Every moment and every event of every man’s life on earth plants something in his soul.

- Thomas Merton
Dear Readers,

My grandfather farmed a 160 acres, much of which was woods, with a team of horses. I grew up rurally, not too far from my grandfather on an acre of land in the middle of farming country. My father loved the land and the woods, farmed organically — yet he equally loved the city and owned his own business. He told me once that the smell and excitement of the city called to him. I grew up with my feet in both worlds.

Today, I find “both worlds” in all of life — the yin and the yang — and hopefully I can appreciate the balancing act. Hospitals and holistic practices — what today we call alternative or complementary — both have their place. We can be quiet and meditative yet love crowds and parties. We can live in a busy work world and still go within ourselves for solace and peace. We can garden on rooftops or in a front yard in the city and still avoid using pesticides. We can walk in the quiet and peace in the woods and go to a concert or lecture in the evening.

Energy Medicine practitioners speak about the whole person — about the body, mind and spirit as being integral to this wholeness. The whole of the person includes feelings, physicality such as tissue, muscles, bones and fascia, thoughts, mental processes, energetic bodies and flow and probably pieces that we cannot conceive of at the moment. Each piece of the whole puzzle has its place. The body seeks balance — the perfect symmetry of the yin and yang — as do our minds, and hearts. As practitioners we practice — we perform the “hands on” with clients. We connect with them through the modality we offer. We refer to others when we see the need.

Researchers look at the body from their perspective. They often work in a lab or clinical setting and break things down, experiment, study and analyze. They too are seeking to understand and support how the body functions. They are the yin to the yang of the hands on — or maybe that is the yang to the yin.

Balance is key to my way of thinking. If our world becomes lopsided, our perspective may become lopsided as well. When we cannot actually participate in the “other side” of something — as practitioners
we often cannot participate in research — we can seek understanding through reading, conversation and more.

I am not suggesting that we rush about seeking balance. I am suggesting that when given the opportunity, we seek balance and understanding through considering different perspectives.

This issue of Energy Magazine offers a wide range of perspectives on healing, research, self-discovery and more. I hope you take the time to find a quiet spot and enjoy what the authors are offering.

Margaret
Leo Babauta is a simplicity blogger & author. He created Zen Habits, a Top 25 blog with a million readers. He is also a best-selling author, a husband, father of six children and a vegan. In 2010 he moved from Guam to San Francisco where he leads a simple life. Leo can be found online at [www.SeaChange.ZenHabits.net](http://www.SeaChange.ZenHabits.net).

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Jake White is an Integrative Energy Medicine Practitioner who studied at White Winds Institute of Energy Medicine. Jake has a practice in Winchester, Virginia where he has worked with hundreds of individuals through private sessions and groups to resolve the energetic dynamics that keep us from being a loving support system for ourselves. Jake has a passion for creating dynamic healing environments that invite people to live from a place of vulnerability, authenticity and open heart. You can learn more at www.JakeWhiteHealing.com.

Amy B. Scher is author of *This Is How I Save My Life* (Gallery Books at Simon & Schuster, April 2018) and *How To Heal Yourself When No One Else Can* (Llewellyn Worldwide, 2017). She is a leading voice in the field of mind-body-spirit healing. As an energy therapist, Scher uses energy therapy techniques to help those experiencing illness and those in need of emotional healing. Most importantly, Amy lives by her self-created motto: “When life kicks your ass, kick back.” She can be found online at www.AmyBScher.com.

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Lynne McTaggart is one of the central voices in the new consciousness movement. She is the award-winning author of seven books including worldwide bestsellers, *The Field*, *The Intention Experiment*, *The Bond* and her latest book *The Power of Eight*. She also serves as Editorial Director of *What Doctors Don’t Tell You* (www.WDDTY.com), one of the world’s most highly praised health publications. Lynne and her husband, WDDTY co-founder Bryan Hubbard, live and work in London, UK. For more information, visit www.LynneMcTaggart.com.
**1 | In Search of Wisdom**

In Search of Wisdom is a book born of the friendship of three gifted teachers, exploring the universal human journey and our quest for meaning and understanding. This translation of the French bestseller brings readers an intimate, insightful and wide-ranging conversation between Buddhist monk and author Matthieu Ricard, philosopher Alexandre Jollien and psychiatrist Christophe André.

Join these three luminaries as they share their views on how we uncover our deepest aspirations in life, the nature of the ego, living with the full range of human emotion, the art of listening, the temple of the body, the origin of suffering, the joy of altruism, true freedom and much more.

For more information or to purchase these titles click on the title’s image above.

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**2 | How to Change Your Mind**

A unique and elegant blend of science, memoir, travel writing, history and medicine, How to Change Your Mind is a triumph of participatory journalism. By turns dazzling and edifying, it is the gripping account of a journey to an exciting and unexpected new frontier in our understanding of the mind, the self and our place in the world. The true subject of Pollan’s “mental travelogue” is not just psychedelic drugs but also the eternal puzzle of human consciousness and how, in a world that offers us both suffering and joy, we can do our best to be fully present and find meaning in our lives.

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**3 | Real Magic**

According to noted scientist and bestselling author of The Conscious Universe, Dean Radin, magic is a natural aspect of reality and each of us can tap into this power with diligent practice. Radin has spent the last forty years conducting controlled experiments that demonstrate that thoughts are things, that we can sense others’ emotions and intentions from a distance, that intuition is more powerful than we thought and that we can tap into the power of intention. These dormant powers can help us to lead more interesting and fulfilling lives.

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**4 | Charge and the Energy Body**

We all know what it is like to have a “charge” about something. It is a feeling of excitement, fear, sexual arousal, or irritation. But what we do not currently know is how to use charge for the behaviors we want to create. This book makes an important contribution to the growing field of Energy Medicine by looking at charge as the interface between mind and body, and the missing ingredient in Mind-Body healing. Charge and the Energy Body is a comprehensive explanation of how we can become “overcharged” or “undercharged” and how to bring about balance through practices of charging and discharging.
5| What we send out into the universe comes back to us, magnified. Although the power of intention, the energy of positive thoughts, is widely accepted as an influential force in transforming lives, the exponential power of group intention has never been explored, until now. Lynne McTaggart, an expert on the science of spirituality, reveals her remarkable findings from ten years of experiments about how group intention can heal our lives. The Power of Eight provides solid evidence showing that there is such a thing as a collective consciousness. Now you can learn to use it and unleash the power you hold inside of you to heal your own life with help from this riveting, highly accessible new book.

6| Crystal Muse explores how you can transform life’s challenges into opportunities for growth by being equipped with the right crystals and mindset. Learn how you can connect with crystals and empower your life by using this guide to set transformational intentions. These practices are a collection of over 25 years of rigorous research, world travel and spiritual quests by holistic healer and crystal expert, Heather Askinosie. Heather shares her personal stories on the path toward alternative practice, and explains how these remedies can work for the reader’s life too.

7| Ending the Search explores the deep spiritual impulse to awaken and the ways a future-focused mind “co-opts” or veils what is timelessly free, loving and ever present. Dorothy invites us to follow our longing for truth, love or enlightenment back to their source—the Heart that is beckoning us beyond separation. She emphasizes the practice of self-inquiry as taught by Ramana Maharshi. We are invited to search not for an idea of something “out there,” but for the true identity of the seeker, the unnamable Mystery that is compassionately aware, existing right now in each of us.

8| Highly sensitive people, or empaths, see life through the eyes of compassion and caring. They were born that way. As a result, they carry a tremendous amount of inner light. But they are also the favored prey of “vampires” who feed off empaths’ energy and disrupt their lives on every level—physical, emotional and financial. Dr. Northrup draws on the latest research, along with stories from her global community and her own life, to explore the phenomenon of energy vampires and show us how we can spot them, dodge their tactics and take back our own energy. Once you recognize the patterns of behavior that mark these relationships, you will be empowered to identify the vampires in your life too.
Lessons from the Bleachers

Anyone who knows me eventually discovers that I am a baseball mom. My son Gabe now plays college ball, but I have been in the bleachers (not the dug-outs, moms are not allowed) since Little League days. I cannot help but compare the lessons learned in the stands to the wisdom necessary to be an effective energy healer.

I actually became aware of the crossover during the first game I ever attended. The boys, who were about six years old, bounced around like grasshoppers on the field, looking every which way but up. That might have been because there were not many pop-ups or hits in general. When enough kids swung and missed, one of the dads would stand at home plate and simply throw a ball into the field and tell the batter to run.

One boy, however, did hit the ball. Unfortunately, he ran to third base instead of first base. He obviously thought that the shouting crowd was cheering him on, because he rounded all the bases, in reverse, before a fielder could toss in the ball with a wobbly throw.

They gave him the run.

In the meantime, the left fielder stripped to his Power Rangers underwear because it was so hot outside.

Though I was not well versed in the rules of the game, I shook my head. I knew the boys were off, but I had to chuckle. How many times had I experienced similar days in the field of energy healing, not only baseball? I could not help but think of how many clients had presented themselves in much the same way as those young players — sort of confused and lost. Then there were all the times I had not known how to pitch my message or direct a session.

Then again, it is not always bad thing to lack a good game plan. I once worked with a client who had been abused as a child. Her life reflected the fall-out. She could not establish a romantic relationship, she was scared to speak up at work and she was quite overweight. She knew that the latter was an unconscious way to create boundaries and therefore, the perception of safety. Though the keys to unlocking her wild and awesome personality were accessible through confronting her past, she refused to go there. And so, we rounded the bases in reverse.

I assigned activities to the client aimed to help her better express her true nature through her current circumstances. I implored her to wear red lipstick. I encouraged her to memorize jokes and share them on the job. I prompted her to join Match.com. Although she would not actually meet up with anyone, she began a few email exchanges. After about a year of real-life activity, she began sharing details about her past in our sessions. She went in reverse, however, unpeeling the years until she finally uncovered reminiscences of early childhood abuse. At that point, she lost substantial weight and actually went out on a few dates.

Who is to say you cannot round the bases in reverse?

As a healer, I sometimes have to be creative, much like Little League fathers. I might throw a client a softball, forcing a swing. I might shout “Go!” and encourage the stealing of a base. And sometimes, I remind them that life is not fair, no matter what the rules are.

You see, early on, I learned that the most rock-solid baseball rules are stretched all the time. Case in point, it is not permitted to play during lightning strikes. At the first sight of lightning, the umpire is supposed to call a break. Teams sit for fifteen minutes and then the game continues. During the play-offs a few years ago, my son was pitching against an excellent team. Then again, my son is a great pitcher, and we were ahead. That is, until the lightning, thunder and rain started.
The storm came out of nowhere. My son paused on the mound, waiting for the fifteen-minute break. However, we were playing on the other team’s turf. The ump was their own. Sitting on the bleachers, I watched as bolt after bolt of lightning struck the sky, knowing full well that the ump could see the same heavenly drama. Still, he did not call the game. Gabe persevered, although he could not see a thing and the dirt on the mound turned into mud. The coach eventually had to walk out and hand Gabe a bottle opener so he could clean his cleats. Gabe gave up two runs. As soon as the other team was ahead, the umpire called the game.

“Too dangerous to continue!” he shouted, giving the victory to his home team.

My son took it in stride. “That is the game,” he admitted. His attitude was buffered by congratulations from the coach on the other team. “You are the best pitcher I have ever seen,” he told Gabe. “A real bull dog.”

As I tell my clients, sometimes you win. Sometimes you lose. The outcome is not always fair, but it is the one that we get. After all, we have to experience life one pitch, hit or strike-out at a time. But as they say in baseball, you always get “another up.”

