

# Field Theory

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## What is Field Theory?

There were two major twentieth century theories of causation in human behavior, Freudian and Field theory. They contrast starkly in terms of causative denotation. Freud believed that current behavior is a function of personal history, whereas field theory contends that behavior is a function of the current moment, by means of an energetic field that encompasses past impressions and future possibilities within an interactive network. Field theory has been defined as, "a psychological theory that examines patterns of interaction between the individual and the total field, or environment. Kurt Lewin developed the concept, in the 1940s and 1950s. Field theory holds that behavior must be derived from a totality of coexisting facts. These coexisting facts make up a "dynamic field", which means that the state of any part of the field depends on every other part of it. Behavior depends on the present field rather than on the past or the future. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Field\\_theory\\_\(psychology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Field_theory_(psychology))

## Field Theory and Physics

Field theory developed out of physics, but in the beginning physicists were challenged by having to deal with invisible processes such as gravity, magnetism, electricity and light, to explain how they all worked on a physical level, and to prove them on a conceptual level. As O'Neill describes the dilemma, physicists attempted, "to develop an understanding of processes which were essentially invisible yet the results of which [were] clearly observable...The forces of gravity, magnetism, electricity and light all posed problems which then required a new conceptualization." It was the work by Maxwell and Faraday, first of all, and then Boehm, that brought about a transformation. Einstein said it was the most important revelation since Newtonian physics. Faraday and Maxwell introduced the new conceptualization in the form of a field, and Maxwell wrote the formulas, which verified abstraction and reality.

Bohm took it a step further, and discovered what most physicists thought was impossible. The unearthing began during intensive meetings between Einstein and Bohm at Princeton University in 1947. In their ongoing collaborations, they discussed evidence for a deeper underlying reality, and identified a number of calculations and experiments that ran counter to traditional quantum theory. After his meetings with Einstein, Bohm was brimming with confidence in his pursuit, and continued his experimentation in deeper and unseen aspects of quantum theory. In 1952 did what many physicists thought was impossible. He proved that electrons are sensitive to gain access to

information about their environment, and are affected by information in the environment. In other words, he substantiated field theory at an elemental level of physics. He called electron sensitivity 'quantum potential', and described it as wave-like energy that connects electrons to their environment and the rest of the universe. In another situation, he defined it as "...a wave-like information field that provides a kind of guidance to the electron (Keepin (2011))." Because the electron is potentially connected to the universe, he called this nonlocal connectivity. This means quantum potential is a field in the present location, but also extends into distant and far distant spaces. so can be both local and/or universal. In comparison, the earlier Newtonian concept of reality was not at all about fields, and was primarily focused local phenomena.

I wanted to have an even better understanding what quantum potential meant in practical and simple terms, so I asked a physicist to explain. He said he would have to over-simplify, but would tell me about an experiment that had actually been done. The experiment was based on Bohm's 1952 finding and on Bell's subsequent theorem, extrapolated from Bohm's findings. In the experiment, an electron generator shot two electrons into a chamber. While in the chamber, the generator shot a charge at one of the electrons but not the other, in an attempt to change its course. Bell's theorem predicted that the second electron would also change course, which it did, in the same split second and in the same identical vector. So the second electron was "informed" by the first, or perhaps better said, there was information in the field provided by the first electron, that the second electron immediately enacted. When Einstein heard about the results, he humorously called the phenomena "spooky action at a distance." Extrapolating on quantum potential, it might be predicted that other electrons coming into the same space would have the same inclination to change course. So far findings are mixed, and all the variables that affect that phenomena have not yet been identified. In any case, literally hundreds of experiments were done to confirm Boehm's finding, and gradually over the course of the mid-century, with much resistance, physicists were forced to accept quantum potential as valid. Keepin, Will. (2011) Lifework of David Bohm - River of Truth. [http://www.vision.net.au/~apaterson/science/david\\_bohm.htm](http://www.vision.net.au/~apaterson/science/david_bohm.htm)

