

May, 2008

Volume 8, No. 2

Editorial Musings

WISH POLLUTION

Daniel J. Benor, MD

Seek not that the things which happen should happen as you wish; but wish the things which happen to be as they are, and you will have a tranquil flow of life.

– Epictetus

Background

We dream the dreams our ancestors dreamt for us, and when we look at our own children we dream those dreams for them. All of humanity becomes a sea of great dreams.

– Connie Baxter Marlow

Have you ever had an unlikely wish come true? Did you have the feeling that you may have made it happen – perhaps through the strength of your desire or your activation of an energetic pattern of intent as you wish for it?

For the most part, people assume that when wishes come true it is a positive thing. On one level, the object or event of desire in the wish is a reward. In addition, there is an affirmation of a person's ability to shape reality and a feeling of being worthy on some higher level – as witnessed by having one's wishes granted.

Conventional wisdom holds that wishes are no more than desires and that when they come true it is purely a matter of chance. There is no mechanism within conventional science to suggest how this might occur and therefore it is completely dismissed as an impossibility.

If wishes were horses then beggars would ride.

– Anonymous

Contradicting prevalent Western scientific disbeliefs, research in parapsychology and spiritual healing confirm that wishes and [intentions] can alter the probabilities of:

- dice thrown mechanically showing a randomly chosen number
- a random number generator (RNG) deviating from random output, where the RNG is based on an electronic program or radioactive emissions
- the cascade of balls through a randomizing maze of pins
- rates of growth of bacteria, yeasts, cells in laboratory culture, and plants
- rates of healing in animals who have malaria, amyloidosis, skin wounds

- rates of healing of humans who have anxiety, pain, depression.

The parapsychological research has been replicated in sufficient numbers of studies in numerous laboratories around the world, and the meta-analyses of the results are more substantial than in many other areas of research. The confirmations of successful influence over the roll of dice are at statistical probabilities of a billion to one (Radin and Ferrari, 1991); of RNGs a trillion to one (Radin, 1997; Radin & Nelson, internet reference). Research in spiritual healing has produced replicated studies on healers' influence on human electrodermal responses with a meta-analysis at statistical levels of over a million to one against chance (Braud and Schlitz 1989; Schlitz and Braud, 1997). Meta-analyses of human studies for varieties of problems show this is a subject with modest evidence to support its claims (Abbot, 2000; Astin, Harkness, Edzard, 2000; Winstead-Fry and Kijek 1999). It was difficult to do the meta-analyses because of differences in methodologies in the various studies.

Research on spiritual healing for human subjects demonstrates significant effects in improving hospital course on a cardiac intensive care unit; treating AIDS; enhancing human immune functions; lowering human hypertension; altering human hemoglobin levels; reducing anxiety; reducing pain; improving depression. Studies in non-human organisms show significant effects of spiritual healing in enhancing wound healing in mice; slowing progress of malaria in animals; slowing cancer growth in animals; waking mice selectively from anesthesia; enhancing plant growth; influencing bacterial growth; influencing yeast growth; altering enzyme action; influencing motility of single-celled organisms; strengthening red blood cells against hemolysis; influencing DNA. (For specific references see Benor, 2001a; b; http://www.councilforhealing.org/heal_res_lists_abst.html)

This is an impressive array of research confirming that mental intent and/or influence of spiritual healing through intent and biological energy fields can produce measurable effects in the physical world. In other words, our wishes and intents can influence the animate and inanimate world around us. In other words, there is evidence to show that our wishes could produce real effects in the world.

Misguided wishes

Life affords no higher pleasure than that of surmounting difficulties, passing from one step of success to another, forming new wishes and seeing them gratified.

– Samuel Johnson

The Western worldview is one of seeking outer achievements and successes as ways of validating our personal worth and success in life. With this mindset, we develop a pattern of seeking ever more, never-ending outer goals. Our wishes are often directed towards successes in these endeavors and are never-ending, never satiating.

My wants are many, and, if told,
Would muster many a score;
And were each wish a mint of gold,
I still should long for more.

