

Summary

„Psychosoziale Einflussfaktoren auf biologische Systeme – Die Medizinethik und das Placebophänomen“

by Sebastian Gasde

The effectiveness of a medical or therapeutic intervention is commonly measured by the differentiation of one specific and several unspecific levels of the examined intervention. The unspecific effects are typically summarized by the term placebo effect. This scientific approach relies on control groups, blinding and randomization and was founded in the late 19th and the early 20th century.

This essay analyzes the consequences and inherent epistemological obstacles of this approach for medical and therapeutic science and practice from an ethical point of view. The placebo-phenomenon will be deconstructed from social-historical and philosophical perspectives, revealing weaknesses of medical theory, practice and ethics.

Finally, hidden resources and chances of the placebo effect will be enlightened, which could establish a sustainable model of medicine as a highly subjective, interactive role play. This envisioned role play consists of numerous micro- and macro-levels, which need to be considered with equal importance, instead of declaring one level as the only therapeutically useful level.