

# THE MYTH OF ONE THAT BECAME TWO

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Mythology has amused and gratified humans for a long time. The reason is the same, perhaps, as to why science fiction, movies, the theater and most art forms are popular today. Joseph Campbell in his book *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* has the following to say:<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the inhabited world, in all times and in every circumstance, the myths of man have flourished; and they have been the living inspiration of whatever else may have appeared out of the activities of the human body and mind. It would not be too much to say that myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestation. Religion, philosophies, arts, the social forms of primitive and historic man, prime discoveries in science and technology, the very dreams that blister sleep, boil up from the basic, magic ring of myth.

In myth, there seems to be a desire to reflect other worldliness; a call of the unknown; a challenge to understanding; a reason for escape. Sounds like scientific research? However, we know from research in holistic health, two things that produce the same result need not be same. Thus, while myth reflects reality through glasses that are designed to distort, science wearing the self-same glasses of distortion imagines what it sees is real! Thus, the myth of the sciences could be the science of the myths. To quote Professor Charles Tart “Reality is not what you think, nor is it otherwise!”

Joseph Campbell elucidates the shared myth of the One that became two, and later, grew a thousand faces. In another book, he traces the legends of the

Near East and Far East, both of which describe the One that was in the beginning, becoming two. The Near Eastern legend seems to be linked to history (Genesis in the Old Testament), while the other is distinctly psychological (Yoga and Upanisads). Campbell says:<sup>2</sup>

For, of the tree that grows in the garden where God walks in the cool of the day, the wise men westward of Iran have partaken of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, whereas those on the other side of that cultural divide, in India and the Far East, have relished only the fruit of eternal life. . . and the present age of mutual rediscovery appears in their opposed versions of the shared mythological image of the first being, who was originally one but became two.

In the early days, science was one; but in recent times, it has become two. C. P. Snow, who talked about the two cultures of science and humanities, should be here to see the cleavage of science and the “alternate science;” or, as the powers that be who, in their wisdom, have designated, *Medicine* and the *Alternate Medicine*. Is a reconciliation between the Medicines possible? This is our hope and endeavor, along with many others who have a similar interest in integration. The contents of this issue hopefully reflects this concern at many levels.

The first paper titled “Healing, Energy, and Consciousness: Into the Future or a Retreat to the Past?” by Dr. Larry Dossey raises a fundamental question regarding energy in healing. He asks: “Can energy be held responsible for healing?” He proposes that there could be local, energetic manifestations of nonlocal, nonenergetic events. Since all distant anomalous healing seems to relate to the workings of the mind, he suggests we “would appear to be on safer ground to propose *consciousness instead of energy as the foundation of these events.*” [p. 14]

These ideas are very important at this stage of the game and a unified concept with regard to energy, mind, and consciousness could be extremely helpful in discussions with the reductionistic sciences.

The second paper in this issue by Charles Tart, Ph.D. discusses methods of recognizing the fears in dealing with the paranormal—be it as a researcher or as a partaker of “energy” manipulations. Now, this is a complex subject since

it touches many sensitive points both within ourselves and without. There are personal preferences, some people by nature may not be willing to reveal their deepest experiences— not out of fear—but simply in maintaining a personal territory. Then there is the question of the politics of research, fear of ridicule by the establishment, be it the scientific, religious, or what the ‘suppressed majority’ might consider an unauthentic feeling! I am using the word ‘suppressed majority’ to designate the majority of people who have successfully suppressed both their experiences and their ability to feel and work with subtle energies. In this regard I presume that most of us move in and out of this category, even if we do not belong to one or the other category all the time.

Many interesting points are raised by Charles Tart regarding research, practice and perception of parapsychology by both professionals and practitioners. Some of us who have worked in this area for some time do know that people with psi ability are themselves unsure of their feelings. For example, one person says “When psi is turned on, I don’t know what is going to come up that is out of control, I don’t like that.” [p. 45] Thus, fear of psi is seen to be expressed basically by two types of people: those who know about psi and those who do not know about it!

