

# The Scientific and Spiritual Implications of Psychic Abilities

**Russell Targ and Jane Katra, Ph.D.**

Palo Alto, CA 94301

*Since ancient times spiritual teachers have described paths and practices that a person could follow to achieve health, happiness, and peace of mind. Considerable recent research has indicated that any sort of spiritual practice is likely to improve ones prognosis for recovering from a serious illness. Many of these approaches to spirituality involve learning to quiet the mind, rather than adhering to a prescribed religious belief. These meditative paths would include all the mystic branches of Buddhism, Hinduism, mystical Christianity, Kabalistic Judaism, Sufism, and many others. What is hinted at in the subtext of these teachings is that as one learns to quiet his or her mind, one is likely to encounter psychic-seeming experiences or perceptions. For example, in *The Sutras of Patanjali*, the Hindu master tells us that on the way to transcendence we may experience all sorts of amazing visions, such as the ability to see into the distance, or into the future, the ability to diagnose illness, and to cure them. But, we are told not to get attached to these abilities – they are mere phenomena*

*standing as stumbling blocks on the path to enlightenment. In this paper we describe the laboratory evidence for some of these remarkable phenomena, and their implications for science, mental health, and peace of mind.*

## Introduction

What do the spiritual healer, the mystic, and the scientist all have in common? They are all in touch with their interconnected mind as well as their community of spirit. As we move into the new millenium, in every area of human activity we are experiencing a climax in which science and religion are finally becoming coherent in the exclamation of a single unified truth. In my work with remote viewing research at Stanford Research Institute, we observed the *in-flow* of information that is the hallmark of psychic perception. We also saw an *out-flow* of intention that plays a part in facilitating distant healing. My purpose here is to show that the *in-flow* and the *out-flow* reside on either side of the quiet mind, and that self awareness can arise between these two flows. We have also noticed that narrowly focusing on phenomena, and the seeming omniscience available from ESP may be just a trap that prevents us from discovering who we really are, and what we should be doing. However, as we describe in *The Heart of the Mind*,<sup>1</sup> we are confident that whenever any one person demonstrates an ability beyond the ordinary, it is can be seen as an inspiration to the rest of us, as an indication of an immense and still largely undeveloped human potential.

The scientific and spiritual implications of psychic abilities illuminate our observation that we live in a profoundly interconnected world. The most exciting research in quantum physics today is the investigation of what physicist David Bohm calls quantum-interconnectedness or non-local correlations. It has now been demonstrated repeatedly that quanta of light that are sent off in opposite directions at light speed, maintain their connection to one another, and that each little photon is affected by what happens to its twin, many kilometers away. This surprising coherence between distant entities is called non-locality. In writing on the philosophical implications of nonlocality, physicist Henry Stapp of the University of California at Berkeley says these quantum connections could be the “most profound discovery in all of science.”

Psychic abilities and remote viewing are demonstrations of our personal experience with such non-local connection in consciousness. Mind-to-mind connections give us expanded awareness, which is entirely consistent with life in a non-local world. Our knowledge of these remarkable abilities allows us to awaken each morning in wonder at the fact that our expanded awareness is not limited by either time or space. And it should have become clear to us by now that although we reside in bodies, there is *more* to us than skin and bones. Our quiet moments of self inquiry can reveal what that “more” is.