Cyndi Dale is the author of The Subtle Body: An Encyclopedia of Your Energetic Anatomy, and eight other bestselling books on energy healing. She has worked with over 30,000 clients in the past 20 years. To learn more about Cyndi, her work, books and products please visit: www.CyndiDale.com.
Boost your practice with the World’s Oldest Healing System

Part 3: Fire Element — the Outward Movement

Oh for a Muse of fire that would ascend the brightest heaven of invention. — William Shakespeare

The Fire Phase of your practice is an accumulation, an outward expression, of the incubation phase of Water and the sprouting phase of Wood.

Fire is the phase of how best to be seen.

Fire element is the July bloom of the Lily.

Fire is the phase of connecting with others.

It is the openhearted risk-taking phase of expansion.

Fire Organs: Small Intestine is Yang — Kidney is Yin organ; Triple Warmer is the Yang Fire System — Circulation Sex is the Yin Fire System

Fire: The Lover — represents the capacity for developing deep and intimate connections.

Phase: Bloom — the exhibition of your talents in full light.

Thinking: Can you be openhearted and take risks without feeling vulnerable to rejection?

Purpose: This phase is all about expansion and engagement.

Stimulus: Is this bloom of practice an accurate picture of what I want to give to the world? I planted roses. Did I get roses?

Fire phase is one way of checking in on what was actually sown in the earlier phases. You do not get roses if you planted daisies. Did your blooms reflect what you originally intended to plant?

Does the expansiveness of the Fire phase express my heartfelt love for this work? Am I excited about how this is looking? Are the outward manifestations of my practice true reflections of the seeds I planted in the Water phase?

Does my practice “look” how I wanted it to look? Do I love my hours? Am I enjoying my particular focus? Is the work with children really feeding me? Or is my work with special needs adults working for me? Do I feel effective? Do I like my office?

This is the phase where we tend to the beautiful flower garden we started in the winter.

Truth: My work is an authentic expression of my heart.


Greatest Virtue: Openheartedness

Greatest Talent: Optimism

Acupoints to hold for common Fire issue phases

Heart 7 — Spirit Gate: This point brings the light, the sunshine and warmth from the power of the Fire energy to all aspects of the body, mind and spirit. We want our mind and our heart on the same page. This point aligns the heart and mind. Bilaterally hold/tap Heart 7 to increase a feeling of optimism.

Small Intestine 7 — The Branch of the Upright: Small Intestine is considered the discerner. It is the organ that “sorts the pure from the impure” and it is helpful in making decisions about what is good for your practice and what is not. Bilaterally hold/tap to help the process of deciding what is working and what is not working.

Circulation Sex 8 — Palace of Weariness: Fire phase can burn too hot and exhaust our excitement. CX 8 is the point used to restore our Fire when we are really tired. Bilaterally holding and
Dr. Sara has studied all things energy for over 35 years. She has a private energy practice in Asheville, NC. Dr. Sara has taught energy techniques and modalities to thousands of students all over the world. She has authored over 30 papers and is the author of the class Money Matters: Energy Solutions for Correcting and Creating a Consistent Flow of Money. Her personal aspiration is to instill in her students the expectation of prosperity in an energy science practice. It is her vision that when the Energy Medicine practitioner is equitably compensated, and can depend on career longevity, the world will begin to embrace these essential health-giving skills that have thrived for thousands of years in droves. Learn more at GoodForYouEnterprises.com or contact@drssaraallen.com.

**Best Advice**: Pace yourself. You are in this for the long run. Enjoy the blooms, but most importantly, be open to shifting the planting for the reoccurring seasons. The best time to actually see how your practice is expressing itself is in the Fire/bloom phase. Do you want your garden to look different? Do you want daisies instead of roses?

**“Passion Speech”**: This is when you tell your stories. The feedback from your client’s successful healing is a bloom of this practice. The Fire aspect of a practice is in the telling of the stories of healing and hope and spreads the word of your good work. This is the excitement phase.

**Example of the 90 second “Passion Speech”**: “I am a practitioner of the science of the body’s subtle energy systems. Just like our physical body’s anatomy — muscle, bones, tissues — all of us have an energy anatomy that is fundamental to our well-being. That is what I practice and that is what I am trained in — caring for the body’s subtle energy systems. The energy sciences I work with are grounded in the 5000-year-old disciplines of Traditional Chinese Medicine as well as the ancient teachings of Ayurvedic Medicine. I have specifically focused on and am proficient in the method/s of (Healing Touch, or Touch for Health, Reiki, Eden Energy Medicine, Energy Kinesiology, Applied Physiology, etc.). My interests/focus/specialties are currently centered around (pain relief, or fatigue, children with learning disabilities, mental health issues, etc.). I have had such fascinating experiences since I started this work. I see people do better, feel better and have more energy. The overall well-being people are experiencing has become such a welcome inspiration to me. I feel major excitement about the future of this modality and such gratitude for being in this field right now.”

Customize your own “Passion Speech” as appropriate.

- Be very specific.
- Visualize who you are.
- Imagine what you can do.
- Revel in what you have created.

Next month we will examine the next cycle of Earth. Taking our Water vision, our Wood momentum, our Fire passion and folding that all into creating longevity and establishing depth with the Earth phase of our work. Next month we get into the establishment of deep and satisfying practices that last for years to come.
Humans have a rainforest of microbes living within their bodies. If fed and nurtured, the rainforest will work symbiotically with one’s own physiology to protect and enhance health. This ecosystem is referred to as the microbiome and includes any epithelial or skin surface in the human body that is exposed to the external environment. All the surface area is subject to interaction with exogenous microorganisms or bacteria. These skin cells reside in the mouth, nasal passages, lungs, genital and gut mucosal surfaces. From the mouth to the exiting end, humans are teeming with bacteria. Primarily, the lining of the intestinal tract is the main site of interaction with the outside world and therefore is an important intermediary in the maintenance of health. What all this means is that there is a beautiful ecosystem of bacteria living within us that can be nurtured and influenced to create vibrant health.

Prebiotics are indigestible food ingredients that have a specific stimulatory effect upon selected populations of gut bacteria, or in layman’s terms, food for the microbiome. There are specific foods that can be eaten that will feed the bacterial rainforest within and they include, in part, Jerusalem artichokes, blueberries, chicory root, dandelion greens, garlic, green onions, leeks, nectarine, white onions, pears, raspberries and watermelon. Spices such as black pepper, cayenne pepper, ginger and Mediterranean oregano have all been shown to fuel bacteria, with an added bonus that oregano, black pepper, ginger and cayenne all suppress the growth of pathogenic bacteria. The truth is that these are some of the plant products that have been measured. It is likely that almost every plant would feed some microorganism growing in someone, somewhere. However, only those that are considered anti-bacterial agents would act against the bad bacteria.

There are also foods that are fermented and cultured that contain rich colonies of microorganisms. These foods are called probiotic foods. Most people are familiar with yogurt and kombucha, but there is literally a world of foods in this category. It is only a matter of hunting down unique international markets or stores to find them. For example, in various parts of the world cereals, vegetables, legumes, roots/tubers, dairy products, meats, fish and alcoholic beverages all fit into the category of probiotics with hundreds of various microorganisms teeming in them. Commonly found probiotic foods also include Kimchi, cultured vegetables, sauerkraut and kefir.

The great news is that the composition of the gut microbiome can be influenced, altered or even manipulated by the foods one chooses to eat on a daily or weekly basis! Within 24-48 hours a change can be measured in gut flora composition and their number. Choosing a diet rich in plant foods can help keep this miniature ecosystem thriving. Since it is not really known what species of bacteria are inside each individual person, and these species can change based upon diet, it is best to choose a wide variety of prebiotic foods and probiotic foods.

What would this look like on a daily basis? Breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks would include a wide variety of plant foods including herbs and spices. Also, small amounts of various fermented and cultured foods would be included
with each meal. Think of composing a diet with plant foods, herbs and spices at each meal, for example, vegetables sautéed in extra virgin olive oil with oregano, garlic, onions and fresh ground black pepper alongside a 2oz “shot” of kombucha. Creating a thriving microbe community will result in beneficial changes to human health. Eat arugula until you crave arugula as microbes will send signals about what foods keep them thriving. Microbes are living organisms with their own energy fields. Feeding the beneficial ones will make them happy and in turn they will support their human host. It is a beautiful symbiotic relationship.

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References

Easy Asian BBQ SKEWERS
Recipe by Denise Pickett-Bernard PhD, RDN, LDN and The IFNA Culinary Collaborative

INGREDIENTS
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- Fresh ground pepper
- Salt to taste
- 4 chicken breasts cut into cubes

DIRECTIONS
- Place all ingredients except chicken into a quart size Ziploc bag.
- Mix until well combined.
- Add chicken and coat with marinade. Massage marinade into chicken.
- Chill for 30 minutes to an hour.
- Skewer chicken and cook on a grill, in a grill pan or under a broiler.
Realizing Your Desires

Jan Engels-Smith

Our lives are driven by our desires — whether for happiness, prosperity, good health or for any of the myriad of ideas we hold for what will bring us a sense of personal fulfillment. In difficult times we may desire to be free from pain, trauma or sadness. However, for any of our desires to be realized or before anything can manifest in our life experience, there must be vibrational compatibility between one’s desires and one’s beliefs. This is an exceptionally important statement to understand!

Many people think that they understand the concepts behind manifestation and then become frustrated because their lives are not changing in the way they would like them to. They say their affirmations, they create their dream board, but they do not look at what they really believe about their worth or their ability to deserve.

A belief is nothing more than a thought that is repetitive. This repetition moves the thought energetically from your head and anchors in your chakras. All our beliefs are broadcast from our chakras, which create much of our auric fields of energy. This broadcast is an energetic vibrational frequency that then attracts situations and conditions in your life that match your belief system. You are creating your life from your beliefs and you cannot change your life or manifest what you really want until you change some of what you believe and create an alignment between desire and belief.

What most people do not realize is that beliefs are choices — nothing more. You can change your broadcast, by simple deciding to believe differently.

All your actions are rooted in your belief system. Although most of your beliefs were formed as a child, you still have a choice about whether you follow them or not. If you do not like what you believe, you can change it. As an adult, you have full control of your beliefs. To change, however, you must take a long, searching look at your belief structure and understand why it exists and if you want to continue embracing it.

When you examine your beliefs, look for the strong messages you received as a child and others that you developed as an adult. You may not yet realize that these strong messages usually constitute a major portion of your core belief structure and hold an incredible amount of power. They are actually a major part of your broadcast and in control of how you manifest. Write these beliefs, or messages, down on paper in a list form. Keep the sentences short for easy reading. Again, you are searching for the core or foundation of a belief, not the philosophy behind it.
For our desires to be realized there must be vibrational compatibility between one’s desires and one’s beliefs.

After you have completed your list, write down what you would rather believe. This is the time to be creative and to use your imagination to construct a list that is ideal. Create a belief system that will support you, love you and work for you, not against you. Exploring beliefs around God, money and self-worth are usually very revealing to a person and are great subjects to rewrite. There are no rules, except that you do this exercise. (If you want more guidance in doing this, see my book Becoming Yourself: The Journey from Head to Heart, pages 81-89).

The following is a composite of the common belief statements I hear from my clients. Remember, for any desire to be realized by you, or before anything can manifest in your life experience, there must be vibrational compatibility between your desires and your beliefs.

