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What Happened Here: Explorations into Brain/Mind Problems and Modern Medicine

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1. Abstract

This article explores a childhood incident to answer the question: how do children (or adults) survive difficult situations with no education, training, skills, or experience to draw from? Where does the intelligence come from to find a solution and solve problems, sometimes life or death problems, if there is no background to draw on here? The concept of non-local consciousness is introduced as a viable solution. And the article goes on to ask whether non-local consciousness can also be used in the treatment of difficult, complicated, complex medical problems. An unusual but very powerful resource to draw from. The author suggests that the concept of non-local consciousness has tremendous potential to improve the healing of difficult medical issues. And finally, the author promises to write more as he continues to research this promising issue.

2. Introduction

As an introduction to who I am and how I came to write this article, I am a medical researcher working to understand the pathways that can lead us to healing brain/mind damage. This is not an easy task. Most of my patients are victims of head injuries and other damage to the brain, and victims of severe trauma. The title of my clinical research project is "Listening to the Brain/Recovering the Brain/Mind," while my clinical practice is "Treatment and Tools for Trauma" located in Southern California.

My training is in Neuro-Psychoanalysis, and this is the perspective/lens I use in my clinical work [1]. Over the past decade I have been working to recognize, understand, and treat trauma to the brain/mind. In 2023 I published "The Complex Architecture and Healing of Traumatic Brain Injuries" with Cambridge Scholars Published in the UK. And over the past 3-years I have published numerous articles addressing the physical, and psychological damage that is the consequence of trauma to the brain/mind. All of which has led me to my attempt here to understand the following incident from my childhood and relate it to the practice of modern medicine.

3. What Happened?

The following incident occurred when I was somewhere between 6 and 8-years old, living in St. Paul, Minnesota. My mother had joined 4 of her high school friends and their children, and we were all on a lunchtime picnic in Highland Park. It was summer vacation from school, and moms and their children were enjoying a fun filled outing at the park. I remember the park as lots of open space, a big space surrounded by the woods (as we referred to it).

Everything was moving along smoothly until my brother Greg and our 2 friends Davy and Jeff (same ages as Greg and I) wandered over to the edge of the woods. Just curious elementary age kids exploring the world. Suddenly, out of nowhere, two older boys descended on us (maybe junior high age?) and ordered us to pull our pants down. We were about 100 yards away from the picnic tables where our mothers were.

Needless to say, none of the 4 of us were in any way prepared for this intrusion into our quiet lives. Looking back, I think we were all so unprepared that none of us even screamed out

anything; we just stood there paralyzed while the older boys were zooming in on us like prey. “You kids, pull your pants down now!” Greg, Davy, and Jeff all started to cry sensing the confusing danger we were in (remember fight, flight, freeze and now fawning as a trauma response). For some reason, I wasn’t crying and the older boy walked directly over to me and said: “Okay, brave one, you can pull your pants down first!” I remember noticing that somehow these 2 boys came from some place that wasn’t good. They were “ruffians” in our language back then.

As the scary seconds ticked by, I don’t remember thinking much about how we were going to get out of this mess. I had no plan at all, about anything. But I suddenly just took off down the steep hill we were on the edge of. Looking back on this incident, I cannot think of any preparation the 4 of us would have had for being pounced on by 2 predators.

Halfway down the hill, with the older boy in hot pursuit, and with no conscious thought that I can remember (and I have thought about this many times over the years), I suddenly stopped, reversed direction and headed back up the steep hill. The older boy (why was he doing this??), attempted to put on the brakes but instead slipped, fell, and began rolling down the steep hill. Taking advantage of my “element of surprise” (I’m in elementary school, what do I know), I raced back up the steep hill. Once at the top of the hill, I found that my brother and our 2 friends had taken my cue and run off as well. My brother Greg, in tears, had already taken off for our mom and the picnic tables. As he told me later, “I never looked back, I just bolted out of there!” It is difficult to know exactly what these two boys were thinking and feeling, but the younger boy appeared to have given up the chase after I climbed back up the hill. He looked at me, but didn’t make a move toward me, while I yelled out to Davy, and Jeff: “Let’s go get our moms!” And the 3 of us took off like “bolts of lightning” heading back to the picnic tables.

By the time we reached our picnic area, our mothers were already headed in our direction armed with the baseball bats we had brought to the picnic. We told our mothers what had happened, backing up what my brother had already told them, and the moms decided together that we had to leave the area immediately. Which we did. Sadly, there was no further discussion about the incident, so it was never processed (that I can remember, although my brother Greg remembers some discussion at home). I don’t know if our mothers ever reported the incident to the police. It just drifted away into our memories, conscious and unconscious. I am aware that I thought about the incident from time to time as I was growing up (and so did my brother). At the same time, it was never something I took the time to process, even in my own analysis as an adult. Until now.....

4. Why Did This Happen

I believe there are many facets to this incident, including whether these two boys were victims of sexual abuse themselves (which I suspect). But what I would like to concentrate on here is: where did the wisdom come from that “allowed” me to run and then put on the brakes halfway down the steep slope essentially “ditching” this predator. What if he had gotten ahold of me? What could have happened then? Afterall, he did go after me when I took off down the steep slope. My question now is: Where did the “intelligence” come from that allowed me to get away from these predators? I was just a young elementary school age kid living a calm, peaceful life. I had no preparation for this kind

of traumatic situation, nor, again, was it ever processed very fully by my family.

Moving a step further, is this the kind of “intelligence” we need to help our patients find as they come to grips with healing difficult and complicated medical situations. Are the answers to critical medical situations really all around us; but we just don’t know how to connect with them? Do we need to better understand how to tap into the kind of intelligence that the universe is offering us here. And how can we prove any of this?

