

## [The Science Behind Healing Intention](#)

Have you ever been to a healthcare practitioner you were really comfortable with? Perhaps you experienced faster healing by working with this person. Or maybe your church congregation prayed for you and you found yourself recovering from an illness faster than usual. Maybe you helped another person heal by your positive attitude or consciousness. If you experienced any of the above situations you have first hand experience with a mysterious phenomenon known as healing intention.

Just what is healing intention? Intention can be thought of as having and acting with a purpose. In the case of healing, it is having the purpose to heal. The purpose to heal can be directed at one's self or to another as in a practitioner-patient relationship. Healing intention also works over great distances.

Early research on healing intention was done with simple living systems such as plants. In one early study conducted by Bernard Grad (1) two different kinds of saline solutions were given to plants. One sample consisted of normal unaffected water while the other consisted of water exposed to healing intentions given by a healer. The plants given the healing water showed more sprouting were taller than those given the untreated water.

Another series of studies by Grad showed that skin wounds in mice healed faster in mice treated by healers who simply laid their hands on them. (2) This effect of faster wound healing by the laying on of hands has also been found in human subjects.(3) More recently a study conducted by Randolph C. Byrd, a cardiologist at San Francisco General Hospital showed that healing prayer affected the recovery of cardiac surgery patients. (4) The prayed for patients experienced less complications and less morbidity than those who were not prayed for.

A clue as to how healing intention works may be found in the way intention affects machines. A number of experiments have been done with machines that generate a string of random numbers. These machines called random event generators or REGs spew out millions of random numbers that should all statistically cancel out. Experiments show that these numbers deviate from randomness with human intention. Human subjects can actually influence the machine's output by just thinking about it. The effect is small but statistically sound. This effect also occurs over great distances.

The important point is that somehow intention decreases randomness in the universe. There is some kind of mysterious link between someone's intentions and physical reality. At present we know this connection exists but we don't know exactly what it is or how it works.

Disease can be thought of as the body moving toward a state of greater randomness. Think of an infection or something more serious like cancer. The body's cells become more disorganized, more random with disease. It may be that intention works by decreasing the randomness produced by the disease.

Intention is also a non-local phenomenon. A non-local phenomenon does not happen according to the laws of physics. In other words it does not obey the laws of space and time. For example, if you drop a ball you can measure a number of properties related to the event of dropping the ball. You can measure the speed of the ball, the acceleration and so on. In non-local events you cannot measure these properties because they appear to transcend physical attributes such as mass, speed and acceleration. Non-local events are instantaneous and can extend to any distance in space. If intention is non-local then it elicits its effects instantaneously and over any distance.

Intention can be used by anyone to heal or to help others to heal. We have seen that prayer is a form of intention but there are also other ways to use intention. First of all you must make a decision deep inside you to heal or to help someone else heal. Then you must hold the intention for a period of time. That means that you can concentrate on healing or just know in a deep way that you are healing. If you are using intention to help others you should focus on their health and well-being.

Some techniques go as far as having a group of people such as family members use guided imagery to help a loved one through surgery. Instead of nervously waiting in the visitor's lounge the family members work together by performing an imagery exercise. The exercise begins by imagining the patient entering the operating room and then continues by forming an image of a successful operation and recovery. In my opinion this is time well spent and gives family members a sense of control over the procedure.

Intention is a great addition to any healing program and should be considered by anyone wishing to heal or in helping others to heal. It is simple to do, works over any distance and is supported by a number of studies. Although the actual mechanism is not known it may work by somehow reducing the disorganization caused by disease.

References

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