

PSI AND HEMI-SYNC (PART 11)

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A variety of subjective psychic experiences are often connected with depersonalization or dissociative phenomena, such as clairvoyance, telepathy, channelling, mediumship & OOBEs. The Dissociative Disorders Interview Schedule (DDIS), which is a reference "bible" for diagnosing dissociative disorders (for example, multiple personality disorder, schizophrenia), contains many references to psychic experiences. Dr. Douglas Richards, of Atlantic University, in 1991 reported the results of a survey on subjective psychic experiences, the aim of which was to study the correlations between subjective psychic experiences and dissociative experiences. Before you start getting too worried, the results showed a moderate correlation with dissociation, but not necessarily associated with pathology, so don't call for the guys in the white coats just yet! The subjects were 184 attendees at conferences at the Association for Research and Enlightenment (ARE), an organization established to continue the Edgar Cayce research and that deals with various types of psychic phenomena. The respondents were well-educated, middle class adults, with a high incidence of psychic experiences, but when taken in consideration of other surveys of the general population, the results confirmed that psychic experiences are a common occurrence in non-clinical populations. Eighty-one point five percent of the subjects felt their psychic experiences had a positive or inspiring effect on their lives. Thirty-three point six reported spontaneous OOBEs at least once, with a further 17.2 indicating OOBEs more than five times.

We also learned that a 1974 psychic experiences questionnaire of the general population, in Charlottesville, Virginia, conducted by Dr. John Palmer, now of the RRC, revealed that over half of the respondents claimed at least one ESP experience. There was also a tendency for persons reporting psychic or psi-related experiences to claim a large number of them. OOBEs were reported by 25% of UVa students, with the town sample being 14%. Many indicated that psychic experiences affected their attitude toward life and/or lifestyles.

OBEs, with a seemingly cross-cultural distribution, have been reported throughout the ages. In more recent times, they have been the subject of some serious research by parapsychologists, especially so in the past three decades. Their interest is for several reasons: the subjective experience of an OBE can be accompanied by ESP, which can provide veridical/objective evidence of the event; there may be implications for survival after death research; and if laboratory research of lab-induced OBEs gives information about the physiological state of the subject, this could provide hints on how to produce this state. Being able to produce OBEs in labs could very well lead to a fuller understanding about the nature of the experience and ESP.

Various theories to explain OBEs have emerged in the last few decades. They generally fall into two categories, Paranormal (Ecsomatic, i.e., that something actually leaves the body) and Imaginal (hallucination). The imaginal theories cover psychological and physiological theories.

During the 1960s, Dr. Charles Tart, at the University of California at Davis, conducted a series of experiments with Bob Monroe, with the aim of inducing OBEs in a lab setting. Bob's physiological monitoring showed great variability in his EEG patterns, with unusually high theta waves and also that he spent considerable time in borderline/hypnogogic states. Bob reported two OBEs during the sessions, in one of which he reported seeing a man with the female technician who was normally alone. This was later verified by the technician. Tart, who recommended that future OBE research concentrate on these borderline states, hypothesized that at least some of Bob's OBEs might be a mixture of dreaming and "something else".

In the area of apparitions studies, the SSP course covered a 1995 investigation by psychic researchers into an alleged haunting of a house in Texas. The researchers/"ghostbusters" reached a most interesting conclusion. The strange noises and lights, seen and heard by the frightened occupants of the house, were the result of electro-magnetic fields around geological fault lines. A combination of limestone, underground water and a geologic fault, produced an ultra-sonic sound which created a magnetic effect on the human brain, leading to the hallucinations. This type of research is extremely useful, as a natural cause was found for what at first appeared to be seemingly inexplicable phenomena. It is indeed of value, when evaluating these types of phenomena, to be aware of unusual physical forces which may be exerting a perfectly natural, i.e., non-paranormal, influence on us.