

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.

PRE-EMPTIVE LISTENING

The visual experience was so fascinating, that after a couple of days I started getting interested in how animals listen.

It seemed like a good first step to listen actively and openly to everything which was happening – as helpless and vulnerable as a newborn baby before they learn to filter out the everyday sounds.

But, I soon realised that listening to any continuous background sounds is dangerous for animals. However beautiful birdsong or the river may sound, listening to them is a distraction.

When we focus on any specific sound, we don't notice sudden warning signals until a second after they have happened.

Beyond The Panorama

Sounds are sometimes very sudden and vanish in a fraction of a second. Smells and sights generally last at least a few seconds. Listening requires and stimulates immediacy like no other sense.

Animals need to be ready and waiting for sudden sounds. Panoramic listening in its most sensitive form is pre-emptive. It is anticipatory listening, always open to sounds a second before they happen.

Animals need to listen for things which haven't happened yet, but could occur at any moment.

Predators listen-out for specific signals when hunting specific prey. This is a useful step.

It depends on where you are and what sort of background sounds there are, but I often listen-out for dogs and children; at night for owls and hedgehogs. I don't hear them often; hearing them is irrelevant, listening-out for them is the vital part.

Animals have been using their senses in this way for billions of years – it is clearly part of a successful survival strategy.

Whereas vulnerable animals usually alternate panoramic and focused sensing, predators combine the two. Predators generally watch over a wide, but not fully panoramic area, with the intention of catching specific prey. The predatory usage is governed by focusing.

The Human Experiment

Humans secured their survival by developing their focusing abilities. Unlike all other animals, we learnt how to survive without actively using our panoramic senses.

We developed an astounding ability to think – we could focus on memories and learn. We learnt how to shape flint tools, to make fire, and wheels, and gradually our modern civilisation developed. Focusing can be amazingly clever and creative, and it gets things done.

The problem is that nowadays, our modern early education of focused sensing and thinking, overwhelms our panoramic abilities before they even start to develop.

And we just don't recognise that everything we do, think, and want is happening because we focus on it. We don't remember that there is another way of sensing life. Our only knowledge of panoramic sensing comes from the subliminal use of the horizontal peripheries when driving, to alert us to something we might need to focus on.

After an amazing million-year long history of focusing for our survival, our one-sided strategy has now led us to a point of critical overload.

Today's free cultures are fracturing into extremes. And all we think we can do, is to focus on trying to find answers.

Animals would become extinct if they only ever focused.

Many aspects of our lives are being affected by the lack of panoramic awareness. The following is an example which will perhaps inspire people to do more than just think.

BELIEFS AND SAFETY

As our human abstract abilities evolved, we developed beliefs.

Beliefs are the epitome of focusing. Beliefs are awe-inspiring, often beautiful or perfect focal points.

Ancient cultures were bound together by their beliefs. They were mutually confirmed and openly celebrated. And for hundreds of thousands of years they enhanced human life. They gave us comfort, safety, purpose, identity, completion, and social cohesion.

It's a long story, but in the modern free world there is no longer any universal consensus on what to believe. Now, every individual is free to believe in themselves or their groups ideals.

And, it's like freewheeling downhill, acceleration is inevitable. There will always be new developments at shorter time intervals, new trends and types of religious and political extremism, more influencers influencing, and more crazy conspiracy theories and lies.

But this, or something like it, is what we would expect from a culture and species which only focuses. Focusing always singles out specific perspectives. It separates life into bits, and the bits always get smaller.

To find any sense of wholeness in our abstract reality we must join the bits together again. Beliefs try to join the bits together, but these days they seem to be having the opposite effect.

In our modern cultural climate, safety and wholeness are being confused with closed-mindedness and pride.

Panoramic vision is a 'being with' what I'm seeing – instead of looking at it – immediately and directly connected with all that I sense. It's a state of wholeness, at times even oneness and absorption in what I'm seeing.

And the garden where I used to sit was full of birds and squirrels which, compared to humans, all have extremely sudden and unpredictable movements.

I knew nothing about panoramic perception back then, but one thing was obvious, the quicker and more unpredictable the movements were, the more noticeable they were.

This was my experience, and it just seemed so logical and appropriate that vulnerable animals would need to sense in this way, in order to survive.

