

## CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor:

### **The sensory mind/psi mind hypothesis**

Despite the many reports of extrasensory perception (ESP) recorded in the literature (see Feather & Schmicker, 2005; Hearne, 1989; Mackenzie, 1997; Osborn, 1961; Rhine, 1961) there must be a reason why, according to surveys, only some 20–25% of people report having one or more experiences of ESP. Why is there a corresponding dearth of ESP experience in 75–80% of the population? Is there anything that we know about ESP phenomena that may give us a lead?

An ESP experience is said to occur when someone receives new telepathic, clairvoyant, or precognitive information about someone or something that was not accessible to the bodily senses, and could not have been inferred from prior personal knowledge. ESP experiences appear to be unpredictable, involuntary, and usually last less than a minute. Strikingly, what most ESP experiencers seem to agree upon is that during the experience they feel in a different state of mind to their normal, everyday, state of mind. It seems that ESP is most likely to occur when at rest and mentally relaxed, or engaged in a rather monotonous activity, or dreaming before waking, circumstances in which conscious engagement with sensory information is low. These observations suggest that ESP experiences may occur when in a different state of mind from the everyday—i.e., that there is a *sensory mind*, based upon sensory input only, and a *psi mind* receptive to non-sensory information only. From descriptions of the unexpected onset of an ESP experience it seems that ESP enters conscious awareness when the psi mind momentarily interrupts, or supervenes upon, the continuity of normal sensory mind experiencing. This implies that an ESP experience only occurs when the psi mind overcomes, or replaces, the signal strength of sensory input. This is the sensory mind/psi mind hypothesis.

That some 75–80% of the population never experience an ESP implies, according to this hypothesis, that their mind has remained within such strong sensory mind constraints that psi has not been able to break through. Of those in the 20–25% who do experience ESP, some appear much more susceptible to ESP experiences than others, sometimes to the point, often from childhood, of ESP-acquired knowledge being accepted as a normal experience. This implies

that there is a sensory/psi crossover boundary of varying strength between the two states of mind, ranging from sensory high to sensory low. When it is the latter, involuntary ESP can break through the continuity of sensory experiencing.

Some of those whose sensory boundary is normally low, and consequently find that ESP information about people or places is a common event, may choose to become psi practitioners, learning how to voluntarily transition from sensory mind information only to psi mind information. Those who practice as psychics or intuitives find that when in the psi mind they are able to mentally contact the minds of their clients seeking help and advice. Others, who practice as mediums, believe that during a séance they are able to contact the minds of deceased relatives and friends on behalf of their sitters.

Psi practitioners who specialize as healers find that on transitioning into the psi mind they can ease mental distress and aid physiological recovery from physical illness and trauma (Buxton-King, 2017). This effect of psi intention is known as ‘psychokinesis’, meaning the direct action of mind on matter, in this case living matter, and has been confirmed by many positive non-placebo trials on seeds, cells, plants, and tissues, including survival of mice with a form of normally fatal cancer (Bengston & Fraser, 2010; Charman, 2021, 2023; Edwards, 2017; Jain, 2021).

Psychokinetic movement of objects from rest, popularly known as ‘table turning’, has also been confirmed by objective experiments using small groups working together (Batcheldor, 1966; Brookes-Smith, 1973; Brookes-Smith & Hunt, 1970; Charman, 2008; Owen & Sparrow, 1976). There seems to be agreement between the experimenters that, for object displacement to occur, sensory mind disbelief in the possibility of psychokinesis needs to be replaced by an unquestioning acceptance that it is a natural occurrence and will occur during the session. This change in group belief implies a crossing over into the psi mind.

In summary, the sensory mind/psi mind hypothesis is proffered as a possible reason why involuntarily received ESP information is so unpredictable in occurrence. It depends upon the varying strength of a hypothesized sensory mind/psi mind crossover boundary, and in the majority of the population this seems set too high. It proposes that in relationship to psi there are two states of mind: one constrained by sensory input only, and the other not constrained by the senses. In sensory reality, neither past, or future, or the minds of other people are accessible. In psi reality, these sensory imposed boundaries disappear and other minds, and places are accessible to a varying degree.

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