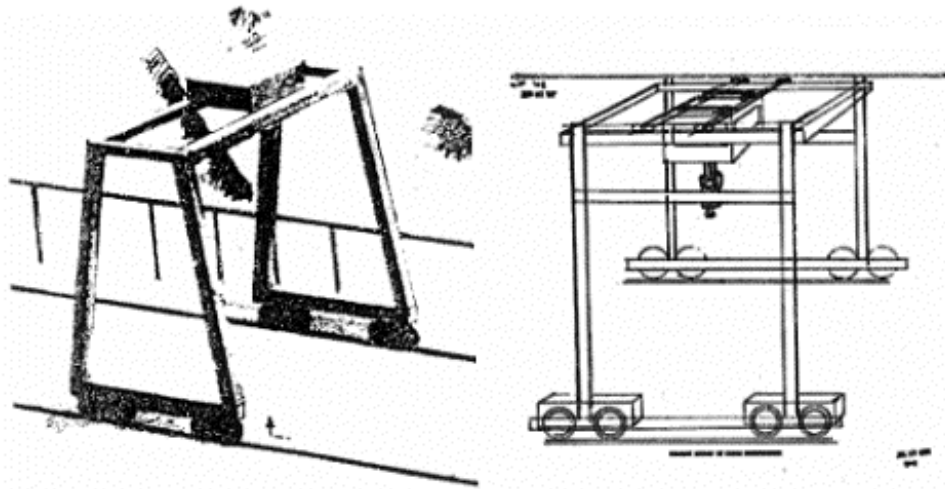
## Remote Viewing

Stanford Research Institute (SRI) conducted investigations into the human mind's capacity for expanded awareness, also called remote viewing, in which people are able to envision distant places and future events and activities. For two decades SRI's research was supported by the CIA and other government agencies. I was co-founder of this once secret program which began in 1972. Our task was to learn to understand psychic abilities, and to use these abilities to gather information about the Soviet Union during

the Cold War. We have found from years of experience that people can quickly learn to do remote viewing, and can frequently incorporate this direct knowing of the world -- both present and future -- into their lives.

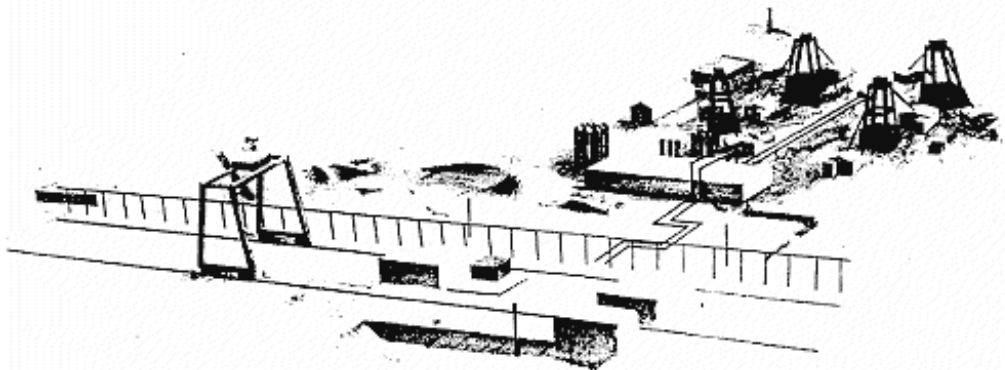
For a phenomenon thought in many circles not to exist, we certainly know a great deal about how to increase and decrease ESPs accuracy and reliability. Remote viewers can often contact, experience and describe a hidden object, or a remote natural or architectural site, based on the presence of a cooperative person at the distant location, or when given geographical coordinates, or some other target demarcation -- which we call an address. Shape, form and color are described much more reliably than the target's name, function, or other analytical information. In addition to vivid visual imagery, viewers sometimes describe associated feelings, sounds, smells and even electrical or magnetic fields. Blueprint accuracy has occasionally been achieved in these double-blind experiments, and reliability in a series can be as high as 80 per cent. For example, the authors recently achieved 11 hits out of 12 trials in such a series<sup>2</sup> With practice, people become increasingly able to separate out the *psychic signal* from the *mental noise* of memory, analysis, and imagination. Targets and target details as small as 1 mm can be sensed. Moreover, again and again we have seen that accuracy and resolution of remote viewing targets are not sensitive to variations in distance. In 1984 I organized a pair of successful 10,000 mile remote viewing experiments between Moscow and San Francisco with famed Russian healer, Djuna Davitashvili. Djuna's task was to describe where our colleague would be hiding in San Francisco. She had to focus her attention ten thousand miles to the west, and two hours into the future to correctly describe his location. These experiments were performed under the auspices and control of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

Ten years earlier, in 1974, my colleague Hal Puthoff and I carried out a demonstration of psychic abilities for the CIA in which Pat Price, a retired police commissioner, described the inside and outside of a secret Soviet weapons laboratory in the far reaches of Siberia -- given only the geographical coordinates of latitude and longitude for a reference. (That is, with no on-site cooperation.) This trial was such a stunning success that we were forced to undergo a formal Congressional investigation to determine if there had been a breach in National Security. Of course, none was ever found, and we were supported by the government for another fifteen years. As I sat with Price in these experiments at SRI, he made the sketch shown below right, to illustrate his mental impressions of a giant gantry crane that he psychically "saw" rolling back and forth over a building at the target site!



Above right is Pat Price's drawing of his psychic impressions of a gantry crane at the secret Soviet research and development site at Semipalatinsk, showing remarkable similarity to a later CIA drawing based on satellite photography shown at left. Note, for example, that both cranes have eight wheels.

