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THE NATURE OF LIFE

Bernie Siegel, MD

Personal openings to collective consciousness

When I was four years old I was home in bed with one of my frequent ear infections. I took a toy telephone I was playing with and unscrewed the dial and put all the pieces in my mouth as I had seen carpenters do with nails, which they then pulled out to use. The problem was that I aspirated the pieces and went into laryngospasm. I can still feel my intercostal chest muscles and diaphragm contracting forcefully, trying to get some air into my lungs, but nothing worked and I was unable to make any sounds to attract help. I had no sense of the time but suddenly realized I was not struggling anymore. I was now at the head of the bed watching myself dying.

I found it fascinating to be free of my body and a blessing. I never stopped to think about how I could still see while I was out of my body. I was feeling sorry for my mother, who was in the kitchen and would soon find me dead. However, I thought it over and found my new state preferable and intellectually chose death over life.

Then, for no apparent reason, the boy on the bed vomited and all the pieces came flying out. He began to breathe again and I was very angry as I returned to my body against my will. I can still remember yelling, "Who did that?" My thought as a four year- old was that there was a God who had a schedule and I wasn't supposed to die now. So the way I would explain it today is that an angel apparently did a Heimlich maneuver on me.

I really do believe there is a schedule we create unconsciously because of later life experiences. Twice I have had my car totaled by people driving through red lights and once I fell off our roof when the top rung on my wooden ladder snapped off. In none of these incidents did any significant injury occur to my body. Someone told me it was because I had an angel and he knew his name. I asked what it was and he asked, "What did you say when the ladder broke?" I replied, "Oh Shit!!" He said, "That's his name."

I will add that he always shows up when I call him in an impassioned way. My next experience was with the healer, Olga Worrall. I had injured my leg in training for a marathon. It was very painful and not responding to rest or therapy. Olga was a guest speaker at an American Holistic Medical Association conference My wife told me to ask her to heal me. I was embarrassed to ask and very frankly a non-believer. Nevertheless my wife pushed me forward and Olga sat me down in a chair and placed her two hands on my leg. The heat from her hands was incredible. I remember putting my hands on the opposite leg to compare the heat sensation. There was no sense of warmth from my hands coming through the dungarees. When Olga was done, I stood up and found I was completely healed. The pain was gone and I could walk normally.

Another time, Olga and I spoke at the funeral of a mutual friend. After the ceremony we were

standing in a deserted hallway when she asked, "Are you Jewish?" "Why are you asking?" I responded. "Because there are two rabbis standing next to you." She went on to tell me their names and describe their garments, including their prayer shawls and caps. Her description of them was exactly what I saw in my meditation and imagery sessions when I had met these figures while walking on my path.

Another evening, after I gave a lecture in which I felt like someone else was giving it and I was simply verbalizing it for them. A woman came up to me and said, "That was better than usual. Standing in front of you for the entire lecture was a man and I drew his picture for you." Again, it was exactly the face and features of my inner guide. I still have the picture hanging in our home.

My next experience came when I was telling a friend about how busy I was and she said, "Why are you living this life?" Her intension intention was to get me to slow down and travel less but her question sent me into a trance. I immediately saw myself in a past life with a sword in my hand, killing people. My first thought was that I had become a surgeon in this life to use a knife to heal and not kill.

I spontaneously went into a trance again a few days later and saw myself living the life of a knight who killed because he feared his lord and what he would do to him if he didn't carry out his commands. I killed a young woman, my wife, in this that life, along with her dog and was devastated by the experience because the woman I killed is my wife in this life. But at the same time it revealed to me why my wife's face in this life has always had a hypnotic effect upon me and why I am so involved in rescuing animals.

What further convinced me of my past life experience being true was when one of our children came home from school and showed me his art project. He filled an entire canvas with the word, words. When you put wordswordswords together they become swordswordswords. I have learned I can kill or cure with words or swords. Ultimately these trance experiences taught me about having faith in the true Lord, and like Abraham, Jesus, Moses, Noah and others to understand that what our Lord asks of us is for the greater good and that if I had said yes I would have not been asked to kill anyone.

Most recently, one of our cats disappeared when a door was left open. After several weeks with no sign of her I was sure she had been killed by a predator. A friend I had made, Amelia Kinkade, is an animal intuitive who lives in Los Angeles. We live in Connecticut and Amelia has never been to our home or near it. I pestered her to tell me where the cat was and one day I received an email, without even sending Amelia a picture of the cat, which detailed the house, yard, plus other animals and people who were involved in the cat's life. She told me in the email, "The cat is alive because I can see through its eyes." The next day I went out and found the cat exactly where Amelia said it was hiding. If that doesn't make me a believer then nothing will. I totally believe that consciousness is non-local and not limited to the body.

Helping others through collective consciousness

I also have experienced this non-local consciousness through the drawings and dreams of patients I have cared for, which allows them to know their diagnosis and what the future holds for them. Physicians are never taught that Jung interpreted a dream and made a correct physical diagnosis. What the dreams and drawings of my patients reveal is knowledge of their physical diagnosis, future time of death and other things. Past, present and future are present in the symbols and numbers present in their drawings and dreams.