I add a description of quantum physics by Robert Harrison, health <http://www.getthehealthyagain.com/>. Quantum physicists looking into the nature of all that is, discovered that at the fundamental level, the universe is essentially energy. Energy that is interconnected in a vast quantum field so that everything is connected to everything. Something like being a part of some invisible web or grid. I think of it like the Internet, but more connected. You can directly access any energetic information if you have the intention and know what you are doing. According to quantum physics, we are essentially quantum energy. As such, there is a constant exchange of information within the quantum energy field that underlies physical matter. According to the physicists, all living things emit an energetic frequency or subtle vibration." Emerson comments that this energy can be tapped into by everyone, providing a palpable but subliminal field of knowing and communication. "In the body information is relayed in some fashion through energies on the quantum level. Experiments have proven that there is light energy communication between cells that does not involve nerve pathways. As we are part of the universe, our body and mind must operate at the quantum level, with information pulsing simultaneously through our brains and body. There must be a continuous interaction between the subatomic particles of our brain and body, and the quantum energy field.

According to these physicists, we are literally connected to everything in the universe, the Quantum Field.

To more fully understand how energetic we are, how at the most basic level that vitamin or herb you are taking is essentially energetic, you need to understand that when the nature of the universe is investigated using quantum physics, atoms and subatomic particles turn out not to be really solid. When quantum physicists look into the components that make up atoms, electrons, protons, etc., they find that they are not objects. Even though they may behave as particles, physicists have discovered that particles have no actual size or dimension. They have qualities of a particle and a wave. This is known as the complimentary principle. There are no exceptions to this wave-particle principle. It appears in all matter including light. Physicist David Bohm, in plasma experiments, at the Berkeley Radiation Laboratory, found that individual electrons act as part of an interconnected whole. The discovery led to what some call the principle of Non-Locality, which as part of the wave/particle duality, means that everything is connected. Matter and events interact with each other without regard to time, space or distance. Related to this is Bell's Theorem, a quantum physics law that says that once connected, objects affect one another forever no matter where they are. Thus a line of energy will always connect objects that have been connected in any way. Michael Talbot, in *The Holographic Universe*, describes matter as a "ripple...a pattern of excitation in the midst of an unimaginably vast ocean". That in fact, "the universe does not exist in and of itself, but is the stepchild of something far vaster and more ineffable." Quantum Physics by Robert Harrison, health consultant, <http://www.gethealthyagain.com/>

There were early "fathers" in field theory, both in the US and Europe (Sutherland, Jung, James, Lake) Most were only tangentially influenced by physics. Instead, their notions of fields emanated out of their philosophical and psychological perspectives, and their desire to deeply understand human perception and behavior. The first of these fathers was the renowned Carl Jung, who after long years of training and teaching, and four decades of treating patients, realized that some patients had a breadth and depth of knowledge that did not come from their personal lives, so he was forced to distinguish between a personal unconscious and a collective unconscious. To prove his point, he shared an in-depth case of a patient whose connections to myths and archetypes belied her personal history (In a chapter entitled "The Concept of the Collective Unconscious" (<https://www.cgjungpage.org/learn/articles/analytical-psychology/527-the-concept-of-the-collective-unconscious>)). Many other patients exhibited similar knowledge, and he concluded that there had to be a collective unconscious from which they connected to universal knowledge. I came to somewhat the same conclusion myself, after working with psychotherapy clients for twenty-five years. I had clients who exhibited knowledge not affiliated with their personal histories. For example, I treated a ten-year-old boy who drew detailed mandalas that he had never before seen or heard of, later verified by museum manuscripts and diagrams. I also treated a female artist who, in trying to understand her despair, drew detailed pictographs of native tribes she had never heard of or read about, depicting tribal movements to survive famines and plagues. Granted, these two may have been clairvoyant, but neither had ever shown signs of being so. In any case, Jung's collective unconscious was a kind of cosmic repository of universal, archetypes, that is, primordial images that reflect and shape

behavioral patterns in mankind (<https://www.cgjungpage.org/learn/articles/analytical-psychology/527-the-concept-of-the-collective-unconscious>)

