Brains and Beyond: The Unfolding Vision of Health and Healing

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After a considerable absence, interest in “the spiritual” has reappeared in modern medicine under many guises — healing intentions, therapeutic intent, prayer, compassionate caring, etc.
Consciousness is confined to the brain. It does not affect the body and plays little or no role in health.
Consciousness operates within an individual and significantly affects health.
meditation
imagery and visualization
music
yoga
massage
biofeedback
hypnosis
placebo effects
stress management
Consciousness is not localized to specific points in space (brains, bodies) or time — i.e., it appears to be a nonlocal phenomenon. *It can affect not only one’s own body, but also the bodies of others.*
LASSIE!
GET HELP!!
What is consciousness?

“Consciousness is a fundamental principle that underlies all knowing and being. In a fundamental sense, consciousness is the source of awareness.... [It] is what makes awareness possible.”

~ K. Ramakrishna Rao, PhD

Consciousness as fundamental

“I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness.”

~ Max Planck
the founder of quantum mechanics

Max Planck. The Observer. London, UK; January 29, 1931
Consciousness as fundamental

“Although I think that life may be the result of an accident, I do not think that of consciousness. Consciousness cannot be accounted for in physical terms. For consciousness is absolutely fundamental. It cannot be accounted for in terms of anything else....”

~ Erwin Schrödinger

Nobel Prize, 1933
Consciousness as fundamental

“I propose that conscious experience be considered a fundamental feature, irreducible to anything more basic....”

~ David J. Chalmers
Mathematician, philosopher

Era III or nonlocal healing involves “healing intention” or “therapeutic intent” — willing, wanting, wishing, or praying for the best outcome for a patient, whatever that may be.
Era III or nonlocal healing involves spirituality.
Spirituality: the sense of connectedness with “something higher” than the self or ego — an absolute, immanent, or transcendent power, however named — and the conviction that meaning, value, direction, and purpose are valid aspects of the universe.
**Religion**: a codified system of belief, worship, and conduct; may or may not include a sense of the spiritual; usually takes place in a group of like-minded believers
Those who follow a spiritual/religious path — it does not seem to matter greatly which one they choose — live on average 7 to 13 years longer than those who do not, and they have a lower incidence of all major diseases.


Spirituality does not always mean good health

*Sickly saints*

St. Bernadette  Ramana Maharshi  The Buddha
Healthy reprobates
Healthy reprobates
Religion & health: Naturalistic influences

• better health habits
• less smoking and drinking
• dietary precautions; vegetarianism
• social support and networks
• sense of meaning and purpose

Era III or nonlocal healing

human studies

non-human experiments

spontaneous healings
Nonlocal healing

human studies
A study of therapeutic intent:

Jeanne Achterberg, et al.

“Evidence for Correlations between Distant Intentionality and Brain Function in Recipients: A Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging Analysis”

The Hawaiian study

North Hawaii Community Hospital
Waimea, Hawaii

Funded by Earl Bakken,
inventor of the implantable
cardiac pacemaker and founder
of Medtronic
The Hawaiian study

Dr. Achterberg spent two years immersing herself in the culture of the island, meeting healers, and gaining their confidence and respect before beginning a prayer study.
The Hawaiian study: Results

• Significant differences were found in the fMRI brain scans of 10 of the 11 recipients during the “send” vs. the “no send” conditions.

• The brain areas affected were the frontal, precuneus, and anterior and middle cingulate regions.

• There was only about 1 chance in 10,000 that the results were due to chance (p = 0.000127).
“Two Meta-Analyses of Noncontact Healing Studies”


57 studies involving whole humans
49 studies involving non-humans (bacteria, cells, animals, plants, etc.)

- Healing methods included intercessory prayer, therapeutic touch, Reiki, Johrei, and unspecified/other

**Conclusions:** “Results in the active condition exhibit a significant improvement in wellbeing relative to control subjects…. [Results] do not seem to be susceptible to placebo and expectancy effects.” The effect size is small \((r = 0.203)\), but statistically significant.
How do healing methods compare in humans?

