

# GCP Technical Note: Global Harmony Revisited

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A reexamination and extension of the global harmony analysis carried out by Roger Nelson (2001b) exploring the effect of global meditations and active engagements for peace in the world on the Global Consciousness Project's EGG network is described here, using normalized  $z$ -scores. It was found that the extended dataset of 56 global harmony events produces an overall cumulative result ( $p = .029$ ) that, while slightly reduced, remains consistent with the result found with the original dataset of 17 events ( $p = .011$ ). This suggests a promising direction for exploration, and that further research is warranted.

## Introduction

Aside from the altered states of consciousness that are typically associated with such experiences (which may or may not be associated with mind-matter interaction effects), one of the reasons meditation events may be of interest to the Global Consciousness Project (GCP) is that they often have the purpose of gathering together large groups of people all around the world to hold a common focus on a positive state for the future. Such a unity could be described as being both socially and mentally "coherent" on a mass scale, and may therefore be conducive to a supposed global consciousness "field" effect on the GCP's EGG network of random event generators/random number generators (REGs/RNGs), an effect that might be analogous to "coherence" among what are expected to be independent and globally distributed random physical systems. An early "FieldREG" study carried out during the Gaiamind meditation in January 1997 had resulted in a small but noticeable overall statistical effect on a makeshift network of REGs/RNGs located around the world (Nelson, 1997), seemingly providing a hint of promise to the sensibility of such a notion. Similar effects observed during other field REG/RNG explorations of group rituals, ceremonial events, healing sessions, and meditations geared toward a similar purpose of establishing harmony and positive states for people and society in general also seem to underscore the idea (Nelson et al., 1996, 1998; Nelson & Radin, 2003; Radin, Rebman, & Cross, 1996; Rowe, 1998).

In a similar fashion, many public engagements that strive for a better future and peace in the world through active, hands-on demonstration may also be to some degree conducive to group "coherence" given the unified actions and the shared attentional focus toward the goal. One need only think of a unified chant as an example. This too is also in line with the aesthetic visions of the GCP of moving toward a shared "global mind" and a unified awareness of peace and harmony around the world, the "noosphere" once envisioned by the French philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1959). As with many other global events examined by the GCP, the EGG results associated with these engagements have varied, and this leads to the question of whether a cumulative examination across events somewhat like that done with the formal GCP database (Nelson, 2001a) might be more interesting.

In early 2001, GCP director Dr. Roger Nelson (2001b) carried out an exploratory analysis to examine the possible cumulative effect of meditation and active engagement events focused on global harmony upon the EGG network. From a preliminary dataset of 17 events gathered from the larger formal GCP database, a significant effect was found ( $p = .0035$ ) that had odds against chance of about 300 to 1. In the three years since, an increase in such events seems to

have occurred, which was probably fueled by the unrest and anxiety in the world with the increased threat of terrorism following September 11, 2001, and divided opinion about the ongoing war in Iraq. A number of these events became formal predictions in the GCP database. Here, a second exploratory analysis is described that examines an expanded dataset of global harmony events in order to further assess the possible effect on the EGG network since the first analysis by Dr. Nelson. A second motivation for this analysis is that the formal GCP database results have recently been converted to normalized  $z$ -scores, and it may be instructive to gauge the possible effect this has had on the initial global harmony analysis result.

## Method

The normalized  $z$ -scores for the initial 17 events used in the first global harmony analysis (Nelson, 2001b) and for any meditation and active engagement events since the first analysis were obtained from the listing of formal events in Table 2 on the “Results” page of the GCP website (<http://noosphere.princeton.edu/results.html>). The criterion for categorization as a meditation or active engagement event and inclusion in the extended global harmony dataset simply involved a given event having some direct mention of meditation, a general description of the event activity that is in line with a goal of global harmony, or the words “peace”, “prayer”, and/or “harmony” in the text of its detailed individual results page, or in its original GCP prediction registry entry.<sup>1</sup> There were 39 events since the beginning of April 2001 that fit the criterion, making a total of 56 events for the extended global harmony dataset.