~~SECRET~~



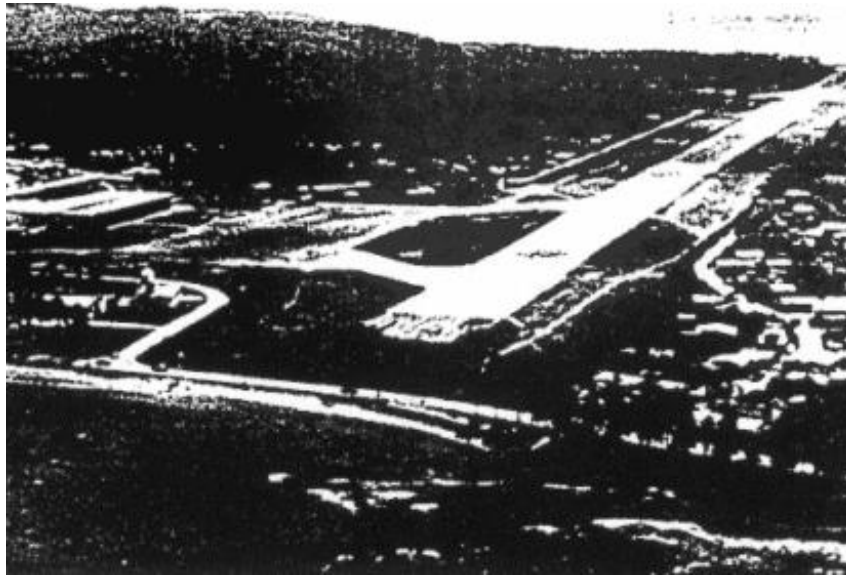
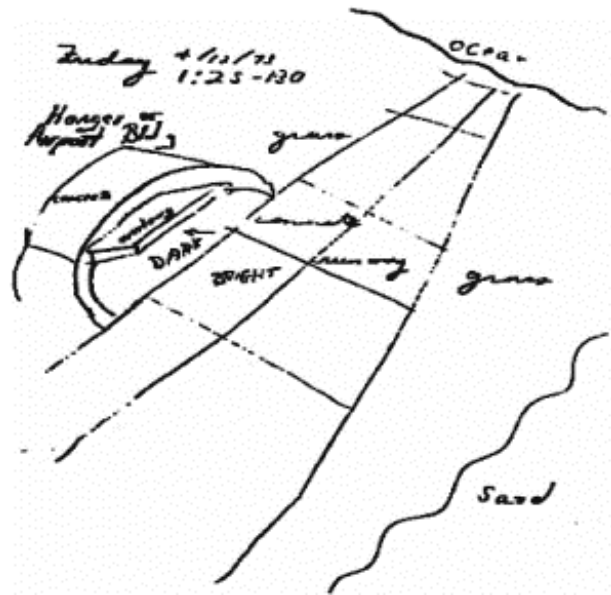
Here is a CIA artist tracing of a satellite photograph of the Semipalatinsk target site. Such tracings were made by the CIA to conceal the accuracy of detail of satellite photography at that time.

Data from our formal and controlled SRI investigations were highly statistically significant (thousands of times greater than chance expectation), and have been published in the world's most prestigious journals, such as *Nature*, *The Proceedings of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers*, and *The Proceedings of the American Academy of Sciences*.<sup>3</sup> The twenty years of remote viewing research we conducted for the CIA is outlined in *Miracles of Mind: Exploring Nonlocal Consciousness and Spiritual Healing*, co-authored by Targ and Katra.<sup>4</sup>

One day, while we were working with Pat Price, he didn't arrive for the scheduled experiment. So, in the spirit of "the show must go on," I spontaneously decided to undertake the remote viewing myself. Prior to that, I had been only an interviewer and facilitator for such trials. In this series we were trying to describe the day-to-day activities of Hal Puthoff as he traveled through Columbia, in South America. We would

not receive any feedback until he returned, and I therefore had no clues at all as to what he was doing. I closed my eyes and immediately had an image of an island airport. The surprisingly accurate sketch I drew is shown below. What we learned from this trial, is that even a scientist can be psychic, when the necessity level is high enough.

Sketch produced by physicist Russell Targ, when he spontaneously took the role of remote viewer in the absence of psychic Pat Price.



This photograph shows the target, which was an airport on an island off San Andres, Columbia. Targ correctly saw, "Ocean at the end of a runway."

