

Dialogue

Commentary—“BUT IS IT ENERGY? REFLECTIONS ON CONSCIOUSNESS, HEALING AND THE NEW PARADIGM”¹

and

HEALING, ENERGY AND CONSCIOUSNESS:
INTO THE FUTURE OR A RETREAT TO THE PAST?²

by Larry Dossey, MD.

Commentary by William Tiller, Ph.D.

I want to applaud the recent efforts of Larry Dossey^{1,2} for bringing the important issue of consciousness into open discussion as one tries to understand the relevant physics operating in distant healing and many other psychoenergetic phenomena. However, I believe it is a mistake to adopt an either/or position regarding consciousness/energy involvement in these processes and will endeavor to show the reader that both are involved in this class of phenomena.

About twenty years ago, I wrote a few papers on this general subject³⁻⁵ but most people aren't aware of them because of limited distribution of Journal/Conference proceedings. More recently, I have continued some communication on this topic⁶⁻⁸ and will, here, attempt a brief description of the relevant features of my model that bear on the questions raised by Dossey.^{1,2}

To date, in conventional science, we have discovered and acknowledged only four fundamental forces operating in the universe via which we try to explain *all* the observable phenomena of the universe. However, for many decades a growing body of experimental data has appeared that seems inexplicable based upon consideration of *only* these four forces. Thus, it has been necessary to postulate the existence of subtle energies functioning in universal spaces beyond our conventional 4-space to rationalize this anomalous data and I label this body of work “unconventional science.”

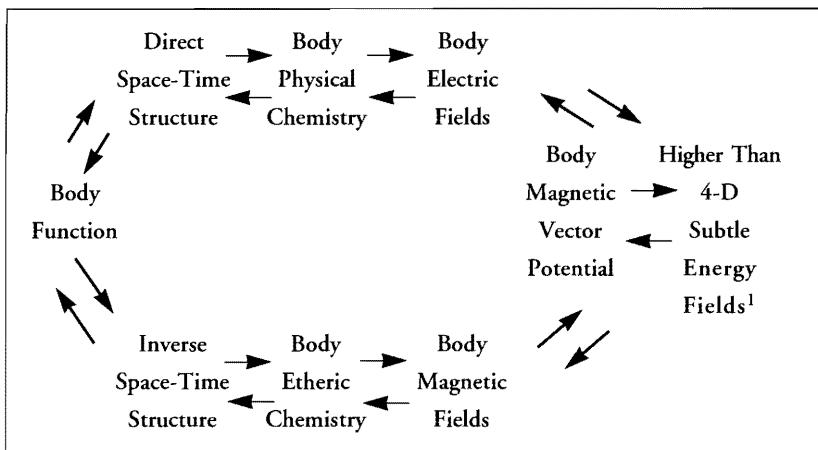


Figure 1. Reaction equation.

My present working hypothesis of human function is indicated by the reaction equation presented in Figure 1. Thus, I am proposing that we function in an 8-space composed of two dual 4-spaces, our familiar (x, y, z, t) and its conjugate ($x^{-1}, y^{-1}, z^{-1}, t^{-1}$) which is a frequency domain. These companion spaces are imbedded in three higher dimensional spaces populated by unique substances, emotional (9D) mental (10D) and spiritual (11D), which all give rise to subtle energy fields. Balance of the energies of the above equation is necessary for ultimate harmony and ultimate health. Allopathic medicine deals with the chemistry of the upper path in Figure 1, while homeopathic medicine deals with the chemistry of the lower path in Figure 1.

Over the years, I have come to feel that human evolution is characterized by and limited by the penetration of spirit into dense matter. The more spirit present in dense matter, the higher is the consciousness of the entity. The entity applies that consciousness, through its focused intentionality, in the various acts of daily life. By the entity's thoughts, attitudes and actions transformational changes occur in both the dense and subtle matter. This leads to a more refined structure allowing a greater inflow of spirit (or produces a degraded structure which does the opposite). My own experience has been that, when applied intentionality is focussed through the human heart into the life process, an

increased rate of structural refinement occurs and, thus, the more rapidly does one's consciousness expand. It is the focused feeling of love, across its broad spectral band, that opens key structures in the heart which, in turn, allow the entity's spirit substance to enter the body. The greatest example we have of this overall process in action is the gradual refinement of the *homo sapien* over time by the initial investment or embodiment of human spirit into the mammalian ape. Summarizing this, I tend to think of consciousness as an attribute of spirit which is capable of generating radiations that eventually beget matter (frozen light), and, in unique collections of this matter, various levels of awareness develop.