“For whole human studies, the largest effects were associated with Reiki and Johrei interventions followed by therapeutic touch, then unspecified healing. The outcome for prayer studies was somewhat (though not significantly) lower.”

~ Chris Roe, et al
University of Northampton


“[Results with whole humans are] not dependent upon the previous inclusion of suspect studies and is robust enough to accommodate some high profile failures to replicate....”
Healing studies in humans as of March 2016:

- Eight additional systematic or meta-analyses of the human clinical studies have been published in peer-reviewed literature; most have reached positive conclusions.

What do scientists believe about the possibility that prayer might work?

Thirty-nine percent of biologists, physicists, and mathematicians believe in a god who answers prayers.

~ E. J. Larson & L. Witham

Scientists are still keeping the faith.  
Nonlocal healing

non-human experiments
Healing studies in non-humans: Why important?

These studies overcome the main objections of human studies: lack of pure controls, suggestion, expectation, and positive thinking (placebo responses).

Non-human studies strongly suggest that a healing effect is real.

Cell to Cell

Nonlocal connections between distant, shielded human neurons

When one group of human neurons is stimulated with laser light, a distant group of neurons registers the same changes, although both are shielded, bypassing any known form of physical communication.

~ Rita Pizzi and colleagues

DiBit Laboratories, Milan, Italy

“[O]ur experimental data seem to strongly suggest that biological systems present non-local properties not explainable by classical models.”

Rita Pizzi, PhD
University of Milan

The Smithsonian/NASA Astrophysics Data System
http://adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/2004SPIE.5436..107P

Photos: http://www.123people.it/z/rita+pizzi
and: http://www.nasa.gov
Cell-to-Cell Connections

Connections between isolated, distant cells

When an “inducer” group of human epithelial cells were poisoned with hydrogen peroxide, a distant batch of “detector” cells were damaged in a similar way, although there was no way they could communicate by any known physical means.

~ Ashkan Farhadi and colleagues
Rush University Medical Center, Chicago

Neuroblastoma cancer cells have been shown to communicate with normal neurons, when both are shielded, preventing any known means of communication.

~ Victor V. Chaban et al
Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA


Photo: http://www.uib.no/rg/tsg/projects/selheim-group/quantitative-proteomic-analysis
If a few human neurons or cells can communicate remotely with one another in the lab, without any obvious physical mechanism, might large groups of human neurons, such as brains, do the same?
Using fMRI and EEG methodology, a dozen experiments demonstrate that distant brains can simultaneously register a stimulus, when only one is stimulated.


http://deanradin.blogspot.com/2010/03/brain-correlation-experiments.html
There are scores of “healing analog” studies in bacteria...

Non-human studies: DMILS
(distant mental interactions with living systems)
fungi
...seeds and seedlings
...and animals
In studies in three academic centers, Bengston and Krinsley have found that inexperienced skeptical volunteers acting as healers can produce full cures in mice following transplantation of a normally fatal dosage of mammary adenocarcinoma.

Untreated mice: 100 percent fatality in 30 days

Treated mice: ~ 90 percent cure rate

After healing, the mice are resistant to mammary cancer transplants.

Nonlocal healing
Ann O’Neill

- 4-year-old female; acute lymphocytic leukemia; University of Maryland Hospital, Baltimore, 1952.

- Her disease was 100 percent fatal at the time.

- She was dying and was given last rites.

- Her feisty mother bundled her up, left the hospital, took her to a cemetery, and laid her at the tomb of Mother Elizabeth Seton, a revered Catholic nun. The mother and several nuns prayed for a healing.

Tomb of Elizabeth Seton
Ann O’Neill

• Back in the hospital, blood tests a few days later were normal.

• Nine years later she remained healthy. A bone marrow biopsy was normal.

• Declared a miracle cure by the Catholic Church.
Dr. Milton Sacks, one of the foremost hematologists in the US, who was caring for her, said her illness was “uniformly fatal.”

“The only reason this case has not been written up is that I have been afraid to.”