Recent research in areas as different as distant healing and quantum physics are in agreement with the oldest spiritual teachings of the sages of India, who taught that "separation is an illusion." This concept suggests that there is no distance for consciousness, and we have an intuitive inner knowledge of time and space. In fact, we now know that information from the future regularly filters into our dreams – one could fairly say that these precognitive dreams indicate that the future affects our past. That is, our dream tonight may sometimes be caused by an event which we will experience at a later time – strongly violating our ordinary understanding of causality. In research by

the authors, who are respectively a physicist and a spiritual healer, we have been exploring how our mind's ability to transcend the limits of space and time is linked to our now well-documented capacity for distant healing.

We do not yet know the physics underlying psychic abilities. But, researchers in the field of parapsychology agree on the undeniable observation that it is no more difficult to psychically describe a picture or an event in the near future, than it is to describe such a target in the present, when it is hidden from view.<sup>5</sup> It is as though our bodies reside in the familiar four-dimensional geometry of Einstein's space-time, while our consciousness has access to another aspect of this geometry that allows us to find a mental path of zero distance to seemingly distant locations. This is how a physicist expresses such an idea, while mystics for the past three millennia tell us from their experience that "separation is an illusion – and we are all one in spirit, or consciousness." From experimentation in laboratories around the globe, it is clear that we significantly misapprehend the physical nature of the space-time in which we reside. It is this knowledge, together with our experience, that drives our passion to understand and learn more about the universe and the transformational opportunities offered us.

Joseph Campbell is famous for teaching that our lives are fulfilled only when we "follow our bliss" – or passion. For Thomas Aquinas this passion was pursued through conscious reasoning. He wrote that:

The ultimate human felicity is found in the operation of the intellect, since no desire carries us to such heights as the desire to understand the truth. Indeed all our desires for pleasure or for other things can be satisfied, but the desire to understand does not rest until it reaches God.

However, those who truly understand the truth of God tell us that God can not be understood – only experienced.

## Distant Mental Influence of Living Systems

More than thirty years of investigations clearly show that one person's thoughts can affect the physiological functioning of another, distant person. We do not yet understand the causal mechanism involved, but the results are indisputable, and have obvious implications for our ability to facilitate healing in others. We take for granted the calming effects that a mother's gentle cooing has on her distressed infant, not really thinking about the effects of her soothing *intentions*. How do we know that our thoughts affect others? A significant body of research now exists demonstrating that one person's focused intentions can directly influence the physiological processes of someone far away. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" takes on new meaning when you realize we are all truly connected, as the following research studies show.

Exciting experiments in the area of Distant Mental Influence of Living Systems (DMILS) have been carried out by psychologist William Braud at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in Palo Alto, California, and anthropologist Marilyn Schlitz, Research Director for the Institute of Noetic Sciences.<sup>6</sup> They have repeatedly shown that if a person simply attends fully to a distant person whose physiological activity is being monitored, he or she (acting as a sender) can influence the distant person's autonomic

galvanic skin responses. In four separate experiments involving 78 sessions, one person staring intently at a closed-circuit TV monitor image of a distant participant, influenced the remote person's electrodermal (GSR) responses. In these cases no techniques of intentional focusing or mental imaging were used by the influencer. He or she simply stared at the "staree's" image on the video screen during the thirty-second trials which were randomly interspersed with control periods.

In these studies, Braud and Schlitz discovered something even more interesting than this telepathically-induced effect on our unconscious system. They found that the most anxious and introverted people being *stared at* had the greatest magnitudes of unconscious electrodermal responses. In other words, the more shy and introverted people reacted with significantly more stress to being stared at than did the sociable and extroverted people. Quiet introverts may possess, or have developed, a sensitivity of consciousness that others are less aware of. This experiment gives scientific validation to the common human experience of feeling stared at and turning around to find that someone is, indeed, staring at you.

We are all familiar with the idea of premonition, in which one has an intuitive apprehension of something about to happen in the future — usually something “bad!” There is also the experience of *presentiment*, wherein one has an inner *sensation* -- a gut feeling that something strange is about to occur. An example would be for you to suddenly stop on your walk down the street because you felt “uneasy,” only to have a flower pot then fall off a window ledge and land at your feet — instead of on your head. That, of course, would be a useful presentiment.

In the laboratory, we know that showing a frightening picture to a person produces a significant change in his or her physiology. Their blood pressure, heart rate, and skin resistance all change. This fight-or-flight reaction is called an “orienting response.” Researcher Dean Radin at the Boundary Institute, in Los Altos, California, has shown in his research that this orienting response is also observed in a person’s physiology a few seconds *before* viewing the scary picture! If ESP were an electro-magnetic phenomenon, this would be called an *advanced wave*.

