His family had a long Catholic tradition. His father was not merely a famous surgeon, but also a Member of Parliament. He received his early education at the Stamford Hill Jesuit College, near London. It was known for the way in which it inculcated systematic thoroughness and remarkable self-control in its students, and these were traits of Fox's character throughout his life. The Jesuit Order trained men who were not afraid to break with traditional teachings and who eventually influenced the philosophical beliefs of the world, such as Pascal, Descartes and Voltaire (Gaze 1968:18–19).

It seems that Fox was a natural healer. At the age of six he placed his hand on his mother's aching forehead, who then experienced no more pain, and felt a sense of peace embracing her. In another instance, when he spoke the words, 'Mary, Mary, you are going to be well! Yes, you are going to be well!' to the sick sister of the maid who was working for them, he realised that it was their (the maid's and her sister's) faith that had brought about the healing (Gaze 1968:97). Even as a young boy he understood that the ability to heal was not special to him, but is a power that is possessed by all. He seriously began his investigation into the healing phenomena at the age of eighteen. At that time he was not very strong himself. His impaired hearing and vision led to nervous shyness and even to being labelled a 'sissy'.

His ability to heal led to his divergence from the Catholic Church. His quest for answers and explanations led him into a study of metaphysics and later to its teachers and healers. It included movements such as Practical Metaphysics, New Psychology and Divine

Science. The works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, Mesmer, Mary Baker Eddy, Curtis Hopkins, Horatio W Dresser and Charles Fillmore all led to Fox's deeper understanding of healing. To him, healing meant 'complete harmony of body, mind and soul' (Gaze 1968:98–101).

It has been stated that his movement away from the Catholic Church was a gradual process. That there was no break with the church indicates that his 'new-found faith was not a protestant one so much as it was an increasing enlightenment that encompassed all faiths' (Gaze 1968:20). It was important for Fox to have the freedom to approach God in ways known to him, and therefore he also respected the ways of his parents and other people. It has been said that 'his family did not oppose him so much as they adjusted to his new way of life' (Gaze 1968:22). Once, after he had appeared on the platform with psychics such as Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at the Albert Hall, an article in the newspaper led to a family confrontation, which resulted in Fox and his mother never discussing the subject again. However, it seems that he and his mother shared a fine zeal for their inner faith and therefore respected each other in that faith. His sister, Nora Fox, never realised what great work her brother had done, for he always underplayed his fame so that he did not hurt the family's Catholic sensitivities. It was at his cremation that Nora said: 'Fancy him starting a new religion when we've got a perfectly good one!' (Wolhorn 1977:228).

Harry Gaze first met Emmet Fox as a young electrical engineer who was attending Gaze's classes in healing. Gaze (1968:22) remembers him as a 'shy but avid student, eagerly concerned not only with the techniques of healing but also delving into the underlying philosophy and psychology'. Fox is regarded by thousands of readers, students and seekers as a writer of religious books, a teacher, minister and friend who served them for years and a healer who was always willing to pray with them. Fox's personality is described as being 'a little grayish outwardly', rather than 'booming and rosy'. He was regarded as an adventurer, but in the sense of a spiritual adventurer rather than one who would risk his life in exploring the wilderness. His shyness was often interpreted as coldness. His charm was described as magnetism. When people were asked what Emmet Fox was like, they seemed more impressed with his spiritual qualities than his personal and physical appearance. He is remembered as someone who was always positive, who was sure of himself, and who knew what he was doing and why. One of his common expressions

illustrated this, when he said, 'life is thrillingly interesting'. Having had a 'center line and focal point', he kept on track and was not distracted by meaningless events. He is also described as 'a happy man with a shining twinkle in his hazel-grey eyes'; one with 'dark and heavy brows and grey hair'; and his 'laugh was a deep chuckle rising from "far below"' (Gaze 1968:13–15).

Herman and Blanche Wolhorn, who had known, worked and travelled with Fox for over twenty years, remember a more personal and intimate side of him that is not usually known to others. Wolhorn (1977:135) regards Fox himself as the greatest golden key of all. He states that Fox 'opened a new way of life for millions of people and was the means of channeling healing to thousands of others. His faith in the power of constructive thinking and its ability to change lives continues to affect millions through his published writings.'

Whatever Fox did, he did with all his heart. He used to imprint this quality on his students by saying that, 'if you sing of the glory of God, really glorify Him with all your voice' (Gaze 1968:15). From an unpublished manuscript of a lecture series delivered in 1938, Fox said:

Please get away from the idea that anything very important must be complicated. All the essential things of life are simple – or life would not go on. Apart from Divine Science, the religion which is nearest to God, it seems to me, is that of the Quakers. It is probably one of the smallest religious groups in the country because it is so simple. It is more fundamental in my estimation than most others. I admire all churches, but to my way of thinking the Quakers have the essentials. They give you the goods, no wrapping paper, just the goods (Gaze 1968:15).

He lived a well-balanced life, with quality and simplicity the two elements that he demanded in his surroundings. His appreciation of beauty in all forms and aspects included watching the stars and the sky, visiting museums and far-away places, viewing masterpieces of art and sculpture. He would often say, 'God is so good to us' (Gaze 1968:17).

Regardless of some physical weakness, Fox had the unique ability to demonstrate the wholesome power of God and to inspire his students for many years. He states clearly that

there is no need to be unhappy. There is no need to be sad. There is no need to be disappointed, or oppressed, or aggrieved. There is no need for illness or failure or discouragement. There is no necessity for anything but success, good health, prosperity and an abounding interest and joy in life ... as long as you accept a negative condition at its own valuation, so long will you remain in bondage to it; but you have only to assert your birthright as a free man or woman and you will be free (Fox 1994:1).

He also lived a life of spontaneity, enjoying a sense of humour, independence and good will. These were all qualities he had inherited from his Irish parents. Fox felt that a growing simplicity in one's life is one of the tests of the seeker's sincerity. He states that

sooner or later you will have to put God first in your life, that is to say, your own true spiritual development must become the only thing that really matters. It need not, perhaps had better not, be the only thing in your life, but it must be the first thing. When this happens you will find that you have got rid of a great deal of the unnecessary junk that most people carry about; mental junk, of course, although physical junk is apt to follow upon this. You will find that you will do a great deal less running about after things that do not matter and only waste your time and energy, when once you have put God first. Your life will become simpler and quieter, but in the true sense, richer and infinitely more worthwhile (Fox 1979a:119).

According to Gaze (1968:29) two steps are singled out that summarise Fox's approach to education. The first is 'singleness of thought to the point of realization, or concentration', and the second lesson of life is 'control of thought'. The following words were written thousands of years ago by an Eastern sage: 'All that we are is the result of what we have thought.' The apostle Paul preached that 'we are transformed by the renewing of our minds', and Fox explained it as 'you choose all the conditions of your life, when you choose the thoughts upon which you allow your mind to dwell. Thought is the real causative force in life, and there is no other.'

Fox perceived the world as a school in which one has to learn one's lessons. The two lessons that run throughout his work and his personal life are the 'lesson of the Omnipresence of God, and the lesson of the power of thought' (Gaze 1968:25). The two thousand or more books in his library testified to the wide interest he had shown in this subject matter. One could find on the bookshelves the Upanishads of Hinduism, the Sutras of Buddhism, the Gospels of Christianity, the works of John Wesley, George Fox, Martin Luther and Mark Twain. He loved music, especially Mozart, art, poetry and dancing, and works dealing with physical culture. Fox was always learning. 'Teaching and learning was a single process with him. Ordinary conversation offered him opportunity to find new truth' (Gaze 1968:27).

