

Dean Radin Gets Intentional

BH: One of the topics that received the most questions through the What the BLEEP website was on Dr. Emoto's water crystal experiments. More specifically, people want to know just how scientific they are.

Radin: Okay. I think like a lot of people, I've seen Dr. Emoto give his lectures and they're quite amazing, perhaps a little too amazing. So the question that most people have, whether they're scientists or not, is how robust is this effect really? Is it so robust that the pictures that they are showing us are truly representative of what they end up with? Or maybe they're just a selection of a much larger body of pictures.

After one of these talks I went up to Dr. Emoto and asked him if he'd be willing to participate in a double blind experiment to get rid of the potential selection problem and also bias in deciding what pictures to take. And to my delight he immediately said sure. Initially we were thinking we'd get a walk in freezer and I would duplicate the entire method, and then I realized I don't want to spend a week in a freezer, and more importantly, I don't have to. If we do it under proper double blind conditions, then his analyst in Tokyo could do the analysis of the water, and I would do the analysis of the results of the experiment.

BH: And what does double blind mean?

Radin: It means that in the case of the images of crystals that they're working with they don't know which water they're working with. There are two types of water in this experiment, there is treated water, which is treated by intention, and then there is a control water. So, if the analyst and Dr. Emoto and everyone in Tokyo did not know which of the water samples they were dealing with, then they can't be accused of selecting out the best pictures because they don't know from which samples they came. So that's one form of being blind. They're blind to the condition.

The way the experiment worked is this: I said to Dr. Emoto, if I send you some water samples, can you go through your procedure and take pictures? He said fine. So I selected some bottles of Fiji brand, commercial, bottled water and put them in our shielded room, here at Noetic Sciences. On a given day, I think this was in 2006, there were 2,000 people at a conference or lecture that Dr. Emoto was giving in Tokyo and I had sent him a digital picture of what the bottles looked like in the shielded room. So what he did is he presented his talk and then at the end of the talk, he said okay, now we're going to try an experiment. Here are two bottles of water at this institute in California. He used the Google Earth application to show them where they were in Tokyo as compared to where we were here, roughly 3,000 miles away. And then he put a Kanji prayer for water overlaid on the picture and he led them through reciting this prayer for water, to send it to the water that was in the laboratory.

The next day I retrieved the two bottles and unbeknownst to Dr. Emoto, or anybody at this conference, I had two additional bottles of water, all four just taken off the shelf from a store, and the two bottles that were the control bottles were just up in my office in a different part of the building from where the two treatment bottles were. I sent all four bottles to Dr. Emoto and said, "in each case, take 50 samples as you normally do out of each bottle and take pictures of the crystals, I will tell you afterwards which is which, but for now, just consider them bottles A, B, C, and D, and then send me back the pictures." So when he sent back the pictures, I said, "since they're labeled A, B, C, D, you re-label them so you're sending back pictures and I don't know yet which bottle they're from." So that's the second blind. So the first blind is all they know is A, B, C, D, they don't know the condition, the second blind is that when they return the pictures of the crystals I don't know which bottles they were using. So we're both holding part of the information, we're both blind to the data so we can't be biased.

So what I got back from his analyst were a bunch of pictures of crystals that they took and while there are four bottles leading to 4X50 crystals, potentially 200 pictures could be returned. But I only got back about 40 pictures and the reason is, I learned, is that a lot of times there aren't any pictures at all. So this is our first hint that what Dr. Emoto shows are selections. They're selections of examples of what he is looking for.

The next question is, how do we assess whether the crystals are different in the two conditions? In this case, I put all the pictures on a website without labeling what condition they were in and asked people (about 2,000 participated) to look at the website and assess the esthetic beauty of each one of these pictures. And the way they would do this is they would simply look at a series of pictures all in a row, and they're simply asked on a 6 point scale to say they thought this was the most beautiful thing they ever saw, all the way down to they didn't think it was beautiful at all ratings. Esthetic beauty ratings. What you end up with then is a pretty stable, grand assessment; what would the population agree upon for this particular picture, or the next picture and so on.