– John Quincy Adams

In practicing this pursuit of objectives, our limited vision from the perspective of our individual awareness could mislead us to set in motion energies and patterns of consciousness that may not be for our highest good. For example, when we feel physical pain, we often wish for it to be gone. This is entirely natural. No one wants to suffer any more than is absolutely necessary. However, pain might bring us unanticipated lessons. It is often a message from our body, inviting us to look at some area of disharmony in our lives that was outside our conscious awareness or that we have ignored.

Example 1: Wishes that address surface problems and miss deeper issues.

Wanda was a married, 48 year-old teacher who suffered from severe tension headaches. Using WHEE, a potent self-healing method (Benor, internet reference), she learned quickly to lower

the intensity of the headaches from an intensity of 9 (out of a maximum possible of 10) but could not get the pain to reduce below a 5-6.

Wanda was in a marriage that she found unsatisfying in many ways. Her husband, Larry, earned a good living and they were able to enjoy the benefits of a very comfortable lifestyle. She admitted this was a major reason in her decision to stay in a relationship where she and her husband had grown apart as he became increasingly interested in spectator sports and they were doing much less together as a couple.

With direction and encouragement, Wanda was able to use WHEE to overcome her anxieties and confronted Larry over her unhappiness about their drifting apart. To her surprise and relief, he responded with concern and caring, and their relationship started to improve.

Disappointingly, her headaches went down only to an intensity of 3-4. This appeared to be connected with Wanda's continued dissatisfaction with Larry, which she began to see were excessively strong in view of the promisingly good start at improvements, her earlier good relationship with him and her positive feelings and wishes in wanting to make the relationship work.

This suggested to me that there might be other issues sitting in the 'file drawers' of Wanda's unconscious mind, that were resonating with her current issue. Knowing her history of having had an unhappy relationship with her father throughout her childhood, I encouraged Wanda to ask her pain whether it was wanting to tell her something about this. The answer was a clear "Yes."

Working on these issues was the key to releasing the pain entirely. Wanda's unconscious mind was ready and eager to have her clear these old issues but had not been able to bring them to her conscious awareness. One might even speculate whether she hadn't chosen Larry as her partner in life out of this inner wish/ need to clear these issues.

Wanda's headaches brought her very helpful lessons. Had she persisted with her initial wish to be free of them, she might well have missed these life-transforming lessons. Many people succumb to the 'easy fix' for discomforts in life, rather than looking below the surface to seek understanding about how their problems developed and why they persist.

Inside what scares you lies what frees you.

– Anonymous

Not all wishes that are not granted have clear reasons behind them. But over many years of pondering and observing such experiences, I have come to accept that there is a higher wisdom and guidance we may not be able to comprehend guiding such matters in our lives.

Wishes apparently not granted

Stop the habit of wishful thinking and start the habit of thoughtful wishes.

– Mary Martin

As we explore realms of collective consciousness in which our wishes may change the world around us so that they come true, we come to see that casting our wishes upon the waters may not always be a positive action to be taking, or may have a positive start but may turn out negative in the long run.

How many people do you know who hold onto a wish for job security, persisting in high stress positions despite chronic pains in their head, neck, back, guts or elsewhere?

How many people do you know who wished for children but were disappointed in themselves as parents? In their children, for not being able to meet parental expectations?

Example 2:

Bruce was very intuitive and generally in tune with his higher self. When he meditated on a desire and felt intuitive confirmation that it was for his highest good, he would energize this as a wish. Usually, within a short time, his wishes were granted. These included items small and large – from smooth travel experiences to unexpected funds arriving to enable purchases of a home; and to finding the woman of his dreams.

His wish for a child, however, together with the same wish of his wife, was not granted. Over a period of several years, his relationship with his wife grew strained and eventually they parted.

It was only with his second wife that his wish was granted. Looking back on this experience, Bruce realized that a child would have made his separation and divorce from his first wife very difficult, and had they had a child, it would have suffered because of their marital problems.

Do you know people whose wish for a perfect relationship/partner/spouse; home; job; or other object of desire has led them to overlook or reject very promising options that might have developed into exactly what they wanted if they had only given them a chance?