At a later stage in his life he also achieved his goal of learning to skate on ice, and he was passionate about the circus. This love was shared by his good friend and a member of the

board of trustees of Fox's church, the writer Earl Chapin May (author of the best-selling *From Rome to Ringling*). Fox encouraged everyone to visit the circus. He emphasised its rejuvenating effect and said that the best way to see a circus is through the eyes of a child. 'If you don't have a child of your own, beg, borrow or steal one and go to the circus', he would say (Wolhorn 1977:142). He came to know the performers very well and he often used the life of the circus as a metaphor for his sermons. Every season he would give a cocktail party for the circus performers, and would also be involved in helping them with their daily challenges on a spiritual level.

Fox gave his first metaphysical talk in 1928 in the Mortimer Hall in London. From this moment he was ambivalent about whether to continue working as an electrical engineer, or whether to take up public speaking and writing. Gaze encouraged the young Fox, and soon afterwards he started his career as a speaker, first in Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh and Glasgow, and then in New York. In 1931 Fox knew a change was coming in his life, and his original thought was to go to Russia, a country that was 'in the throes of an interesting political experiment' and that was 'beginning to open its doors to the outside world'. After a great deal of prayer he received the answer, 'Go west; see America first' (Wolhorn 1977:135). He never did go to Russia, but one of his most popular booklets on reincarnation was translated into the Russian language and published in many magazines in Russia.

In 1931 the unknown Fox arrived in New York. Later he was believed to have been one of the greatest mystics and religious teachers of the time, who brought an enrichment to America that had not been known in the past. He arrived in the US with a six-month visa, but was eventually to stay for twenty years. His first break came when Florence Scovel Shinn, whom he had met in London, invited him to speak at her church while she was on vacation. The day he appeared unannounced on the platform some people left the room (those that remained came back early the next week in order to obtain a seat). Not long after this ordeal, about seven hundred people left the room on the day that Fox *did not* speak and someone else stood in for him. He received invitations to speak at the Church of Truth and the Unity Society in the Salmon Building. The secretary of the Church of the Healing Christ, Herman Wolhorn, recognised his potential and offered him the position of successor of Dr James Murray in 1931. As a forty-five-year-old, his career then took off in one of the largest congregations of its kind in the world.

Dr James Murray, a teacher of Divine Science, came into the movement through Matilda Cramer, who in turn was a student of Emma Curtis Hopkins. The Church of the Healing Christ had its beginnings in 1906 under the leadership of Dr Murray. Neither Murray nor Fox identified himself with any existing group. However, they always had close relationships with kindred groups such as Homes of Truth, Unity, Divine Science, New Thought and Churches of Truth. Dr Murray built up a congregation of about 1 500 members, which began to drop in numbers when he died. After Dr Murray's death Dr A C Grier succeeded him for a short while. And then the young and upcoming Emmet Fox took over when Grier resigned as pastor of the Church of the Healing Christ and thereby started 'one of the most remarkable ministries of any church in America in that or any other period' (Braden 1987:352).

As a layman preacher Fox decided to become ordained. Unity insisted that every graduate should first complete the formal requirements. But as Fox was already such a big success, Nona Brooks of Divine Science was willing to 'waive the formal requirements, and so he was ordained as a minister of Divine Science by the College of Divine Science at Denver' (Braden 1987:352). He then renamed his church The First Church of Divine Science of New York (Larson 1987:179).

Emmet Fox gained the respect of his congregation by living the truth. There was an authority in his manner, and with his charm and quiet dignity he brought the message into the hearts of the people. He was never bound to a building, and was not convinced 'that buildings were essential in maintaining a religious organization'. So, like the children of Israel, this congregation moved among various halls, rooms and auditoriums. There was no hierarchical structure or complicated organisation. This loose organisational structure reminds one of a country such as South Africa, where similar trends are noticeable. It is my opinion that organisational structure within New Thought groups is very loose and it seems that the future role of New Thought in South Africa is not going to be one of a highly structured new, religious movement, but rather one of offering people an opportunity to 'transcend' their present religious thought and to keep on transcending it without necessarily leaving it. This allows individuals within the South African New Thought Movement the freedom 'to provide bridges between different cultures, languages, religious and political beliefs in times of major change and adjustment' (Venter 1996:142). Therefore, continues Gaze (1968:76–77), one could rather refer to Fox's church as 'a school for spiritual development'.

As the numbers of attendees grew over the years, the church had to find larger venues. The movement from one venue to another had its own story. Originally meetings were held in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, which was then demolished so that the Empire State Building could be erected. It was at this time that they approached the management of the Biltmore Hotel for a venue. At first the hotel management were uncertain whether they really wanted to accommodate a church meeting on their premises. The then-famous president of the Biltmore hotels, John M Bowman, who was present at the meeting that day, said to his staff, 'Gentlemen, it seems to me that we have everything in this hotel but God.' And with this statement, the church was 'in' (Wolhorn 1977:137). The congregation had to move around as often larger venues were required to accommodate the growing numbers of attendees. From the Biltmore Hotel, the church moved to the Hotel Astor, then to the Hippodrome, the largest auditorium in New York City with the exception of Madison Square Garden. Between 5 000 and 6 000 people attended the Wednesday evening and Sunday morning services. On special occasions such as Easter the number reached 8 000. On these occasions the police were called in to direct the flow of traffic.

These meetings attracted the attention of the press. Headlines included 'Preacher uses hotel ballroom to popularize prayer' (*Newsweek*); 'Every Sunday the preacher, Emmet Fox, pounds home the same vital message' that 'Prayer does change things!' When he was asked by reporters why he used ballrooms and theatres for his meetings, he answered, 'I couldn't get some men into church with a shotgun, but they'll come to a hotel.' Walter Winchell, the well-known New York columnist wrote: 'Two new religious movements are attracting plenty. Emmet Fox, who a year ago held his meets in a hotel, now turns them away from the Hippodrome and the Manhattan Opera House' (Wolhorn 1977:141).

Braden (1987:352–353) recalls that 'he had the distinction of preaching to the largest congregation in New York, and probably the greatest in all America'. The Manhattan Opera House was often filled to capacity, even before the start of the service, and hundreds of people were turned away. A newspaper journalist from the New York *World-Telegram* (30 October 1937) described Fox's service:

Somebody said the other day that when you see a crowd leaving a public building, you can guess what sort of meeting it has been – whether a gospel meeting or a prize fight, a circus or a classical concert – but that nobody could place the crowd that comes from the Manhattan Opera House every Wednesday night, because it contains every kind of person. As a matter of fact, it is a cross-section of New York's

population at prayer meeting, the regular Wednesday evening meeting of the Church of the Healing Christ, when the pastor, Dr Emmet Fox, explains the life of man from the angle of psychology and metaphysics (Gaze 1968:78).

Although Emmet Fox was crowd conscious, he never held onto them. He used to say to his congregation, 'There are a number of good centers and churches in the city. While I am gone, if you find someone else where you can get more help, you must stay there' (Wolhorn 1977:139–140). Some did, but there were always more people by the time he returned. He had a certain charisma that attracted people. His father had been a Member of Parliament and years ago when the Liberal Party's regular speakers could not rally a crowd, the young Emmet was called upon. It was well known that each week their own rooms in New York were packed to capacity. Ladies would even roll up their expensive mink coats to sit on the floor wherever they could find a space. Herman and Blanche Wolhorn (1977:140) recalled the time they travelled with Fox to Yosemite National Park in California. He was enthusiastically describing the popular Broadway play *Green pastures* to them. As the story unfolded, people from the other tables gathered closer in order to hear the story. Even waitresses stopped serving. Wolhorn then made the remark that there are enough people to start a metaphysical meeting, and as Fox turned around, every one applauded.

This magnetic speaker attracted people from all walks of life. Although each one had his or her own agenda, most seekers hungered after the truth – they were thirsty for that something which was missing from their lives. The gift Fox gave to people was to awaken in them confidence in God and then make them realise that they had to claim it for themselves. 'The goodness of God is unchangeable; if you do not experience it the fault is yours for not choosing it' (Gaze 1968:83). Fox would remind everyone that there is a place for them, and that 'the Divine Providence wouldn't make you if He didn't need you – there just isn't an unnecessary human being in the world' (Gaze 1968:85).

