

Power and Autonomy in Alternative and Complementary Medicine:
4th International Academic & Experiential Conference for Researchers &
Practitioners
Nottingham University, UK, Wed 4th to Fri 6th July 2007

An Enlightenment Scale

*** Hudoba P., MD, FRCS, Thompson L., PhD, Caire J., PhD, Chuck A., Hsu, S., RN, Sha Zhi Gang, MD (China)**

It is known from the works of Maslow, Coleman and other researchers that, during spiritual evolution, spiritual practitioners undergo changes in their mental, emotional and spiritual composition. Successful spiritual practitioners dissolve their ego structure, develop profound empathy and compassion toward others, and wish to generously and selflessly serve humanity. This transformation is accompanied by profound inner joy and peace, by an increase of intelligence and wisdom, and by an increase in spiritual standing. Enlightenment is a state characterized by very specific changes in body, mind and soul as described in holy scriptures.

Over several years, we have developed a Questionnaire to capture these changes. The sensitivity of this instrument was studied in a short double-blind randomized crossover study.

Thirty-six spiritual practitioners of various orientations (Christian, Catholic, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu) were randomized into two groups in a blind fashion. Each group received a distance blessing from spiritual master Zhi Gang Sha in a blind fashion one week apart. All subjects completed self-assessment Questionnaires within two days before each blessing session and again one week after the second blessing session. Subjects were encouraged to continue their usual spiritual practice (e.g., prayers, meditations and so forth) through the time of the study.

Using psychometric analysis and reliability analysis of data from the study, we were able to eliminate less sensitive questions and group the remaining questions into six coherent units:

1. Body
2. Mind
3. Emotions
4. Wisdom (Intuition)
5. Heart (Compassion)
6. Soul

For each unit we obtained internal consistency of Cronbach's Alpha of more than 0.8, and as high as 0.95 for some. Detailed analysis of the data will be discussed during the presentation.

In this presentation we are not discussing the effect of the blessing or meditation on participants. Rather, we are presenting the analysis of the actual

scale which we used in the study.

Over last years, researchers are increasingly turning their attention to alternative healing methods like meditation, reiki and similar. From our point of view, these techniques have much wider effects on human beings than simply the alleviation of symptoms of illness. We feel that in order to advance the field, it is necessary to use instruments that can capture not only the changes in symptoms, but changes on all levels of the body, as well as changes in the mind and the soul.

The scale of our design meets the criteria to qualify it for use as a research tool. It is user friendly and simple to administer. We consider this scale to be useful for researchers studying the effects of meditation or energy and spiritual healing methods on human beings.

The Institute of Soul Mind Body Medicine and Sha Research Foundation are co-sponsors of the study, which was conducted at San Francisco, California, USA. The study included subjects from both the USA and Canada and researchers from Sha Research Foundation, Stanford University and the University of California at San Francisco, USA.

Biographies

Peter Hudoba MD, FRCS

former Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery

now in private practice in spine management, 30 years of research activity in neurosurgery, neurology and (currently) in the application of spirituality in medicine

Teaches Soul Mind Body Medicine at Brittonia Community Center, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Chairman of the Board, Sha Research Foundation, California

Larry W. Thompson, PhD, MA, BA

The Goldman Family Professor of Psychology

Pacific Graduate School of Psychology, now Emeritus

Professor of Medicine, Emeritus (Research)

Stanford University School of Medicine, Division of Endocrinology, Gerontology & Metabolism

Dr. Thompson's interests include psychosocial treatments for individuals with bipolar disorder and /or other serious mental illnesses; cognitive/behavioral therapy for late-life depression; intervention research with culturally diverse individuals with depression; and psychophysiological research on stress & coping.

Jill Bond Caire, PhD

Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California, San Francisco

Her research on expert-novice models of the self was supported by the Character and Competence Research Program cosponsored by the Henry A. Murray Research Center at Radcliffe College, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and The Institute of Human Development at University of California, Berkeley

Shu Chin Hsu, RN

Former Registered Nurse, spiritual practitioner for many years

Member of the Board, Sha Research Foundation, California

Zhi Gang Sha, MD (China), Doctor of traditional Chinese medicine (China, Canada)

Well-known spiritual healer and teacher, based in San Francisco and Toronto

Founder, Institute of Soul Mind Body Medicine, San Francisco, California

email: zhigangsha@yahoo.com