I help many people who have cancer. Often, their drawings are very revealing and helpful in

treating them. Here are several examples.

Here is a series of drawings sent to me from ECAP, an organization I founded for helping exceptional cancer patients. I do not know this person personally, but was able to make these observations. In Figure 1 it is a bit hard to see the lightly drawn outline of the patient's self-image, hooked up to an IV. The same person drew Figures 2 and 3.

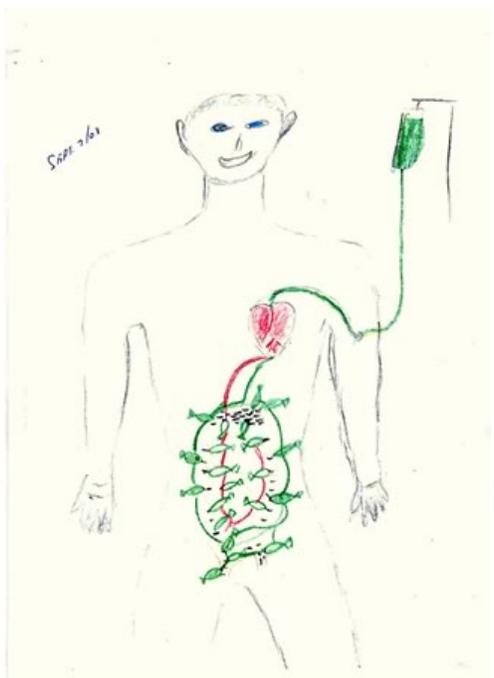


Figure 1.

You look strong but is that real or for benefit of others?
 Hands are small for body so work at getting a grip on things and reaching out for your needs.
 No legs can relate to feeling trapped/stuck
 Head is a bit squashed too.
 To fit in: connect your head and heart so feelings are dealt with.
 Head is a closed circle
 Chemo looks good; nice green color which is nature's color and is the same as your fish
 You and the cancer are black, related to your feelings I'm sure and not unusual.
 Like all the fish and keep them coming. They are doing a good job [eating up the cancer cells] and I like the fact cancer is contained in the pond. It is not free in your body. I think that is a good omen and the infection as a complication also stimulates immune system and can help affect the cancer too in the process of healing.
 Bring other people into the picture to help you.

Figure 2.

What are you fishing for and who is the other person in the water?
 Looks like they have a fish.
 Are you fishing for their attention too?
 Three birds in black on left and one on right.
 Again you are separated from family and support. Even trees are isolated on separate islands except for two small black ones.
 Is this you and your mate?
 Others are healthier with green.
 Scene is full of healthy color and life.
 Is cancer truly red or is it about the emotions you are experiencing on this journey?

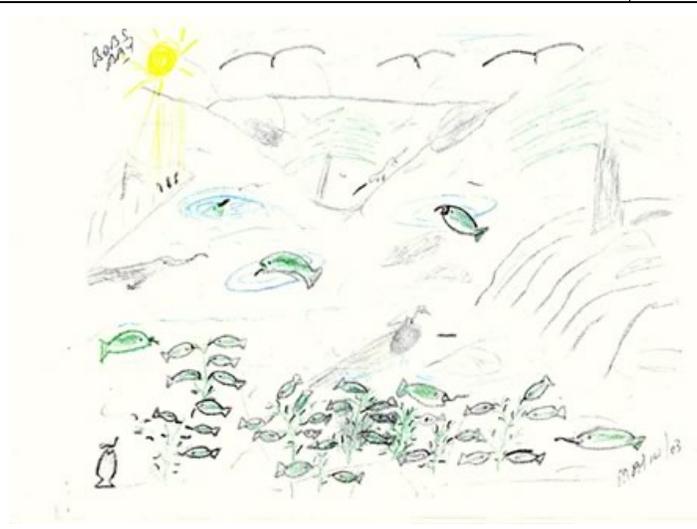


Figure 3.

Again three birds and many fish trying to keep up with cancer cells.
 Keep reproducing those fish.
 Three trees: one green and other black and one large green one. Can be people in your life.
 In this scene there are some black spots away from white cells as represented by the animals and fish. So cover the territory and scan your body. Count cancer cells and white cells and see if numbers have any personal meaning for you related to events in your life – past present and future.

Figure 4.

Drawing of a girl who has cancer and doesn't feel she is getting time from her family. She pictures herself on a separate chair, while there is an empty seat on the sofa – and she is not in that seat with the rest of her family.