Dorothy Giles, (from *Cosmopolitan*) wrote: 'America's soul clinics had taken me to one of Emmet Fox's Sunday meetings. There I had seen some four thousand New Yorkers of every walk in life – lawyers, teachers, bank clerks and bank presidents, stenographers, debutantes and Park Avenue dowagers' (Wolhorn 1977:142). Everyone had his or her spiritual battery recharged by listening to Fox. The names of those who attended read like

a Who's who. Patricia Murphy, the famous restaurateur, would often decorate the platform with flowers on a Sunday morning. The steel industry executive Charles Schwab also attended the meetings and he once remarked, 'What a wonderful thing it would be for the country and for industry if we could get a man like this in the steel business.' The musical director at Carnegie Hall, Mitropoulos, also attended the meetings, after which he would go into rehearsal with his orchestra. Fox and Wolhorn often remained behind to listen to the performance. Clergymen from other denominations also attended and even their notices in the paper began to take on a more constructive and metaphysical aspect (Wolhorn 1977:142–143).

The radio was also a medium through which Emmet Fox shared his teaching. He was first heard on the radio through the active interest of the well-known actress Paula Stone. Although the programme was successful, the rigid censorship regulations of the time 'erased some of the natural sparkle and delicious humour that he had on a public platform', for he was at his 'inspirational best as an extemporaneous speaker'. Emmet Fox nevertheless did recognise the power of the radio and predicted that one day, when the strict regulations of censorship were lifted, the radio would become the best way of bringing the teaching to every one. Another of his predictions that came true was that 'the metaphysical approach toward teaching religion would be integrated more and more into the orthodox churches as the new generation of religious leaders became aware of the great potential in scientific – affirmative – prayer, and the need for healing as Jesus demonstrated it'. They would return to what he called 'the practical Christianity of Jesus Christ without dogma or creed' (Wolhorn 1977:143–144).

Fox was also known as a very practical man. He would always include some practical guidelines and instructions in his teachings and challenge his listeners to try them out for themselves. From the many letters he received, all telling of transformational stories, one gathers that the people did precisely that, and naturally experienced the miracles. Fox planned each sermon and essay intelligently, although many of his inspirational ideas emanated from a spontaneous and sincere mind. He spoke directly and clearly on those subjects that had been valuable in his own experience and those had inspired his hearers. Braden (1987:353) recalls that Fox's service did not differ that much from an ordinary church service, save for a silent healing meditation period, which was considered the most

effective part of the service. The affirmations Fox used were all positive and all included God.

Written questions were handed in regularly and he used to answer them after the Wednesday and Friday noon lectures. These were helpful to all as they reached the core of people's problems and aspirations. There were many questions about the men in service during World War II. To questions such as 'How can I help a man who is in the war?' he answered, 'Get fear out of your own heart. Treat yourself. Get that fear out of *your* heart and he will be safe. Don't ask me how; that is too complicated; but he will. Pray until you feel satisfied that God is with you. That is the very best treatment of all.' To another typical question, 'Can another person's thoughts affect me?' he replied, 'Only your own thoughts can affect you. Of course, if you dislike the other person and think he wants to hurt you, that will hurt you, but it is your own belief. See the Christ in him and that will free both him and yourself' (Wolhorn 1977:149–150).

He was not a man to build structures around his teachings or himself. He always encouraged his congregations to seek Truth wherever they could get it. 'Go where you find the most good, and stay where you can grow', he often said (Gaze 1968:89). He reminded people not to be too hard on themselves, for they are not perfect and they should not expect to be. On the other hand he told them to apply the golden rule¹ and not to sin any more. Fox was known for attracting and loving crowds. He was always willing to help anyone, even if it was just a silent prayer of 'bless you' as they passed him in line. Being Irish, he had 'a sparkle and liveliness in his manner of speaking' (Gaze 1968:90). His sense of humour had always been acknowledged and remembered by those who had known him. An eloquent speaker who chose his words well, he nevertheless realised how much one is still in the hands of the dictionary ... as if we cannot express exactly and truly what is within us. That's why he said, 'Do not be in bondage to mere words and form, but concentrate on the underlying thought. The thought's the thing' (Gaze 1968:92).

Emmet Fox was a tireless worker. Even during his annual three-month summer vacation, he took his activities elsewhere, unearthed new facets of truth, and gave life-sustaining instruction to people across the country and around the world. He never wasted time and said that 'what we call "time" represents the very substance of your existence. The hours and the days, the months and the years are soul substance, either efficiently employed in

building up a successful and glorious life for you, or wasted and lost.' When he was asked by Dr Ernest Holmes (founder of the Church of Religious Science, Los Angeles), 'How is it that at the end of every June you can close up the Church, go away for three months, come back in October, and you have the crowd right back with you?' he chuckled and replied, 'I carry them in my pocket.' To this Dr Joseph Murphy (minister of the Church of Divine Science, Los Angeles) added, 'He keeps them in the pocket of his mind' (Wolhorn 1977:139).

In a greeting sent to the members and friends of the Church, Fox wrote:

This service completes our activities for the season 1932–33. It has been a year of vigorous growth and progress. The Church membership has largely increased and the general attendance has grown steadily from week to week. It will be noted that more than once we have had to move our quarters from one part of the hotel to another, but this has been caused by the need for more room and is a tribute to the success of the work. Many striking demonstrations have been reported to me, and most of us feel that we have made a very definite advance upon our former selves of June 1932. A number of remarkable healings have occurred during our meetings but what I consider still more important is that many people have demonstrated both in bodily health and in affairs by their own personal work. The power of self-healing is the only guarantee that one really understands the teaching. The circulation of our various booklets and publications has greatly increased and this is a matter of congratulation because the written word is almost the best way of spreading the message at the present time. May the summer intermission be an opportunity for mental stock-taking and a general reorganization of your spiritual life. It is well that there should be such periods when the mind can digest and assimilate the food which it has been receiving (Wolhorn 1977:138–139).

When Fox took on the vocation of minister at the Church of the Healing Christ, it was not primarily to be a healer. However, throughout the years, he did engage himself in prayer for personal healing and there were weekly healing services. He stated that:

Healing is an essential part of the Jesus Christ teaching. If you are coming to the meetings and reading the books, and you are not getting healings, at least in some departments of your life, then you definitely have not made your contact with God (Wolhorn 1977:144).

Although Fox had used the laying on of hands as a method of healing when he was a young boy, he did not use it in his ministry. He preferred to use scientific prayer, the practice of the presence of God,² as it seemed to be more effective to him. Although he considered prayer to be enough, he never condemned the use of medicine. In fact, he believed that one can only

be healed at the level of one's understanding (the subconscious level), and should one believe in the use of medicine, then one should bless it and take it.

Fox had a method for dealing with those who sought healing from him. He would listen attentively, even meditatively, to the person's story, as this would often be the time that he intuitively received some insight into the case. He would then pray with the seeker – sometimes in silence. During this prayer he would centre his conscious mind on the healing power of Christ within, and practise the Presence of God at the specific place of need. When he was done, he would get up to indicate that the interview was over, and either greet the person with his hand, or extend a blessing with the words, 'Bless you! Bless you!' On the second visit, Fox did not allow the person to repeat his or her story as he felt this was focusing on the limitation rather than the richness of God's abundance. This method reminds one of Caroline Myss's (in Tipping 2000:74) description of the ritual the Navaho Indians had for preventing belief in the importance of wounds from becoming an addictive pattern. It was said that if a person had a grievance to share, the whole tribe would meet and everyone would listen with empathy and compassion as the person aired his or her 'woundedness' three times. Thereafter, should the person wish to tell the story again, everyone would turn their backs and say 'Enough! We have heard you express your concern three times. We have received it. Now let it go. We will not hear it again.'