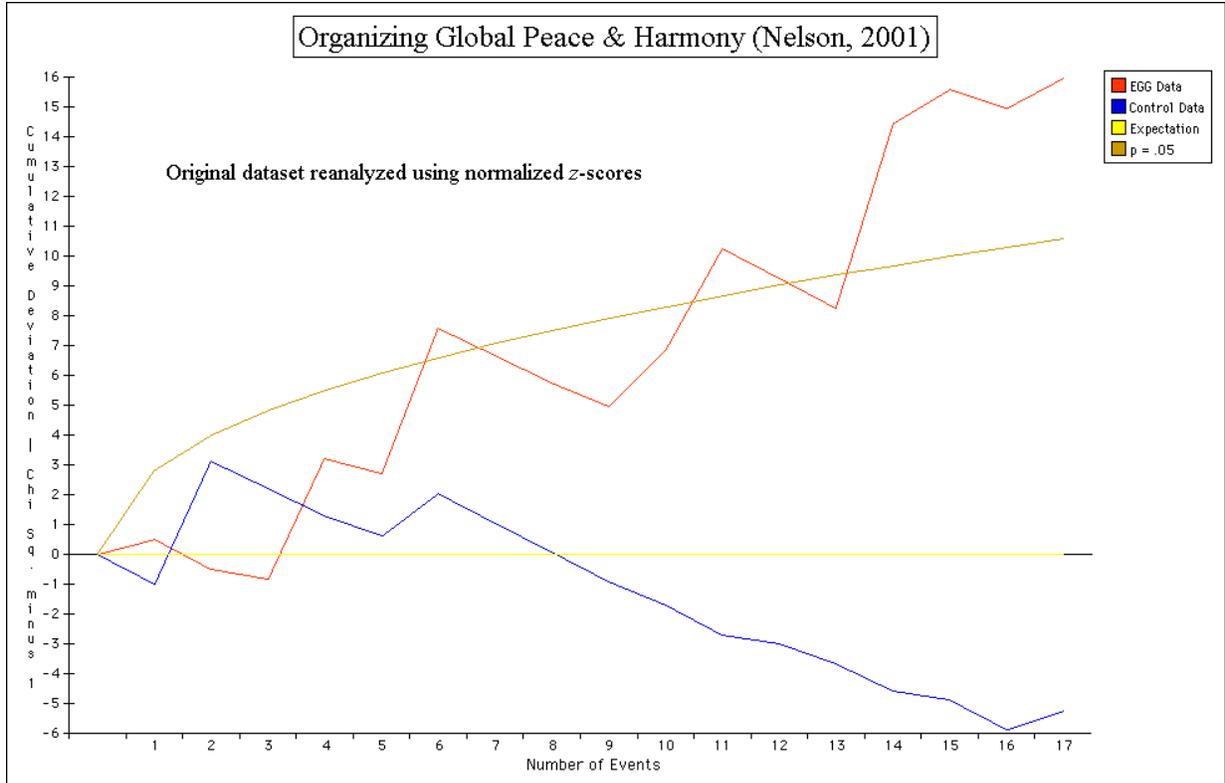
The  $z$ -scores were squared to form a value that is Chi-square distributed, with 1 degree of freedom ( $df$ ). Since Chi-square values are additive, a cumulative summation of all of the values was taken across events (with  $df$  = number of values summed) to represent the overall measure of deviation, and an associated probability value was obtained. Graphical representations of the data over time were then generated from this cumulative summation (Nelson, 2001a). Since pseudorandomly generated data provide a good means of control comparison (e.g., Walker, 2001), a series of pseudorandom control data were produced for this extended dataset through the use of an algorithm function contained within a standard spreadsheet program, and were plotted graphically in the same manner as the actual EGG data for this reason.

## Results

The 56 events that make up the extended global harmony dataset are shown in Table 1 in the Appendix, with the first 17 listed events constituting the original global harmony dataset used by Dr. Nelson (2001b). These original 17 events were reexamined using the normalized  $z$ -scores, and the graphical result is shown in Figure 1.