Now how do we handle this fear of psi? Tart has listed a long list of possible scenarios for dealing with this fear. And he sums it all up saying: “And finally, the ultimate way of dealing with your own fear of psychic abilities is *personal and spiritual growth*.” [p. 58] This is a very important message from a person who has contributed to the growth and understanding of the science of psi.

The third paper in this issue is by Carol Schneider, Ph.D. and Wayne Jonas, M.D. The paper is titled “Are Alternative Treatments Effective: Issues and Methods Involved in Measuring Effectiveness of Alternative Treatment.” This paper reviews many research designs, and addresses which variables are relevant for follow-up. Variables such as physical symptoms, emotional states, quality of life indicators, spiritual background and awareness in an illness, etc. must be included in the assessment. The usual physiological measures along with blood profile could also be included. A clear view of the goals of treatment should be delineated. This could range from complete cure to providing a philosophic understanding of lessons from illness. About 120 references are provided to compliment the paper. For many who have from time to time requested

information on research methods in this area, this paper could be the first introductory one delineating the concepts in assessment of any treatment.

Perhaps it is relevant to point out both the philosophical and technical implications of research in holistic health. First, like many medical practitioners, it is felt that if a treatment is deemed to be helpful, then withdrawing it from a patient is not ethical. Second, are the methods of science, so ferociously forwarded by the establishment in assessing alternate therapies, followed by the establishment itself? In a recent paper titled "Research into Complimentary Medicine: Going Beyond the Limits of Clinical Trials," David St. George has the following to say:<sup>3</sup>

One review of research designs in three leading medical journals found only 16 per cent of published articles over a ten-year period were randomized controlled trials. Of the other 84 per cent, 49 per cent were observational cohort studies, 14 per cent were uncontrolled trials, and 21 per cent were nonrandomized control trials. . .

Does this not suggest a double standard? The medical profession insists that complimentary medicine can be evaluated only by randomized clinical trials, while it answers its own therapeutic questions through a wide range of study designs (with randomized clinical trials playing a minor role). Obviously, it is vital for complementary medicine to conduct randomized clinical trials whenever possible, but it is just as important to develop the whole spectrum of research activities.

We need to change attitudes about imposing outdated methods (even for biochemical models of medicine) of randomized trials. Even in conventional medicine only a small percent of research is carried out in a randomized style. Perhaps there is need for a public debate regarding the points raised by David St. George.

The final paper is an experimental one titled "Effects of Qigong on Cell-Free Myosin Phosphorylation: Preliminary Experiments" by David Muehsam, *et al.* This particular biological system has been studied earlier for its sensitivity to variations in static magnetic fields above and below ambient values. The results of the reported experiments indicate that Qigong practice affects this myosin system consistently in much the same way as small change in the ambient

magnetic field. However, this does not mean that Qigong effects are purely magnetic in nature. Such a conclusion is premature, as the authors themselves observe, since isolating the preparation in a magnetic shield does not block effect due to Qigong. All of these experiments were carried out without physical contact.

In the opinion of this writer, the importance of this report is two fold: one, the search for a biological system which can act as a transducer of different types of subtle energies, and second, the willingness of serious researchers in the electromagnetic field to turn their attention to subtle energies. While human or whole-animal dynamics are very complex and different from an *in vitro* preparation, experiments using these biotransducers are quite important.

Now, this brings us full circle: from Dossey's thesis of nonlocal mind, interacting in the process of healing, to a possible magnetic component of healing. In the final analysis, both could be true and both could be false, or both could be neither true nor false! The best way to ensure that this editorial survives the test of time is to make no comment about either. And that is what I intend to do.

The cover art provided by Alex Grey is esoteric, suggestive and highly artistic. We provided readers with another of Grey's art works earlier, an equally stunning one. Thanks to the artist for his gracious interaction with us.

Finally, my sincere thanks to all authors who have generously shared their views.

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#### REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

1. Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, Bollingen Series XVII (Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1968), p. 3.
2. Joseph Campbell, *Oriental Mythology* (Arkana, New York, NY, 1962), p. 9.
3. David St. George, Research Into Complimentary Medicine, *Advances*, 10, 3 (1994), pp. 59-60.

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