

## PING kevin.

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**From:** andy (news4\_at\_earthsong.free-online.co.uk)

**Date:** 08/19/04

Date: Thu, 19 Aug 2004 16:18:07 +0100

It would be good if you would reply to this one, as it's one of the posts where I feel like I'm getting more to the point of the sort of thing I'm trying to say.

On Wed, 18 Aug 2004 13:18:59 +0100, andy wrote:

- > *On Tue, 17 Aug 2004 06:46:01 +0000, Kevin Aylward wrote:*
- >
- >> *I don't accept it as I see no credible scientific evidence that it*
- >> *actually works. Like, controlled independent double-blind experiments*
- >> *using 10000's of people, by several independent qualified research*
- >> *groups.*
- >
- > *How would you do a double-blind trial on a therapy like shiatsu?*
- >
- > *Double-blind means neither the doctor nor the patient know whether the*
- > *treatment being given is the correct one or a placebo. But shiatsu is a*
- > *hands-on therapy - like a form of massage but based on the principles of*
- > *chinese medicine. And to do it properly needs a long period of training*
- > *(at least 3 years) where the doctor learns how to detect imbalances in chi*
- > *using methods like feeling muscle tone in various parts of the body*
- > *(according to the chinese understanding there's more to it than that, but*
- > *I'll stick at that for the purpose of argument), looking at skin colour,*
- > *tone of voice etc. The treatment consists of pressure point massage along*
- > *the meridians, stretching limbs in particular ways, and similar things.*
- >
- > *There's no way that you could do this properly without knowing whether or*
- > *not you were doing it properly, if you see what I mean - it wouldn't be*
- > *enough to have an untrained person read a chart and do the massages*
- > *because they might not do it in the right way, and the right treatment to*
- > *apply would vary session by session anyhow.*
- >
- > *This is quite different to a drug trial, where nurses can be given drugs*
- > *and apparently identical placebos in unmarked containers, and then it's*
- > *just a question of the patient swallowing one or the other.*
- >
- > *The best you could do for something like this would be either a*
- > *single-blind trial where the practitioner deliberately applies an*

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- > *irrelevant treatment to some of the patients, or a non-blind trial where*
- > *you compare with some other kind of treatment like a normal massage.*
- > *But if it was done like this, then people might reject the results*
- > *just because it's not double-blind.*
- >
- > *The point being that it's easy to say 'I won't believe it until I've seen*
- > *a double-blind trial', without really thinking about what this would mean*
- > *for a treatment like shiatsu. Which is an example of the point I'm arguing*
- > *– judging something like that by the standards of scientific medicine, and*
- > *expecting to be able to apply the same sort of tests that are used there*
- > *isn't necessarily going to be the best way to find out whether it really*
- > *works or not. It's not a case of special pleading – saying it's not fair*
- > *to apply those tests because they are too harsh or something, it's because*
- > *at least in this example, they are simply not appropriate to the situation.*

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