

**THE BEINGNESS INSTITUTE**  
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## Meta-analyses of healing studies

Abbot, Neil C, Healing as a therapy for human disease: a systematic review, *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 2000, 6(2), 159-169. This meta-analysis covers 59 randomized controlled studies, (including 10 dissertation abstracts and 5 pilot studies) of healing in humans up to the year 2000. Of 22 fully reported trials, 10 suggested significant effects. There were 8 studies rated as methodologically sound, of which 5 showed significant effects. The heterogeneity of the studies precluded a meta-analysis. Small sample sizes in the 15 studies in the dissertations and pilot group may have contributed to the lack of significant effects in 11 of them. The inclusion of the the abstracts and pilot studies weakens this analysis.

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.

John Astin, assistant professor at the University of Maryland Medical School, Edzard Ernst, Chairman of the Department of Complementary Therapies at the University of Exeter in England, and Elaine Harkness, reviewed 23 studies: 5 with prayer healing, 11 with non-contact Therapeutic Touch, and 7 miscellaneous distant healing approaches. A positive effect was found in 57 percent of these. The study is a bit peculiar in including non-contact Therapeutic Touch as distant healing, but within the study this category is analyzed separately. Overall, for the 16 trials with double blinds, the average effect size was 0.40 ( $p < .001$ ). For 10 TT studies meeting their selection criteria, the average effect size was 0.63 ( $p < .003$ ). For the prayer studies the effect size was 0.25 ( $p < .009$ ). For the "other" studies the average effect size was 0.38 ( $p < .073$ ). The authors conclude that "the evidence thus far warrants further study."

This is an acknowledgment (in research reviewers' terminology) that the evidence has merit. A second acknowledgment was published in the *New York Times*, op-ed page, June 6, 2000, in the column "Vital Signs" by Eric Nagourney, titled, "A cautious nod to "Distance Healing." Previously, the *New York Times* was reluctant to acknowledge healing research as valid.

Braud, William and Schlitz, Marilyn. A methodology for the objective study of transpersonal imagery, *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 1989, 3(1), 43-63. This meta-analysis focuses on electrodermal activity (EDA), a measure of skin resistance that

reflects states of tension. Healers have been able to selectively lower and raise EDA, aided by feedback from a meter attached to the healee's skin. In a series of studies by William Braud and Marilyn Schlitz there were 323 sessions with 4 experimenters, 62 influencers and 271 subjects. Of the 15 studies, 6, (40 per cent) produced significant results. Of the 323 sessions, 57 percent were successful ( $p = .000023$ ). That is, such results could have occurred by chance only twenty three times in a million.

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## ARTICLES IN SUPPORT OF DISTANCE HEALING AND REFERENCES

*"Scores of controlled studies have demonstrated the correlation of positive mental intent with physiological effects in distant human beings." - Larry Dossey, M.D.*

### **Western Journal of Medicine Abstract 1998 Dec**

Sicher, F; Targ, E; Moore, D 2nd; Smith, HS. A randomized double-blind study of the effect of distant healing in a population with advanced AIDS. Report of a small scale study. *Western Journal of Medicine*, 1998 Dec, 169(6):356-63.

Various forms of distant healing (DH), including prayer and "psychic healing," are widely practiced, but insufficient formal research has been done to indicate whether such efforts actually affect health. We report on a double-blind randomized trial of DH in 40 patients with advanced AIDS. DH treatment was performed by self-identified healers representing many different healing and spiritual traditions. Healers were located throughout the United States during the study, and subjects and healers never met. At 6 months, a blind medical chart review found that treatment subjects acquired



significantly fewer new AIDS-defining illnesses, had lower illness severity, and required significantly fewer doctor visits, fewer hospitalizations, and fewer days of hospitalization. Treated subjects also showed significantly improved mood compared with controls. These data support the possibility of a DH effect in AIDS and suggest the value of further research.

For other sources of research on distant healing scientific studies you may wish to visit:

<http://www.dosseydossey.com/larry/default.html> Larry Dossey's web site

[http://www.goodsamiam.com/distant\\_healing\\_research.htm](http://www.goodsamiam.com/distant_healing_research.htm) - Good Samaritan International web site

<https://danielbenor.com/twrwhee-research/>