In balanced, double-blind experiments, Radin has demonstrated that *just before* viewing scenes of violence or sexuality, your body apparently reacts to defend itself against the oncoming insult or surprise. However, such strong anticipatory shock reactions did not precede the viewing of a picture of a wastebasket, or flower garden. Of course, fear is much easier to measure physiologically than bliss. Here, it seems, your direct physical perception of the shocking picture, when it occurs, causes you to have a unique -- five seconds *earlier* -- physical response. Your future is affecting your past. These intriguing experiments are also described in Radin’s comprehensive book *The Conscious Universe*.

## Distant Healing

From the dawn of history certain individuals have been recognized as possessing special healing gifts. The Pharaohs of ancient Egypt viewed healers as revered advisors. And it was healers who actually founded the world’s great religions: Gautama Buddha, Jesus of Nazareth, and the prophet Muhammad were all gifted healers. The earliest Christians

were primarily a healing community. And centuries before Jesus, the Hebrew prophets Elijah, Elisha, and Isaiah were acknowledged healers; and Moses is said to have healed many Israelites from serpent bites.

Medicine men and healing shamans throughout Africa, Asia, and the Americas held some of most esteemed positions in their tribes. In contrast, the progression of Western thought has largely ignored the broad range of mind-to-mind healing that has worked in other cultures. With our reverence for Humanism and Reason, we have much to relearn about the role of consciousness in healing. Only now are we realizing the power of the mind to heal through the scientific method. In recent years, a number of pioneering experiments have explored the role one person's consciousness may have on another person's health.

In his 1993 book *Healing Research*, psychiatrist Dr. Daniel Benor examined over 150 controlled studies from around the world. He reviewed psychic, mental, and spiritual healing experiments done on a variety of living organisms -- enzymes, cell cultures, bacteria, yeasts, plants, animals, and humans. More than half of the studies demonstrate significant healing.<sup>8</sup>

An important study by Fred Sicher, Dr. Elisabeth Targ, and others was published in the December, 1998 issue of *The Western Medical Journal* describing healing research carried out at California Pacific Medical Center.<sup>9</sup> It describes the positive therapeutic effects of distant healing on men with advanced AIDS.

In this mainstream medical journal the researchers defined non-local or distant healing as an act of "mentation intended to benefit another person's physical and/or emotional well-being at a distance;" adding that, "It has been found in some form in nearly every culture since prehistoric time." Their research hypothesized that an intensive ten-week distant healing intervention by experienced healers located around the U.S. would benefit the medical outcomes for a population of advanced AIDS patients in the San Francisco area.

The researchers performed two separate, randomized, double-blind studies: a pilot study involving twenty male subjects stratified by number of AIDS-defining illnesses, and a replication study of forty men carefully matched into pairs by age, T-cell count, and number of AIDS-defining illnesses. The participants' conditions were assessed by psychometric testing and blood testing at enrollment, after the distant healing intervention, and six-months later, when physicians reviewed their medical charts.

In the pilot study, four of the ten control subjects died, while all of subjects in the treatment group survived. But this result was possibly confounded by unequal age distributions in the two groups.

In the replication study, men with AIDs were again recruited from the San Francisco Bay Area. They were told that they had a fifty-fifty chance of being in the treatment group, or the control group. All subjects were pair-matched for age, CD4 count, and AIDS defining diseases. Forty distant healers from all parts of the country took part in the study. Each of them had more than five years experience in their particular form of healing. They were from Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Native American, and shamanic traditions, in



addition to secular “bio-energetic” schools. Each subject in the healing group was treated by a total of ten different healers on a rotating healing schedule. Healers were asked to work on their assigned subject for approximately one hour per day for six consecutive days, with instructions to “direct an intention of health and well-being” to the subject they were attending to. None of the forty subjects in the study ever met the healers, nor did they or the experimenters know into which group anyone had been randomized.

By the mid-point of the study neither group of subjects was able to significantly guess whether or not they were in the healing condition. However, by the end of the study, there were many fewer opportunistic illnesses, allowing the healing group to be able to identify itself -- with significant odds against chance. Since all subjects were being treated with Triple-Drug Therapy, there were no deaths in either group. The treatment group experienced significantly better medical and quality of life outcomes (odds of 100 to 1) on many quantitative measures, including fewer outpatient doctor visits (185 vs. 260); fewer days of hospitalization (10 vs. 68); less severe illnesses acquired during the study, as measured by illness severity scores (16 vs. 43); and significantly less emotional distress.