My personal view is that we humans are primarily elements of spirit, multiplexed in the Divine and that we have been gifted with a mechanism of perception which is a 10-dimensional mind and this 10D mind creates our vehicle for experiencing. This vehicle, in turn, creates our cosmos, our universe. Our bodies. It is, in fact, a *simulator* for our experience—it is adaptive to us and continuously reprogrammed by us, via our thoughts, attitudes and actions. It allows us to create a multitude of *relative* universes by our collective reactions. It is a teaching machine with absolutely wonderful capabilities—created by God's *love* for us so that we might experience and grow and be! What we call creation and the consequence of the evolvement is just one program in the *simulator*.

How does one comprehend all this in the context of energy, information and consciousness? I would start with the premise that all form and substance is constructed from superposed waves, whether at the physical level or at the individual subtle levels. It is well known that the mathematical square of the amplitude of any wave is proportional to its inherent energy content. Thus, energy is definitely involved in the construction of any form (information pattern) or substance (physical or subtle).

Suppose, now, we consider the example of our family TV sets. Here, we are also involved with a carrier wave coded with audio and video information (a pattern imprinted on the waves) so it has both energy content as well as information content. Once these waves have passed through the air and entered the set, the information coding triggers the *stored energy resources* and algorhythms of the TV set which sprays electrons in a sensitized screen so that

we see the *patterns* of human figures imprinted and moving on this two dimensional surface. Our simulator is something like that—only more so. There, the potentials of the multidimensional wave-set activate the nodal points^{5,8} of multidimensional space to create dancing (or at least moving) figures (us, you and me) in the physical (and other) 4-space domain of this special device (the simulator). Here we find that consciousness, activated by intention, generates some remarkable phenomena in our teaching machine that are imprinted there by the interplay of various energies embodied both by the needed information wavesets and the energy storage mechanisms of the various involved sub-process devices in the simulator.

Without the individual love which drives some of the key structural development of self, there can be little growth in our indwelling spirit content. Without the increase in spirit content, there can be little growth in consciousness. Without the increased consciousness, there can be little additional structural development at physical and subtle levels and little additional growth of awareness of the possible frequencies of love reachable by us, etc. It is an interactive process where we ultimately reach that internal level of coherence wherein our consciousness influences all the properties of matter around (and inside) us. These things are all connected forming a vast chain, or perhaps “loop” is a better term, where we are at one end of the circle and God is at the other. One property of the simulator is that it provides a feedback current back to the source for a particular entity (frequency tag) with a current magnitude that scales with the degree of coherence developed by the particular entity. This is a non-linear function that grows strongly with the degree of developed coherence in the entity. Thus, the source knows when the particular entity is ready to graduate from a particular classroom.

Along this path of individual development, the functioning energy increases in the system is a concomitant part of the growth in consciousness because coherent structural development is involved. The physical and subtle level structural development forms the necessary “wiring” and “switch gear” within whereby huge power densities can flow through the system and be consciously put to work in life. If we ever expect to grow to a level sufficient to “spin” worlds out of “ourselves,” we must be sufficiently coherent and developed because the energy/matter equation still holds at the physical level.

As a second example, a recent publication⁹ finds internally self-consistent support for the hypothesis that, when a healer emits pulses of subtle energy (not directly observable because they function at levels beyond space-time), a pulse of magnetic vector potential appears at the periphery of this 4-space via interaction between subtle level substance and physical level substance. This magnetic vector potential pulse, in turn, creates an electric field in the body in the physical vicinity of the pulse which acts on the electrolytes of the tissue fluids to cause electric charge separation and thus electric dipole formation. This electric dipole inside the body of the healer manifests outside the body as a large electric voltage pulse at an electrode connected to the ear. The body voltage pulse represents a substantial energy effect triggered by the conscious intent of the healer acting through organized subtle/physical body mechanisms.