—Milton Sacks, MD
C. Hirshberg & B. O’Regan

Spontaneous Remission: An Annotated Bibliography

- 3,500 cases
- 800 journals
- 20 languages

Institute of Noetic Sciences; 1993
If these distant healing effects are real, how might they work?
What is the mechanism?
“Something unknown is doing we don’t know what.”

~ SIR ARTHUR EDDINGTON

1882-1944
transmission theories
An increasing number of consciousness researchers believe these distant healing phenomena may involve nonlocal connections between distant entities.
What is nonlocality?

Nonlocal, distant, correlated events have three essential characteristics:

- **Unmediated**
  (by any known energetic signal)

- **Unmitigated**
  (by increasing spatial separation)

- **Immediate**
  (instantaneous)

“The new physics presents prima facie evidence that our human thoughts are linked to nature by nonlocal connections: what a person chooses to do in one region seems immediately to affect what is true elsewhere in the universe…[O]ur thoughts... do something” [emphasis in original].

~ Henry P. Stapp
Theoretical physicist
U. California, Berkeley

Nonlocality and entanglement in the human domain are being endorsed by physicists.

Vlatko Vedral, PhD
Oxford University
“The quintessential quantum effect, entanglement, can occur in large systems...including living organisms.... These effects are more pervasive than anyone ever suspected. They may operate in the cells of our body.... The entanglements are primary.”

~ Vlatko Vedral
physicist, Oxford University
“I propose that psi is the human experience of the [quantum-] entangled universe....[T]he ontological parallels implied by [quantum] entanglement and psi are so compelling that I believe they’d be foolish to ignore.”

~ Dean Radin, PhD
Chief Scientist, IONS
Entangled Minds

“[M]inds are entangled with the universe, so in principle minds can nonlocally influence anything, including a collection of other minds or physical systems.”

~ Dean Radin, PhD
Chief Scientist, IONS
Entangled Minds

Can quantum physics account for distant healing and other distant connections between individuals?
Caveat:
Quantum physics cannot fully explain healing in humans.

Vital factors in healing — compassion, caring, empathy, love — are completely missing in the equations of physics.
Physics cannot explain consciousness:

“My position [on consciousness] demands a major revolution in physics.... [T]here is something very fundamental missing from current science. Our understanding at this time is not adequate and we’re going to have to move to new regions of science....”

~ Sir Roger Penrose
Mathematical physicist
Caveat:

We must be careful not to equate quantum nonlocality with human nonlocality.

We may be dealing only with accidental correlations in terminology.

Further research will hopefully resolve this issue.
“The scientific study of consciousness is in the embarrassing position of having no scientific theory of consciousness.”

~ Donald Hoffman

cognitive scientist

U. California-Irvine
How could consciousness possibly arise from the physical brain?

“Beats the heck out of me. I have some prejudices, but no idea of how to begin to look for a defensible answer. And neither does anyone else.”

~ Steven Pinker

experimental psychologist
Harvard University


“Nobody has the faintest idea what consciousness is.... I don’t have any idea. Nor does anybody else, including the philosophers of mind.”

~ Stuart Kauffman

theoretical biologist
& complex systems theorist

God enough. Interview of Stuart Kauffman by Steve Paulson.
www.salon.com/env/atoms_eden/w008/11/19/stuart_kauffman/index1.html

Photo: http://www.ucalgary.ca/oncampus/weekly/april22-05/kauffman.jpg
“The origin of life is a total mystery, and so is the existence of human consciousness. We have no clear idea how the electrical discharges occurring in nerve cells in our brains are connected with our feelings and desires and actions.”

~ Freeman Dyson
physicist

“Nobody has the slightest idea how anything material could be conscious. Nobody even knows what it would be like to have the slightest idea about how anything material could be conscious. So much for the philosophy of consciousness.”

~ Jerry Fodor
philosopher, Rutgers University

“If the brain were so simple that we could understand it, we would be so simple that we couldn’t.”

— Emerson Pugh

physicist

"Bragging about one's intelligence is like an animal bragging about the size of its cage."