And so now the proof of the pudding is we had some crystals that were in fact in the treated condition and some that were in the control condition. What was the difference in esthetic ratings between these two conditions? The prediction would be that the crystals should look better in the treated water and should not look so good in the control water. And that's what we found to a statistically significant degree. Now when you look at the actual crystals returned from this experiment in the two conditions, there are some cases of control water leading to quite good looking crystals, and there are some cases of treated water with pretty bad looking crystals. But on average, just doing a simple statistical test, the difference between the crystals in the two conditions is significant and in the direction that he had predicted. So it lends some credence to the general idea that something about intention has an effect.

So we've since done a triple blind experiment where we had one additional level of blindness. In this case the entire analysis was finished before I learned what the

different conditions were. I'm revising the paper now for publication and that also showed an effect that was significant. It was a weak statistical effect, it's significant but it's not a massive effect. It's certainly not as robust as the effects as he shows in his presentations. But on the other hand he's not claiming that these are scientific tests.

BH: The water that had an intention placed on it, was there any treatment process done to it beforehand?

Radin: No, it was straight off the shelf from Whole Foods.

BH: I recently saw, in a new movie from Russia titled Water, where Dr. Emoto does another, similar experiment. He has three glass containers with rice and he pours water into each one, I believe it's just regular tap water. Everyday for about a month, someone goes in and says, "I love you" to the first container of rice and water. In the second container, they say "You idiot," and the third container of rice and water is completely ignored. After the month is up, they come back and in the first container of rice and water, the water is still clear and the rice has fermented, giving off a nice aroma. In the second container, the rice and water are black. And in the container that was completely ignored, the rice was rotting. I was wondering if that would be a good suggestion for people who are skeptical or just want to see for themselves?

Radin: Yes. There have been plenty of science fair projects, both elementary and high school, that do basically the same things. The power of prayer on plant growth has been studied many times. The effects that you see with plants is sometimes more dramatic than you see with a crystal because there are lots of factors that influence crystal formation, of course there are a lot of factors that influence plant growth as well.

The tricky part of doing an experiment of the course that you describe, which is a perfectly fine experiment, is to make sure that the conditions of the three containers is as close as is humanly possible to create. Because obviously if you made a mistake, for example when you're looking at something like how high plants grow and the treated plants happen to get more light, then that would confound the experiment.

I know some colleagues who were working with their children on their science fair projects and doing things like praying over, or simply intentionally responding to plants in different ways, in the way that you described with the rice. They claim they were astonished at the results, which came out pretty much like you would predict. So I think these things do happen, as in any experiment there are many ways in which it can go wrong and give you the impression that it worked when in fact it was a mistake. But having also seen experiments that were done under extremely tight conditions in a laboratory we see that there are changes that occur, both in the structure of water and things like the hydrogen bonding in water itself. When we see small but real effects in the laboratory, it's not too surprising that you can see larger effects in the uncontrolled real world.

BH: I was at a conference where Dr. Joe Dispenza and Lynne McTaggart spoke on intention. There were some interesting experiments discussed and many in the crowd seemed to be concerned with negative intention. Have you done any work with negative intention?

Radin: I get asked that fairly often and the answer is no. Mainly because any experiment that we do has to pass through an ethics review and it would be very difficult to get approval from an ethics board to do an experiment that involves negative intention, at least one that involves people. So if you're feeding a plant and calling it ugly everyday, I suppose you can do that but I'm not sure I want to ask people to exercise those kinds of intentions.

BH: Many of the conference attendees were concerned with whether or not negative intention is as strong as positive intention.

Radin: I think it is a valid concern. I don't think the magic underneath this is the intention per se, although that's part of it. I think what is also a big part of this is the motivation that comes along with it. So the motivation is a focusing mechanism for the brain or for the mind. If you have very strong intention, either positive or negative, there's something about that intense focus, especially focus that is sustained, which seems then to carry the nature of the intention out into the world. So a negative intention could work probably just as well as a positive one.

I should say that in most of these studies, there is the assumption that the world is actually changing as a result of our intention and we still don't know that this is actually the case. We see experimental results which are consistent with that interpretation but there's another interpretation which is that whenever there is an experiment that is designed, somebody has to make decisions about how it's going to look, how it's going to work. And if that person was able to sample the future, say they had precognition, they would be able to craft an experiment in such a way and conduct the experiment at such a time, to give them the results that they want. Then, when they actually do the experiment it would look a lot like magic force beams come out of people's heads and push the world around, when in fact that didn't happen at all, they just took advantage of a fortuitous time.