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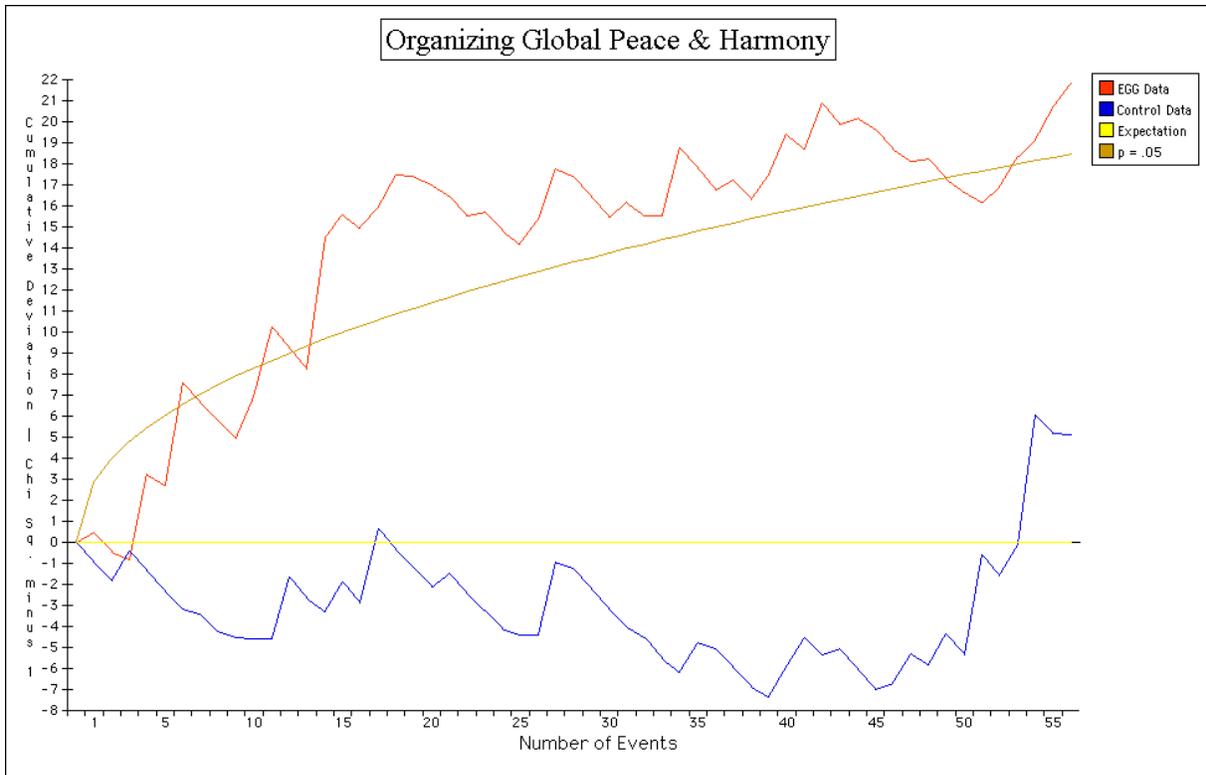
<sup>1</sup> Admittedly, there comes a considerable deal of subjectivity when deciding whether a given event fits the simple categorization criterion for inclusion. However, it must also be recognized that there is a subjective aspect to most GCP analyses that inevitably cannot be avoided when attempting to gauge the effect of certain events, or even to make predictions about event duration or effects. Thus, it is assumed for the sake of analysis that this subjective decision will not have a considerable influence on the overall result.



**Figure 1.** Cumulative deviation of Chi-square for the 17 original events (red trace) used in the first global harmony analysis by Nelson (2001b), using the normalized z-scores. Pseudorandom control data (blue trace) are plotted for comparison. The smooth light brown arc represents the  $p = .05$  level as time passes.

The red trace of the actual EGG data from the original dataset shown in Figure 1 indicates increased variance across events that overall is significantly different from chance ( $\chi^2 = 32.97$ , 17 *df*,  $p = .011$ ). The Stouffer's Z-score for the entire original dataset of 17 events in normalized form was found to be 2.931. In contrast, the blue trace of the pseudorandom control data is opposite in direction, and nonsignificant overall.