A final example relates to how I think one works the simulator to manifest anything in the physical world. It is our consciousness-directed intention that imprints an individual frequency coded pattern at the 10D mind level of our body simulator. This pattern activates or imprints a conformal pattern both at the etheric level of substance and at the emotional level of substance. This emotional level of substance serves as a transfer medium allowing this etheric pattern to imprint another conformal pattern at the physical level of substance in our body. This pattern then activates our neural processes, motor functions, muscle action, etc., to make the specific action in the physical world. *Consciousness* initiated the process but various levels of *energy/matter* stuff cooperated to materialize the effect.

In closing, allow me to phrase what I think is the operating hierarchical symbolic equation of the simulator; *i.e.*,

$$\text{Love} \rightarrow \text{Consciousness} \rightarrow \text{Energy} \rightarrow \text{Matter}$$

All are needed to make the overall process work. *All* are important and *all* are different kinds of things. Love leads to consciousness which spins off information patterns in the form of various radiation waves with energy content and these, in turn, imprint the patterns into matter in a fashion much like the familiar xerox process. Our cognition of these imprinted patterns in nature allow us to interact with nature in all its manifest forms, to experience the relative reality and to grow more coherent through the interactive process.

It is with sincere appreciation for Larry Dossey's two papers^{1,2} that I close this dialogue contribution.

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Commentary by Eric Leskowitz, M.D.

The recent Perspective article by Dossey entitled "But Is It Energy? Reflections on Consciousness, Healing, and the New Paradigm"¹ goes a long way towards clarifying our understanding of local and non-local phenomena. He brings together important data from many different disciplines which force us to expand our perspective on the nature of reality, but he leaves the reader with a Zen-like sense that unresolvable paradoxes abound. Certainly there is much that is unknown in this field, but I believe some of his puzzles may have more definite answers than he allows for. I'd like to offer here a somewhat different perspective on the question of non-locality, one that invokes processes not often referred to in the pages of this Journal (*i.e.*, reincarnation, channeling, spirit guides, etc.), in a speculative but logically consistent (I hope) attempt to address some of the metaphysical paradoxes which he leaves us with.

As I understand his essay, Dossey distinguishes local healing events that are clearly mediated by some sort of energy process from non-local healing events which transcend space-time (and so logically cannot involve energy mechanisms, at least in any useful sense of the word "energy"). He proposes that the nondual language of Eastern mysticism may be best suited to describe these nonlocal events, because Eastern mysticism has closely studied the underlying unity of consciousness which he understands to create these non-local events. But by assuming, perhaps unintentionally, that "non-local" is synonymous with "nondual," I feel that Dossey has actually engaged in a subtle form of dualism. That is, he posits an either/or split between two discrete mechanisms of healing. In other words, healing events are seen as either local (and energy mediated), or non-local (and mediated by unitary nondual consciousness). Thus, there is no room in this model for the language of energy dynamics in understanding the non-local phenomena which he has so exhaustively described here and elsewhere.²

However, it seems logically consistent that certain healing events could involve both local and non-local processes. For example, non-contact Therapeutic Touch probably involves only local subtle energy transactions when it enhances wound healing.³ On the other hand, intercessory prayer might utilize local energetic mechanisms as well as non-local consciousness mechanisms when CCU patients are prayed for.⁴

How might this work? I propose that non-local healing is carried out by discrete non-local (but not non-dual) forms of consciousness whose effects “trickle down” from the transpersonal plane into the sort of local energy phenomena studied by alternative medicine. A key element of this two track mechanism is the existence of intermediate forms of consciousness which are hypothesized to be non-physically based, which can influence space-time events, yet which are not unitary or non-dual or Absolute in nature. These organized units of consciousness are the great spiritual beings who are revered in all religious traditions, and who lie on a spiritual spectrum ranging from spirit guides to ascended masters to guardian angels to God. All lie beyond (or above) the space/time continuum.