Part of Fox's healing education included assignments in breathing, concentration and observation. He reminded the seekers not to accept anything less than perfect health, harmony and happiness, as these are one's divine right as sons and daughters of God. He stressed that negative and limited thinking are merely bad habits – like the bogeyman under the stairs. They were only there because we believe them to be there (Gaze 1968:105–108). Another reminder to the patient was to 'tell no one for a while until the healing has had time to "jell"' (Wolhorn 1977:146).

Fox had 'an uncanny way of isolating the essentials and seeing the difficulty in its true light and proportions'. This helped patients to be more relaxed, because they could see problems not as isolated cases, but in proportion with the rest of their lives. In one case a singer came to see Fox in quite a frantic mood. She was to sing at the inauguration of Franklin D Roosevelt, but close to the time she had developed a sore throat. When she asked him to heal her throat, he said instead, 'Why don't you forgive your parents?' After

this had been done, he reminded her that her voice would be fine and told her: 'When you sing, believe that healing goes out through your voice' (Wolhorn 1977:146–147). His spiritual advice was so much in demand that private consultations continued after the evening talks. Often neither Fox nor Wolhorn would get home before three or four o'clock the next morning. But Fox was not influenced by status and those socialites who insisted on preferential treatment were told to wait patiently until such time as he could see them.

Although healing others came naturally to him, he found it very difficult to treat himself. At one evening talk he whispered hoarsely over the microphone to the crowd of more than five thousand people, 'If you want to hear a lecture tonight you will have to practice what you've learned. Treat for me right now.' So he sat down in complete silence, praying with them, and after a while he rose and gave one of his best lectures ever (Wolhorn 1977:149).

Practising the silence³ in his healing sessions was very important to Fox. This allowed the Presence the 'opportunity to work in the souls of those who listened' and it 'melts down individual differences' (Gaze 1968:114–115). Fox also included a healing silence before meetings. He suggested that people enter in silence, sit down and be quiet. The instruction was

Get your breath both physically and mentally. Then think of God in any way you like. Recall a favorite text or a verse of a hymn that has helped you. Then 'drop' your problem into the silence, and then forget it by thinking of God again (Fox 1942:5–6).

Fox never married and did not attach himself to any social set. In a conversation about marriage with Wolhorn (1977:151) he answered,

I have thought about it more than once, and I realize that I could have lived a more normal and perhaps a happier life, but I have always felt that the work was so important that I had to forego these things and devote all my energies and time to getting out the message.

However, he was very popular with women and enjoyed female company as well as his friendships with women. He thought highly of women and said that 'the more women were emancipated, the more civilization and democracy advanced'. His friendships were deep and long, but simple and few. True friendship was marked by a sense of mutual search – rather than a teacher-pupil relationship. His devotion to his ministry, writing books, lecturing, preparing sermons and practising prayer and meditation fulfilled him in many

ways. Although he was never a parent, he took on the responsibility of a father for those he counselled, and often referred to the word 'child' in his healing work.

Harry Gaze (1968:116–125) paints a picture of Fox's life as one that was sensitive in nature: a person who loved books and music. One of Fox's hobbies was collecting old clocks and watches. The furnishings of his apartment, like his clothes, were simple and in good taste. His living quarters on the twenty-third floor of a hotel in mid-town New York were sunny, spacious and bright. Some of the rooms opened up onto a terrace where he kept some little evergreen trees. His sense of humour was 'kindly and whimsical'. Gaze recalls the day that he and Emmet went for lunch and how surprised he was to notice that the menu had some interesting names for the various courses. For example, the appetiser was named 'Elixir of Life', the soup was titled 'The Fountain of Life' and the salad was called 'Eternal Youth'. It was only later that Gaze discovered that Emmet had had the 'gilt-edged menu printed for his benefit' as he was known 'as an advocate of life renewal'. He found this a rejuvenating experience.

Other close friends added to this picture as they remembered him as a merry and warm companion. 'Joyousness was an element of saintliness that grew with him during his lifetime.' This joyousness found its expression in a spontaneous generosity to all people. He loved all kinds of people and he met people from all walks of life. An evening with Fox was always entertaining, as he would then be extremely relaxed. 'He was an amusing mimic and took great delight in bringing to life his well-loved Dickens characters.' He also loved to sing his favourite songs while travelling. He had many friends in the theatrical world (Gaze 1968:116–125).

Fox had a very practical approach to life. Whenever he sensed a financial need within someone, he would give assistance. He never accumulated money, or possessions. He said: 'I need only one apartment; I can eat only one meal at a time.' He entertained a consciousness of prosperity at all times. Hubbard (1971:41) recalls the time that her family moved away and Fox reminded her to ask for whatever she might need. He said: 'Just make-believe that you are going to JP Morgan or a bank or any place where you could naturally get money.'

Emmet Fox always had a special place in his heart for America and its history and thought it only natural that he should become part of this great nation. In 1930 he came to the USA as a visitor, only to return to the United Kingdom to apply for permanent residence of the US. With the help of senators Robert W Wagner and Dr Royal S Copeland, he was able to re-enter the country in 1933 as a permanent resident. On 21 May 1941, when he became an American citizen, he joyfully waved a little American flag that he took from his pocket. Blanche and Herman Wolhorn witnessed this ceremony and he then took them to the house where he had been conceived. Although his parents moved back to Ireland (where he was born), he would always say: 'I have an American soul' (Gaze 1968:126). He believed that the US had a key role to play in shaping the future of the world and was always proud to be an American.

The threesome, Blanche and Herman Wolhorn and Emmet Fox, went on regular trips around the country, visiting the World Fairs and other places of interest. Canada, Mexico and most of pre-Hitler Europe were also on the agenda. They preferred to travel by car, as it gave them the opportunity to view everything. Fox did not drive a car. Hubbard (1971:39), who also drove Fox around, remembers when he once ran into a man on a bicycle with his motorcycle. On the spot Fox sold his motorcycle, for he was convinced that London was getting too crowded for motorcycles. Emmet Fox was especially attracted to a second-hand bookshop with some long-out-of-print books. It was in such a shop in London that he was first led to the metaphysical movement.

He seemed to have had a 'prodigious memory'. He told Hubbard (1971:41) that he 'had to train himself to forget'. At one time he could give line and page of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. His general knowledge of all the major towns they drove through was also impressive. When asked where he got his information, he answered: 'From reading the *Brooklyn Eagle* in London'. He regarded this paper as one of the most outstanding publications in the world. When asked about his photographic mind, he agreed he had one, but also commented: 'So does everyone else, because the subconscious always remembers everything that an individual has experienced. What people have to do is to train their minds to recall information when needed' (Wolhorn 1977:164).

During these trips time was always put aside for prayer and meditation. Blanche and Herman Wolhorn remember an incident when they were travelling through the drought-

stricken Middle West. Fox decided that it was time to pray for rain. Well, soon after that, they had to stop again, for it was raining so much they could not see where they were going, and then it was time to give thanks again. Whenever anything happened along the road on their trips, especially with the car, Emmet Fox suggested prayer and treatment. Once when every effort to start the car failed, and it began to rain, Fox remarked: 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity. Let's put our weight on God' (Wolhorn 1977:204). The treatment always worked.

Fox was extremely generous on these trips and besides insisting on the best hotels, service and scenery, he always bought something of sentimental value. This deeply sentimental and sensitive side of Fox was known to Blanche and Herman. On another occasion while they were visiting a Navajo trading post, Blanche inserted a nickel into a slot machine, which flooded the floor with even more nickels. The Navajos were amazed and as they began to help her picking up her winnings, she counted seven Navajos. Looking up at Emmet Fox she asked, 'Isn't seven divine fulfillment?' Fox laughed and replied, 'No metaphysical skull-duggery, please!' and 'No more gambling for you' (Wolhorn 1977:205). These trips took them to all the major towns, amid breathtaking scenery, interesting small hotels and very challenging meals (they discovered that 'Home Cooking' signs do not always deliver what they promised), as well as diverse differences in characters that they met. They often treated and prayed for accommodation as they drove through the streets. Emmet Fox managed to do a great deal of writing on these trips. Another delight was Fox's tea drinking. He loved the drink, but always had to train the waitresses to make a pot of tea (bag in the pot and then boiling water must be poured onto it). In the end he gave up and decided 'I had better stick to metaphysics.'