Dr. Targ concludes, “Decreased hospital visits, fewer severe new diseases, and greatly improved subjective health supports the hypothesis of positive therapeutic effects of distant healing.”

The editor of the journal introduced the paper thus: “The paper published below is meant to advance science and debate. It has been reviewed, revised, and re-reviewed by nationally known experts in biostatistics, and complementary medicine.... We have chosen to publish this provocative paper to stimulate other studies of distant healing, and other complementary practices and agents. It is time for more light, less dark, less heat.”

Two other studies of distant healing have been published in prestigious medical journals. In 1988 Dr. Randolph Byrd published in *The Southern Medical Journal* a successful double-blind demonstration of distant healing. The study involved 393 of his cardiac patients, at San Francisco General Hospital.<sup>10</sup> And in 1999, cardiologist William Harris of the University of Missouri in Kansas City, published a similar successful study with 990 heart patients. His paper appeared in *The Archives of Internal Medicine*.<sup>11</sup>

Scientists don’t yet clearly understand how the mind-stuff of one’s own intentions results in the contractions of one’s muscles. It remains a mystery, how the invisible mind moves the physical body. But we *do* know now that it is more powerful than we previously thought. Twentieth century science has documented that our thoughts affect others — that we are all interconnected through our consciousness. We aren’t even alone in experiencing the effects of our own thoughts!

We are actually already hooked up to the psychic Internet — Jung’s “collective unconscious.” But the users are primarily those who have learned to stop their thoughts and rest their attention. They are tuning in to access and affect the exchange of information.

## Why Would A Scientist Pray?

Today, many of us are searching for a comprehensible spirituality, one in which experience takes primacy over religious belief. It is evident that a person need not *believe* or take on faith anything about the existence of universal spirit, because the *experience* of God is a testable hypothesis, as we describe below. However, philosophical proof is not our purpose. Rather, we have become aware that this experience is available to anyone seeking a spiritual life who at the same time desires to remain a critical and discerning participant in the twenty-first century. We can include God in our lives without giving up our minds, if we can transcend our usual analytical thoughts and learn to become *mindful*. A scientist might pray, or search for “the peace which passes understanding” as a way to experience the truth without conscious thought.

In his 1939 essay “Science and Religion,” Albert Einstein suggested that we each have the potential for a greater awareness of truth than analysis alone can offer: “Objective knowledge provides us with powerful instruments for the achievements of certain ends. But, the ultimate goal itself, and the longing to reach it, must come from another source.” Wisdom teachers throughout history have shown that the experience of God is possible without belonging to a church or following a religion, as long as one’s basic motive is to discover truth. Dr. Herbert Benson recently proposed that we — our bodies and our brains — are “hard-wired for God.” By this he means that throughout the past twenty-five hundred years — from Buddha, Jesus, and the *Baal Shem Tov* (the founder of Hassidic Judaism), to such poets as Rumi, Blake, and Emerson — mystics have shared a common experience that is actually available to us all. In all the mystic paths, the *experience* of God is celebrated, rather than the belief in God, or the religious ritual. The Sufi poet Rumi shared his thoughts which arose after experiencing his own divinity:

All day I think about it, then at night I say it.

Where did I come from, and what am I supposed to be doing?

I have no idea.

My soul is from elsewhere, I’m sure of that,

And I intend to end up there.

Whenever we sit peacefully and quiet our mind, we have an opportunity to experience an oceanic connection with something outside our separate self. To many, that connection is experienced as an overpowering feeling of love, and it may well constitute part of our evolutionary process as a species.

This feeling of universal love, without any particular object, is often associated with the realization that we reside within an extended community of spirit enveloping all living beings. Such feelings of unbounded interconnected consciousness have been described by many as an experience of God. The gift of a quiet mind allows us to understand what it means to be *in* love, like being immersed in loving syrup, as contrasted with being in love with another person. It is possible to reside in love (or gratitude) as a way of life. This experience is the source of the often-heard expression that “God is love,” which in an ordinary context is easily dismissed as a simple cliché, or worse, as not even comprehensible.

These oceanic, loving, peaceful experiences are examples of the compelling feeling of “oneness” that mystics have been urging us to explore for millennia. Jesus called this state of awareness “the peace that passes all understanding,” and a “kingdom which is not of this world.” Hindus call it “bliss,” or *ananda*. And Buddha called it a state of “no-mind,” meaning the absence of thoughts disrupting awareness of indivisible unity.

