

Healing with Intent

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As a trained and practising healer (N.F.S.H. and Reiki) and a scientist, I have made every effort over the past four years to develop a theory as to how 'healing with intent' might work. (Bunnell, 1997). Not satisfied with dealing with purely speculative ideas I then reviewed the literature and decided to carry out my own investigations to assess the effects (if any) of 'healing with intent'.

By 'healing with intent' I mean any effort made by one person to improve the mental or physical well-being of another person or animal within close proximity. The 'healer' typically assumes a relaxed or meditative state of mind, with eyes closed, and focuses on the person/animal known as the 'healee'. Activities which I consider to be synonymous with 'healing with intent' are hands-on-healing, polarity therapy, psychic healing, reiki, faith healing and spiritual healing.

During my review of the literature it became apparent that many excellent studies had already been carried out, some of which involved changes in water structure (Rein and McCraty, 1994) and some enzyme activity. (Smith, 1972; Edge, 1979)

I decided to design a study whereby any effect(s), shown to be caused by 'healing with intent', could not be attributed to a placebo effect. With this in mind, I conducted nineteen trials where I monitored the rate of hydrolysis of partially purified albumen by the enzyme pepsin. Before adding the enzyme to the substrate, two test tubes containing equal amounts of a 1% pepsin solution received different treatments. One enzyme sample was held in the hand, by a person experienced in 'healing with intent', for a fixed time, while the other was held in the hand for the same period of time by a person unaware of the nature of the experiment. For consistency, in each of the nineteen trials, the 'healer' remained the same.

Conditions of pH, temperature, and substrate and enzyme concentration, were identical for each pair of solutions under investigation within each trial, thus producing paired data. In order to slow the reaction down, to enable data to be collected over a twenty-five-minute period, in each trial the pH of the pepsin solution was non-optimal; That is, the pH was greater than 1.57, the optimal pH for pepsin. The reaction was monitored by recording percentage light transmission readings, at regular intervals, using a Jenway 6051 Colorimeter.

The reaction rates obtained for *healed* and *unhealed* enzyme samples were subjected to statistical analysis using the Wilcoxon test for paired data [$P = 0.0026$]. That is, the enzyme sample which received 'healing with intent' was significantly more active than the control sample, in that it produced a greater rate of hydrolysis of the albumen, over nineteen trials.

This experiment appears to demonstrate that the delivery of 'healing with intent' has altered the activity of pepsin enzyme. How this might have happened is open to speculation. Humans, while in a focused, healing mindset, have been shown to produce 0.3 - 30 Hz pulsing magnetic fields from their hands (Zimmerman, 1985). Healers have also been shown to produce 70V surges of electricity from their hands (Tiller, 1995).

It is possible then, that during the delivery of a weak magnetic field in close proximity to the enzyme solution held in the test tube, an electrostatic charge might have been conferred on the water and/or enzyme molecules. Such a charge might affect the state of ionisation of the side chains of amino acid residues at the active site of the enzyme molecule, producing a better fit with the substrate and a consequent increase in reaction rate.

How a pulsing magnetic field might exert this effect is also open to speculation. 'Healing with intent' has been shown to alter hydrogen bonding in water (Grad, 1967), reduce surface tension of water (Rein and McCraty (1994) and to produce a consciousness-related influence on water structure when other parameters are held constant (Pyatnitsky and Fonkin, 1995).

Alternatively, maybe the effect produced is not due to the presence of a magnetic field produced by the hand, but is rather due to a non-local response produced by the mind. If the latter were true, it should be possible to produce the same results obtained in this experiment by delivering 'healing with intent' from a distance.

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