One of Fox's highlights was the visit to the Unity School with its headquarters in Kansas City. Fox had always regarded Charles Fillmore, founder of Unity, as one of the great prophets. He considered himself a spiritual son of Fillmore, for he states: 'A prophet is one who has certain contact with God in a very rare degree and gives that out to his fellowmen' (Wolhorn 1977:165). Charles Fillmore was one of the great men of that generation. And Fox thought of Nona Brooks, co-founder of Divine Science Church, as his spiritual mother. It was during a visit to the First Divine Science Church and the Colorado Divine Science College in Denver that Fox gave his lecture on 'The historical destiny of the United States –

the mystery of the American money'. It seems that even as early as 1938 some of the predictions he made had come true.

The Wolhorns accompanied Fox on some of his visits to Europe too. The first was in 1937 and more trips followed in 1938, 1950 and 1951. They were amazed at Fox's ability to speak French so eloquently. He always enjoyed visiting the cathedrals, museums and galleries of Europe. They even spent some time at the Père Lachaise cemetery, where the 'list of persons buried' read like a 'Who's Who of the theatre, music, history and the arts'. When Fox remarked that 'all good Englishmen and Americans come to Paris to die', he did not know how prophetic he was, for his own ashes lay for a month at this cemetery before they were brought back to America on his favourite ship, the *Ile de France* (Wolhorn 1977:187).

Fox had his favourite restaurants. Lunch was usually at Fouquet's on the Champs Elysées, where he enjoyed filet of sole and a bottle of Sylvaner. Dinner was enjoyed at the La Coupole in Montparnasse. He loved French cuisine and thought it better than English. Even in the States, he visited and enjoyed French restaurants. He knew Paris as well as he did London. He wanted Blanche and Herman to see everything and to experience the beauty of these cities. In travelling he had one rule regarding hotels – only the best. Although Hitler and Mussolini were in power at that time, as Americans they had no problems with travelling arrangements or border crossings.

In Rome Fox visited St Peter's and soon his magnetism took over as more and more tourists gathered around him for an explanation of the place. He was recognised all over the world by people who had attended his talks or who recognised him from the photograph on his books. Fox never tired of all the sightseeing. He was like a young student drinking in all the beauty and marvels around him. On one occasion when he insisted that Blanche sing the famous Italian aria *O mio bambino*, and people spontaneously threw coins to her, he remarked: 'Maybe we ought to continue this and we could pay our passage around Europe' (Wolhorn 1977:190). With his tenor voice he often joined in the singing and once did a duet with Blanche, after which they were applauded with shouts of 'Bravo! Bravo!'

On this trip to Europe Fox met Dr Carl Jung and each parted with increased admiration for the work of the other. Fox was also very interested in Dr A Rollier's heliotherapy, which was used in healing tuberculosis of the bone in children and lungs in adults. This method used sunlight to heal people – especially the sunlight before nine o'clock in the morning. Rollier remarked that 'sunlight should be used like most medicines in small doses' and when asked by Fox about special diets for the patients, he said, 'We serve them any food that the sun shines on!' (Wolhorn 1977:192–193).

Fox loved London and insisted that the Wolhorns see everything: from the obvious tourist attractions (Tower of London, St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, and the Houses of Parliament), the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace, a photograph with some chimney sweeps, all the venues where he used to give talks, outdoor performances, lunches and dinners at his favourite places, to Petticoat Lane. His energy never flagged.

In his eagerness to find out everything about healing, he seldom left a stone unturned. Although he believed that true healing comes from God, he nevertheless realised that man brings this about in different ways. On one such a trip he visited Dr Olson from the Battle Creek Sanatorium; he discussed healing and prayer techniques with Mr and Mrs Voliva of the Christian Catholic Church; B J Palmer, the founder of the Chiropractic School of Healing, explained his method of healing and even gave Fox a chiropractic treatment; he studied the methods of healing that were used at the Osteopathic School of Healing and experienced another treatment there as well (he liked to speak from first-hand experience). In Wyoming, at the hot baths of Thermopolis, he investigated the healing of rheumatism and other ailments. Hubbard (1971:40-41) reveals that Fox had a skeleton – a real one – in his closet, because he felt that 'the skeleton was a vital part of a person's health'. It is known that he practised yoga exercises and often went to a chiropractor.

Fox was always eager to meet leaders in the field of healing. Besides visiting the New Thought groups, he once met Aimee Semple McPherson from Angelus Temple, who was a dynamic leader and healer. On the same trip he visited the large Seventh Day Adventist camp to listen to a lecture. In a book that he was autographing for Emmet Fox, Dale Carnegie wrote: 'Few – if any – have done more than you have to help people stop worrying and start living. I have enjoyed your books immensely. May God keep on loving you always' (Wolhorn 1977:202). The British politician Ernest Bevin was one of the famous

personalities that came into Fox's life. He had a deep affection and respect for him. On the occasion of Bevin's death, Emmet Fox said, 'Destiny sometimes moves a capable man around on the checkerboard of life and places him where he can be most useful' (Gaze 1968:127).

On 7 December 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour, Fox spoke at his meeting on the subject of 'Light in darkness'. He was also scheduled later in the day to give talks in Washington DC at the Metropolitan Presbyterian Church and the subjects were 'Christ and Anti-Christ' and 'The Search for God'. It was on their way there that they heard the news of the bombing. Chaos reigned. Fox spent a great deal of time in prayer and treatment. He once remarked: 'Things look very bad for both Europe and America. There are very dark days ahead. It will last longer than most people think. It will need a lot of prayer on both sides of the curtain.' He was of course referring to those that had passed on and considered their prayers helpful and 'we should not hesitate to ask their prayerful help when we think of them'. He continued: 'America will win. There is no question about that, but when the war is over it will not be the world we know. Eventually it will be a better world for millions of people' (Wolhorn 1977:207-208). One week after the bombing, Fox arrived at the Manhattan Opera House in New York to address the largest crowd (8 000 people) that had ever come together in the metaphysical movement.

During the war there were great shortages of gasoline (petrol) and tyres, and these limited travelling arrangements for Fox and the Wolhorns. Eventually they started to take trips by plane as Fox had speaking engagements all over the country. Sometimes they were 'bumped' off flights by the military and had to change their arrangements. Fox never minded these minor inconveniences and always quietly 'treated' each situation as it occurred.

After the war, when civilian travel to England was still discouraged, Fox decided to take a trip to Mexico to further research Mexican symbolism. He continued his search for truth and said 'he would pay any price and go anywhere to get a lift in consciousness, and he spent a good part of his life and his wealth in doing just that. It was a joy', says Wolhorn (1977:210), 'for Blanche and me to be part of it'.

On the topic of psychic research, Fox stated

Do not dabble in psychic things. If you wish to investigate thoroughly and scientifically, well and good, but this will be the work of years, and will call for scientific conditions. The chief objection to the running after mediums that so many people practice is that it is really a running away from the responsibilities of this life (Wolhorn 1977:211).

Emmet Fox's psychic research began in London at the British Society for Psychical Research. Fox then continued his research in America and sat with several well-known mediums. He also worked with three highly respected astrologers.