5. The Role of Consciousness

For me, this incident raises more questions than there are answers. But at the same time, I believe this incident is worthy of further exploration. I note that I have recently written several articles, and presented at 2 medical conferences, exploring the conceptualization issue [2].

The articles and the presentations address my understanding/discovery that our “stream of consciousness” (from William James 1890 at Harvard University) contains 2 levels. One that we are aware of, and another, deeper level, always present but mostly unconscious to us. Given my experiences with my patients, I believe this is true. There is a deeper level to our stream of consciousness containing that which must be repressed in order for us to function. This level, again constantly streaming, contains that which is traumatic, overwhelming, stressful, confusing, frustrating, and anything else we don’t feel prepared to deal with. I am also considering that this is a major cause of psychosis, when this material, actively present but unconscious, breaks through into our awareness. It can be absolutely crazy making to have “this kind of material” flood the mind.

But now, reaching back into my childhood memories, and with a different lens than just having had a very scary experience, is there yet another important dimension to the human brain/mind that modern medicine needs to consider and value in the process of healing our patients? Possibly an intelligence that is non-local, not located in the brain/mind, but is available from the Universe around us? And somehow, I was able to tap into this information?

As I was finishing my doctorate in 2001, I had approached IONS (Institute of Noetic Sciences) for a job, but they weren’t hiring new people at the time and I moved on. My doctoral dissertation, by the way, was written on the subject of “flow experiences” in psychoanalytic treatment. And now, 25-years later, I am still interested in understanding how our brain/minds work. Which is really the question I am asking in this article, how does our brain/mind process information and keep us alive, especially during circumstances we have never encountered before? I believe that an important aspect of science, as we search for answers to these kinds of questions, is tapping into our imagination while we search for answers.

As “luck” would have it I just finished Dan Brown’s new Novel “The Secret of All Secrets,” which explores non-local consciousness as a major part of the story set in Prague, Czechoslovakia. A major aspect of this excellent novel explores the question of whether or not human consciousness is really non-local. This is the focus of the work at IONS, and I am asking the question here if non-local consciousness applies to my childhood incident. And taking this a step further, can non-local consciousness be involved in the healing of brain/mind injuries?

6. Consciousness as an Explanation

Non-local consciousness is the hypothesis that the human mind is not strictly confined to the physical brain. The suggestion here is that consciousness acts as a fundamental, pervasive field surrounding us, allowing us an awareness and interconnection that transcends our ordinary limitations of space and time. In this paradigm, the brain is a receiver rather than the generator of our thoughts. Here the brain acts more like a receiver or translator, localizing a broader universal consciousness into our day-to-day experiences. Under this paradigm, consciousness is independent from matter, and consciousness becomes the fundamental building block of reality, while matter becomes the derivative. This is a huge departure from what most of us consider to be our reality. Our reality is generated from our brain/mind, and this is the perspective and expectation that modern culture is based on. But is this totally accurate?

In doing my research for this article I came across a Journal Article entitled: “What if Consciousness is not an Emergent Property of the Brain,” from The Institute of Noetic Sciences in Petaluma, California [3]. In this excellent article I came across an explanation for what happened to me that day in Highland Park.

Here there is a section entitled “Phenomenon Suggested by a Model of Non-Local Consciousness.” Phenomenon #4 is “Apparent Cognitive Abilities Beyond the Experience/Learning/Skills of the person exhibiting them.” The explanation for Phenomenon #4 is as follows: “If conscious were non-local, then people might be able to gain cognitive skills without previous experience or training in these skills.” And isn’t this what happened on the summer day back in Highland Park. Is this an accurate explanation? It certainly could be, but is it the right explanation?

7. Conclusion

My interest here is twofold. One, the incident itself. Why did it happen this way, and where did the intelligence come from that “allowed an escape?” Two, the possible value to the practice of medicine that would include non-local perspectives, especially with complex and complicated cases. Stephen King in his excellent book “On Writing” [4] suggests that writing helps us to think. I agree, and this article is an example of “writing to think.” I understand that it is difficult to prove that non-local consciousness helped me that day.

But on the other hand, something was there that I was able to “tap into,” allowing me to escape danger. And this perspective gets complicated because what about people who don’t escape danger and die? Where was non-local consciousness for them? At the same time, I believe many persons would see my “escape” as the hand of God intervening for me. But again, why is God there for some persons in their time of crisis and not for others?

Rather than attempting to put forth answers here (which I don’t have yet), I can make a commitment to understanding more about the impact of non-local consciousness in the practice of medicine and writing about this. I am specifically interested in how the perspective of non-local consciousness can help/assist patients with “heavy” brain trauma recover

This would include TBI patients, strokes, seizures, brain

infections, autism, major mental illness, dementia and PTSD. One direction I can suggest (and pursue) is searching for answers within the realm of “The Self.” My experiences working with patients who have sustained physical and psychological trauma to the brain/mind, is that addressing the person’s Sense of Self is crucial for their recovery. And what might we find if we expand the patient’s Sense of Self to include non-local consciousness. In a sense, allowing the Universe to be a part of the healing process. What can we expect?

Stay tuned, I will be writing more as I work to understand the role that non-local consciousness can play in the healing process and expand our concept (our conceptualization) of modern medicine.

8. Author’s Note

To begin with, I struggled with the title of this article. Should it be: “what happened here,” or “why it happened?” After considering the “what” and the “why”, I realized that I was working to understand both the “what” and the “why” of what happened to 4 young boys as they began exploring the nearby woods during a family picnic. At the same time, I am working to understand how this incident can help inform the practice of modern medicine.

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