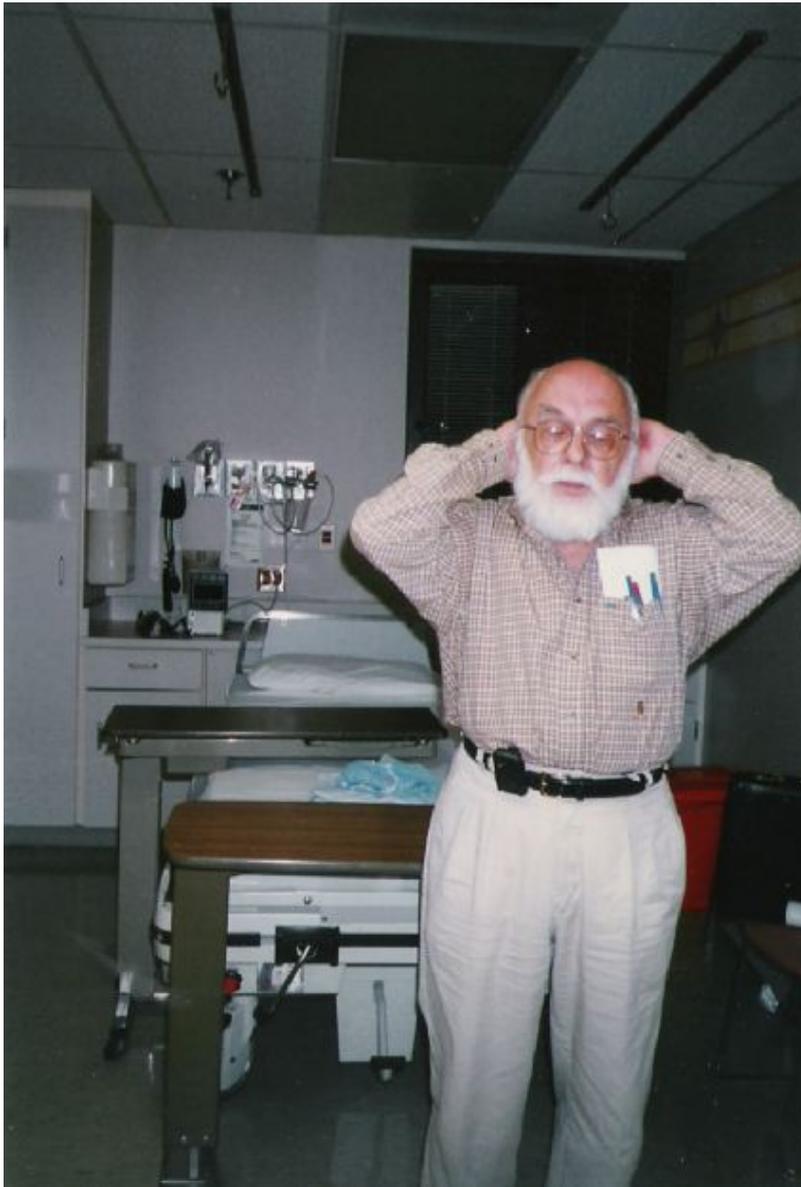


JREF and PhACT Issue Challenge to "Therapeutic Touch" Practitioners

Written by D.J. Grothe
Friday, 15 March 2013 12:48

The James Randi Educational Foundation (JREF) in association with the Philadelphia Association for Critical Thinking (PhACT) formally issues its \$1 Million Challenge to any Therapeutic Touch Practitioner (TTP) who can detect the Human Energy Field (HEF). The test will be held April 20, 2013 in Philadelphia at the Franklin Institute, one of America's leading hands-on science centers.



Randi at the Therapeutic Touch challenge in 1997.

A success in this simple, direct, test could provide evidence for and would justify the continued existence and promotion of both Therapeutic Touch (TT) and the Energy Field Disturbance

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Nursing Diagnosis (EFD).

The existence of the Human Energy Field (HEF) is the entire basis of the "energy based therapy" known as Therapeutic Touch (TT). TT was created, and has been promoted as science, by the Nursing profession since the 1970's, which has claimed it is supported by Quantum Mechanics and research published by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM).

Without actually touching the patient, Therapeutic Touch Practitioners (mostly nurses) claim

1. that they can detect the HEF
2. that they can detect irregularities in the HEF
3. are able to correct them by manipulating the field

JREF and PhACT are only concerned for purposes of this Million Dollar Challenge with claim number one. Therapeutic Touch Practitioners claim that they can feel the Human Energy Field 4 to 8 inches from the surface of the human body. Therapeutic Touch appears in Nursing textbooks as a treatment and is taught in Nursing programs. Therapeutic Touch courses are taught and are eligible for Continuing Education Credits which are necessary for advanced certifications and nursing licensure. The practice is supported by major nursing organizations, including the American Nurses Association. The American Nurses Association's Code for Nurses is a nonnegotiable obligation to uphold and adhere to the code of ethics, the standard by which ethical conduct is guided and evaluated by the profession.

The "American Nurses Association Code for Nurses with Interpretive Statements" includes the following statement:

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#10. The nurse participates in the profession's effort to protect the public from misinformation and misrepresentation and to maintain the integrity of nursing.

In regards to giving informed prior consent, the registered nurse performing Therapeutic Touch is responsible for assuring that patients, their families and/or legal guardians are educated and given adequate and accurate information about the treatment. As part of the TT diagnostic portion of the procedure, nurses claim to be able to feel the Human Energy Field (HEF). There is no evidence that HEF fields exist other than TT practitioners' (TTP) claims that they can feel them. TTPs routinely use this claim to gain the confidence of the patient. If TTPs cannot feel the HEF, then they are misinforming the public, misrepresenting themselves and their abilities, and damaging the integrity of nursing.



The Therapeutic Touch challenge.

NANDA International, formerly the North American Nursing Diagnosis Association, is an organization formed in 1982 and it develops and defines Nursing Diagnoses for the entire profession. In their Mission Statement, NANDA states that they "are committed to improving the quality of nursing care and improvement of patient safety through evidence-based practice."

In the NANDA guidelines, under the listing "Energy Field Disturbance," the section "Definition" shows that the diagnosis is totally dependent on Therapeutic Touch and the claim that TT

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practitioners can feel a Human Energy Field. The "Defining Characteristics" section mentions the perception of changes in patterns of the energy flow. Terms used include "warmth," "coolness," "spike," "hole," "bulge," "tingling," "flowing," and "dense."

This is not the first time that James Randi and PhACT have challenged the alternative medicine practice known as Therapeutic Touch. In 1997, the organizations [jointly issued a challenge](#) to over 40,000 Therapeutic Touch Practitioners for a prize of \$742,000 if it could just be proven that the Human Energy Field could be detected. Only one Therapeutic Touch Practitioner was confident enough in her powers to step forward to be tested. She failed the challenge.

JREF and PhACT propose a simple, yes-or-no, scientific test to determine whether any person, Therapeutic Touch Practitioner or not, can detect the claimed Human Energy Field, thus providing evidence for and justifying the continued existence and promotion of the Energy Field Disturbance Nursing Diagnosis. JREF's \$1 Million Prize will be awarded to anyone who applies for and wins [JREF's Million Dollar Challenge](#) .