**The desire:** I want more money.

**The incompatible belief:** Money does not grow on trees. You must work hard for your money and I never did get the education I was supposed to. These are beliefs from childhood and they imply that it is not only difficult to get money, but the difficulty is accentuated because of a failure with education. These beliefs broadcast hopelessness, frustration and inadequacy.

**Another incompatible belief:** I am so tired of not being able to afford the things that I want. I always need to explain to others, “I cannot afford that”.

This belief is not a match for the desire. It is full of frustration, lack, discouragement and it is reinforced over and over again in conversations.

**Change the belief to:** I am so appreciative for what I do have and that I get to choose each day what I prioritize and am able to afford. My life has the potential to continually improve. This belief is a match for the desire. It moves from a belief in lack to one of appreciation. It also supports empowerment with possibilities instead of being a victim.

**The desire:** I want a better relationship with my employer.

**The belief:** My boss does not realize the value that I offer; actually, no one sees my value. I am always invisible; my brother who was the football star always gets noticed. This belief is not a match for the desire. The childhood belief is that of unworthy, invisible, not as good as.

**Change the belief to:** I feel good about the work I do. Regardless if anyone notices, I do quality work. This is a match for desire. There is pride and self-value. There are feelings of worth, truth and inner knowing. Also note that the energetic change in self-value will automatically create better relationships, not only with the boss but in general. There does not need to be direct interaction or communication with the boss to affect the relationship; the inner change will be communicated energetically.

**The desire:** I want to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight. I want to lose weight!

**The belief:** It is really difficult, almost impossible to maintain the body weight that I desire without strenuous exercise and depriving myself of the foods I like to eat.

This belief is not a match for the desire.

**Change the belief to:** It is possible for me to find a comfortable lifestyle that will give me the results
that I want. This belief is a match for the desire. This belief gives hope, self-empowerment and the possibility for a desired outcome.

As you review your list and discern the nature of your current belief system, remember that it represents choice. If it does not reflect what you desire, discard it. Let your imagination go and create a new belief system. Then read that list over and over again. Engage yourself in the envisioning of living that new belief system. Most of all, feel your belief. For example, if your new belief inspires hope, take a few minutes and embody the feeling of hope. Feel the feeling; do not just think about the feeling. Remember there must be vibrational compatibility between one’s desires and one’s beliefs. Take a few moments and genuinely feel in your body the feeling you want to have that is compatible with your new belief. This allows one to obtain vibrational compatibility.

I personally believe that the feeling of appreciation is one of the easiest ways to move out of the cycle of hopelessness, lack, frustration, discouragement — all the lower frequency feelings that are listed above. Appreciation feelings can be stimulated by thought (reflecting on something that you appreciate) or if you are practiced at consciously embodying feelings appreciation can be stimulated purely by will. Regardless of how you stimulate the feeling, hold it and embody it, the more you practice this the more you will be in alignment with your desires, whatever they may be.

Your lists may look entirely different from the examples that I gave. These are just examples to trigger your own thinking. You need to develop your own personal profile. The important thing is to remember that whatever beliefs you choose will manifest into your own reality as you add energy to them. Be good to yourself. Give yourself the best and have fun with this effort. One of the side effects of this exercise will be an improvement in your outlook on life. Positive thoughts generate positive feelings.

Creating our ideal beliefs in list form are the first steps in the process of bringing a new belief system into reality. In the beginning, it may feel uncomfortable and unnatural, but let that be. Use your imagination and create. Give yourself permission to explore and generate new possibilities. If you cannot imagine something as being possible, then you are not going to achieve it. But if you can imagine the possibility, you are already on your way to creating it.

In some instances, your new belief system may feel comfortable, like a familiar truth that automatically resonates with your soul. If this happens, realize that your soul is responding to a truth and letting you know about it through a feeling.

Remember to keep putting energy into your new belief. Buy books that will reinforce it, talk about it, gather with people of like minds — all these acts will add energy to the new beliefs and help them to multiply. Do not be victimized by old belief systems handed to you as a child, especially if they are causing hardships in your life now. Do something about it.

Self-worth and the quality of deserving are at the core of every prosperity issue I have ever encountered while working with a client. Look closely at what you really believe about yourself. Again, underlying belief systems can be hidden from immediate view, but we can discover (or uncover?) them.

Be honest with yourself. You may need to start at the very core to understand how you truly feel about yourself: your self-love. No matter where you are on your spiritual path, keep looking at the issue of love. Love is what the universe is based on; you must not lose sight of this. Love includes self-love. In fact, self-love is the most important. When you love yourself, you will make quality decisions for yourself, which will directly influence every other relationship you have, including your relationship with other people, finances, health and emotional well-being.

Author Jan Engels-Smith can be found at www.LightSong.net.
Comfort zone
Anodea Judith, PhD

While there is little comfort in the growth zone, there is little growth in the Comfort Zone.

We are all familiar with what it feels like to be uncomfortable. Maybe it is daring to disagree that rings your alarm bell. Maybe you feel uncomfortable dancing, singing or being seen in a bathing suit. Certain people might make you feel uncomfortable to be around and certain topics of conversation can bring up discomfort. When someone clams up in shyness or laughs nervously, even others can feel that person’s discomfort. Often clients, when experiencing some kind of resistance, will say that they are uncomfortable with an exercise.

Most often, when someone says, “Sorry, I am not comfortable with that,” we take it at face value and simply let it go. It has become an acceptable way of saying “No” that allows people stay in their Comfort Zone. Few people, when they feel uncomfortable, really look inside to see what is making them uncomfortable. Let us look at this on an energetic level.

Energy wants to flow freely. When the energy of our life force is heightened — whether by a situation, a memory or a practice — the charge moves through the body. It first flows through the places that are open, but if it encounters blockages, it pushes up against them, trying to get through.

For example, if your lower body is free and open, the energy might rise easily through your hips and belly, but then get stuck in your chest or throat. If you live in your head, your charge might have trouble finding its way down into your legs to create a solid sense of ground and embodiment, getting stuck in the hips. Or you might feel open in your heart, but your throat gets blocked when you try to express your love.

Energy pushing against a block creates an uncomfortable feeling. You would think that because we want to release our blocks that this ought to feel wonderful. Why, then, the discomfort when the blocks are activated?

Our blocks were put there, once upon a time, for a good reason. Maybe we spoke up and were humiliated for saying something stupid, so we now have a block in the throat. Maybe we were told we were too full of ourselves and we learned to “rein it in” and make ourselves smaller, so we block our activity. Maybe a past lover broke our heart, so we block the area around the chest. We do not always know the source of the block, and might not even be aware of it, until the energy pushes up against it, heightening the discomfort and bringing it to our attention.

Adapted from Charge and the Energy Body: The Vital Key to Healing Your Life, Your Chakras and Your Relationships
Energy, Charge and the Comfort Zone

At the same time that we want to let go of the block, we simultaneously fear its release. When energy pushes up against a block, all the fears of the original situation begin to arise. Most often this is unconscious. We no longer remember what we are afraid of; we just have a sensation of fear in our body. We do not know why, but we suddenly shut down. We simply feel uncomfortable.

The more energy we generate, the harder it pushes against the blocks. So, we limit the discomfort by blocking our charge. We do this with muscular tension, cyclical thoughts, emotional ruts, addictions and distracting behaviors. This may keep us in our Comfort Zone, but it also costs us our aliveness.

The Sensation of Discomfort
What can be much more fruitful, when discomfort arises, is not to push it away or jump over it, but to bring attention to the sensation. I will say to my clients, “What is the sensation of that discomfort? Where do you feel it in your body?” Sometimes they look at me quizzically, having no idea what I am talking about; other times they are able to pinpoint a physical sensation or perhaps a thought that is related. They might respond with statements like:

“I feel like I want to jump out of my skin.”
“My heart is pounding in my chest.”
“My palms are sweaty.”
“My gut is clenching.”
“I feel nervous and jittery.”
“I want to run out the door… change the conversation… not look at you…”
“I think you are going to judge me.”
“I feel like I am wrong… bad… inadequate… flawed… not ready…”
“I feel like I might cry.”

In all cases, the charge is pushing directly at the block, creating a kind of internal argument, while highlighting the beliefs and attitudes associated with the block. Bringing awareness to it is the first step in the healing process. Become curious about the sensation, magnify it or exaggerate it to see what message it might have.

In order to track the charge, I might say things like — “What do you notice as you focus on that sensation?” If it is a thought that emerges, I try to bring it back to the body. “When you have the thought that you are inadequate, what is the sensation in your body?” or “What happens in your body when you think you are going to be judged?” If the client has worked with me awhile and is already educated about tracking their energy, I might simply say, “Do you feel a charge when you say that? If so, where do you feel it?”

Notice that this line of inquiry does not go further into the content of the situation, but simply follows the sensation of the charge itself. This is an important point, often overlooked in most talk therapies when someone is describing a difficult situation. We run on about the details and run away from what is going on in the body. We disconnect from the charge and thereby disconnect from a deeper truth trying to emerge.
Where is your Comfort Zone?
Each of us has a Comfort Zone that falls somewhere between having a high charge and having a low charge. Some people are much more comfortable in higher charge states. They handle stress reasonably well, they can take on challenges or they might love living on the edge of danger. That is when they feel most alive. If one’s charge was to drop to a lower level, such a person might feel depressed, vulnerable or bored.

Others are more comfortable staying in a lower charged state. They like being alone, quiet and peaceful. They may avoid parties or challenges and may not handle stress well.

Some people have a wide Comfort Zone and easily hold tension, meet demands and handle challenges, as well as experiencing states of deep relaxation or periods of solitude and quiet. Such a person has a greater degree of freedom in their life as they can be flexible in a wide variety of states and situations without having to control themselves or the environment.

Others have a very narrow Comfort Zone. They cannot handle the stress of too much charge or they feel depressed and lost when there is too little charge. They tightly control themselves and the world around them in order to maintain their narrow Comfort Zone. They might think everything is okay, but they do not have much freedom.

Expanding Your Comfort Zone
Life happens at the edge of the Comfort Zone, but not over it. In order to break through to freedom we need to get beyond our Comfort Zone. But here is the important point:

In working with energy, it is important not to push someone beyond their Comfort Zone, but instead to expand their Comfort Zone. Pushing beyond it will increase the feelings of discomfort and fear. Then the defenses will kick in and leave a person even more locked up than when they began. Pushing past the Comfort Zone can throw a person into helplessness, rage or dissociation.

Expanding your Comfort Zone gives you more room and allows growth to occur. It creates freedom and dispels fear. You can say, “Wow, I can do this. It is not as hard as I thought.” You can expand to more freedom without wanting to jump out of your skin.

You expand your Comfort Zone by going right to the exact edge of it and noticing what is there. You bring awareness to the charge pushing up against the block — to what it feels like, to what it is trying to do, to where it is trying to move and to what wants to be expressed. With that awareness, you can examine your beliefs, release blocked actions or express emotions, all of which serve to expand the Comfort Zone.

It may seem counterintuitive, but by exaggerating the block — such as tightening the belly even more, holding the breath for a few moments or locking the knees even tighter — the unconscious block can be made conscious. Then by slowly releasing that tightening, we release the energy in a manageable stream that can then be incorporated into the body. It is much like releasing a pressure cooker before taking the lid off.

I call that “harvesting the charge.” We harvest it into our tissues by feeling its sensations and this allows new insights to emerge. It also creates expanded states of being, such as more room for the breath, more relaxation in the muscles, wider cognitive function and a bigger Comfort Zone! When we can harvest the charge, instead of having to block it or get rid of it, we become more fully alive, centered and present.
Exercise: Focus and Exaggerate

When you experience a charge hitting up against a block, begin by noticing what you are unconsciously doing in your body to create that block. You might be tensing your shoulders, holding your breath, clenching your jaw or tightening your legs. This is what your body is doing on its own in reaction to the charge.