The psychic-spiritual side emerged when Fox and the Wolhorns gathered regularly to pray and treat for special cases. Fox became aware of Blanche's psychic ability and over the years they recorded specifics regarding time, date, conditions and other details for their research. It was the beginning of many experiments in 'telepathy, psychometrics, absent healing, and other forms of psychic and spiritual healing'. The psychic-spiritual relationship between the Wolhorns and Fox continued throughout the years of their association. There were many incidences of proof of these 'signals' between them. One such story referred to the day, precisely at 7:45 pm, that Herman and Blanche nearly had a fatal car accident. Fox later shared with them that on that day, at 7:45 pm (he kept a diary), he had picked up a signal from them that they were in danger, and he treated immediately for their divine protection. Fox often used Blanche's ability to feel and see as part of his experiments or to verify his own insights. On one occasion Blanche and Fox had the same feeling of a terrible battle that was to occur. They could actually see soldiers fighting in the streets. Seven years later on D-Day during the Allies' invasion of France, this terrible battle did take place in that area.

Fox always had the feeling that 1939 would be a crucial year for him. On 9 April, Easter Sunday, Fox announced to his congregation that he needed a rest and the church would be closed for the season. The Wolhorns escorted him to a private place where he shared with them a karmic record of his life.⁴ He said: 'If I get through this night, I will have a number of years to carry on.' He asked Herman and Blanche to pray for him and to keep on praying until they had a real sense of the Presence of God. After many hours of prayer Blanche saw a great white light in the room and Emmet Fox standing in it. When they knocked on Fox's bedroom door, he called out, 'Yes, I know. The crisis has passed and all is well' (Wolhorn 1977:220–221). It was at breakfast the next day that Fox shared with them what happened. It was a rare experience that the Bible calls the 'alighting of the

dove', which means that the demonstration has been made. He told them that he was to have died when he was a young man, but that prayer saved him, and he expressed gratitude to the Wolhorns for assisting him through this crisis. However, he did mention that there would be a third time and that it would be harder to overcome.

Wolhorn (1977:153) remembered his conversations with Fox on abstract theories. Once on a trip, Herman commented that the bushes next to the road seem to rush by, whilst the houses and trees in the far distance seem to move with them. Fox replied that 'nothing moves and nothing stands still'. To this seemingly paradoxical statement, he added that 'Einstein and the mathematicians might be able to explain it better, mathematically' (which apparently Einstein had done at an appointment with him in Princeton). He also explained that to say that 'the car was at any particular point in this journey' is to say that

the car would not be moving, it would be standing still, yet we know it isn't. No matter how small an interval of time we use, the same thing would be true. I believe the whole of existence is a state of consciousness in the Mind of God, being re-created perhaps a billion times a second. We might compare it to the electric sign with moving lights. It seems as if the light were traveling around the sign but we know that is an illusion caused by each bulb lighting up in turn for a fraction of a second – what we might call metaphysically 'flashes of consciousness'. The same thing is true with motion pictures. The actors seem to move, but actually the movies are a series of still pictures. It is because life is a state of consciousness that spiritual healing is possible. The difference between Jesus with his instantaneous demonstrations and others who may have to spend some time in prayer before the healing takes place is that Jesus had a complete awareness of perfection. When he could motivate that belief in others, the healing followed. The person was 're-created in wholeness' (Wolhorn 1977:153–154).

Fox also had a theory about departed souls making their presence known to a friend or loved one by producing some sort of odour in a room. He personally had such experiences, and was usually able to identify the contactee. He felt that this mode of communication was easier for the departed than some other uses. In sharing these thoughts with his students in private classes, he cautioned them not make a fetish of it, but 'develop spiritually and all these things will come to you'. Another theory that he discussed was that one day in the future one would be able to think oneself to a desired place and would actually arrive there. In his humorist ways he advised students that 'in the meantime, until we attain that state of awareness, it is easier to hop into a taxi or train and pay the fare' (Wolhorn 1977:154). He felt that 'humankind had only begun to sense the true powers resident in the Mind of God

and therefore in the mind of the individual'. For him there is 'only one Mind in the universe, Divine Mind, and we are all individualizations of that – undivided parts. This is the true "image and likeness"' (Wolhorn 1977:154–155). He also believed that:

There are many other races of beings besides the human race. We know only a tiny corner of the universe. There are beings who were once human and who have now advanced far beyond our comprehension. There are entities called angels who can be sent by God at certain times but their appearances in this world are very, very rare, and they do not come unless sent. However, angels never were human (Wolhorn 1977:155).

Fox always held a higher and more complete picture of the world. As he used to say,

those who are perplexed by the difficulties and seeming inconsistencies of life should remember that at the present time we get only a partial view of things; and that a partial view of anything never shows the thing as it really is. At any time we see only a particular section of the whole, and even that we see awry, through our lack of understanding (Gaze 1968:127).

He believed that the period he was living in was one of crises, as well as one of the most significant eras for some 56 000 years. He saw it as a time in which humanity had to develop its individuality, meaning humankind must realise the innate divinity of all.

Fox believed that humanity had reached a stage where it was 'ready to do without personal prophets of any kind, and to contact the Living God at first hand for itself'. He stated: 'The Great World Teacher of the new age is not then to be any individual, textbook, or organization, but the Indwelling Christ' (Gaze 1968:131). Fox had already stated in 1933 that within 25 years the human race would emerge with 'flying colors, purified, strengthened and emancipated. As for individuals their fate depends on one thing: the condition in which they keep their consciousness. The only real protection is the Practice of the Presence of God that manifests itself in mental peace and good will toward all' (Gaze 1968:132).

The third challenge in Fox's life came in 1951. Fox and the Wolhorns were on a trip to Europe and Fox was anxious to see all his favourite places in Paris. The Wolhorns remembered how strange it had seemed to them that Fox wanted to go to the Père Lachaise Cemetery several times. On 11 August, after lunch, Fox suggested that they should meditate together. Afterwards he began to review his life. He said at one time that: 'I

have given all I have to the people. Now it is up to them to carry on.' He continued: 'We three have lived many times before and it is not by accident that we are together in this life. I have often thought of past lives and at times ancient Egypt comes into focus, and at other times Greece and especially the Acropolis seems very vivid'. When Blanche shared her insights into a past life in Egypt, and said how she would like to visit that country, Fox responded, 'You and Herman will make it, but I won't' (Wolhorn 1977:225). Seventeen years later they visited Egypt.

After dinner Fox requested a slow drive up the Champs Élysées, where he and Blanche sang *Roses of Picardy* together. He then retired to his room. The next day when he did not arrive for their 1:00 pm appointment, they found him in his room, lying in bed with his Bible resting on his chest. They eventually managed to get him to a hospital where at 2:00 pm on 13 August, he 'took his departure from this side of the curtain'. Apparently prior to his departure, the doctor recalled him sitting up in bed and starting to give a lecture. He was very peaceful and 'there was a beautiful smile on his face. He was radiant and looked twenty years younger. We kissed him', recalled the Wolhorns, and said, 'We'll be seeing you' (Wolhorn 1977:227). After an autopsy it was stated that he had died of a cerebral haemorrhage. He was cremated at his beloved Père Lachaise Cemetery and his ashes were shipped on board his favourite liner, *Ile de France*.

It was only after the Wolhorns had boarded the ship with Fox's ashes that they began to receive 'signals' from him again. In her diary on 13 August Blanche wrote:

Dear Dr Fox, from the beautiful smile on your face today, I know that you know that all the things you taught are true. How wonderful for you! You always said thirteen was your 'lucky' number. Continue to bless us. I shall always sing 'Roses of Picardy' for you as I did the last time we were together' (Wolhorn 1977:228).

Apparently this song was played by the orchestra when they boarded the ship.

There were many lingering questions regarding Fox's death. Some people wondered why he died. For 'if it is true that prayer can heal, why did it not heal Emmet Fox?' Gaze (1968:139) tried to answer these questions by stating that

Fox did not just get along with a partially functioning body, but he was able to pour into his service a vitality and vigor that palpably reached into other lives. The notable courage and confidence that he

evoked in other persons were demonstrations of the transformation that had taken place in his own personality ... [and] although Emmet Fox gave a perfect theory, a theory that can be exemplified in life by others, he himself did not completely exemplify it. In spite of the testimony of his overcoming physical handicaps and his ministry with its tremendous strain on his vitality, might there still have been divine and human possibilities he did not exhaust?