For example, one common archetype is The Mother, a primordial image that guides our perceptions and feelings about mothers and motherhood. An archetype is not a passive force in life, but an active dynamic that shapes how we live life. For example, without a mother archetype, or a God archetype, cultures would be less prone to mothering, or to believing in God, and would lack an ideology and passion for religion and motherhood. In any case, I doubt Jung would describe himself as a field theorist, but his belief in the interconnectivity of the universe, and the archetype as an organizing principle, places him solidly amongst field theorists. The second early father of psychological field theory was William James, who postulated two interconnected fields: a field of consciousness that is personal and attached to the body, and another that is greater than the sum of all individuals. According to James, the latter field influenced humans in how they behaved and what they perceived. He contended that the field of consciousness was there whether anyone believed in it or not, that it surrounded everyone's body, and provided guidance. He said, "... [The field of consciousness] is nevertheless there, and helps both to guide our behavior and determine the next movement of our attention. It lies around us like the 'magnetic field', inside of which our centre of energy turns like a compass needle, as the present phase of consciousness alters into its successor." (James 1977 p. 233) in O'Neill.

Another pioneer in field theory was Frank Lake, although he too would not describe himself in that manner. (The following is from Sills (2004), but I also draw on my talks with Frank Lake directly). The topic is how we start to develop a self-sense, a sense of *being*, or not. In Lake's Dynamic Cycle he talked about being, and being needs—the kind of field of needs being responded to—the empathetic field of acknowledgement, recognition and unconditional acceptance of *being*. If those needs are met, that quality of being in relationship—that being starts to know itself in the relationship with Mother, that reflective relationship. Mother's reflection of her being—her love and her empathetic field, the little one starts to know its own being; it doesn't know just Mother's being. Mother is reflecting *being nature* to the little one. It also starts to experience well being. Well being needs, then, support the nature of being. So, being needs to be sustained and nurtured. Mother's provision of the physical needs—the womb environment, oxygen, food, the ability to get rid of waste, the sense of warmth, temperature, all of those needs are taken care of. The little one doesn't have to go out and get a job. Everything's taken care of. And in a holding environment that's where the little one can just rest in openness and *be*. So, when being and well being needs are experienced, the little one starts to know *it is*—and it feels good about being, and good about the relationship it is in. The initial stage Lake called, "Being-in-Relationship." The little one knows its own being in the relational field of the other. Its needs are met through that field. Lake called that Being-in-Relationship.

As the twentieth century progressed, American psychologists were increasingly curious whether the discoveries in physics might parallel to human behavior, and whether human behavior might operate according to principles discovered in gravity, electromagnetic fields, light, and electricity. Smuts (1926) was a pioneer in this process. He was cognizant about the theory of relativity and early

quantum physics, but also knew epistemology, so he combined the two into a social field theory. More importantly, he outlined the scientific grounds he used in building his theory, using biologic and electromagnetic fields to guide him. . As O'Neill, page 3, says, "Smuts places the concept of "field" within the history of science and brings an epistemological cohesiveness and integration to physics, biological and psychological field theory. In doing so Smuts demonstrates a very erudite understanding of the field theory of physics and psychological field theory." Wertheimer was another early pioneer in psychological field theory, whose work mirrored and confirmed Smut's.

### **Lewin the Acknowledged Pioneer**

In spite of a number of early pioneers in psychological field theory, among them Jung, James, Smuts, Wertheimer, and others, Lewin emerged as the originator and leader in the field. He was so influential that he holds a significant place in the annals of psychology. As human resource expert Swanson and Holton describe it, that besides Freud, Lewin was the most important figure in twentieth century psychology. They said, (p. 79) "These [men] remain two of the most influential thinkers in psychology. Lewin developed field theory out of the field concept in physics -- the study of electromagnetic fields -- which eventually led to Einstein's theory of relativity...Lewin...developed field theory as a way to represent psychological reality...Freud...gave us a way to help us understand the importance of individual history, and then there was Lewin, who helped us understand the group." In the US, Lewin is considered the father of social psychology and the originator of psychological field theory. He was able to imbibe the learnings and teachings of those who preceded him, to articulate field theory in a way that was "user friendly" to government and cultural leaders, and to use field theory to make important societal and cultural changes.