When you have identified what your body is unconsciously doing, the next step is to bring it more fully into consciousness. **Exaggerate the movement.** Make it larger. If you are collapsing your chest, you might collapse it even further, moving toward curling up in a ball if that seems like the right expression. If you are holding your breath, hold it even tighter and longer until you cannot anymore. If you are shaking your legs or your hands are quivering, shake them even more. By making the movement bigger, it is not only completing the urge, it brings the unconscious movement of the body to awareness.

Take a moment to see what your body might be expressing as you exaggerate your unconscious urge. It might be, “Leave me alone,” or “I need you.” Maybe your body is saying, “I am all alone and scared,” or “I feel like everyone is pushing up against me.” Sometimes you might not even know what it is saying, and if so, that is fine. Simply move to the next step. If I am working with a client who does not know what her body is saying in the exaggerated position, I might reflect back to her what it looks like she is saying. “Well, it looks to me like you want to hide... push someone away... reach out for help...”

Slowly begin to relax the exaggeration. By slow, I mean incrementally, glacially slow — a quarter inch at a time. This allows your brain-body interface to track the change and allows your charge to move to a new place. If you move too quickly, you miss valuable openings that can occur. You also run the risk of not releasing the block. Moving slowly allows the charge to release slowly, meaning it can be assimilated more comfortably!

Do not decide with your head where the undoing is going to go. Instead just follow the body’s natural process of unfolding. If you are bent over with your hands in a fist and you slowly unclench your fingers, you might find that your body naturally starts to sit upright, or your shoulders naturally want to relax. But you are not “deciding” this is the right way to go and then forcing your body to do it. You are instead feeling the natural inclination of the body in its folding and unfolding.

When you reach a stopping place in the unfolding, simply observe where you are now. Spend a few minutes in the new position. You might experience a warmth or a tingling in some part of your body. You might experience relaxation or notice that your vision gets clearer. You might have a new insight, or you might have feelings come up. Simply be with whatever arises and allow it to move your body.

Anchor that new feeling into your brain and body. Focus on it. What is different about it? What does this new posture or feeling make possible for you? Maybe there is a new belief, a new feeling or a new state of being. Sometimes things do not release in one try. Then you might tighten and release a few more times — but always remember to do it very slowly.

Other times, when you relax one thing that you have been doing, another unconscious movement pops up. You might release your shoulders and then discover that your jaw is tight. Then simply do the same exaggeration and slow release with the jaw. After that releases, return to the shoulders or whatever pops up next.

Life happens at the edge of the Comfort Zone, but not over it.

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Author Anodea Judith can be found at www.AnodeaJudith.com.
Pause to Love

The leaves are whispering.
Listen
Do you hear them?
Listen again
Listen deeply
Do you hear them?
They whisper the heart of the tree.

The roots are reaching.
Reaching deeply
Deeply into the heart of the Mother.
Do you feel them?
Listen...Listen again.
Your feet touch the Earth to Listen.

The branches are weeping.
Weeping tears of sorrow
For not being heard....Listen
Listen again
Listening turns the tears to joy.
Gracious giving

A stiff breeze sets the leaves to shimmer.
They Call Stop!
Listen!
Pause to Love.

– Carol Lessinger
I n the culture of the Alternative and Complementary Medicine community is a widespread belief that some sort of conscious connection between the healer and the healee is important to a successful healing outcome. Indeed, many healers associate healing with a conscious spiritual practice or spiritual mindset. The frequent endpoint of this belief is the suggestion that getting into some sort of a spiritual state, or “higher vibration” on the part of both the healer and healee, may be an important component in healing efficacy.

My research in alternative healing, now going on for more than 35 years, is suggestive of the possibility that the link between healing and conscious spiritual connection may be oversimplified. Indeed, my research suggests that we may have the causal order reversed. That is, an awareness of “connection” may not be the proximate cause of healing. Instead, healing may be closer to an autonomic response to need, and the subjective awareness of spiritual connection may be unnecessary and optional at best.

I realize that this perspective may seem heretical to some. Bear with me please and take a look at some interesting and relevant data that supports this view. These data have been gathered using both in vitro cell cultures and in vivo live mouse models, while I have looked into some parameters of healing such as distance and dose; the physiological correlates of healing; and more recently, the attempt to reverse engineer the healing effect to make it scalable and reliable, a more conventional treatment. The mice research encompasses sixteen experiments using standard models of mammary cancer, sarcomas, naturally occurring oncogenic tumors, immune deficient nude mice and extremely aggressive cancers. These experiments have been performed at eight independent institutions, including four medical schools. In addition, innumerable in vitro cell culture experiments on the consequences of “healing with intent” have been performed on human leukemia cells and human breast cancer cells, to name but a few.

The experimental protocol used in all of these experiments has been to take a “standard” mouse or cell model with a long history of conventional empirical research that has a known and predictable outcome, and to introduce the variable of “healing with intent” using the rapid imaging healing technique, which I helped to develop. Additionally, human physiological correlates to healing have been examined using EEGs at a private lab, and fMRIs independently carried out at two medical schools. Volunteer healers, who have included both students and faculty, have all been pre-screened to be without any experience in alternative healing, nor were they in any way “believers” in the validity of alternative heal-

William F. Bengston, PhD

Questioning the Importance of Conscious Awareness in Alternative Healing
Healing appears to be unrelated to a particular conscious state on the part of either the healer or the healee.
Mice develop a non-metastatic externally palpable tumor that results in death either by the crushing of the internal organs or by malnutrition, or both. Healing treatment of the mice generally involves the volunteer healer placing his or her hands on the outside of the cages and practicing the healing technique for a specified duration.

Those mice that have been treated by the healing with intent techniques typically develop an encrusted blackened area on the surface of the tumor, followed by tumor ulceration and then implosion to full lifespan cure.

Histology indicates that at all stages of remission there are viable cancer cells in the mouse. When full cure is achieved, the mouse is completely free of cancer and is further apparently immune to subsequent injections of the same cancer for its entire life.

Sudden shifts, analogous to “phase transitions,” have been the pattern in all experiments, whether in vivo or in vitro. That is, in the early stages of healing treatment, mice (and cell cultures) show no apparent effect of the healing intention, until suddenly there are non-linear dramatic shifts in tumors (in vivo models) or cell growth (in vitro models). After the first week, there is no significant difference between cells treated and untreated. After the second week, the cells grown in the treated medium are significantly stimulated.

**Healing and the Sense of “Connection”: Part 1**

In addition to the anomalous healing in and of itself, there is apparently an anomalous connection that can occur between subjects.

Synchronizing EEGs between the healer and subject indicate that the healer’s EEG data shows harmonic frequency coupling across the spectra, followed by frequency entrainment effects with the healee, followed by EEG phase locking. These results suggest the presence of a connection between the healer and healee. Of central importance, in addition to the apparent connection established at a distance, is that neither the healer nor healee are consciously aware of the connection. The healee has a need, and the healer practices the rapid imaging healing technique with only a passing intention to help. The connection simply occurs.
Questioning the Importance of Conscious Awareness in Alternative Healing

Figure 5 shows waveforms revealing the 7.5 to 8 Hz frequency range in both healer and subject at three parietal locations. Early in the healer’s sustained amplitude burst, the phase of the subject does not match the healer’s. As the healer’s burst continues, the subject’s phase synchronizes with the healer’s as the subject’s amplitude also increases to near its maximum for the entire 11-min session. Note: Given the healer’s greater amplitude generally, the subject’s entire waveform was amplified for clarity (50 vs. 15 microvolts/cm sensitivity).

Healing and the Sense of “Connection”: Part 2

Research questions have included whether healing with intent might have a specific location in the brain. In order to gather data using functional MRIs, it would be necessary to produce a “toggling” of healing intention into “on” and “off” states. To my amazement, this was achieved through conscious intent. At the University of Connecticut and Thomas Jefferson Medical Schools, an exploratory pilot study with a simple protocol had healers inside an enclosed fMRI intend to “heal” and then to “not heal” during 45-second cycles to see if healing intention can be toggled.

Figure 6 – fMRI data contrasting “on” and “off” healing intention, with a control run. The green and gray bars at the bottom illustrate “activation” and “deactivation” of a part of the brain when cycling is “on” and “off” at 45 second intervals. The part of the brain that was most affected by the cycling was the back of the frontal lobes of the brain (illustrated by the brain images through each successive slice). Each successive image of the brain is a “slice” of the brain at different depths. The first row of images, for example, has the highest parts of the brain.
Apparently, healing can indeed be “toggled.” These results were reproduced by several people acting as healers, always contrasting “on” and “off” states of healing intention, using the same techniques as were applied to the mice and in the EEG studies.

An interesting modification of the protocol involved the healer standing outside the fMRI, approximately 25 feet from the fMRI, and a volunteer healee located inside the fMRI. The healee had no specific intention and was instructed to simply lie inside of the fMRI. Here too, the healer was the one cued to direct healing intention in an on/off cycle of 45 seconds each, except this time the healee was the one being monitored. The same basic pattern of on/off cueing in the brain of the healee was produced, apparently indicating a brain connection across some distance. Once again, there was no conscious awareness on the part of the healee that anything was out of the ordinary. The healee’s only task was to lie still inside the fMRI.

The third and possibly the most important variant on the fMRI protocol involved the gathering of 10 pictures and hair samples of cancerous animals (there were dogs, cats, horses and sheep) which were each placed inside of an opaque envelope. To serve as controls, an equal number of opaque envelopes were prepared that had only index cards inside of them. The envelopes were randomized, and in double blind fashion, one was placed on the left palm of volunteer healers who were lying in an enclosed fMRI. Results clearly indicate that the brains of the volunteer healers “turned on” only when the envelopes had “need” expressed in them (pictures and hair samples of cancerous animals). This apparent activation in response to need essentially duplicated the results when the healers consciously attempted to toggle healing and non-healing in specified intervals. The brains of the volunteer healers “knew” when a need was present in the envelopes.

This kind of “on” and “off” contrast occurred whether the person was cycling, intending to actually heal someone or had an envelope with healing “need” inside. And, this contrast was similar to ones where a volunteer was inside the fMRI and the healer was on the outside, some distance away. The healer, turning

“on” and “off,” produced similar patterns in the (non-healer) person in the fMRI.

Need and a Biological/Behavioral Response to Healing in Mice

Among the curious phenomena that have been observed is the apparent response of mice to the healing environment. In all experiments, we have seen a preference by the mice to situate their tumors as close as possible to the left palm of the healer. This occurs regardless of the orientation of the cage.

![Apparent left-hand attraction in two different mouse models.](image)
This left-handed attraction occurs regardless of the healer, or the type of cancer, only so long as the mice have cancer. Once the mice have been completely cured, they no longer have an inclination to move towards the left hand. It appears as if the mice actually take turns putting their tumor as close as possible to the left palm of the healer, and they switch off after approximately one minute of minimum distance from that placement.

**Healing and Need in Cell Cultures**

Ordinary cotton obtained from a pharmacy was “charged” by volunteer healers for approximately 20 to 30 minutes. Charged and un-charged (control) pieces of cotton were then placed next to well plates with cells that have “need” and cells without need.

Several growth experiments were done on bacteria cells without healing need, comparing the effects of “treated” and “untreated” cotton. There was no significant effect on cell growth. But when human breast cancer cells with a healing “need” were exposed to the treated vs. un-treated cotton, significant changes occurred in cell proliferation and migration.