The key step in any non-local healing event is taken from outside of the confines of space and time by this higher form of consciousness, but then the healing process “plays itself out” in physical space/time through the mediation of progressively less subtle forms of energy. In the example of intercessory prayer, the prayer process itself (perhaps through the expanded biomagnetic energy field of the praying person) may attract the attention of a nonlocal transpersonal healing guide, who energetically activates the heart chakra of the CCU patient “prayee,” thereby triggering a local cascade of beneficial energetic and psychophysiologic changes. This double mechanism is possible because we human beings are ourselves multidimensional, and can thus directly participate at multiple levels in these baffling and complex nonlocal events. We humans can resonate with angelic energy frequencies at the same time that we engage in mundane physical activities. Subtle energy is what consciousness uses to interact with physical form; it’s the bridge between Spirit and Matter.

Dossey wisely advises us not to stretch our concept of energy too far by using it to encompass and explain both local and nonlocal events. However, he’s too nihilistic when he states that models of non-local healing may be inherently unimaginable. The model I’ve proposed is, if anything, too imaginable, suggesting cartoon-like pictures of otherworldly beings peering down from their lofty nonlocal perches upon us hapless humans trapped in 3-D space/time. In a sense, this proposed image of non-local spiritual helpers doesn’t really explain anything, it simply invokes one more putative causal agent.

But is it really a scientific explanation to propose that distant healing is mediated by guardian angels? What experiment could validate, or even operationalize this hypothesis? Another critique could be that my proposed answer to Dossey's koan ("Who is it that is sending the energy?") is dualistic to the core, in that another separate level of agency is proposed. But dualism may not be *a priori* a bad thing, especially when it's part of a multidimensional or spectrum approach to consciousness. That is, human beings can be said to function on many discrete and separate levels or dimensions, giving us more complexity than the simple dualism between matter and spirit that has bedeviled Western civilization for centuries. There are multiple intermediate levels on this spectrum between Matter and Spirit, ranging from our familiar Ego personality identification with body consciousness, to the transcendent Absolute of unity consciousness.

To simplify somewhat, we operate in at least four recognizable domains—the physical, the subtle energetic, the nonlocal and the non-dual Absolute. Humans initiate gross physical phenomena through the actions of our physical bodies, we initiate subtle energy phenomena through our energy bodies (aura, biofield, etc.). We can initiate non-local phenomena (through expanded states of spiritual awareness that transcend space/time limitations), and a select few of us can even experience samadhi Union with the non-dual Absolute.

In this model, each person is seen to have a physical anchor in space time that is composed of the physical body and the subtle energy body. Further, each person also has a non-local core (the Soul, Higher Self, spirit, etc.) which can directly access nonlocal realms of consciousness, to an extent proportional to the level of spiritual awareness of the individual. That is, some of us can only signal the masters to help us, while others can consciously do the non-local work themselves. Some of us are granted only momentary glimpses of these inner worlds in the course of an entire lifetime, while others have the ability to abide in these realms continuously. So it's not only by absorption into unity consciousness that nonlocal events are created (though certainly unity consciousness can create non-local events—*i.e.*, the life of Jesus). It's our human ability to resonate with many degrees of non-local consciousnesses that often sets the process in motion. At different times we identify with different aspects of our being (am I a doctor, a Daddy, a body jogging harmoniously, a storm of anger, a wave of bliss?). The Buddhist meditations on disidentification are

illuminating in this regard (“I am not this body, I am not these thoughts”), although the Vipassana Buddhist cosmology of mindfulness posits no interdeity realms between Ego and Void. Because of these multiple levels of potential identification, the phrase “I create my own reality” has an entirely different meaning depending on which level of “I” is involved. The phrase is certainly dualistic and guilt-inducing if the “I” refers to the ego personality that is embedded in space-time, because our 3-dimensional egos simply cannot create or influence all aspects of our lives, no matter how hard they try. Too much of earthly life springs from spiritual sources to be controllable by the physically focussed ego. “I” do create “my” reality, however, *when* my self-identification is transferred to the transpersonal realm of Spirit. In this realm, my pre-incarnational Higher Self or soul makes choices on issues ranging from major life themes (poverty, creativity, etc.) and challenges (including death), to choice of parents and culture. The details that flesh out these major life contours may be left to chance or non-intentional events, and are probably not consciously chosen.