~ Simone Weil
philosopher, author, social activist

1909-1943
Ethical Issues
In medicine and healing, must we wait for perfect science before employing healing intentions clinically?
“We must act on facts and on the most accurate interpretation of them, using the best scientific information. That does not mean that we must sit back until we have 100 percent evidence about everything. When the health of the individual is at stake...we should be prepared to take action to diminish those risks even when the scientific knowledge is not conclusive....”

— Richard Horton
Editor, Lancet
“The Precautionary Principle”

There is compelling evidence that some aspect of consciousness is **nonlocal** — unconfined to specific points in space (brains, bodies) and unconfined to points in time (the present) — therefore *infinite* in space and time.
“I strongly believe that consciousness cannot be located in a particular time and place. This is known as nonlocality. Complete and endless consciousness is everywhere.... Near-death experience prompted the concept of nonlocal and endless consciousness.... Ultimately, we cannot avoid the conclusion that consciousness has always been and always will be, independent of the body.”

~ Pim van Lommel, MD

Dutch cardiologist, NDE researcher

If consciousness is nonlocal or infinite in time, then in some sense it is eternal and immortal.
“I venture to call it [the mind] indestructible since it has a peculiar time-table, namely mind is always now. There is really no before and after for the mind.”

Erwin Schrödinger
Nobel physicist, 1933
1887-1961

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“To be conscious is not to be in time.”

~ T. S. Eliot

*Four Quartets*
If consciousness is nonlocal or infinite in space, it is omnipresent.
If consciousness is omnipresent, in some sense all minds come together to form a single, unitary mind.
“The evidence from parapsychology...suggests ways in which our psychic interactions may intimately link all conscious beings and all objects (no matter how physically distant) into a kind of global community.”

~ Stephen E. Braude
philosopher ; editor, JSE

“It may be that our deep interconnectedness with each other and with all of Nature is *the* major conclusion that issues forth from the many findings of [consciousness research].”

~ William G. Braud, PhD
consciousness researcher

1942-2012
“To divide or multiply consciousness is something meaningless.”

Erwin Schrödinger
Nobel physicist, 1933
1887-1961

“There is obviously only one alternative, namely the unification of minds or consciousness.... In truth there is only one mind.”

Erwin Schrödinger
Nobel physicist, 1933
1887-1961

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“Deep down the consciousness of mankind is one. This is a virtual certainty ... and if we don’t see this it’s because we are blinding ourselves to it.”

If we are all connected, there is *always* a collective, global aspect to personal health.
Personal health is never merely personal. If consciousness is unitary, the health of one affects the health of all.

← This is never distinct from this →

Photo: http://reecreates.org
This suggests that the **Golden Rule** can be expanded from

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” to

“Be kind to others because in some sense they *are* you.”
The unitary One Mind, by fostering cooperation between people, and love for all sentient life and the Earth itself, may assist our own survival.
Indeed, without this awareness it is not clear that we will survive as a species.
“Hate is not the opposite of love, the opposite of love is individuality.”

~ D. H. Lawrence

... not healthy individuality, but pathological individuality, the unwillingness to acknowledge our oneness and unity, leading to greed and selfishness.

Quoted in: Michael Bell, *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being.*
So, in the end, perhaps it’s all about love — the overcoming of boundaries, which is the essential expression of nonlocality
“Anything we love can be saved.”

~ Alice Walker
novelist
“We must love one another or die.”

~ W. H. Auden

poet

1907-1973


In: Anthony Storr. *Solitude.* Citation on p. 208, #6.
“People often ask me what is the most effective technique for transforming their life. It is a little embarrassing that after years and years of research and experimentation, I have to say that the best answer is – just be a little kinder.”

~ Aldous Huxley
novelist, philosopher
“Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind; the second is to be kind; and the third is to be kind.”

~ Henry James

novelist

1843-1916
Let’s go deeper,  
Go deeper.  
For, if we do,  
Our spirits will embrace  
And interweave.

Our union will be so glorious  
That even God  
Will not be able to tell us  
apart....

~Hafiz
Persian poet  
1324-1390
thank you
thank you