Genomics performed on human breast cancer cells, comparing exposure to treated and untreated cotton, demonstrated significant changes in six genes if the cotton was charged, with strong suggestion of an additional two genes that may be of importance.

Interestingly, Raman spectra analysis failed to detect any difference between the charged cotton that had produced genomic effects, and uncharged cotton. The testing of other materials besides cotton included clear quartz, pink quartz, water, selenite and cellulose — all with no detectable difference between “charged” and “uncharged.”

To date, only life in need seems to respond to charged materials. And so, the interesting speculative hypothesis might be that the detector for the difference between healing and non-healing might need to be both alive and in need.

**Some Concluding Thoughts**

Several interesting patterns emerge from these data. First, the theme of “need” consistently occurs. Mice that have a healing need will move to the left hand of the healer. Once they are completely cured, this no longer happens. Similarly, cells which have a healing need will respond to healing with intent, whether that healing source comes directly from the hands of a healer, or healing apparently stored in substances such as water, cell medium or cotton. Cells with no healing need exhibit no anomalous changes when offered healing with intent. And so, at a minimum, it can be posited that biological need is a crucial component in healing, and it may be the healee that instigates the healing effect.

### Table: Genomic Changes in Human Breast Cancer Cells Exposed to Charged Cotton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gene Description</th>
<th>Gene Symbol</th>
<th>Energized cotton</th>
<th>Fold Change</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caspase 9, apoptosis-related cysteine peptidase</td>
<td>CASP9</td>
<td>-1.241</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPHrin receptor factor 4, p160/gp150/RhoGAP</td>
<td>EPH4</td>
<td>1.128</td>
<td>0.006</td>
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<tr>
<td>N-myc downstream-regulated gene 1</td>
<td>NDRG1</td>
<td>-1.315</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insulin-like growth factor binding protein 3</td>
<td>IGFGBP3</td>
<td>1.181</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mitochondria maintenance complex component 2</td>
<td>MCM29</td>
<td>1.300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protein phosphatase 1, regulatory (inhibitor) subunit B</td>
<td>PP1R1B5A</td>
<td>-1.405</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serpin peptidase inhibitor, clade F (alpha-2 antiproteinase, pigment epithelium derived factor), member 1</td>
<td>SERPINF1</td>
<td>1.406</td>
<td>0.003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vascular endothelial growth factor C</td>
<td>VEGFC</td>
<td>1.216</td>
<td>0.083</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9 – Significant genomic changes in human breast cancer exposed to charged cotton

Genomics performed on human breast cancer cells, comparing exposure to treated and untreated cotton, demonstrated significant changes in six genes if the cotton was charged, with strong suggestion of an additional two genes that may be of importance.
Second, conscious awareness on the part of the either the healer or healee is not likely to be necessary to produce a healing effect. The extent or quality of consciousness on the part of mice or cells may be debatable, but there is little question that they are unlike anything that parallels human consciousness. Yet mice in need “know” to move proximate to a healing source; cells in need do likewise if they possess motility. Can there be serious doubt that these responses to healing are natural biological responses?

The volunteer healer logs vary widely in the extent to which they were consciously aware of anything associated with healing. Some occasionally felt some sort of “connection” with their mice; some felt nothing at all, the latter to the point that they seemed not to understand the question when asked to comment about feelings associated with healing. In multiple experiments, there has been no association between healing efficacy and subjective states of connection. And so, it may be posited that a conscious awareness of healing may be unnecessary for healing to take place.

At the same time, both EEG and fMRI data clearly indicate that some sort of biological connection actually does take place. For one, at least in the case of healing humans, healer and healee go into harmonic brain phase locking, and do so without any necessary conscious awareness that the healing phenomenon might be taking place.

Yet, while there can be high confidence that conscious awareness on the part of either the healer or healee is optional at best, the role of intention on the part of the healer becomes more problematic. That is, the simple act of putting hands around a cage, or attempting to “charge” materials for a healing experiment, signifies intention of some sort. That intention may be fleeting, and certainly separate from anything approaching either belief or sustained awareness. But if action is taken in order to produce or to test healing of any sort, there must be intention. This intention is akin to the intention expended for many forms of action. I “intend” to walk down the street, but there is nothing approaching “belief” or sustained “attention.” Indeed, attentive walking will diminish efficacy.

There must have been some intention to begin the walking, but the activity is driven not by sustained effort or attention, but by a letting go. The mastery of many skills, whether walking or healing, likely involves the transition from “mindful” attention to relatively “mindless” fleeting intention.

Connection can be seen as an autonomic response to need. Consider that in one fMRI protocol, blinded envelopes with pictures and hair samples of animals placed onto the palm produced significant brain response in the healer if “need” was present in those envelopes. These responses were biologically similar to the brain changes that occurred if the healer intentionally attempted to heal. If the envelopes placed into the palms of volunteer healers did not contain need, then no significant brain changes ensued. Again, there was no conscious awareness of whether any envelopes did or did not have any pictures of animals in need.

The commonly found association between certain states of consciousness and healing, often associated with being “spiritual,” likely has the causal order and temporal sequence inverted. Instead of a “spiritual” sense of connection first being necessary in order to produce healing, the data indicate that healing occurs more as an autonomic response to biological need, and the subjective sense of spiritual connection is an optional consequence of that need. Since more subjectively sensitive individuals are more likely to be drawn to healing, the mistaken association can be made that this sensitivity is the source of healing. It turns out that people who are less subjectively sensitive can heal just as well without ever experiencing connection. Conscious awareness of spiritual connection is optional.

That healing intention can apparently be stored in materials and later be used to stimulate healing effects is extremely suggestive that consciousness may have an associative technology. Data presented here on the apparent storage of healing in water, cell medium and cotton, which can produce a future healing effect when need is present, begs inquiry into future studies that may help to unravel some of the myster-
ies of healing. And, there is the additional possibility that this storage ability might be able to make healing more conventional and scalable.

Finally, the lack of necessity of awareness of spiritual connection on either the part of the healer or healee makes it likely that healing does not conform to models of psychokinesis that support conscious intention as the operative agent. That is, healing outcome is not “willed” in the way that operators can bring about intended alterations in, say, the theoretical output of random number generators. Volunteer healers may have “intended” healing in that they went through some training in a healing technique and placed their hands around cages, but there are no cases of these healers having healing follow their wishes. Indeed, initial experiments proceeded under the assumption that if healing were to work, then mice that were treated shortly after being injected with cancer would avoid tumor growth altogether. In all cases, regardless of type of cancer, and regardless of how soon after injection treatment began, tumors grew, sometimes very large, before the process of ulceration and implosion commenced. The volunteer healers were successful in the outcome; they were upset and concerned when their mice developed tumors. Certainly, the pattern and stages of healing do not conform to the wishes of the healers.

The data output from the experiments, and the experiences of the healers, do not conform to anything like a direct PK effect. Instead, there is merit to thinking of healing as a non-directed outcome similar to that proposed by Jahn and Dunne in their M5 model for explaining their consciousness related anomalies with random event generators and remote perception studies. That model proposes the notion that the conscious mind might connect to the tangible physical world not directly, but by way of a circuitous route involving unconscious processes and intangible physical mechanisms. Further speculation involves a timeless and spaceless “Source” in which the unconscious and intangible merge.

While a full examination of the application of the M5 model to healing is beyond the scope of this discussion, let me simply say that the actual healing technique used in these experiments, as well as the subjective experiences of a selection of volunteer healers, is remarkably consistent with this model.7 I would add, however, that a full explication of the usefulness of the model to understanding healing would actually and controversially minimize the importance of the conscious mind.

Author Bill Bengston can be found at www.BengstonResearch.com.

Notes:
This article has been abridged and edited from a chapter entitled “Some Reflections on Consciousness, Intention, and Healing,” in Being and Biology: Is Consciousness the Life Force? Edited by Brenda Dunne and Robert Jahn, ICRL Press, 2017.

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Nature as Energy Medicine

Heather Green

Working with aspects of nature, such as bodies of water, trees, a meadow or a garden can help you heal imbalances on a body, mind and spirit level. You can follow the steps I provide below to work with any issue. In particular, nature can assist with balancing the physical body and emotions. The best part about this healing modality is its simplicity.

Similar to taking physical plant remedies like herbs, essential oils or flower essences, you can also receive the physical, mental, emotional or spiritual benefits of these plants as an Energy Medicine. For instance, nature, plants, trees and bodies of water are made up of energy. They all emit healing frequencies. These energies help us heal.

There are several examples of different aspects of nature and the ways in which they can assist any area of your life. With their deep roots, expanded heights and longevity, trees radiate an energy of wisdom, patience and stability. We can benefit from these energies as well as from the quiet and peace we feel while in their presence.

Many of us have experienced how a meadow or garden’s energy helps awaken a sense of joy, freedom or beauty within us. Each plant or flower activates a particular energy that is needed on some level of our being. For example, working with the energies of lemon balm can reduce anxiety and improve digestion. St. John’s Wort is great for helping with anger and depression and mugwort balances the female hormones. Use your intuition when discerning what plant or flower energy you need to work with to heal a specific issue. The best part about working with these plants in the form of energy is that your body and energy fields will only take in the right amount for you and there are no side effects like there are with physical remedies like herbs, drugs or supplements.

You can also work with the vortex energies of the earth in person or on an energetic level. Vortices are volumes of spiraling healing energy that exist in a particular location of the earth. They are extremely powerful and transformative. You will know when an area of the earth has one or more vortices that are helpful to you because you will often be attracted to and in awe of the place. You might also feel energized, rejuvenated and/or relaxed and meditative. Most people will feel an increase in vitality or a sense of peace around a vortex. But even for those who are not as sensitive to the energy changes, a vortex can still provide healing benefits. The vortices in Sedona, Arizona and Mt. Shasta, California are commonly referred to in hiking and spiritual awakening texts.

When working with nature as an energetic medicine
using the steps below, you can use your intent to draw up the beneficial energies from a plant or area of the earth into your physical or emotional body to assist in healing there. For example, working with the energies of bodies of water, like the ocean, can purify and cleanse physical and emotional toxins. You can also work with Earth in a vortex area, drawing up her energies to bind to free radicals throughout the body, bringing balance and preventing disease.

Steps for Working with the Energies of Nature to Heal
This healing method works well for helping with physical wounds or injuries and emotional issues like grief, anger or fear.

Follow these steps:
1. Connect with Earth, Earth’s vortices or an aspect of nature, like a body of water or a plant. These will be aspects that you are drawn to or called to work with. They will ignite your healing process.
   
   a. Whether you are working with an area of Earth, a plant in person or from a distance, simply intend to make your connection. It is in alignment with universal law that energy naturally follows intent.
   
   b. After you make the connection, you should feel a shift in energy confirming that you are linked up with that area of nature. When a shift in energy happens you feel calmer, sleepy and relaxed; you might also want to take a deep breath or move your body.

2. Set your healing intention to be in collaboration with Earth’s energetic medicine.

3. With your intent, draw up or call forth the healing energies from a plant, an area of nature, such as a meadow or body of water, or the earth itself. Visualize the energy coming into your body or energy fields. Energy fields are the layers of energy that surround your body. Although invisible, they carry vibrations that affect your mental, emotional and physical health.

4. Use your intuition to guide you. Visualize or feel the energies moving into the areas of your physical body or the emotional layer of your energy fields as needed. You might experience a sense of knowing that the energies are working with you to heal. If you do not sense anything at all, a shift in energy as described in Part b of the first step above will confirm for you that the healing is happening.