It is from this transpersonal level that intuition, guidance and synchronicity arise. Guilt and blame are not involved at this level; the focus is on learning from karmic experience. So the “I” who creates “my” reality is largely unconscious to the personality-focussed waking consciousness, except in the case of highly realized beings who have consciously merged their Egos with Spirit. The task for the rest of us, I believe, is to learn how to create one’s life on an ever more conscious level, so that the personality and the Higher Self work in conscious cooperation, the local and the non-local interweave. In other words, there’s plenty of room for us humans both to “do” and to “be” (or as one teacher on the kiddie TV show Romper Room used to say, “Do Be a Do Bee.”).

The fact that great mystics die of common diseases does not prove that they didn’t create their own reality—all humans must die, as the mystics knew only too well. And whichever illness functioned as one particular mystic’s doorway to death undoubtedly made complete sense at the time, given his unique individual physical/psychological/emotional/spiritual makeup. Interestingly, some mystics like Yogananda apparently made a conscious decision to die despite robust physical health, and so didn’t even need the passageway of illness to make their “great Samadhi.”⁵ Again, death is not the enemy to be overcome,

but rather a human transition to a non-local dimension of reality, to be experienced as consciously as possible. As Dossey says, illness isn't a sign of spiritual imperfection. It's an opportunity to learn more about one's self. The sick person's guilt and self-accusations are projections of his ego's sense of limitation and impotence, and represent an unskillful and uncompassionate application of the "I create my own reality" model.

For readers interested in a more comprehensive (and coherent) presentation of these ideas, several books are offered in the bibliography.⁶⁻⁹ All four books are "channeled," in that the human author did not compose the book from his own personal data base of life experiences. Instead, the writing process more resembles one of taking dictation from a non-physical "boss," much the way ancient Greek artists listened to their Muses. I believe these books do not contradict Dossey's model, but expand on it. Life is composed of local as well as non-local phenomena; "non-dual" and "non-local" are not synonymous, and several of the paradoxes Dossey discusses are image-able. Non-local events may be generated by individuated units of consciousness which are not based in space/time and yet which are not fully merged into nonlocal nirvanic transcendence. There are many steps between Man and God.

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Response by Larry Dossey, M.D.

I am grateful that Dr. William Tiller and Dr. Eric Leskowitz submitted such thoughtful comments to my earlier papers dealing with the role of consciousness and energy in healing.^{1,2} It is refreshing to dialogue with colleagues who respect the experimental evidence favoring distant healing. While we may differ about **how** these events occur, **that** they take place appears not to be a matter of debate. A great starting point!

Let me summarize my position. Distant healing (psychic, spiritual, or psi-healing) is apparently a nonlocal phenomenon. "Nonlocal" implies *infinity* in space and time—not "a long way off" or "a very long time" (a limited nonlocality is a contradiction in terms). Nonlocal events have been proved to occur at the subatomic level. They are apparently unmediated (no transfer of energy is involved), unmitigated (they do not dissipate with spatial separation), and immediate (the correlated distant events occur simultaneously). The fact that they are unmitigated and immediate argues against the transfer of any form of energy or signal, subtle or otherwise. Nonlocal subatomic events may have nothing whatever to do with nonlocal, consciousness-mediated, healing events; these may be independent phenomena occurring in different domains of nature. On the other hand, there may be intimate connections between the two, as some physicists have proposed. Any hypothesis seeking to account for nonlocal healing events will have to accommodate one of the most consistent features of consciousness: its capacity to manifest nonlocally in the world. Such an hypothesis must also account for the capacity of consciousness to violate the temporal barrier, to act outside the present, which has been shown to occur in a series of compelling experiments. [I will not re-state the references for these assertions. Readers are referred to my earlier papers in *Subtle Energies*.]

I emphasize that my quarry in the earlier papers was **distant, nonlocal** healing—not **local** healing events that can be described by contemporary physical concepts.