Lewin's psychology was instrumental in clarifying that groups act according to a force field called "the life space." A key concept in Lewin's field theory was that behavior depends entirely on the psychological field that exists at the time of the behavior. Past, present, and future are all enfolded with the field, and the future is defined in terms of a person's perceptions, anticipations, and hopes about prospective life. Another key concept in Lewin's field theory has to do with the power of knowledge and intentionality in the field. Coexisting facts make up the dynamic field at any given time, which means that the state of any part of the field depends on every other part. Both knowledge and intentionality have the power to influence the psychological state of the individual, and vice versa, and this is perhaps the pinnacle of his theory. This notion was popularized in the movie Star Wars, and exhibits Lewin's notion of how fields work. Before Luke Skywalker left on his missions, Yoda would always say, "May the Force be with you." The Force was a highly powerful and universal force field of intelligence, stronger in some regions, with dark and light sides, that shaped both good and evil. But the influence was not one way. Luke could influence the force by means of his "spiritual" practices, which in turn helped the force to guide him. It was a two way street, parallel to the Christian concept that God helps those who help themselves. The Force held the powers of creation and destruction, illuminating just how powerful fields might be.

## **Animal Experimentation: Intelligence and Communication in the Field**

Rupert Sheldrake is a neophysicist, field theorist, researcher, British social scientist, and an avid observer of animal behavior. He is no small figure on the world scientific scene. As Deepak Chopra says on the cover of Sheldrake's most recent book, *Morphic Resonance*, "Rupert Sheldrake's contributions will be recognized one day on the same level as those of Newton and Darwin." He is also a courageous man, facing up against scrutiny and criticism from the European scientific community who judged his ideas and scientific acumen. As the late American Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy, once said, "Moral Courage" is the willingness to incur the backlash of your own peer group for the sake of the truth as you see it. Dr. Rupert Sheldrake has demonstrated moral courage for decades, standing up under the poorly substantiated ridicule of the scientific community for his daring theories of Formative Causation, Morphogenetic Fields, and Morphic Resonance.

From decades of examining animal behavior, Sheldrake realized that conventional scientific theories could not explain certain phenomena about animal behavior. He calls this morphic resonance, and in 2009, republished his theory and research in a book of the same title. From his research studies, he found clear evidence of a field in which the forms and behaviors of the past shape living organisms in the present. This means, for example, that when animals learn something, it creates an energy field which other animals can profit from. For example, when laboratory rats have learned a particular maze pattern, rats elsewhere seem to learn it more easily on their first try. An unanswered question is whether all fields are localized and universally available, or just some, and even more so, what laws govern the process. Sheldrake says that fields cannot be directly affirmed according to the traditional scientific method, but can be inferred by other methodologies he describes. He says that each kind of system in nature - from crystals to birds to humans to societies - is shaped by a unique "morphic field" containing a collective or pooled memory.

I'd like to share a simple but elegant study Sheldrake conducted, which I first heard in a London lecture of his in the late 1970s. The study impressed me so much, I have remembered it to this day, and often mention it in my spirit and soul wounding classes. However, it's been a long time, so a few of the details may be slightly off, but not substantively in error. For example, I recall the study involved pigeons, but it could have involved another species of bird, and the study involved a mileage figure which I recall as one mile, but it could have been more or less miles. In any case, Sheldrake and his research team wondered what would happen if they moved a well-established habitat (house) in which pigeons roosted and lived. They did this when the pigeons were far away. They wondered how long it would take for the birds to find their new home, if ever. According to Sheldrake's morphic field theory, pigeons should have no trouble finding the new location because when the house was moved, it was mapped and logged into the field. Sure enough, when the birds returned from the distant journey, many of the birds flew directly to the new location without hesitation, while others needed trial and error to find the new location, and a minority of others flew directly to the old site, but when they discovered their house was not there, flew directly to the new location as if it were on a map. All three types of behaviors support the presence of an intelligent field of some kind. Sheldrake has conducted hundreds of similar experiments with animals, and has a sound scientific basis for his claims.