This seems a rather unfair remark, as surely those who grasped Fox's teaching would not have expected him to live forever. Death is not a failure of prayer, rather the next phase in one's development. Harry Gaze (1968:146) then summarises Fox's transition as a positive move towards greater spiritual freedom. He states that

although Emmet Fox believed in and taught the wholeness of soul, body, mind and spirit, in his mind there was the greater attraction to a life that appeared to give more spiritual freedom – hence the chemistry of his body worked in that direction. His prayers had become powerful and his body was sensitive to the secret prayer of his soul to be free.

Fox (1979a:223) felt strongly that once one has outlived the body, it should be cremated and one should dispose of the remains. His own ashes were scattered to the winds. He states that the late owner of a body

wore out a number of physical bodies during his life and this is only the last of them ... The beauty of a beautiful body comes from the soul that shines through it ... That soul with its beauty and joy has gone now, and the body left is but an old garment which has been discarded.

The following declaration by Fox seems to be a summary of his attitude to life.

I do my duty and enjoy myself where I am; I do my job and pass on – to another. I am going to live forever; in a thousand years from now I shall still be alive and active somewhere; in a hundred thousand years still alive and still active somewhere else; and so the events of today have only the importance that belongs to today. Always the best is yet to be. Always the future will be better than the present or the past because I am ever growing and progressing, and I am an immortal soul. I am the master of my fate. I greet the unknown with a cheer, and press forward joyously, exulting the Great Adventure. Armed with this philosophy, and really understanding its power, you have nothing to fear in life or death – because God is All, and God is Good (Fox 1979a:230).

Newspapers in Europe and in America carried the news. The following tribute was written by Dr Fletcher Harding for the *Science of Mind* magazine:

On Monday, August 13, 1951, the earthly sojourn of Dr. Emmet Fox came to a quiet end, in his beloved Paris, where he began the experience of which he had written to comfort uncounted thousands in his booklet *Life After Death*.

Seekers of Truth throughout the entire world will reverently pause to pay tribute to this noble soul whose life was marked with rich achievement. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will treasure his books for generations to come. His *Sermon on the Mount* has been carried by praying hands into every church. His *Find and Use Your Inner Power* has made the lives of millions brighter. When he wrote *Make Your Life Worth While* and *Power through Constructive Thinking* he left us clear and simple guideposts for Christian living.

In recent years it seems fitting that Dr Fox should take his work to Carnegie Hall, which had known the finest music. He brought to its time-honored halls the finest of thinking and Christly teaching. His rich humor and humble British dignity endeared him to thousands. His footprints are clearly established on the sands of time.

The metaphysical movement claims Emmet Fox as one of its greatest leaders. Although he was ordained to the Christ Ministry by the Reverend Nona L Brooks, co-founder of the Divine Science College in Denver, Colorado, and affiliated his New York work with this organisation, his ministry reflected his own marked individuality. With the authority that arises out of a deep spiritual understanding and conviction, he spoke the Word of God with clear certainty and unwavering faith. The greatest monuments left to honor him are the mended lives of men and women everywhere who have found peace of mind, health of body and purposeful living through his teaching.

Our hearts are deeply moved over the golden bowl that is broken, but our loving thoughts embrace the emerged Spirit that moves through timeless space in the Eternal Heart of God. Our gratitude and blessings reach out to our honored friend whom the hand of the Infinite Shepherd has anointed. In reverent faith we know that beyond the dim horizon of our vision his unseen lips still speak the words of God to a vaster congregation (Wolhorn 1977:228–229).

Ervin Seale, the pastor of the Church of Truth, in New York City, wrote the following on the death of Fox:

The true spiritual teacher dedicates his strength to others and takes upon himself the psychic burdens of the race. He lays down his life in every earnest effort to lighten these burdens. Dr Emmet Fox carried a tremendous burden all his life. But 'all that we send into the lives of others comes back into our own', and in the end, the prayers of thousands attended and blessed him, not necessarily for return, but for progress. In the most immediate sense in which we can contact life, he is not dead. He walks abroad in all the changed and happier lives he touched. We all owe him much. We shall not soon see his like again (Seale 1951:17).

Emerson once stated when he was writing the life of Plato that 'great geniuses have the shortest biographies' (Gaze 1968:117). Gaze seems to agree with this as he considers Fox's life to be one of simplicity, yet powerful.

2.2 HIS PUBLISHERS AND PUBLICATIONS

Emmet Fox reached many people through the services he conducted, and even more through the written word. His publishers, Harper & Row, estimated that over the years there have been over twelve million readers of these editions. Very well-known writings such as *The golden key* and *Alter your life* were first published as booklets and distributed. His most famous interpretation of The Sermon on the Mount was also distributed in this way, until sales grew to such proportions that it was necessary for a publishing house to take it over. Under the expert handling of Harper & Brothers (now Harper & Row) a new edition of *The Sermon on the Mount* reached best-seller rating on non-fiction lists, and 'it has remained a best seller on religious lists ever since'. By 1940, only a couple of years after the book appeared, Harper had published nineteen editions.

Edward Larocque Tinker, distinguished historian and book critic, wrote in the *New York Times Book Review* of 31 March 1940:

This book is a condensed, distilled essence of years of Bible and metaphysical study – a practical hand-book of spiritual development ... In explaining the manifold benefits of perfect understanding of Jesus' teachings, Dr Fox concisely and without a trace of sensationalism gives his readers a profound outlook upon life, and an absolutely fresh scale of values which the Sermon on the Mount presents to mankind ... The substance of Dr Fox's purpose is to show that everyone has troubles, ill health and all the rest of it, but that down the ages certain people have attained mastery over these misfortunes and through their own efforts have been able to lead lives of unbroken happiness' (Wolhorn 1977:157–158).

In the *Christian Herald* Albert Linn Lawson reported:

Not in a long time have I come across anything that surprised and delighted me so much as *The Sermon on the Mount* by Emmet Fox ... It would seem that the many, many volumes written about the Sermon on the Mount would well-nigh have said all that human tongue could say about it. Far from so! Dr. Fox has opened my eyes, and will, I feel sure, likewise open the eyes of everyone who reads his book (Wolhorn 1977:158).

'The extraordinary sales record of *The Sermon on the Mount* has been achieved with very little effort on the part of either publisher or book trade', Harper wrote, for the book spoke for itself. Publications such as *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Divine Science Monthly* (now *Aspire*) and *Unity* magazines began to publish articles by Fox.

When the United States entered World War II in 1941, a paper shortage developed. It was soon clear that restrictions on publishing *The Sermon on the Mount* would not work. So an agreement was made with another publishing company, Grosset & Dunlap, who had a paper surplus, to undertake this publication. After three years, this company was reluctant to give back the publishing rights to Harper for it had sold half a million copies during the war book boom.

Fox was later convinced by Fred Becker and Eugene Exman, editor-manager of Harper's Religious Books Department, to attend autographing parties at bookstores as they felt it would help to spread the message. He often included the following quotation by Shakespeare when he autographed books, 'There is nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so.' He felt that this statement summed up the essence of his own teaching (Wolhorn 1977:160).

There was such a demand for his books that *The Sermon on the Mount* was translated into French, Spanish, German and other languages. Editions of his writings also appeared in France, Mexico, Greece and Brazil. Two other popular publications, *The mental equivalent* and *Life is consciousness*, were reaching vast numbers and brought about many healings and transformations in people's lives. Wolhorn refers to the miraculous healing of Dr Jack Holland, a well-known professor at San Jose State College in California, after reading *The mental equivalent*.⁵

Often out-of-town visitors visited the publishing house in the hope of finding Emmet Fox there and asking him questions. One of the staff members, Eleanor Jordan, who was familiar with Fox's works, helped many visitors on their spiritual paths. His other books all reached best-seller status. They included *Find and use your inner power*, *Power through constructive thinking* and *Make your life worth while*. Other highly successful publications appeared after his death, namely *Stake your claim*, *The Ten Commandments* and *Diagrams for living*.⁶ According to Fred Becker from Harper, the manuscripts of only two

authors became 'best sellers after their death: Zane Grey, writer of Western stories, and Emmet Fox'. After his death all his work was translated into French and even in a translated language, his books became best sellers throughout the French-speaking world.