Within the system of conventional Western thinking, asking that such wishes should come true may not appear unreasonable. However, our perspectives on the benefits of such wishes may have an event horizon that is short-sighted. The longer-term effects of our wishes may bring us very different outcomes and consequences than we had anticipated.

Ways that wishes may go awry

If wishes were horses, there would be an easy explanation for all this horseshit.

– Anonymous

Not stating with clarity and precision what we thought we were wishing for (apocryphal, dark humor story):

A man with a paralyzed arm found a corked bottle on the beach. With great difficulty, he managed to open it. Out popped a genie, who offered him just one wish. "Please make my arm like my other arm," he said. With a 'poof' he ended up with two paralyzed arms.

Our conscious mind may wish for something that our unconscious mind knows is not for our best interests. Meditating on the objects of our desires is essential to finding clarity on whether these are for our highest good. Wherever possible, having several people meditate on the same question is even more helpful. Where the desires or fears of one person might distort their intuitive awareness, this is less likely to happen in a group – though there is no guarantee the same distortions might not creep into group visions.

In our cultural collectives we have also gotten in trouble through our wishes. Western civilization has been very short-sighted in our visions, plans and programs – locally, nationally and internationally. Our governments of elected officials have a decision-making horizon that is no longer than the term of their service – usually four to six years. Being re-elected is higher on most of their lists of priorities than any considerations of negative effects that might result from their decisions after they are no longer in office.

For instance, Western society has wished to bring better health to the rest of the world. Improving water supplies so that they are both more reliable and less open to carrying infectious organisms, and introducing antibiotics have been incredible boons to people in many parts of the world. The negative effects of this wish, however, are becoming increasingly evident, as populations soar, natural resources dwindle and pollution rises. The unchecked rise in population set in motion by a wish to do good has ended up hastening the overpopulation of our planet.

Spoiled by an abundance of natural resources over the past centuries, our global wishes are shaped today by unreal expectations. Western society suggests that if we work hard enough, anyone in the world could have their wishes come true - for a large home, a car for every member of the family, and other economic benefits featured in Hollywood and popular TV culture. This is a patent impossibility when we extend such wishes beyond Western society to the entire world. The West has exploited the resources and cheap labor of the rest of the world to generate a lifestyle that is unsupportable on a global scale. We would need two more planets with full and abundant natural resources to provide sufficient resources to make this possible for the whole world.

Native Americans would traditionally consider the possible effects of important decisions upon the seventh generation down the line before taking action. We must return to this more cautious event horizon and extend it considerably further if we are to survive on planet Earth.

Accepting that we cannot have the full picture from our limited human perspective

It is one of the commonest of mistakes to consider that the limit of our power of perception is also the limit of all there is to perceive.

— C.W. Leadbeater

Here is another apocryphal story from Eastern traditions to illustrate this:

A poor farmer in China, a Zen practitioner, had a single horse. This horse was essential to his work. It pulled his plow, brought his produce to market and provided transportation for his family.

One day, the farmer woke to find the gate open and the horse gone. His neighbors came around to commiserate with him over his loss. He responded only with, "We'll see."

Two days later, his stallion returned with a herd of 20 wild mares. His neighbors came around to congratulate him on his wonderful good fortune. Again, he responded only with, "We'll see."

The next day, his only son was struggling to ride one of the wild mares and broke his leg. His neighbors came around again to commiserate with him over his bad luck. Again, he responded only with, "We'll see."

A week later, the local warlord came to their village, drafting every able-bodied young male for his army. Naturally, he was unable to take the farmer's son. His neighbors came around again to congratulate him on his wonderful good fortune. Yet again, he responded only with, "We'll see..."

The plans of the universe may carry much more wisdom than the plans of individuals, or groups, or even the collective awareness of mankind. Acting always with integrity, we may come to trust our fate to the universe and not fret and fester when our expectations, hopes and wishes are not granted.

Wish precautions

My only wish is that my wishes be at rest.

Ruckett

How can we possibly assure that we do not contribute unintentionally to wish pollution?

Living a life of trust and contentment with what is present is a good start. Living in harmony with creation, we go with the flow rather than pushing the river.