This state is available to us *now*, while we reside in the world, whether or not we know or follow any religious teachings. Psychologist Joan Borysenko has written, “When the heart is open, we overcome the illusion that we are separate from one another.”

## The Path Of Self Inquiry

Early in the twentieth century, two of the world’s greatest logicians, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Alfred Ayer attempted to describe the physics and metaphysics of what can be known about reality. These Logical Positivists proclaimed that nothing meaningful could be said about God, because no experiment could be designed to either prove or disprove (verify or falsify) whatever one might say. But, by the end of their lives, both Wittgenstein and Ayer were willing to seriously examine the idea that the experience of mystics might actually be considered data — something observable in an experiment. In fact, in Wittgenstein’s last book, *On Certainty*, he gave primacy to experience over theory. This pre-eminent logician tells us, “The solution to the riddle of life in space and time lies *outside* space and time.”

For thousands of years, various wisdom teachers have presented a world view to all who will listen. They have described a “sit down and be quiet” practice that is available for all to observe and experience. They then invite us to examine our experience, and see if it corresponds with their teaching. Ultimately, this seems like an acceptably scientific, empirical approach to spirituality.

Thirty years ago national U.S. magazines proclaimed on their covers that “God is dead.” Today, we would say that God is neither alive nor dead, but rather *manifesting as activity in consciousness* -- transcending and transforming one’s ordinary awareness. God is an active personal experience rather than a distant entity in the sky. Our five familiar senses bring us data of the material world, while filtering out and limiting our exposure to the wider, transcendent world of active awareness available to the quiet mind. The direction of our attention is the most powerful tool we have to transform our lives.

After centuries of academic bombast, we are finally coming to recognize how tentative so-called scientific truth really is. In a scientific world increasingly governed by so-called laws of “indeterminacy” (Werner Heisenberg) and “nonlocality” (John Bell) in physics and “incompleteness” (Kurt Gödel) in mathematics, we are beginning to find room for the experience of God.

Philosopher Ken Wilber makes this point with great force in his book *Quantum Questions*.<sup>12</sup> He asserts convincingly that although physics will never explain spirituality, the spiritual realms may be explored by the scientific method:

The preposterous claim that all religious experience is private and noncommunicable is stopped dead by, to give only one example, the transmission of the Buddha's enlightenment all the way down to present-day Buddhist masters (which allows it to be experienced and discussed today).

Wilber describes three different, but equally valid, avenues of scientific empiricism: *The eye of the flesh*, which informs us about the world of our senses; *the eye of the mind*, which allows us access to mathematics, ideas, and logic; and *the eye of contemplation*, which is our window to the world of spiritual experience. None of these approaches suggest that we must embrace any body of dogma, or that we need to integrate Santa Claus into a scientific view of the modern world. They do, however, invite us to look beyond our thinking mind to discover who we are.

People everywhere are searching for ways to bring meaning into their stressful lives. Our days are filled with an increasing number of activities, and a decreasing amount of time in which to do them. We look for happiness through the acquisition of *things*. We want things, and we want them desperately. We want them now, and we want them to last forever. Despite owning more possessions than any people in history, despite our advanced learning, sophisticated communication and technological apparatus, our lives often seem overshadowed by feelings of isolation, despair, and powerlessness. And we feel this during the greatest period of prosperity and good health in history. We seem unable to change the course of our individual lives, our communities, or our environment, where life often seems hopelessly threatened. This frustration occurs because our wealth and all its distractions cannot substitute for what is really essential – our ability to take control of our own minds, and investigate the source of our consciousness.

The Perennial Philosophy first described by Aldous Huxley is the thread of universal truth that permeates all the world's spiritual traditions. It teaches us that alongside the actions we take to improve our world, we also have the opportunity to experience either unity and peace, or isolation and fear. And from the ancient Hindu *Vedas*, as well as the contemporary teaching of *A Course in Miracles*, we learn *that we give all the meaning there is, to everything we experience*. While we can't always control the events around us, we do have power over *how* we experience those events. At any moment, we can individually and collectively affect the course of our lives by choosing to direct our attention to the aspect of ourselves which is aware - and through the practice of self inquiry, to awareness itself. We can ask, "Who is aware?" and then, "Who wants to know?" The choice of where we put our attention is ultimately our most powerful freedom. Our choice of attitude and focus affects not only our own perceptions and experiences, but also the experiences and behaviors of others. Spiritual teacher Gangaji, who points to the path of self-inquiry, reminds us that we are "already completely whole, totally free, and permanently at peace." She suggests that we are beings of consciousness, participating in what the authors would call non-local awareness. She writes:

"What is choiceless is the truth of who you are. Choice lies in the mind's ability to either deny that truth or accept it... That choice is free will. You are naturally consciousness... You are naturally one with God." <sup>13</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi taught that “The only devils in the world are those running around in our own hearts. That is where the battles should be fought.” Heaven and Hell are available for the asking, but no experience can take place in our lives except in *our* consciousness, and with *our* agreement. A master told his student: “You don’t have to look for God. God is here now. If you were ever here, you would see him.”