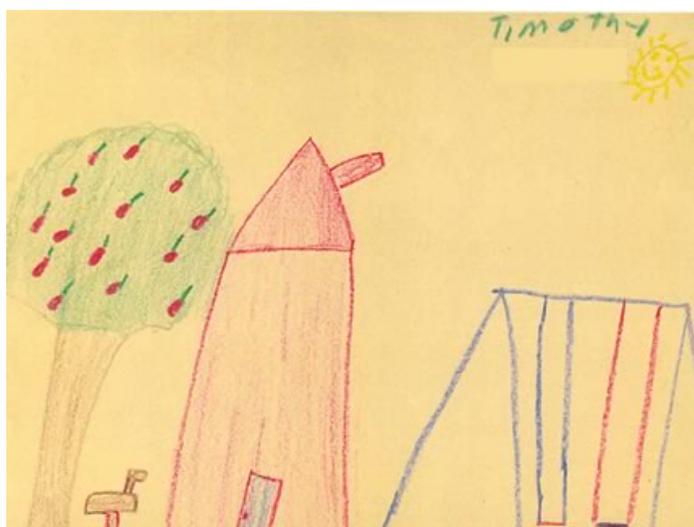


Figure 5.

Pre-op circumcision

This is the drawing done by a boy while waiting to be brought into the operating room for a circumcision.

The structure is very phallic and the red color reveals his emotional state and concern about the pain he may feel.



In conclusion

As Jung said, "The future is unconsciously prepared long in advance and therefore can be guessed by clairvoyants."

I believe it is this unconscious awareness which we each bring with us when we are born. When our physical body dies it is my belief and experience that our consciousness continues to exist and returns to the intelligent, conscious, energy which started the process of creation. When we are born we bring an element of that consciousness back with us and it affects us unconsciously in the making of many life decisions. If we see life as a school in which we are all here to learn then the level of consciousness will rise and our planet will become a peaceful, loving place to reside. But it is not appropriate to become enraged at third graders if we are graduate students. We must educate each other so the collective consciousness we share will benefit us all. So I do not believe we literally live many lives but that we bring with us the experience of previous lives. My consciousness experiences many lives but they may have been lived by others and i may be acquiring their experience through non-local consciousness. In practical terms, it is easier to think of it as going to school and either getting left back or moving forward depending on your state of consciousness and what you learn from your life experiences. Thus, the wiser we get the better the future will be for

those who follow us.

Bernie Siegel, MD, who prefers to be called Bernie, not Dr. Siegel, was born in Brooklyn, New York. He attended Colgate University and Cornell University Medical College. He graduated with honors and holds membership in two scholastic honor societies, Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Omega Alpha. He trained in surgery at Yale New Haven Hospital, West Haven Veteran's Hospital and the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. He retired from practice as an Assistant Clinical Professor of General and Pediatric Surgery at Yale in 1989, creating a new career speaking with patients and their caregivers.

In 1978 he originated Exceptional Cancer Patients (EcaP), a specific form of individual and group therapy utilizing patients' drawings, dreams, images and feelings. ECaP is based on 'carefrontation,' a safe, loving therapeutic confrontation, which facilitates personal lifestyle changes, personal empowerment and healing of the individual's life. The physical, spiritual and psychological benefits that followed led to his desire to make everyone aware of his or her healing potential. He found we are all capable of exceptional behavior.

Bernie, with his wife and coworker Bobbie, live in a suburb of New Haven, Connecticut. They have five children and eight grandchildren. Bernie and Bobbie have co-authored their children, books and articles. Their home with its many children, pets and interests resembled a cross between a family art gallery, museum, zoo and automobile repair shop. It still resembles these, although the children are trying to improve its appearance in order to avoid embarrassment.

In 1986 his first book, *Love, Medicine & Miracles* was published. This event redirected his life. In 1989 *Peace, Love & Healing* and in 1993 *How To Live Between Office Visits* followed. He is currently working on other books with the goal of humanizing medical education and medical care, as well as empowering patients and teaching survival behavior to enhance immune system competency. Bernie's realization that we all need help dealing with the difficulties of life, not just the physical ones, led to his fourth book in 1998, *Prescriptions for Living*. It helps people to become aware of the eternal truths and wisdom of the sages through Bernie's stories and insights rather than wait a personal disaster. Bernie wants to help people fix their lives before they are broken and thus not have to become strong at the broken places. Published in 2003 are *Help Me To Heal* and *365 Prescriptions For The Soul* and in 2004 a children's book, *Smudge Bunny* and in the fall of 2005 *101 Exercises For The Soul*. In the works is a book on parenting which he considers the number one public health issue of our time.

Woody Allen once said, "If I had one wish it would be to be somebody else." Bernie's wish was to be a few inches taller. His work has been such a growth experience that he is now a few inches taller. His prediction is that in the next decade the role of consciousness, spirituality, non-local healing, body memory and heart energy will all be explored as scientific subjects.

For many, Bernie needs no introduction. He has touched many lives all over our planet. In 1978 he began talking about patient empowerment and the choice to live fully and die in peace. As a physician he has cared for and counseled innumerable people whose mortality has been threatened by an illness, Bernie embraces a philosophy of living and dying that stands at the forefront of the medical ethics and spiritual issues our society grapples with today. He continues to assist in the breaking of new ground in the field of healing and personally struggling to live the message of kindness and love. Bernie and Bobbie travel extensively to share his experience and techniques.

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