The extended global harmony dataset of 56 events, along with its own matching set of pseudorandom control data, is shown in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2.** Cumulative deviation of Chi-square for the extended global harmony dataset of 56 events (red trace), using the normalized  $z$ -scores. Pseudorandom control data (blue trace) are plotted for comparison. The smooth light brown arc represents the  $p = .05$  level as time passes.

The red trace of the actual EGG data for the extended dataset indicates that the deviation from expectation continues in a modest and fairly steady positive trend, in contrast to the blue trace of the pseudorandom control set, which displays a mostly random walk with a slight trend towards the end. Overall, the extended dataset produce a cumulative result that remains to be significantly different from chance ( $\chi^2 = 77.81$ , 56  $df$ ,  $p = .029$ ). The Stouffer's  $Z$ -score for the entire extended dataset was found to be 2.419. As with the control data for the original dataset, the matching pseudorandom dataset were nonsignificant in this case.

## Discussion

The extended global harmony dataset of 56 events has an overall result that is notable and remains statistically consistent with the original global harmony dataset, although the graphical display of the data and the probability value suggest that the effect has slightly decreased across events. One possible reason for this may be that many of the individual events in the dataset had overall results that were null or even opposite to the predicted direction, with the latter most frequently seen in global meditation events throughout the GCP database (another possible factor may be the normalization process, although one would have to analyze the extended dataset prior to normalization using the original Chi-square values to be more certain of this possibility). In contrast, the matching pseudorandom control data were random as expected and did not produce a notable result.

A comparison of the initial result from the original global harmony dataset used by Dr. Nelson (2001b) with the result using the normalized  $z$ -scores again suggests that the effect was

somewhat reduced, and that the process of normalization within the formal GCP database may have brought about this reduction. Despite this, the result remains consistent with the hypothesis of a positive significant effect, and indicates that even with this reduction, the result for the original dataset still remains notable.

The statistical consistency of these results suggests that exploration in this direction is promising, and that further examination is warranted with a growing dataset in the future. Although it may still be too early to make any certain conclusions, a tentative interpretation of these results may be that meditation and active engagement events which promote the establishment of world peace, interconnection, and a global harmony also promote the formation of a coherent global consciousness that has an effect on the GCP EGG network. Perhaps this further suggests that when people come together to meditate or act with the same positive intention in mind, they may have a subtle effect on the physical world somewhat akin to that which they are promoting. If this idea is valid, then the late rock musician Robert Palmer may have been more right than he knew when he wrote in his 1978 song that "...it takes every kinda people to make what life's about...it takes every kinda people to make the world go 'round.'" Only further examination will provide us with better answers.