5. After you feel a shift in energy or a couple of minutes pass, it is time to stop. This shift in energy lets you know you have received enough healing energy for one session.

6. Observe how you feel physically and emotionally for the next few hours or days. Based on the results I have seen with my clients, you can continue to use this healing method as needed two times per day for physical or emotional issues.

7. You might notice small or big changes or none at all. If your emotional or physical issues completely resolve, then the healing is complete. If you see little to no improvement, then continue using this healing method every day for approximately two weeks along with any medicine or remedies recommended by an allopathic or naturopathic medical professional.
If the physical or emotional issue persists after seeing a doctor and using this healing method for two weeks, you might want to also consult with an Energy Medicine practitioner for extra help. There can be many layers involved when it comes to injury or emotional imbalances. Their origins can even be spiritual or energetic in nature, or it can be related to another unidentified health problem. Healing is most effective and long lasting when all the root causes are identified, addressed and resolved.

You can also work with nature as a form of Energy Medicine to help animals! Follow the same steps above, setting the intention for the animal instead of for yourself.

It is always recommended that you see a licensed medical professional and that your animals visit a veterinarian for all physical and emotional issues. But working with nature as an Energy Medicine can be a great assistant in the healing process. Enjoy the process of connecting with the earth, plants or any other areas of nature as you and your animal companions move into greater levels of wellness!

Author Heather Green can be found at www.TealHealing.com.

References
Overcoming Challenges by Focusing on the Positive

Marie Manuchehri

When I was guided to write an article about embracing and overcoming challenges following the most politically angst-filled year of my/our lifetime (regardless of one’s political views), I thought it was so convenient. For some this past year included personal struggles, adding to the dread, and for that I am truly sorry.

I often wonder when I am personally affected by strife, what the real reasons behind such pain could possibly be. As a reader of human energy, I typically see — through vivid images and auditory commentary — the authentic reasons behind the emotional and physical suffering of others. But when it is my own life, I sometimes wonder and wonder, humbled by the emotional pain and internal questioning. Eventually, I remember what I have shared with those I guide — that truly challenging times are connected to unhealed past life events that have yet to be integrated into one’s consciousness. The current unjust event somehow triggers an unhealed past life trauma that is so upsetting that we are unwilling or unable to come to peace with its narrative.

Before each incarnation to Earth, we choose specific wounds to heal during the upcoming lifespan. We may have tried to heal the perceived injustices over several incarnations and with each natural life, we most likely but not always, gain insight and a little healing, lessening the need for severe contrast. Diversity appears, especially in physical realities, so that we may choose a new viewpoint. Earth’s unique physical reality provides countless opportunities to compare and contrast. Through compromise and new viewpoints, we eventually heal.

Still, it is these areas of life that bother us the most. You know the area of your life I am writing about. You are aware of the problem. You may have tried everything to resolve it (heal your body, get a great job, increase income, make new friends, find real love, etc.). However, the undesired persists. Because when your focused attention is pinpointed on the unhealed issue, it simply cannot liberate.

Whether you are aware or unaware of your thoughts, energy flows toward what you focus on. Feelings intensify energy, which is a wonderful manifesting tool if your feelings are positive. The over-focused, intense, worried areas of your life do not need your attention. These difficult areas of your life have had your focus for far too long and remain present, despite your devotion to resolve them.
Let me share with you a personal story as an example of how to change one’s focus!

Nine years ago, just before the leaves began to fall, I realized that soon, all three of my daughters would be in college at the very same time. Of course, this information was not new. I had intentionally pushed the realization to the back of my mind, waiting for the shock to subside so that I could think and feel financial ease for this monumental time.

As a believer in thoughts becoming things, I knew I needed my energy system to get into an authentic place of peace regarding the extra monies needed. For one week, I directed my mind, once again, to simply not think about it. Instead, I focused on quickening my internal vibration with thoughts of beautiful things (an easy activity when living in the beautiful Pacific Northwest), in preparation to transfer increased energetic positive thoughts about the upcoming financial requirement.

After the week passed and I had somewhat forgotten that all three children would soon be in college, I asked myself a few important questions so that I could allow my mind, and eventually my emotional body, to be in a place of allowing more resources to come into my life.

As I searched my mind for what I loved about helping my children attend university, I was instantly filled with joy, as it was a privilege and an honor to provide for what I thought was an important aspect of their development. My children’s father and I did not want them to acquire any debt regarding their education. It was this thought that really allowed my energy to soar in positivity.

As my feelings of appreciation and gratitude grew with what we were able to accomplish, I began to visualize myself happily writing a check to our youngest for her expenses. The image was spontaneous. I could see myself relaxed and happy, as if there were plenty of funds in my checking account. In the image, I was sitting on the floor in my living room (my favorite room in the house) near a huge, ornate wood and glass coffee table, with thick, dreamy, blonde carved legs (one of my favorite pieces of furniture).

From that moment forward, I invited this pleasing image, and the feelings that came along with it, into my day and refused to entertain any negative thoughts or feelings about the triple-tuition payments.

Within a few weeks, one of my clients who was a vice president for a local Seattle company asked me if I could make myself available one Friday per month to give sessions to out-of-town clients and employees. He said, “We would be happy to pay you the corporate rate,” which was basically twice my normal rate! At the time, I was not working on Fridays and agreed to his surprising offer, which easily covered the needed expenses each month!

Your comprehension as to what you are really feeling and thinking empowers your vibration to align to desired outcomes. Refocusing your energy over and over again is the key.

Author Marie Manuchehri can be found at www.EnergyIntuitive.com.
Five Secret Messages Your Symptoms Might Be Sending You

Amy B. Scher

I was not doing anything noble in my twenties, like changing the world, but I was totally content making people smile with “Live To Ride” Harley-Davidson paraphernalia and meditating to the sound of rumbling bikes on my lunch break. I had no idea that my dream life as a marketing director for Harley-Davidson was suddenly about to fold.

It was the beginning of a wake-up call from inside myself.

After a string of misdiagnoses and treatments that nearly killed me, I was finally accurately diagnosed at age twenty-seven, seven years after my very first symptoms appeared. This is the jackpot moment in a chronically ill person’s life. Apparently, a tiny tick bit me, doctors explained — a tick that I had never even known about. It transferred to me bacteria called Borrelia burgdorferi, the causative agent of Lyme disease. Lyme disease is a bacterial infection transmitted from a tick bite that can cause serious health problems if left untreated. And it did. The diagnosis of Lyme disease carried with it a string of further diagnoses, including autoimmune thyroid disease, kidney dysfunction, connective tissue disease, fibromyalgia, neuropathy and more.

While we tend to think of symptoms as bad news from our bodies, I have taken the long road to learn that this is not always exactly what is going on. Symptoms do come through the body, but they are often delivering loving messages coming from a deeper place — the part of ourselves we do not always want to listen to. Symptoms are the body’s way of trying to get our attention, whether something is off physically or emotionally. In a 2012 Huffington Post article, Deepak Chopra wrote, “Modern medicine, for all its advances, knows less than 10 percent of what your body knows instinctively.” When I was suffering through those many years of debilitating illness, I found myself angry with my body for acting out and “betraying” me. But this perspective and resentment toward my body only made things worse.

Symptoms are your body’s emotional guidance system and this system is hard to ignore, resist or dismiss. I now see, through all of those years of autoimmune illness, anxiety, suffering from Lyme disease and more, my body’s guidance system was the only completely honest source of information in my life. It called me out — very often. As I became more apt and able to ignore the symptoms, my body’s guidance system became stronger and louder. It never gave up and did not cower at my rebellion. It just kept delivering the messages.

After a while, you can become familiar with how your body speaks to you. We each have what I like to refer
to as the **loudest link** (my more positive version of the term **the weakest link**). This part, or parts, of your body, may feel like your worst enemy, but in fact, may be your best friend. It will be the part that acts up first to tell you something is not right.

It was a big shift in thinking when I stopped hating my body so that I could really listen to what it was saying. That is when my path to permanent and complete healing opened before me. When I learned that my body was showing me all the ways I was not being true to myself — living in fear, engaging in toxic relationships, being an unending perfectionist — I started listening. And from that moment, I started healing.

If your body has been speaking loudly to you, read on.

**The Mind-Body Approach to Symptoms**

While you should notify your healthcare practitioner of any new physical symptoms, it is wise to also look deeper into what you can do to support your own healing. In my own healing journey, I set out to discover why my body was so out of balance in the first place. Our emotions, along with the way we live our lives, including our thoughts and attitudes, have a strong influence on our physical bodies. Living out of alignment with who we really are (being afraid to be our true selves), holding negative emotions from the past and being in toxic relationships are all important factors to address for our health, just as is eating right and getting enough rest.

After learning how to interact with and respond to my own body’s secret messages in the form of symptoms, I was able to heal permanently and completely. This though, was after years of medical and alternative treatments that seemed to sometimes help, but never fully or permanently. That is when I came to the life-chanting epiphany: **If treating the body alone does not resolve the problem, then maybe the body alone is not what caused it.** The mind-body approach to healing worked for me when nothing else did.

The only requirement for success in healing is that we need to do our own work. Even while using the support of medicine or other modalities like energy healing, acupuncture and complimentary methods, we cannot excuse ourselves from the biggest part of the process.

When we listen to the messages of our body and respond by changing our lives for the better, we practice a powerful method of self-healing to enhance everything else we are doing to get well.

**Five Common Symptoms and Their Possible Messages**

From my own healing journey, and in my experience as an energy therapist working with clients, I have learned some common patterns in terms of metaphors, messages and clues to which certain types of conditions, or symptoms, are connected.

Here are the five most common messages:

1. **Skin Rashes and Conditions** — Your skin acts as a barrier between you and the world. When symptoms show up on the skin, they can be linked to feeling like someone is getting under your skin, feeling unprotected against something or someone, feeling that you are itching or burning to release something and holding hurts right under the surface. Skin rupturing such as blisters can be bubbling-up agitation. Rashes are sometimes an indication of a burst of anger/expression that you have been holding on to, or the body having a big or sensitive reaction. Skin issues are often linked to the fight, flight or freeze reaction (panic). In
Traditional Chinese Medicine, your skin is linked energetically to your lungs, which are connected to the primary emotions of grief, sadness and confusion. The energy of congestion can also show up in the skin — feeling congested or stuck with emotion and unable to move it out.

2. Throat/Thyroid Issues — The throat symbolizes communication, expression and metabolizing energy. Symptoms that manifest in the throat can be pointing you to energy around choking on words, swallowing emotions (anger, pain, grief), feeling choked by someone else, being unable to swallow the truth, feeling afraid to speak up or being choked up and unable to express your feelings. The throat and thyroid can also be imbalanced by speaking, giving advice and feeling the need to express or defend yourself beyond what feels comfortable or healthy for you. Thyroid conditions, tonsillitis and other mouth and throat conditions are most often linked to these types of metaphors.

3. Autoimmune Conditions — Autoimmune conditions are all about attacking your own body or self. These conditions are often signs of self-criticism, attacking yourself or your past (regrets) and feeling completely out of control. They can be particularly affected by patterns of carrying guilt or shame and feeling unworthy or undeserving.