## Plant Experimentation: Intelligence and Communication in the Field

Sheldrake contends that every living system in nature has a morphic field, and that reminded me of research on plant consciousness I had read and heard about in the 1970s. I recall that almost forty year ago, Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird published a book entitled *The Secret Life of Plants*. In this remarkable book, scientific research showed that plants have emotions, communicate with each other by the wavelengths of fragrance and color, and communicate with humans by means of mysterious but instantaneous extrasensory perception. I recall a particular study that Tompkins shared in a San Francisco lecture in the 1970s, which I attended. At the time I didn't know if the study was published anywhere, so I took notes. The purpose of the study was to demonstrate that plant consciousness and memory are passed on generationally. In this study, researchers grew a "family" of coleus plants. They divided the family in half, and separated them into distant rooms. Then they dressed a man in a red and gray-checked shirt with long sleeves, and had him visit each family of plants. They hooked plants up to a device similar to the one that measures galvanic skin response in humans. But since plants have no skin in the human sense, the response in plants was changed to Psycho-Galvanic Response, or PGR. Galvanic skin response is an accepted indicator of distress in humans.

Vogel, a plant consciousness researcher cited in Tompkins and Bird's book, says that the PGR exists not only in plants, but also in all living things, and that it expresses itself in a series of pulses that can pass through many materials. He says, (p. 30 in Tompkins), "The directive action of the mind focuses this energy and, on command, releases the force in a series of pulses which can pass through glass, metals, and other materials." Vogel contends that this energy is similar to what Carl Jung referred to as "psychic energy", accounting for the ability of humans to communicate nonverbally and nonlocally. Vogel also found that psychic energy is lower when human are not in altered states of consciousness, like hypnosis or deep relaxation, and that that altered states are helpful in facilitating psychic energy and subtle communication between plants and humans. In addition, Vogel speculated that this is the reason why some researchers were unable to duplicate his findings; they were not in altered states! In any case, the PGR was continually measured in both families of plants. The checker-shirted man made designed visits to each family. In one he was warm and friendly, and in the other he was violent, trashing and killing many of the plants. As you would expect, plants in the first group registered calm and joy, while plants in the violent group registered fear. All plants were then allowed to reseed themselves, but remained in separate families and spaces. The researchers wondered whether the two families would have memories of their last encounter with the checkered-shirted man. Sure enough, when he visited the family where he had previously been violent, the plants registered fear. When he visited the family that he had previously been friendly with, there was some apprehension but also something akin to joy. The study affirmed plant intelligence, perception, and memory. The apprehension in the befriended family may have been due to a psychological field that transmitted information about the previous massacre, but this was not mentioned or discussed by the researchers.

Vogel did another series of one and one experiments with plants while he was centered and relaxed,

using Yoga breathing to help. These experiments deepened and confirmed his earlier findings, and I will share one such experiment. The main purpose of his experiments was to establish that humans and plants communicate with one another, and to clarify the conditions necessary for that to occur. First, Vogel found that plants anticipated the act of having their leaves torn, reacted with even greater distress to the threat of being burned or uprooted, and even more so if they were actually torn, burned, or otherwise brutalized. He was convinced he was witnessing the power of psychic energy. He found he needed to refine the testing station because there were still too many distracters that created false responses on the PGR. So he eliminated distracters such as random electromagnetic frequencies, the hum of nearby equipment, and external noise of any kind. He was finally able to get clear, long term baselines on the chart that were flat, without oscillations. At this point, he entered the next phase of his experimentation, trying to "establish the exact moment when a philodendron entered into recordable communication with a human being. (P.21)" With a baseline flat, Vogel stood in front of his Philodendron and began pouring loving and affectionate energy toward the plant, much like he would to a friend. Each time he did this, a series of ascending oscillations appeared on the PGR chart. At the same time, Vogel could sense a discrete energy coming from the plant, that he thought to be psychic energy. Then Vogel wired two plants to the same PGR machine and snipped a leaf from the first plant. The second plant responded to the hurt being inflicted on its neighbor, but only when the second plant was paid attention to. Otherwise it had no response! These and other experiments led Vogel to conclude that plant and humans are in deep communication with one another, and discovered some of the conditions required for this to reliably occur. He concluded, "It is fact: man can and does communicate with plant life. Plants are living objects; sensitive, rooted in space...they are extremely sensitive instruments for measuring man's emotions. They radiate energy forces that are beneficial to man. They feed into one's own force field, which in turn feeds back energy to the plant. (p. 23-24)." He also found that hostility and negativity reduce or eliminate the ability of plants and humans to communicate, and realized this was a likely reason others were sometimes unable to replicate his results. They were too tense, not relaxed, and therefore not close to being in an altered state of consciousness. .