## References

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## Appendix

Table 1: Extended Global Harmony Dataset

	<i>Event</i>	<i>z-score</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p-value</i>
1	Global Peace Vigil, Twyman - 981113	1.223	1.50	1	0.22
2	World Peace Prayer - 981210	-0.135	0.02	1	0.887
3	Praying for Peace, 31 days - 990403 to 990503	0.819	0.67	1	0.413
4	Billion Person Meditation - 991025	2.242	5.03	1	0.024
5	Just a Minute, 1-Min Epoch - 20000101	0.697	0.49	1	0.483
6	Papal Visit, Israel - 20000321 to 20000326	2.428	5.90	1	0.015
7	Great Experiment II - 20000423	-0.23	0.05	1	0.823
8	World Earth Healing Day 2000 - 20000504	-0.303	0.09	1	0.764
9	Peace Summit Religious Spirit - 20000828 to 20000831	-0.446	0.20	1	0.654
10	Group Mind Meditation - 20000924	1.72	2.96	1	0.085
11	Group Mind Meditation 2 - 20001022	-2.085	4.35	1	0.037
12	Group Mind Meditation 3 - 20001112	0.027	0.0007	1	0.978
13	Group Mind Meditation 4 - 20001126	-0.028	0.0007	1	0.978
14	Lovewave 010101 - 20010101	2.688	7.23	1	0.007
15	Kumbh Mala, India - 20010124	1.457	2.12	1	0.145
16	WorldPuja Webcast - 20010331	0.591	0.35	1	0.554
17	Johrei Ceremonies - 20010401	1.419	2.01	1	0.156
18	Earth Day 2001 - 20010422	1.595	2.54	1	0.11
19	Full Moon in Taurus - 20010507	0.948	0.90	1	0.342
20	World Peace Meditation - 20010520	0.773	0.60	1	0.438
21	World Earth Healing Day 2001 - 20010621	-0.688	0.47	1	0.492
22	Buddhist Stupa Ceremony - 20010809 - 20010817	-0.213	0.05	1	0.823
23	Silent Prayer, Sept 14 - 20010914	1.087	1.18	1	0.277
24	MUM Peace Meditation - 20010923 - 20010927	0.345	0.12	1	0.729
25	Binding Spell on Bin Laden - 20011015	0.616	0.38	1	0.537
26	World-Wide Meditation - 20011111	1.479	2.19	1	0.138
27	Ramadan Muslim Prayer - 20011116	1.836	3.37	1	0.066
28	WorldPuja Meditation - 20011116	-0.802	0.64	1	0.423
29	George Harrison Tribute - 20011203	0.222	0.05	1	0.823
30	Sri Lanka Peace Meditation - 20020315	-0.085	0.01	1	0.92
31	Indigo Peace Meditation - 20020420	-1.303	1.70	1	0.192
32	Summer Solstice 2002 (Meditation) - 20020621	-0.636	0.40	1	0.527
33	World Healing Day 2002 - 20020822	0.993	0.99	1	0.319
34	Korea's Birthday (World Earth-Human Festival) - 20021003	-2.06	4.24	1	0.039
35	Twyman in Baghdad - 20021012	0.032	0.001	1	0.974
36	Earthdance 2002 - 20021012	-0.056	0.003	1	0.956
37	Antiwar Protests, Jan 18 2003 - 20030118	1.207	1.46	1	0.226
38	Peace Meditations - 20030209	-0.244	0.06	1	0.806
39	Global Peace Demonstrations - 20030215	1.483	2.20	1	0.138
40	Lysistrata, Prayer, & Women - 20030303	-1.707	2.91	1	0.088
41	Gather the Women - 20030308	-0.532	0.28	1	0.596

<b>42</b> Candlelight Vigil - 20030316	1.783	3.18	1	0.074
<b>43</b> GE Prayer for Bush - 20030401	-0.155	0.02	1	0.887
<b>44</b> Aqaba Peace Summit, Middle East - 20030604	1.136	1.29	1	0.271
<b>45</b> Rainbow Gathering, 4th of July - 20030704	-0.693	0.48	1	0.488
<b>46</b> Love & Peace to Water Day - 20030725	0.154	0.02	1	0.887
<b>47</b> Mars Close Approach/Yang Spiral - 20030827	0.623	0.39	1	0.532
<b>48</b> World Healing Day 2003 - 20030910	-1.082	1.17	1	0.279
<b>49</b> Dalai Lama in NYC - 20030921	0.145	0.02	1	0.887
<b>50</b> Harmonic Concordance - 20031109	0.612	0.37	1	0.543
<b>51</b> Oprah Winfrey in Africa - 20031218	0.711	0.51	1	0.475
<b>52</b> 60 Seconds for Peace - 20031227	1.303	1.70	1	0.192
<b>53</b> Anti-Terror Demonstrations in Spain - 20040312	1.582	2.50	1	0.113
<b>54</b> Global Day of Peace - 20040320	-1.324	1.75	1	0.185
<b>55</b> Earthdance 2004 - 20040919	-1.584	2.51	1	0.113
<b>56</b> International Peace Vigil (& Hurricane Jeanne) - 20040921	-1.477	2.18	1	0.139
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.398</b>	<b>77.81</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>0.029</b>