

# About Harald Walach

## Description

I am currently a [Professorial Research Fellow at the Next Society Institute](#) with Kazimieras Simonavicius University in Vilnius, Lithuania. Until June 2021, I was a professor at the Medical University of Poznan and a visiting professor at Witten/Herdecke University. I am also the founder and director of the [Change Health Science Institute](#). Furthermore, I work as a freelance consultant, researcher, author and coach. Until 2016, I was a professor of research methodology at the European University Viadrina.

I have a 30-year career in evaluating complementary medicine practices, have published more than 205 peer-reviewed papers in scientific journals, written 113 chapters for books, written 16 book myself, and edited 16. According to Ioannidis citation metrics (Ioannidis, J. P. A., Baas, J., Klavans, R., & Boyack, K. W. (2019). A standardized citation metrics author database annotated for scientific field. PLoS Biology, 17(8), e3000384. doi:10.1371/journal.pbio.3000384), I am ranked approximately 31,000th out of the 100,000 most cited scientists worldwide, placing me in the 5 per thousand most cited scientists.

My special interest is the question of what role consciousness plays in the field of medicine, but also otherwise in our culture. In recent years, this has led me to questions of meditation research and the cultivation of consciousness.

I studied psychology and philosophy in parallel (from 1978 to 1984, with a year abroad in philosophy at University College London; see also my [curriculum vitae: Curriculum Vitae Prof. Harald Walach ?](#)).

Already during my studies, two things preoccupied me and have not let me go since: What exactly is “healing”? What is the relationship between external empiricism, i.e. scientific experience, and internal experience, i.e. personal, individual experience? In other words, what is the relationship between the individual and the general, the personal and the general? Anyone who has studied philosophy will easily see that these have been central and hitherto unresolved questions since Aristotle.

The question of healing and how it comes about led me relatively quickly to homeopathy and later, in a broader sense, to complementary medicine. Because here, healing is primarily understood as self-healing, i.e. as an impulse to help the organism to heal itself. I have always found this very exciting, both from a scientific and a socio-economic point of view.

In the course of time, new topics have been added: Starting from my basic question, I have been preoccupied with the question of the body-soul problem, the question of how to understand inner experience. A certain branch of inner experience is spiritual or mystical experience, which I also find extremely interesting. This is the background to my historical work and translation of the Carthusian medieval mystic Hugo de Balma, my second doctoral thesis in the philosophy and history of science. In parallel and when I have time, I continue to work on it. I am interested in the historical contexts and the person of the author. Another project in this vein is the question of whether Brentano’s idea of grounding psychology in the systematic experience of consciousness is possible.

In my ongoing projects, I am looking at whether it is possible to achieve prevention of dementia through lifestyle change. We are investigating the value of mindfulness and interventions based on it. I have developed the

Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory (FMI) with my research group. On the way to understanding healing processes, placebo effects or the semiotics of therapeutic processes are of great importance. Furthermore, I have long wondered whether it is conceivable and meaningful to develop a theory of wholeness in which non-local processes have a systematic theoretical place. Our work on a generalisation of quantum theory takes place in this context.

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