### **Human Experimentation: Intelligence and Communication in the Field**

According to most embryologists, the body is fully formed by the end of the first trimester, in the sense that all the parts are present, and only need to mature. In the second trimester, my research shows that emotional development subsides while spiritual development thrives (or do not do so because of trauma or shock). It is a time of relative quiescence, and a time for the Soul to rest before the advent of ego (in T3). Quiescence can be interrupted by exciting or troubling times, by emotionality on the part of parents, and by traumas and shocks. The embodied spirit now has a temple, i.e. the body, in which it can roam freely and at will. It is a time for the psyche to reconnect to the Spirit world from whence it came, and to manifest in the form of reflection, imagery, daydreaming, fantasy, visions, clairvoyance, meditative states, and other spiritual states.

According to my research and findings, the developmental agenda of the second trimester is psychic development, i.e. development of the human spirit. The spirit and soul are separate but connected, so



the second trimester is very important for the connection to develop and mature. So for the first time, the pre-nate comes to terms with his psyche, with his unfettered imagination, his creativity, his intuitiveness, his awareness of the outside and inside world, his shared feelings with the culture and society, and most of all, his spiritual experiences. The range of spiritual experiences is broader than can be covered here, and there are numerous spiritual texts that cover this mammoth territory. Suffice it to say that the pre-nate meets the Holy Spirit, the Christ Child, the holy mother and father, and other spiritual beings. The pre-nate begins to have spiritual experiences, and to feel the flow of the Holy Spirit in the body, the flow of kundalini, the ebb and flow of chi. The body energies propel the pre-nate toward spiritual experience. All of the spiritual development in the second trimester is dependent on quiescence, stillness, and solitude. Just as in life, when the mind and body recede during meditation, the spiritual process of Discovery and transformation begin.

If one studies human consciousness, human access to spiritual experiences and openness to transformational experiences, to conversion, one finds that mind and body are vital aspects in the process. In particular, as mind and body recede into the background, experiences of the God within, the inner Self, and the higher Self (in eastern psychology) become more available. In other words, for a human to experience Spirit within, the gradual recession of mind and body are considered essential. The implications of this for the second trimester are profound. It means that parents must hold the second trimester with great care and reverence, attempting to provide as much peacefulness as they can in their lives. When this is not done, and even more dramatically when traumas or shocks occur, the spiritual process is inundated and occluded by traumas and shocks. The second trimester is also complicated by traumas and shocks that precede it, by wounding that occurred in the first trimester. These memory traces from first trimester shock also implode onto the second trimester. When the fetus becomes quiet, the memories emerge, obstructing and/or distorting the spiritual process. An example of this occurred to a second trimester pre-nate. His sibling sister (who was three years old when he was a second trimester pre-nate) became very ill, throwing the parents into fear and turmoil, and leading them to be distressed and distracted for a prolonged period of the second trimester. This event interrupted his natural process of connection to the divine, and brought in associations with abandonment and fear. He felt abandoned by his parents, and deeply worried about his sister, with whom he was feeling a psychic connection. Inevitably, the stress of his parents and his own worry colored his own spiritual experiences of the second trimester. When he was adult, he regressed to the second trimester, and reported the following experience. "I kept seeing the crescent moon, and it held such a feeling of peacefulness in my heart. So beautiful it was I almost choked with delight. But soon an ominous cloud appeared, and then another, and pretty soon there was not anything but black clouds with furrowed brows, gaping red eyes, and menacing mouths. Really terrifying, so much so that I would wake up, and realize that I was inside my mother and my sister could die." This experience happened to him over and over again during the second trimester, and reflected the crisis that his sister was in. However, after he worked with his actual wounding over her illness, he began to recollect the moon as a beautiful experience and began to have very deep spiritual experiences to do with moon shadows and earth terrain. He was an artist, and his moonscapes became renowned.