We conclude that the scientific and spiritual implications of psychic abilities are evident in the continually unfolding mystery of the space-time in which we live. And a quiet mind has the opportunity for experiencing itself as love that is timeless, eternal, and unseparated by our bodies.

If one wishes to investigate this perennial experience, he or she can follow the suggestions offered by *A Course in Miracles* which, like the *Vedas*, teaches that walking with God is like surrendering to gratitude, or the experience of oneness that is available at all times. It is not talking about *self-improvement*, but rather *self-realization*. It has the following to say about the purpose of this surrender -- and the life-changing power of transcendence packed into the simple-seeming idea that “*I rest in God:*”

This thought will bring you the rest and quiet, peace and stillness, and the safety and happiness you seek. ... This thought has the power to wake the sleeping truth in you whose vision sees beyond appearances to that same truth in everyone and everything there is. Here is the end of suffering for all the world, and everyone who ever came and yet will come to linger for a while. ... Completely undismayed, this thought will carry you through storms and strife, past misery and pain, past loss and death, and onward to the certainty of God.<sup>14</sup>

## References

1. Jane Katra and Russell Targ, *The Heart of the Mind: How to experience God without Belief*, Novato, CA, New World Library, 1999
2. R. Targ, J. Katra, D. Brown, and W. Wiegand, “Viewing the future: A pilot study with an error-detecting protocol,” *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, 9:3, pp. 367-380, 1995.
3. H. E. Puthoff & R. Targ, “A Perceptual Channel for Information Transfer Over Kilometer distances: Historical Perspective and Recent Research.” *Proc. IEEE*, Vol. 64, no. 3, pp. 329 - 254, , March, 1976; R. Targ and H. Puthoff, “Information transfer under conditions of sensory shielding.” *Nature*, 251, 602-607, 1975; H. E. Puthoff , R. Targ & E.C. May, “Experimental Psi Research: Implication for Physics,” in the *AAAS Proceedings of the 1979 Symposium on the Role of Consciousness in the Physical World*, 1981.
4. Russell Targ and Jane Katra, *Miracles of Mind: Exploring Nonlocal Consciousness and Spiritual Healing*. Novato, CA: New World Library, 1998.
5. B. J. Dunne, R. G. Jahn, and R. D. Nelson, “Precognitive Remote Perception,” Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research Laboratory (Report). Princeton, N.J., August, 1983.

6. Marilyn Schlitz and Stephen LaBerge, "Covert Observation Increases Skin Conductance in Subjects Unaware of When They are Being Observed: A Replication," *Journal of Parapsychology*, September 1997, 185-196; W. Braud & M. Schlitz, "Psychokinetic Influence on Electro-Dermal Activity," *Journal of Parapsychology*, 47, 1983, pp. 95-119.
7. Dean Radin, *The Conscious Universe*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1997.
8. Daniel J. Benor, *Healing Research*. Volume 1. Munich, Germany: Helix Verlag, 1992.
9. Fred Sicher, Elisabeth Targ, Dan Moore, & Helene Smith, "A Randomized Double-Blind Study of the Effect of Distant Healing in a Population With Advanced AIDS," *Western Journal of Medicine*, 169, December 1998, pp. 356-363.
10. Randolph C. Byrd, "Positive Therapeutic Effects of Intercessory Prayer in a Coronary Care Unit Population," *Southern Medical Journal*, 81: 7, July 1988, pp. 826-829.
11. William S. Harris. et al, "A Randomized, Controlled Trial of the Effects of Remote Intercessory Prayer on Outcomes in Patients Admitted to the Coronary Care Unit," *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 159, Oct. 25, 1999, pp. 2273-2278.
12. Ken Wilber, *Quantum Questions: Mystical Writings of the World's Great Physicists*. Boston: Shambhala, 1984.
13. Gangaji, *freedom & resolve: The living edge of surrender*. Novato, California: The Gangaji Foundation, 1999.
14. *A Course in Miracles*, Workbook lesson 109. Glen Ellen, CA: Foundation for Inner Peace, 1975.