The practice of being in the present, in the 'Now,' is a help in not getting caught up in anticipations of possible futures (as well as in releasing the burdens of memories of experiences in the past).

A helpful precaution is to wish carefully, always checking with our higher selves to be certain our wishes are for our own highest good and the highest good of all.

Programming our mind is a good plan. The unconscious mind is extremely literal and will usually act very literally in accordance with the way we state our wishes. Here are some helpful setup statements:

- May everything that I wish for be granted only if it is for my highest good and the highest good of all in the universe.
- May my wishes be guided through transcendent levels of consciousness that are beyond personal ego.
- May my wishes be guided for their fulfillment only through the highest and purest light of God/ The Infinite Source.

In summary

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

– Gandhi

Rather than wishing for changes in other people or in the world at large that might enhance our lives, a better investment of our efforts would be to work on ourselves. As each of us is a pixel on the big screen of reality, if we each take the responsibility to clear away negativity within ourselves, we become brighter and clearer pixels. If we encourage those around us to do the same, we are contributing to making the screen as a whole brighter and clearer.

It is possible that the next Buddha will not take the form of an individual.

The next Buddha may take the form of a community;

a community practicing understanding and loving kindness,

a community practicing mindful living.

This may be the most important thing we can do for the survival of the Earth.

– Thich Nhat Hanh

References

- Abbot, Neil C, Healing as a therapy for human disease: a systematic review, *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 2000, 6(2), 159-169.
- Astin, John A/ Harkness, Elaine/ Ernst, Edzard, The efficacy of "distant healing": a systematic review of randomized trials, *Annals of Internal Medicine* 2000, 132, 903-910.
<http://www.acponline.org/journals/annals/06jun00/astin.htm>
- Braud, William and Schlitz, Marilyn. A methodology for the objective study of transpersonal imagery, *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 1989, 3(1), 43-63.
- Dossey, Larry. *Be Careful What You Pray For... You Just Might Get It*, HarperOne 1998.
- Honorton C. The ganzfeld psi experiment: A critical appraisal, *Journal of Parapsychology* 1985, 49, 3-49.
- Honorton C, Ferrari, DC. Future telling: A meta-analysis of forced-choice precognition experiments, 1935-1987, *Journal of Parapsychology* 1989, 53, 281-308.
- Lawrence, Tony. Bringing home the sheep: a meta-analysis of sheep/goat experiments. *Proceedings of 36th Annual Parapsychology Convention* 1993, Fairhaven, MA: Parapsychological Association.
- Milton, J. A meta-analysis of waking state of consciousness, free-response ESP studies. In Zingrone, NL/ Schlitz, MJ, eds. *Research in Parapsychology* 1993, 31-34, Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press 1994.

- Radin, Dean. *The Conscious Universe*, New York: HarperCollins 1997.
- Radin DI/ Ferrari DC. Effects of consciousness on the fall of dice: A meta-analysis, *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 1991, 5, 61-84.
- Radin D/ Nelson, R. Meta-analysis of mind-matter interaction experiments: 1959 to 2000
www.boundaryinstitute.org/articles/rngma.pdf (Accessed 2/26/06)
- Schlitz, Marilyn/ Braud, William, Distant intentionality and healing: assessing the evidence, *Alternative Therapies* 1997, 3(6), 62-73.
- Winstead-Fry, Patricia/ Kijek, Jean, An integrative review and meta-analysis of Therapeutic Touch research, *Alternative Therapies* 1999, 5(6) 59-67.

Daniel J. Benor, MD, ABHM

Editor

International Journal of Healing and Caring

P.O. Box 76

Bellmawr, NJ 08099

Tel. 609-714-1885

Fax. 519-265-0746

DB@WholisticHealingResearch.com



TERMS OF USE

The International Journal of Healing and Caring On Line is distributed electronically. You may choose to print your downloaded copy for relaxed reading.

We encourage you to share this article with friends and colleagues.

The International Journal of Healing and Caring – On Line

P.O. Box 502, Medford, NJ 08055

Phone (866) 823-4214 (519) 265-0746

Email: center@ijhc.org Website: <http://www.ijhc.org>

Copyright © 2007 IJHC. All rights reserved.