Besides his many publications⁷ there were the well-known pamphlets that were designed to fit into one's pocket or purse. Most of these booklets were included in the books *Power through constructive thinking* and *Alter your life*. The best-known and most often used include *The golden key*, *The seven day mental diet*, *The Lord's Prayer*; *The magic of tithing*, *Make your life worth while*, and *The seven days of creation*. These were practical tools to assist people in their daily spiritual work. There were also cards, four by six inches in size, on which appeared subjects such as *Treatment for divine love*, *How to get a demonstration*, and *The word of power*. These could be used whenever the person was challenged by something in life, as they acted as reminders of our true divine natures. Reading and rereading them at intervals did bring about a change in the people's outlook on life.

Fox devoted himself to people and wrote little on the subject of political and social affairs. Only four small pamphlets covered the subject of historical movements. These included *The historical destiny of the United States*, *The zodiac and the Bible*, *The American spirit* and *How to maintain peace*.⁸

Alter your life (originally published in 1931) is compiled from Fox's earlier writings. It is based on biblical texts and offers a progressive, life-changing course designed for all readers, whether they have read a religious book before or not. Fox explains that the dreary problems we are facing are actually bad habits of mind, and ones that we can free ourselves of.

I regard *Power through constructive thinking* (published in 1932) as possibly the most comprehensive of Fox's teachings. As early as 1963 over a quarter of a million copies of this book had been in circulation (Braden 1987:354). Fox touches on all the relevant subjects in such a concise manner that, according to many accounts, his readers remembered and readily quoted his words. He knows his topic, understands it, explains it simply and lucidly. The reader is left in no doubt about how to get out of any difficulty at any time in life. This book is so designed that it instructs the reader in building a life through

constructive thought, as 'all power lies in creative thought'. Throughout this book one realises that our destiny is in our own hands, as it is impossible to think one thing and produce another – like attracts like and like produces like. This truth encourages us to carefully consider what we think about all day long – what thoughts we are entertaining in our minds – for thought is the key to life.

Topics such as life after death and reincarnation are thoroughly researched and presented in a very clear way. *The golden key*, probably the best known and most widely read of Fox's works is also included in this book. It states that the key to a fulfilled life is to take one's mind off the difficulty and focus it on the various aspects of God. Other gems such as *The seven day mental diet*, *The wonder child*, *The Lord's Prayer* and *The Good Shepherd* are only some of his most inspiring writings and have helped people to clarify their thinking on these important points. All the essays in this book were previously published as separate pamphlets and are still obtainable in that form.

Find and use your inner power (published 1937) was previously known as *Sparks of truth* and contains one or more of the laws of psychology or metaphysics. It is a reminder that 'The Laws of Thought are the Laws of Destiny' and that 'Whatever you believe with feeling, that you bring into your life' (Fox 1979b:xi). In these simple single-page gems of wisdom and inspiration, many students have found abiding spiritual truths as well as practical advice for daily living. Fox is known for his light and amusing style of writing. Fundamental truths are stated in the plainest and simplest language so that even an intelligent child would be able to understand them. Fox uses everyday problems and experiences with which all his readers can identify and challenges them with his answers.

Make your life worthwhile (published 1942) consists of short, one-page essays. It instructs the reader in practical successful living. It deals with everyday challenges and Fox concentrates on the power of prayer. Through highlighting the concepts of the power of prayer and thought, one's inner sources, the belief in God as the source of everything, faith, the wisdom within the Bible, the great mental laws and some of the keywords in the Bible, he gives his readers practical advice on how to achieve real health, happiness, prosperity, greater security and peace of mind. This is an easy book to read with no technical terminology. Most of the short chapters end with a biblical quotation. The

principles covered in this book motivate the student to apply them immediately and experience transformations within their lives.

Herman Wolhorn, who had known Fox for more than twenty years as an assistant, companion and friend, regards the short essays in *Stake your claim* (published in 1952) as the 'refined gold of his lifetime of teaching and helping people' (Fox 1992:ix). It is written in an easy to read and understand style, like all of Fox's writings. Each of the 72 essays is a time-tested recipe for accomplishment and wellbeing when one consistently puts it into practice.

Around the year with Emmet Fox (published in 1952) consists of 365 short pieces, never more than a page, which could be read as a devotional and inspirational exercise on each day of the year. After Fox's death, the publishers realised the success and popularity of his work. They decided to publish a book for all his friends and followers from his unpublished and published lecture notes as well as from his manuscripts.

As there has always been a demand for copies of Dr Fox's sermons and lectures, *The Ten Commandments* (published 1953) came about as a response to that request. It represents a series of sermons that were delivered to thousands of people over a period. Fox's ability to take a profound spiritual truth and explain it in simple language so that all can understand it and use it in their daily lives is evident in this work. He explains the Ten Commandments, as given to Moses, in a refreshing way, underlining the spiritual meaning more than concentrating on the literal interpretation. His observation is that 'there is no problem that cannot be solved, nor any aspiration that cannot be fulfilled when once the underlying meaning is absorbed and made a part of one's life' (Fox 1979d:5).

In *Diagrams for living* (published 1968), Fox simplified some of the Bible stories by re-telling them with his interpretation in mind, as well as adding modern-day terms. As the sub-title, *The Bible unveiled*, indicates, Fox delivered his promise to students to 'unveil' a cross-section of the Bible written in allegory and symbology. He believes that when we understand that some of the facts that are taught in the Bible as historical facts are really allegory, then readers will open up their consciousness to the different diagrams for living that it offers. In outlining these diagrams, he feels that each one can then take the necessary steps to make his or her life worthwhile and interesting. He believes that we are

on every page of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation; that each character portrays an aspect of ourselves; and that each story contains the ingredients of our unfolding lives; that every character in the Bible symbolises a state of one's soul; every incident signifies something that can happen to us; every name, place, number and letter has a symbolic meaning revealing a facet of our many-sided personalities (Fox 1993:1–4).

NOTES

- 1 The complete rule is 'Stop thinking about the difficulty, whatever it is, and think about God instead' (Fox 1979a:138).
- 2 In another way, scientific prayer is referred to that which is seeing the Presence of God where the trouble seems to be and it does not merely give one the courage to meet the trouble; it actually changes the trouble into harmony. In *Power through constructive thinking*, Fox (1979a:267) says, 'Scientific prayer or spiritual treatment is really the lifting of your consciousness above the level where you have met your problem.'
- 3 Fox learned techniques for practising meditation and silence from Dr Porter Mills, a former Chicago physician who gave up his practice to do metaphysical healing (Gaze 1968:33).
- 4 Read Fox's own account of the 'unfolding of the Judgment Books' in the chapter, 'Reincarnation and Life After Death' in *Power through constructive thinking*.
- 5 A personal communication by Jack during a visit to South Africa confirmed this healing.
- 6 This book (*Diagrams for Living*) was based on the manuscripts that Fox left with Herman Wolhorn.
- 7 Fox published prolifically. His works included *Alter your life* (1994); *Power through constructive thinking* (1979a); *The Sermon on the Mount* (1934); *Find and use your inner power* (1979b); *Make your life worthwhile* (1984); *Stake your claim: exploring the gold mine within* (1992); *Around the year with Emmet Fox* (1979c); *The Ten Commandments* (1979d); and *Diagrams for living: the Bible unveiled* (1993).
- 8 These articles can be found in *Alter your life*.