I don't have a great deal to say in response to Dr. Tiller's proposals about multidimensional spaces—"emotional (9D), mental (10D) and spiritual (11D)" spaces which, in his view, "give rise to subtle energy fields." To the extent that

these hypotheses meet the above requirements, they should be taken seriously. Although I do not know how these proposals could be either proved or falsified, we need to make room for them, and for others as well.

It is worth noting that a plethora of hypotheses by many serious scholars are currently beginning to surface, which attempt to account for the puzzling nature of consciousness. There are suggestions that distant, nonlocal, anomalous events are related to the zero point field and the quantum vacuum;³ that nonlocal subatomic events may underlie nonlocal **consciousness-mediated** events,⁴ as already mentioned; and that consciousness may be a fundamental property in the universe, on a par with matter and energy, not reducible to or derivable from anything else.^{5,6} The sheer variety of these proposals reminds us that no one **knows** how consciousness operates—either locally (within the body or in its immediate vicinity) or nonlocally (at immense distances)—and that we need to be open to a variety of hypotheses.

I agree with Dr. Tiller, as a matter of personal opinion, that “human evolution is characterized by and limited by the penetration of spirit into matter.” However, “spirit” appears to be currently transempirical, and our opinions are exactly that. It is worth noting, however, that Dr. Tiller’s idea was extensively developed by transpersonal psychologist Ken Wilber in his book *Up From Eden*.⁷ Wilber adduced an impressive array of evidence from evolutionary biology, anthropology, history, religion, and psychology to support the thesis that consciousness is prior to matter, and the Absolute—God, Goddess, Allah, the Divine, Brahman, the Infinite—precedes, gives rise to, and includes all.

I also agree with Dr. Tiller’s comments about the relevance of love in how consciousness manifests in the world. I have recently editorialized about the capacity of love to affect the state of the physical world.⁸ Evidence for the role of love in health and illness has been admirably reviewed by Green and Shellenberger.^{9,10} Love, in the form of “an appropriate resonant bond,” has been shown by Jahn, Dunne, Nelson and colleagues at Princeton’s Engineering Anomalies Research laboratory to be capable of influencing the function of physical instruments nonlocally, at global distances.¹¹

However, there are some conjectures by Dr. Tiller to which I shall nod appreciatively and pass by, because I don’t know how to get my hands on them. I am

not sure that any precise meaning can be given to terms such as “body etheric chemistry,” “balance of the energies,” “ultimate harmony,” “ultimate health” or the “generating [of] radiations” by consciousness. I do not dismiss the potential fruitfulness of these ideas, I simply am unable to grasp their meaning and therefore I am at a loss to know how to respond to them.

There is one particular point on which I feel I may have been misunderstood by Dr. Tiller. I do not believe, as implied, that one has “to adopt an either/or position regarding consciousness/energy” in describing the spectrum of healing. On the contrary, I believe both perspectives are necessary. Space-time-matter-energy explanations are extremely helpful in accounting for local healing events. But they are not up to describing the dynamics of distant, anomalous, consciousness-mediated, nonlocal healing phenomena, for the reasons given.

Will some future hypothesis such as Dr. Tiller’s restore energy as an explanation for nonlocal, distant healing? If it does so, this “energy” will probably be so unlike anything currently known that I believe we would be better off ditching the term. “Energy” has too much classical baggage; “subtle energy” has too much subtle classical baggage. Our images of “energy” are not going to be sufficiently refined by calling it “subtle.” Along with the subtle energy metaphor come all sorts of notions that don’t fit the facts—images of radiations, propagation through space, dissipation, shieldability, limitation to the present, a force that will deflect a meter if only it is sensitive enough, on and on. The worst casualty of energy metaphors may be our intrinsic nonlocal nature—that eternal, immortal, infinite quality of consciousness—which is utterly incapable of being described by an energy vocabulary. Why not reserve “energy” for the situations in which it fits, such as the local healing events that are set in motion by medications, surgical procedures, and intrapersonal mental events such as emotions, thoughts, and feelings? But I am re-writing my previous papers.

