

# Documentation and Research for Alternative Aquatics

[www.AquaPoetics.com](http://www.AquaPoetics.com)  
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*Not everything that is healing to someone can be measured scientifically.*

Water is not only a bridge between energy and matter, but also between the conscious and unconscious minds, the rational and the emotional, waking state reality and altered states, and the subjective and objective realms.

Currently science does not know how to bridge this gap. In fact, science seems rather uncomfortable with the unconscious, the emotional, altered states and the subjective.

I think at core, the fear is one of drowning in deep water, where the individual scientist has less control, and must surrender to the flow of a larger process.

Until this fear is addressed, science will try to swim upstream with one arm tied behind its back!

# Water connects us ...

- a shared goal of aquatic physical therapists and aquatic bodyworkers is more effective treatment and greater health benefit to clients.
- the desire to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of treatment is important for both physical therapists and aquatic bodyworkers.
- clinical therapists could benefit from the understanding that not everything that is healing to their clients can be measured scientifically.

# Integrative medicine ...

*'There are still people who are quite opposed [to integrative medicine] and who feel that the science is not strong enough to introduce these therapies and that medicine should be based on only that which has excellent evidence ,'* says Maizes, but she points out that in conventional medicine, only an estimated 40% of practices are evidence based, meaning randomized trials support their use and meta-analyses support the randomized trials.

*'Much of what we do in conventional medicine is just that - convention ,'* Maizes adds.

[Victoria Maizes is executive director of the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine.]

# Some questions ...

- **What can we learn from the experience of aquatics practitioners in alternative health and spa settings?**
- **Does our definition of aquatic therapy influence our attitude towards alternative aquatic practices, their therapeutic models, and their beneficial effects?**
- **How could those in clinical aquatics be encouraged to appreciate the therapeutic work, and alternative models for healing, of their non-clinical colleagues?**
- **Is it possible or universally effective to reduce our sense of what it is to be fully human - in sickness or in health - to any kind of model?**
- **Are the approaches to assessment, documentation, and evaluation in the care and treatment of someone the same for non-clinical practices as for clinical?**

# Integration of:

- ancient healing practices
- contemporary medical science
- emergent worldviews

Transforming understanding and approaches to individual and social health and the nature of the healing system within us all

(Institute of Noetic Sciences)

# Evidence-based medicine (EBM)

Aims to apply evidence gained from the scientific method to certain parts of medical practice. It seeks to assess the quality of evidence relevant to the risks and benefits of treatments (including lack of treatment). According to the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, "Evidence-based medicine is the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients." EBM recognizes that many aspects of medical care depend on individual factors such as quality and value-of-life judgments, which are only partially subject to scientific methods. EBM, however, seeks to clarify those parts of medical practice that are in principle subject to scientific methods and to apply these methods to ensure the best prediction of outcomes in medical treatment, even as debate about which outcomes are desirable continues.

From Wikipedia

# Science has difficulty when a study:

- does not yield objective truth
- its conclusions are context-dependent, inconsistent from one context to the next and not verifiable by statistics
- its conclusions are derived through a wide range of diverse techniques and approaches to therapy that differ widely from practitioner to practitioner
- its conclusions are derived, not through empirical observation alone, but through the participation of subject and object in a mutual dialogue
- its conclusions assume the possibility of meaning and purpose, while science disavows these possibilities and is not prepared to discuss them
- has no testable mechanism to explain how it works; nor has any such theory ever been tested by the rigorous standards demanded by science

(After Joe Landwehr)

# **Water** may be seen as a bridge between:

- energy and matter
- conscious and unconscious minds
- the rational and the emotional
- waking state reality and altered states
- the subjective and objective realms

# Paradigm shift?

*A paradigm is a worldview or way of seeing everything. Contrasted with the materialism of 20th century science, the emerging paradigm recognizes non-material realities such as life force, and the role of conscious intention.*

*For instance, water is more than just H<sub>2</sub>O. Experiments prove water can be affected in measurable ways by subtle influences such as music or whether a person's thoughts are hate-filled or life-enhancing.*

Jeanne Manning