## Empathic Holding Fields

The culmination of Lake's collaboration with other prominent leaders in the field, especially Winnicott and Bowlby, was the discerning of empathic holding fields, and the intent to use these fields to access and heal trauma. In particular, Lake claimed that there were basic human needs that could only be met in an empathic holding field, and that being-ness and well-being are two good examples of needs that all humans have. So when mothers are connected to their own being-ness, or when nurses or doctors are, then they are providing a basic need that mothers and babies have during childbirth. But what happens when an empathic holding field occurs is that all participants are connected to their own field of beings, and basic needs are transmitted within this field. So a mother or a birth attendant, who is sensitive to this fact, will access other basic needs of mothers, and be more able to help them, which in turn can avoid complications. A nurse recently told me that she meditated before, during, and after her shift on the obstetric ward, and that she had become so much more sensitive and knowing what mothers really need. For example, a mother's labor was stalling for no apparent reason. The nurse was still connected to the energy from her meditation, and let her intuition or sense what might be going on. She detected anxiety and confusion. She also sensed it had to do with a family member. So she walked over and said, "Nancy, you seem a bit agitated or nervous, is something on your mind?" She sat at eye level and focused her gaze softly on Nancy's face. Nancy said she was worried about her husband, that she wanted him at the birth but he had not called her for five hours, she was not going to have a baby without him there! So an empathic field can uncover a lot of material that makes births safer and more efficient. .

For mothers, an empathic holding field is one that is attuned to the state of the unborn or newly born baby. For medical personnel, it's attunement to the birthing mother and baby. An empathic holding field is a field of presence that is attuned, resonant and responsive to the inner states and needs of another person. The Tibetans say that consciousness is a field experience involving others, and that "all consciousness co-arises and inter-be's." (Sills, 2004, p. 21). So once we are connected to our consciousness, or being-ness, we are connected with a vast field that is not local, and involves many people that are significant to us. Since there is knowledge in the field, we can behave and function more intelligently while meeting others and our own real needs. There is at least one historical example of physicians who used an empathic field to diagnose and treat their clients, and were successful. Over three thousand years ago, Egyptian priests approached their patients with a powerful diagnostic tool: empathy. They would speak with their patients with an open heart, willing to connect and to experience the symptoms in their own bodies as an aid in diagnosing, and also as a way to discover appropriate remedies (Stoff and Pellegrino, 1992).

True listening is another way of bringing stillness into the relationship. When you truly listen to someone, the dimension of stillness arises and becomes an essential part of the relationship. But true listening is a rare skill. Usually, the greater part of a person's attention is taken up by their thinking. At best, they may be evaluating your words or preparing the next thing to say. Or they may not be listening at all, lost in their own thoughts. True listening goes far beyond auditory perception. It is the arising of alert attention, a space of presence in which the words are being received. The words now become secondary. They may be meaningful or they may not make sense. Far more important

than what you are listening to is the act of listening itself, the space of conscious presence that arises as you listen. That space is a unifying field of awareness in which you meet the other person without the separate barriers created by conceptual thinking. And now the other person is no longer “other.” In that space, you are joined together as one awareness, one consciousness (Tolle, from Stillness Speaks).

## **Practical Applications**

How does one apply field holding to trauma treatment? Basically, practitioners hold fields for trauma clients, and the ensuing awareness and compassion combine to heal traumas. As practitioners become more skilled, they are able to hold the fields of mothers and babies, or mothers, fathers, and babies, and discern the traumas that are communicated to unborn or birthed babies, and under what conditions. But the work expands to even broader horizons. For example, it's one thing to believe that a mother's feelings and experiences can permeate to her baby, or that a father's can permeate through the mother to the baby, as has been documented many times in my own work and the work of other field-holders. But under certain conditions, the unresolved traumas of medical personnel transverse the field and end up in their patients. There is a significant amount of clinical observations, summarized in my upcoming book, the show field permeations from medical personnel, and the conditions under which they permeate.

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