

# Expectations Shape Reality

It is known from research that healing in the body is regulated by the brain. This has been repetitively upheld by many studies where the desired effect(s) of various drugs have consistently missed the boat in the company of a placebo. That fact that we are in charge of our brain is reassuring.

The healing power underlying a person's thoughts and expectations has flown largely under the radar and focus in the realm of Western Medicine. So I was intrigued (yet, not surprised) when I stumbled upon an abstract of a study the other day, entitled, The Effect of Treatment Expectation on Drug Efficacy: Imaging the Analgesic Benefit of the Opioid Remifentanil. Researchers discovered, what many people, especially those who are acutely tapped in to the energetics of being are already aware of, that the most influential determining factor to the effectiveness of any drug treatment is (cue intense music) a patient's own mind.

It is always exciting to me when bridges are built connecting science and spirituality in ways that have great potential to comfort those "let's see the numbers" folks into nudging paradigms to the side that are no longer serving in the best of ways, and in the following breath, open up minds to an entirely new way of treating disease.

In the study's abstract, the researchers state: "Evidence from behavioral and self-reported data suggests that the patients' beliefs and expectations can shape both therapeutic and adverse effects of any given drug. We investigated how divergent expectancies alter the analgesic efficacy of a potent opioid in healthy volunteers by using brain imaging."

During the study, "positive treatment expectancy substantially enhanced (doubled) the analgesic benefit" of the medication. On the flip side, when subjects were told that they were not

receiving painkiller medications, even while they were, the effects proved to be entirely ineffective. In fact, the research showed the benefits of painkillers could be increased or completely canceled by manipulating the subjects' expectations. Wrapped up in one sentence? Relief is up to the patient.

While this amount of scientific light shed on the subject should have important outcomes for patient care and drug use, there is no money to be made in our present day setup from telling patients that they hold much potential to heal themselves. That written treatment modalities (of any variety) will always benefit from weaving these mind over matter principles into their approaches. There are thousands of examples where whatever is being wined and dined by the mind in a serious and consistent way has materialized. Mind/body medicine is not parallel to some wishful, cauldron-stirring result. It is real, concrete, and increasingly, the only way to get lasting results in a society that has been built upon stress-laden channels, many of which lack an off switch.

## **Your Mind Matters!**

It is known from research that healing in the body is regulated by the brain. This has been repetitively upheld by many studies where the desired effect(s) of various drugs have consistently missed the boat in the company of a placebo. That fact that we are in charge of our brain is reassuring. The brain carries out its to do list in the form of beliefs, intentions, in the trust of what is to happen, positive, negative, conscious and subconscious, alike. There is no better time than now to realize that we hold (beyond magical) moxie (Capabilities was the word I was really going for. Moxie popped up and I couldn't turn it down.) when it comes to our path, our purpose...and our healing abilities. It is my sincere hope and intention that we, collectively, continue to migrate toward this (refreshed) and powerful understanding.

The article, *The Effect of Treatment Expectation on Drug Efficacy: Imaging the Analgesic Benefit of the Opioid Remifentanil* was published in the medical journal, *Science Translational Medicine* Vol. 3, Issue 70, February 16, 2011. You can find it online at this site, but you will have to subscribe to the read the full article.