4. Reproductive Organs — The reproductive organs are associated with creativity, being comfortable with feeling your feelings, security and joy. When we do not allow our childlike selves to be expressed (as in being “too responsible”), this can cause issues. Similarly, when we are afraid to express ourselves creatively, whether artistically or otherwise, energy can get stuck in these organs. When we have issues and fears related to parenting or being parented, they often affect the reproductive organs as well. Fear or guilt around creating our lives as we wish will affect these organs. Feelings of insecurity (the opposite of feeling secure in the womb) and an inability to turn inward for comfort will affect this area. Other emotions that affect the reproductive system are humiliation, shame and worthlessness.

Repressed emotions about sexuality or energy from past sexual trauma can also show up here.

5. Headaches — Metaphors for this area can be linked to feeling dizzy with anger or fear, being hot-headed, spinning with confusion, feeling like your world has been rocked, feeling overwhelmed, being unable to clear your head, being a headstrong person, being overwhelmed, being clouded, feeling like you cannot stop thinking about something or cannot get your head around something. Are you “doing your head in” by ruminating over the same worry or thought? Self-criticism and over-thinking are also messages sent by symptoms in the head. Migraines are a common sign of being too hard on oneself. Sometimes headaches can be linked to sexual fears or criticism.

Now that you understand your symptoms may have a deeper meaning, look at these possible meanings. Addressing them through clearing old emotional energy in your body might just change your health in ways you never imaged. I am going to introduce you below to a very powerful way to start doing this right now.

Because emotions that get stuck in the body can have a great influence on your physical self, it can be hugely healing to learn ways to release those emotions as you feel them. While most of us are comfortable talking about our feelings or maybe even trying to meditate through them, the following technique can help you release them.

Transformational Technique: Tap Your Thymus Gland to Release Difficult Emotions

The thymus gland is the master gland of the body’s immune system and is located in the upper part of the chest, behind the breastbone. It sits right over the heart and is affected by emotional stress. The thymus is so powerful and so connected to the rest of the body’s energy system that it can be used as a tool for releasing difficult emotions.

When you are experiencing uncomfortable emotions, simply tap the thymus gland using your fingertips while you breathe deeply. Aim for about an inch be-
low the notch in your neck, where a tie knot would be, and tap with three or four fingers on that general area. The percussion effect of the tapping will help to gently process and release the emotion out of your body.

My ultimate healing eventually came from inside. It came from releasing the beliefs, emotions and thought patterns that no longer served me. In order to do this, I learned various ways of working with my body’s energy system, which focuses on clearing and re-balancing for health. Working with my thymus gland was one of the very first ways I began healing.

Now that you have a new way of looking at your symptoms, the only thing left to do is promise your body that you will pay attention. It is possible that through your symptoms, your body has been waiting for you, just like mine was for me. It took years of chasing doctors and cures for me to realize that I would have to be the leader in my own journey. And although that can feel scary and overwhelming, it also feels awesome. If you recognize that some of your patterns, such as holding on to old emotion, may be part of the “problem” in your life, that means learning to release them is part of the solution. And this helps instigate perhaps the most powerful healing energy of all — yours.

Author Amy B. Scher can be found at www.HowISaveMyLife.com.
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had grown especially curious about the idea that thoughts are an actual something with the capacity to change physical matter. A number of best-selling books had been published about the law of attraction and the power of intention — the idea that you could manifest what you most desired just by thinking about it in a focused way — but to all of this I maintained a certain incredulity, overwhelmed by a number of awkward questions.

Is this a true power and exactly how all-purpose is it, I wondered? What can you do with it? Are we talking about curing cancer or shifting a quantum particle? And to my mind, the most important question of all: What happens when lots of people are thinking the same thought at the same time? Does this magnify the effect?

I wanted to examine whether this capacity was powerful enough to heal individuals, even the world. Like a twenty-first-century doubting Thomas, I was essentially looking for a way to dissect magic.

My 2008 book, *The Intention Experiment*, compiled all the credible scientific research that looked into the power of mind over matter, but its purpose was also an invitation. Very little research had been carried out about group intention and my plan was to fill that gap by enlisting my readers as the experimental body of group intenders in an ongoing scientific experiment.

I gathered together a consortium of physicists, biologists, psychologists, statisticians and neuroscientists highly experienced in consciousness research. Periodically I would invite my internet audience, or an actual audience when I was delivering a talk or workshop somewhere, to send one designated, specific thought to affect some target in a laboratory — set up by one of the scientists I was working with — who would then calculate the results to see if our thoughts had changed anything.

Eventually this project evolved into, in effect, the world’s largest global laboratory, involving several hundred thousand of my international readers from more than a hundred countries in some of the first controlled experiments on the power of mass intention to affect the physical world.

As it turned out, the experiments did work. In fact, they really worked. In the 30 experiments I have run to date, 26 have evidenced measurable, mostly significant change and three of the four without a positive result simply had technical issues. To put these results in perspective, almost no drug produced by the pharmaceutical industry can lay claim to that level of positive effect.
I studied this phenomenon, trying to find out why these
groups would have such powerful rebound effects.

But as amazing as that is, it is not the most interesting
part of the story.

In 2008, in one of my early workshops, I placed partic-
ipants in small groups of about eight just to see what
would happen if group members tried to heal one of
their group through a collective healing intention.

I thought the group effect would be a feel-good
exercise — something akin to a massage or a facial —
but I was shocked to listen to more than an hour of
instant, near-miraculous healings the following day.

And throughout the next year, in every workshop we
ran, whenever we set up our clusters of eight or so
people in each group, gave them a little instruction
and asked them to send intention to a group mem-
ber, we were stunned witnesses to story after story of
physical and psychic transformation.

Marekje’s multiple sclerosis made it difficult for her to
walk without aids. The morning after being the target
of a Power of Eight group, she arrived at the work-
shop without her crutches.

Marcia suffered from a cataract-like opacity block-
ing the vision of one eye. The following day, after her
group’s healing intention, she claimed that her sight
in that eye had been almost fully restored.

Diane in Miami had such pain in her hip from sco-
liosis that she had to stop working out. During the
intention she felt intense heat and a rapid-fire, twitch-
ing response in her back. The next day, she declared,
“It’s like I have a new hip.”

There were hundreds, even thousands, more experi-
ences like these. And each time I was standing there
watching these changes unfold right in front of me.

During a talk I gave in Denver, Sande, a 63-year-old,
had been a lifetime athlete but one of her knees was
shot. “When I walk I can feel when my knee is going
to pop out, which it does, and then I fall. I’m in a lot
of pain.” She scheduled knee replacement surgery for
a month’s time after a talk I was giving because she
was fearful she would break a bone if she did not take
care of it.

During the talk, when I put members of the Denver
audience in Power of Eight groups, tears rolled down
Sande’s cheeks as she felt the pressure around her
knee on both sides, “as if somebody with big mitts
was holding my leg. It was warm, not hot. I never felt
that before. It went down my whole leg, going down
to my ankle — and I hadn’t told them about my
ankles. When we opened our teary eyes we looked at
our hands and everyone’s hands were vibrating.”

When I asked the audience if anyone had had an
experience, Sande was the first to put up her hand.
“Look,” she said, “I can bend my knees.” She leaned
over and squatted down. “I could not do that before.”
Three days later, the healing effects had persisted.
“When I walk I don’t get that feeling that the knee
will pop out,” Sande replied. “I can go upstairs with-
out pain.” Since the Power of Eight group, she no
longer needed her knee brace and was able to cancel
her surgery.

Beverly, a massage therapist, never planned to come
to my Denver talk because she was recovering from a
car accident. “My crunched ribs were uncomfortable;
my shoulder was singing a high-pitched, exquisite
pain and wouldn’t stay in place without support,”
she said. Nevertheless, a church group member was
particularly persuasive, and Beverly arrived, holding her shoulder in place.

During the Power of Eight circle, Beverly said, “I felt all the tension of the car wreck fall out of my left side. As I was supported by my groupmates a bubbling, Kundalini-type energy poured out onto the floor through my arm. My shoulder slid back to normal position, my ribcage released and I took a full breath for the first time in the six weeks since the accident.” Nearly two months later, Beverly wrote a progress report expressing that her shoulder had remained in place, “almost exclusively pain-free.”

And there were many other amazing experiences, even among the senders. A woman who had a stroke and could no longer focus her eyes was back to seeing normally. A fellow with bursitis could raise his arm all the way, as normal. Another woman who arrived with a migraine said it had completely cleared and one of the senders arrived with a cane and walked away from the event no longer needing it.

Faith felt the ache in her back immediately begin to dissipate. “I’m a real skeptic, and yet it worked.”

For many years I believed I was witnessing a placebo effect — until I began to realize that the senders were getting healed too.

Wes Chapman, for instance, was in college working on a science degree when he was drafted and sent to Vietnam for the final year of the war. The experience traumatized him so much that he did not finish his university degree and was left in a state of depression. His bad luck seemed to carry on; even the high point in his life — his second marriage — was quickly extinguished after his wife died from cancer.

At 65, he was at the ‘what’s the use’ stage where it was difficult for him to even make breakfast. In August, he joined a Power of Eight group, but sent healing intentions for two group members. Afterward, he said, he experienced his own amazing shift — a feeling of intense joy. He was able to easily handle all the activities that debilitated him previously.

During a dream shortly afterward, he met his 19-year-old self, who told him “there’s still time.” Suddenly he felt compelled to re-engage in writing and even intense exercise, including weight-lifting and 90-minute power-walks. “It feels like I’m 25, not 65,” he said.

Andy Spyros had tried everything to remove old patterns that had interfered with her ability to make a good living. When she joined a Power of Eight group she shared her intention to find a dream job with ample income.

None of the intentions the group tried were working for her.

And Andy then started shifting her intention to a young boy who had tried to commit suicide.

“Two days after that, I got an unexpected offer to do product development and strategy for an online organization involved in human development, a job that would joyfully bring me money doing work I love!” said Andy.

For many years, I studied this phenomenon, trying to find out why these groups would have such powerful rebound effects. And then I discovered evidence that working in a large or small group and doing something altruistic activates the vagus nerve — one of the longest in the body — which connects with all the communication systems involved with caretaking. It slows down heart rate, calms the effects of any fight-or-flight autonomic nervous system activity and initiates the release of oxytocin, a neuropeptide that plays a role in love, trust, intimacy, kindness or compassion.

Increased levels of oxytocin also have a marked healing effect on the body; they lower inflammation, boost the immune system, aid digestion, lower blood pressure, heal wounds faster and even repair damage to the heart after a heart attack.

In 2016 neuroscientists from Life University, the largest chiropractic university in the world, carried out a
A series of studies of Power of Eight groups by placing EEG monitors on some of the students participating in the circles. The results show that members of the group undergo major brainwave changes that are akin to those of a Sufi master during a state of ecstatic prayer — a feeling of blissful oneness.

The powerfully transformational mechanisms at work in my healing intention groups appeared to be the unique power of group prayer coupled with an amazing mirror effect. Focusing on healing someone else brings on a mirrored healing.

Intending in a group is a fast-track to the miraculous.

Author Lynne McTaggart can be found at www.LynneMcTaggart.com.

Adapted from Lynne’s new book The Power of Eight (Atria, 2017), which includes full instructions about how to do group intention and construct your own Power of Eight group.
Breathe

Leo Babauta

Breathe.

Breathing can transform your life.

If you feel stressed out and overwhelmed, breathe. It will calm you and release the tensions.

If you are worried about something coming up, or caught up in something that already happened, breathe. It will bring you back to the present.

If you are discouraged and have forgotten your purpose in life, breathe. It will remind you about how precious life is, and that each breath in this life is a gift you need to appreciate. Make the most of this gift.

If you have too many tasks to do, or are scattered during your workday, breathe. It will help bring you into focus, to concentrate on the most important task you need to be focusing on right now.