Dr. Leskowitz also seems to think that I believe “energy” and “consciousness” are incompatible. I am not sure how this misunderstanding originated. Again: Nonlocal, consciousness-mediated events such as intercessory prayer, transpersonal imagery, telesomatic phenomena, and psychic/spiritual/psi healing have physical repercussions in the body of the recipient, which can be described within an energy framework. Nonlocal events have local consequences. Consciousness “leaves its tracks,” as it were, in the space-time-energy-matter

domain. There is no either/or choice to be made between the local and nonlocal, between energy and consciousness. They complement each other; both perspectives are required to account fully for the varieties of healing taking place in our “clinical universe.”

As an example of the complementarity of the local and nonlocal, consider what happens when your physician prescribes an antibiotic pill for you. The pill goes to work in your body and generates all sorts of physical phenomena that are explainable according to space-time-matter-energy concepts. But consciousness soon enters the picture—*your* consciousness, operating *intrapersonally*. This is the familiar mind-body nexus—your mind influencing your body locally, via the effects of thought, emotion, expectation, belief, perceived meaning, and so on. But what about your physician’s thoughts? Imagine that your physician has completed his day, gone home, and decides to pray for you. Intercessory prayer—a form of distant, positive, transpersonal intentionality—has been shown to affect a variety of biological systems nonlocally, unmediated by any detectable energy, not dissipatable by increasing spatial separation, and not shieldable by any known substance.^{12,13,14} So, in a simple therapeutic act—the prescribing and taking of a pill—we see that one does not have to choose between consciousness- or energy-based explanations. They are both necessary to account for what happens clinically.

I admire Dr. Tiller’s metaphor of the TV set. Several scientists, including the British biologist Rupert Sheldrake and the American mathematician and cognitive scientist David Chalmers, have suggested that the brain operates as a kind of receptor for consciousness. As mythologist Joseph Campbell put it, the brain is the organ that *inflects* consciousness. Just as David Letterman is not inside the television set, consciousness is not limited to the physical brain. But the analogy is limited. The TV signal is a local phenomenon; it gets weaker with increasing distance and soon fades out altogether. Consciousness is apparently a nonlocal phenomenon and does not dissipate.

Dr. Leskowitz states that my earliest paper “leaves the reader with a Zen-like sense that unresolvable paradoxes abound.” I hope so. Paradoxes in contemporary physics are all over the place. Many great physicists have described how modern physics has grown increasingly remote from the senses and has become ungraspable by common sense. The paradoxes take many forms—the wave-

particle duality, curved space, parallel universes, the superposition principle, observer effects, and so on. Are these phenomena image-able? Probably not completely. Niels Bohr once said that the instant one makes any image of the electron, one slips into error.

What about “reincarnation, channeling, spirit guides, etc.,” whose existence Dr. Leskowitz proposes? In 1989 in my book *Recovering the Soul* I introduced the term “nonlocal mind.”¹⁵ My purpose was to emphasize the distant, transpersonal effects of consciousness, and to contrast them with the familiar local actions of the mind. Anyone who has taken the time to reflect on the nonlocal manifestations of consciousness will realize, I believe, that such a mind is infinite in space and time—thus omnipresent, eternal, and immortal. Such a mind might manifest in a variety of ways, including multiform existences. Does this open the door for reincarnation, channeling, angels, spirit guides, and past lives? Yes, it indeed **opens** the door; whether anyone or anything **walks through** is another issue. What we can say—decisively, I believe—is that consciousness is not restricted to our span of 70+ years but appears temporally limitless. I’ll settle for immortality and leave speculations about the entities to those whose personal experience and wisdom exceeds my own. I would recommend two books for those who wish to pursue how consciousness may manifest in other dimensions—philosopher Donald Evans’ excellent *Spirituality and Human Nature*¹⁶ and Arthur Hastings’ *With the Tongues of Men and Angels: A Study of Channeling*.¹⁷

Because Dr. Leskowitz, like Dr. Tiller, says that I posit “an either/or split between two discrete mechanisms of healing. . . either local. . . or nonlocal,” I am forced to concede that I failed miserably to convey my actual position. So I reiterate: I agree with both Dr. Tiller and Dr. Leskowitz that, as the latter states, “It seems logically consistent that certain healing events could involve both local and nonlocal processes,” for the reasons mentioned above. If I understand Dr. Leskowitz correctly, the “subtle form of dualism” he attributes to me results from his belief that I favor an either/or approach to local and nonlocal forms of healing. Since I do not, I hope he will let me off the hook as a dualist in this regard.

