

WITNESS REPORT – Extracts

I felt as if I took a step back and pulled a sheet across between the anchor points at the periphery of the field of vision, ... The act of seeing was not happening with my eyes, but rather on this sheet spread out in front of me, which now feels like the extension of my head. I, my head, my field of vision, had expanded.

The whole space on this sheet feels like the inside of my field of vision. There was no inside and no outside, and my subjective self became part of this field of observation and perception.

I look at this overall picture as if through a new window.

The feeling of expansion, the state of perception was detached from the familiar subject-object relationship. I wasn't actively or passively involved in anything. Only the awareness happened.

A NEW BEGINNING

Even though I like the new-age idea of expanding consciousness, I'm critical of a lot of the methods of doing this.

How can we ever discover our full human potential, without using all of our senses?

By exclusively focusing, we are presently missing something extraordinarily basic about the nature of life.

Oneness as an Everyday Experience

Oneness, absorption, or the mystical experience of God's presence, is normally understood as a result of grace, long years of prayer, forgiveness, moral living, and devotion.

But by using the senses as animals do – the panoramic awareness to change in our local environment – we can experience a degree of oneness, in a matter of days or weeks.

It is ridiculous to ignore this experience just because it divorces oneness from its normal religious context.

And it's irrational for agnostics, atheists, and sceptics to reject the experience just because it reminds them of religion.

Panoramic sensing doesn't require any faith, any morality, codes of conduct, laws and commandments, or belief. But there's no need to give up any other belief – unless it rejects what animals can teach us. It also doesn't involve any money, secret initiations, oaths of allegiance, or clever theories.

This isn't a new belief, and it's also not a mystical experience. It's a natural ability and it belongs to everyday human life.

The Simplicity Beyond Belief

If we go back to the "Who am I?" "Why am I?" questions – and ask "Am I all I could be?" "What is my potential?"

The panoramic experience adds a totally new dimension to being a human being, what it means to be alive and real, and, what it means to be an integrated but independent individual. It's a new depth perspective on human potential.

It may, by itself, never be as potentially powerful as love, forgiveness, prayer, or meditation could be, but it's an unbelievably simple, almost completely unused, practical and natural starting point.

And, forgiveness, selflessness, and social morality can develop far more easily as a result of experiencing oneness and absorption – rather than in preparation for it.

Part Two

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

Focused sensing is always selective, it focuses on specific small areas. Animals use it to do all the things which they want or need.

Panoramic sensing is a receptive all-round awareness. Its primary use is to guard against danger – it makes life safe.

Animals coordinate or alternate almost all of their focused activities with panoramic awareness. This is a balance. Their survival depends on it.

Most birds have a sensitivity to ultraviolet light; a quick panoramic glance allows them to detect any threatening life forms.

Land animals must watch, listen, and smell for short periods of time in order to detect movements or changes.

A Common Everyday Sense

Life started panoramically. Every amoeba has chemoreceptors (for 'smelling and tasting') and a generalised sensitivity to light and vibration.

Panoramic awareness is a very simple, everyday, and ordinary way of sensing. It knows no ideas, no truth or lies, no cause and effect.

Throughout evolution, it has been the natural way to switch off, stop doing or wanting anything, and be actively receptive for a moment.

Panoramic sensing evolved and developed because it was the most efficient way to keep us directly in touch with our local environment. It's a different way of experiencing life. It's a feeling of being connected with all we're sensing.

The senses are often seen as the door between us and the world outside us. In the panoramic reality, our senses connect us with the world. The feeling is – we are the door.

However, listening for specific signals – just as any form of selective attention – always limits the absolute, almost transparent awareness necessary for vulnerable animals to survive.

Vulnerable animals must openly and actively listen out for surprises, even faint or distant ones. Always conscious of sudden changes in the everyday background noise. Always listening-out for the unexpected.

Sensory Pleasure vs. Staying Safe

Except possibly when they feel safe and are dozing – animals miss out on the sensory pleasure of birds singing, but they survive by noticing when the birdsong suddenly changes; they miss out on meditation to the beauty of silence; but they survive by noticing when the silence breaks.

For humans, it is possible to experience the visual panorama and still – slowly and uncritically – to think and to want.

The value of anticipatory listening is that it is impossible to think or want anything at the same time as doing it. Any focal point overrides the open awareness which is necessary to hear split-second sounds.

There is no better, more direct, or readily available method than pre-emptive listening to stop thinking and wanting anything, even trying it will slow down the thoughts for a few seconds.

At first, I used pre-emptive listening in combination with panoramic vision. It can be used independently, but it doesn't have such obvious and striking effects.

All the ideas and experiences in this booklet are explored and developed in detail online.

See especially: The Warm-up Exercises.

One experience is worth more than a million words.