If you are spending time with someone you love, breathe. It will allow you to be present with that person, rather than thinking about work or other things you need to do.

If you are exercising, breathe. It will help you enjoy the exercise, and therefore stick with it for longer.

If you are moving too fast, breathe. It will remind you to slow down, and enjoy life more.

So breathe. And enjoy each moment of this life. They are too fleeting and few to waste.

It is not wise to dash about. 
Shortening the breath causes much stress. 
Use too much energy, and 
You will soon be exhausted. 
That is not the Natural Way. 
Whatever works against this Way 
Will not last long.

– From the Tao Te Ching

Author Leo Babauta can be found at www.SeaChange.ZenHabits.net
I walk up to the bank of the river and kneel down to look at my reflection on the surface. At this calm bend, the water is smooth, as if it has never been disturbed. The day is extremely cold and I have just walked away from feeding the cows with my father. At this time in my life, I often stole off into nature, away from other people in an attempt to feel connected and safe rather than live with the distance I felt around my family.

As I stare down into the water, I attempt to look past the light bouncing off the surface and into my own eyes. What I see is the face of a boy searching for freedom and connection, but not sure how to get there. I pick up a rock and say a spontaneous, made-up prayer asking for guidance on how to resolve the painful and heavy emotions I feel around my family. I drop the rock into the water and the surface becomes wavy as the ripples spread across the glassy surface. As I look down at my reflection my face becomes distorted and I can no longer look into that young boy’s eyes. I rise off the ground and feel the stiffness of my cold knees that had rested on the frozen bank. I hear my father’s loud and boisterous voice shouting for me to come back to the truck. I feel heavesy rise up in my chest, sucked back into the role I try to fulfill: a good, hard-working son who contributes to his family farm. I walk back over the riverbank and approach the truck — back toward that mold that never really fit.

My father has always encouraged me to jump into things headfirst. When I was five, he picked me up and threw me into a lake on my family property. He wanted to teach me to swim, so he tossed me right in. Another time he treaded water in a pool, urging me to jump off the diving board into the water. As I stood at the edge of the diving board, I kept asking my father, “Will it be fun?” and he encouraged me to take the leap of faith into the water and into his arms.

I remember another occasion, sitting on the side of a soccer field, watching my father play with a bunch of adults. I remember feeling comfortable and connected to my body, content walking along the sideline and playing with the grass and flowers. As I watched the grown men playing, I saw only chaos as men threw themselves at each other, attempting to regain possession of the ball. I saw my father stop playing and look from side to side: he was searching for me and I felt a sense of fear rise in my little chest, throat and face as I became nervous and tense. My dad approached me and I knew that I was about to leave the comfortable space I had created and be thrown into the chaos of the grown men playing. My dad got down on his knees and pulled me in close to him. He looked directly into my eyes and said, “You need to go on the field and be aggressive and tough.”
He pointed at another young boy who was fighting the grown men for the ball and said, “You need to be fierce like him.”

What I felt in that moment was the first splash of the rock hitting the smooth glassy surface of my being. I felt a sense of confusion and disconnection replace my feelings of peace and contentment as I froze, unable to step onto the field. I felt the second ripple of doubt materialize from my dad’s comparison to the other young boy who was playing. I felt a subtle, simple conclusion about the part of me that was content on the sideline rise in my consciousness: “There is something wrong with me.”

As this wave reverberated out, I left behind the gentle, calm and sensitive boy that sat in the light on the side of the soccer field. I eventually made my way onto the field and stepped into yet another ripple: the development of new patterns that would enable me to fit in with my father and the other men. I imitated the little boy who was the reflection of what my father wanted from me. I ran after the ball and pulled at the grown men’s clothing. I did whatever I could to perform the way in which my father had asked. I wanted him to be proud and to turn his attention toward me with approval and satisfaction. I wanted to overcome my dad’s disapproval of the shy, sensitive boy as I fought to be the best — to prove that there was nothing wrong with who I was.

Now, as I look back, I can see why I felt that I needed to change in order to survive on the soccer field with my father and the other men. The shock of realizing that I did not fit in as my father looked me in the eyes on the side of the soccer field caused a reverberation out into my entire life, all the way to the point when I wandered up on that riverbank on that cold winter, kneeled on the freezing ground, looked down at the reflection of my sad, stiff face and decided to take a new step into healing and forgiveness. In the reflection of that young man’s eyes I could see all the years of proving that I was tough, a winner, portraying self-confidence in sports, proving that I worked hard and never gave up; but the reality was that underneath the surface I actually felt that I was never enough and that there was something wrong with me.

As I grew up, this feeling led to anger and resentment towards my father and we found ourselves locked in constant confrontation. He was consistently pushing, prodding and urging me to become a farmer.

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Self-forgiveness is how we take personal responsibility for our own energy and stop making other people the cause of our suffering. It is how we finally face the ripples of inner conflict and how they distort the clear image we have of ourselves, like that little boy had of himself in his contentment on the side of the soccer field, exploring the flowers and grass. When we forgive ourselves, we acknowledge the rolling
Finding Peace Through Self-Forgiveness

momentum of these ripples and decide to no longer use them to propel us forward through life; we decide to finally give space and time to return to that point from which this pain originated. Self-forgiveness allows us to see that what we currently experience as self-judgment originates from the perception of an innocent child who wanted to please and be loved by others. Self-forgiveness is how we begin to be present for this old perception of not belonging. In my own story, forgiveness gave me a practice of acknowledging that my self-judgments were connected to the pain caused by my own rejection of that little boy. The more I practice self-forgiveness, the more I feel capable of acknowledging my judgments, validating my feelings in relation to them and embracing the sensitivity that is connected to a sense of belonging.

Looking Within: Practicing Self-Forgiveness

This practice of forgiveness will guide you through becoming aware of how conflict exists in your relationship with yourself and others. This internal practice will help you acknowledge this energy and uncover your deepest intentions within your relationships. Through this practice you will feel a clearing and cleansing in your relationships and a deeper connection to your authentic self.

Choose a Current Conflict

Begin this exercise by first choosing a conflict that you are experiencing with someone in your life. This conflict should be one that disturbed your peace and has been replaying in your mind — a relationship in which there is unresolved tension that has led to awkwardness, separation and avoidance. We all have conflicts in our life and we have the option to go through this process with any situation, whether it be a mild conflict or long-standing conflict that has lasted for years. Forgiveness can bring healing and resolve to both depending on the amount of time we choose to devote to a situation.

Forgiving Patterns

Reflect on how you act within the relationship you have chosen to process. Do you avoid this person or situation, become defensive or angry, overly nice or accommodating, are unwilling to commit time or effort, quick to lash out or belittle or become overly competitive? These are just a few examples of how we react in relationships that cause us conflict. It is important to remember that our energy moves out and attaches to people who trigger us and our patterns occur as altered behavior based on this attachment within our energy. By acknowledging our patterns in the conflict, we claim responsibility for how we express energy within the relationship. After identifying the patterns, we can begin the forgiveness process by embracing the pattern with forgiveness. For example, in relation to my father I would say to myself, “I forgive you, Jake, for always needing to be the best, for isolating yourself, for always doing what other people want and for lashing out.” As we acknowledge these patterns, we accept and forgive our role in the conflict.

Forgiving Belief Systems

The next step is to acknowledge belief systems in relation to this conflict. To get in touch with these beliefs, we have to dig in and explore the inner workings of our own reactivity. Beliefs systems are formed in moments like the one I experienced on the sideline as a little boy — we come to a conclusion about ourselves in relation to another person’s reaction. Beliefs systems are formed in moments like the one I experienced on the sideline as a little boy — we come to a conclusion about ourselves in relation to another person’s reaction. We create beliefs around emotional wounds in order to distance ourselves from the feelings of rejection. These turn into deep-seated perceptions about ourselves, so deep that they seem inherent to our being, and emerge in the face of conflict. Other people act as a mirror, reinforcing these core beliefs when we perceive that they are not valuing who we are. In order to become aware of core beliefs, notice how you feel when you are not valued in a relationship.

In relation to the conflict you have chosen, ask yourself, “What do I want this person to recognize within me?” It may be your voice, your right to be who you are, your contributions, personal space, opinions or preferences. As you identify the aspects of yourself that are not being appreciated, you can then get in touch with how this makes you feel. You may identify not being enough, feeling wrong, unlovable, worth-
Finding Peace Through Self-Forgiveness

less or flawed. In my own process, I acknowledge these perceptions by saying to myself, “I forgive you for believing that you are wrong, not good enough, weak or intrinsically flawed.” As I acknowledge these core beliefs, it invites feelings to arise in my body. In my self-forgiveness practice this is the most essential part — to validate and give space to my emotions in relation to conflict. Invite yourself to deeply feel the vulnerability of long-standing conflicts with yourself and others in order to open up to the opportunity for emotional healing and cleansing.

Acknowledging Emotions
Next, acknowledge these feelings in relation to your experiences. I say to myself, “I acknowledge your pain, frustration, resentment, anger and disappointment.” I take a few moments to feel the energy in my body and the waves of these feelings as they flow through me. I create space for them to belong and to validate my experience. In my practice it is important for me to remember that as a little boy, I was not capable of fully feeling stable and safe within myself in the face of a painful experience. I remind myself that I had to look outside of myself for guidance on how to be me in relation to other people. Staying with the energy of emotions sends a signal to our entire being that we are here to support this vulnerability and have no intention of leaving.

Embracing Our Deepest Intentions
After taking the time to process emotions, try to look into your deepest intention with regard to this conflict. Try to identify what you are searching for in this relationship that you are not getting but can now acknowledge in yourself. We often rely on other people to fulfill our innate need to be loved unconditionally. I say to myself, “I acknowledge your desire for love, respect, appreciation and recognition” to validate my deepest desire and intention. Love, respect, appreciation and recognition are some of the innate qualities that we can reclaim for ourselves. By taking this last step, you can embrace these aspects of yourself that were previously abandoned and now allow them to be fully felt and expressed.

The Outcome
After this practice you will notice some subtle changes in your body and mind. You may start to feel a sense of clarity and release as you close your process. As you practice over a longer period of time, this consistent clarity will result in feeling less reactive. You will find yourself focusing more on your emotions rather than the content of your mind, which tends to attach to stressful situations. Because of this shift toward focusing on emotions, stress becomes less prevalent and more manageable. Through resolution of emotion you may also find yourself more open to connection with others and notice others feeling safer around you. You may notice individuals wanting to connect with you or stand close to you. People with whom you have experienced tension might feel safe to approach you and even ask for forgiveness for conflicts that have remained unresolved.

In my experience, these instances have always been a confirmation of my self-forgiveness practice. These moments of resolution with others represent the subtle shifts toward being gentler with yourself and with others — this is the real gift of continual practice. This subtle, gentle feeling is the light of forgiveness that wants to be reinforced and applied to every situation in your life.

Now, when I walk to the river and gaze down at my reflection, I see a different person. I see someone who is willing to look at himself in order to resolve conflict rather than waiting for my father and other
people to change. If I look deeply into those eyes I see joy, commitment and love. The water seems clear without the waves of sadness that made it impossible to recognize the person I was looking for. I know that the water is not always going to be still, but I have a practice that allows me to fully see every part of that rippling surface. I hope you will make the commitment to see for yourself that conflicts do not exist outside — they exist within yourself. With a practice of self-forgiveness, you will be able to process the waves and reclaim that part of yourself that is waiting for love and acceptance. As I look at my father now, I see an open door for connection and friendship. With forgiveness anything is possible.

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