Is subtle energy “what consciousness uses to interact with physical form”? Is it “the bridge between Spirit and Matter”? While agreeing that we are dealing

with a “subtle process,” I am not convinced that “subtle energy” is involved. I do not believe this debate can be resolved by claiming that the putative energy is so subtle we can’t detect it. The same argument has been used in the past to justify the intrusion of demons, spirits, and other entities in human affairs: they’re there, we just can’t demonstrate them. Empirical evidence abounds in subatomic physics that nonlocal events can occur without the transmission of subtle energetic signals. Why introduce them if they’re not needed, and if there is no evidence they exist?

I agree wholeheartedly with Dr. Leskowitz’s idea of a hierarchy of existence, from the gross material through the non-dual Absolute. This is the core assertion of the perennial philosophy and the “spectrum of consciousness” that has been described by Aldous Huxley,¹⁸ Ken Wilber,¹⁹ and many others. In the highest register of human experience, we know the entire universe as nonlocal— infinite, instantly interconnected, one. But when we view the world through the senses, the nonlocal experience fades and is replaced by one of duality—a world out there, with which we interact causally, energetically, materially: our familiar local habitat.

While these are different ways of conceiving of the world, they are nonetheless intimately connected. All opposites are in some sense one. They are the “principles of movement” of each other, as physicist David Bohm once said. “Eternity is in love with the productions of Time,” the aphorism has it. Just so, the nonlocal and the local, the collective and the personal, the unitary and the disparate, the acausal and the causal—and the nonenergetic and the energetic—“inform” each other, “go together,” and are indispensable to each other.

I don’t disagree with Dr. Leskowitz that it is always helpful to believe that “I create my own reality.” I acknowledge, however, that it can be healthier to believe you are the arch-creator than to believe you are a helpless victim with no power whatever. But at some point it is possible to leave behind the need to create everything ourselves—to replace the desire to create with the desire simply to **be**. This is the dimension where, in Buddhist lore, “There is birth but no one who is born; suffering but no one who suffers; death but no one who dies; enlightenment but no one who is enlightened”—and creation but no one who creates?

About the great saints and mystics who die of dreadful illnesses. My point was a simple one: One can be very advanced spiritually and get really sick. High levels of spirituality are not incompatible with illness. I make no claims about **why** the Buddha died of food poisoning, Jesus died of acute trauma, Sri Ramana Maharshi died of stomach cancer, and so on. As Ramakrishna once put it, as long as we have a body we will be subject to the laws that govern bodies. Whatever they may be.

Dr. Leskowitz asserts that “non-dual” and “non-local” are not synonymous. It depends. If electrons interact and are then positioned at a great distance from each other, when the spin of one changes, the spin of the other changes—instantly and to the same degree. The changes are not causal because causation, generally conceived, requires a before-and-after sequence, and here there is none. The distant particles behave as if they are united as a single entity—no doer and no done-to. The particles are behaving, therefore, **both** nondually and nonlocally. But in our world, in which we are constrained by our senses, the simultaneously nondual and nonlocal unity of the universe is hidden from us most of the time and is replaced by experiences of temporality, causation, and separation. From **our** perspective, nonduality and nonlocality are emphatically **not** the same — but **only** from **our** perspective.

A final word about nonlocality. In my view, nonlocality is “not just” nonlocality. We should not be too quick to equate the nonlocality we see at the level of subatomic particles with the nonlocal experiences we often have, or with the nonlocality we attribute to the Absolute. To say that electrons behave as if they are “outside space and time” gives no hint of the richness of the nonlocal experience of the mystic. Of itself, there is nothing special about “nonlocal.” As Ken Wilber once said, it sounds like passing out. I’ll take the mystic’s nonlocality any day over the nonlocality that is experienced by a subatomic particle.

There is only one cause: the Universe.
There is only one unit of time: Eternity.
There is only one mind: the Absolute.
All the rest is talk.

Including my views.

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