Relearning Amazement

Occasionally we have an intense experience of pleasure and fulfilment – looking into the distance over the ocean, at the stars, or with a panoramic landscape. At those times, we're not focusing on anything specific, but it opens our senses in a special way, and we're just amazed at everything.

By using our eyes in this panoramic way, we can feel this amazement, without having anything awesome or beautiful to sense.

Focusing is blind to this experience of life. I still don't fully understand how humans became so blind... Why have I never heard anything about panoramic vision?... Maybe it just doesn't fit anywhere in our highly specialised, focused world-view.

This is something we were all born with, and it's easy to relearn. There are any number of ways to unlock the feeling and speed up the relearning process. These are described in detail online.

Part One

WELCOME TO THE PANORAMA

At first, I couldn't understand how animals used their panoramic vision, because as soon as I tried to be aware of something at the side, I started automatically focusing on that point.

So I fixed my eyes on a point straight in front, but directed my attention to opposite points on the peripheries at around a 30° angle up from the horizontal on both sides, still physically focusing on the boring focal point in front.

And it was interesting – it often changed my mood, even after just 30 seconds. So I decided to do it for a minute a day, and find out what was happening.

Over the next three weeks, I chose different angles and checked out all the points of the compass.

Then, one day I realised that if I looked at a blank space in the sky, I could see the whole oval shape of my field of vision with numerous things moving inside of it.

A New Way of Seeing

It was amazing, a whole new world opened up. It's a totally different way of using the eyes... a completely different perspective on life.

It's a feeling of being directly connected with everything which is happening.

The sensation is as though previously, I'd always been looking at life as if I were looking at a T.V. screen, and now instead, I'm right up inside the screen. The normal feeling of a subject looking at an object is considerably different. This is an intimate connection.

There are some very basic errors in our perception and understanding.

Beliefs are valuable, they give us identity and purpose in life, they guide us in all we do and think. But in these individualistic modern times, having an identity or purpose in life, is a ridiculous way to feel safe and whole.

Beliefs were a valid and effective step in our evolution, but, on a social level they don't work any more. For them to work everyone must believe in the same thing.

On the other hand, in the panoramic condition we automatically feel safe and whole. But here we find no belief or purpose and only a vague sense of identity or individuality.

Could this be a perfect balance? It's almost as though these two ways of sensing life were made for each other...

Panoramic sensing makes focused activity safe. And this is as true for animals in the physical world, as it is for humans psychologically.

Panoramic awareness is an innate potential which we have collectively learnt to ignore. It may well be the only natural resource which humans don't exploit.

Yet our religious and political leaders, educators and greatest thinkers, show hardly any understanding of panoramic awareness.

What possible harm could there be in doing what every other animal does to stay safe?

And humans could enjoy it, we don't need to worry, we don't need to jump up and run away every time we see a cat or dog.

At present, this is a completely wasted opportunity for humanity and civilisation.

PRACTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Humans suffer from an illness – chronic focusing.

We're perceiving, experiencing and understanding life from only one perspective.

All our ideas on 'self and others' are a limited version of what we could be. The way we understand our individuality continuously narrows down who we are.

We need to give up selfish desires, pride and narrow-mindedness. But, if we do this by any method which uses focusing, we will automatically reinforce and encourage all the habitual routines which generate such self-focused conditions.

However, we can easily and quickly stop focusing by being aware panoramically in the way vulnerable animals are. And as soon as we stop focusing, the craziness stops as well.

Just one panoramic moment interrupts our habitual thinking routines, they're not neurotic anymore.

Just one panoramic moment interrupts the never-ending patterns which are causing the pace of life to overrun our modern cultures.

What we need, are regular periods of panoramic awareness. And, a good start would be to copy the experts, animals, with their short, intensive panoramic moments.

This way of sensing is common to all creatures and people of all cultures... it's a unifying, opening energy... if only humans started using it.

All it requires is curiosity, a little self-discipline – and initially: the intelligence to break free from our habitual human herd-mentality.

Firstly, panoramic is a far better descriptive word than peripheral. In French "la vision panoramique" is normal, as is "la visión panorámica." in Spanish.

Then, due to the growing social-political situation I feel compelled to present my experiences and ideas now, in the form of the following essays.

Most people will have never considered this subject before... Most people need to hear a new idea three times before they start considering it... If you miss the moment a single bee buzzes by, you might miss the honey forever.

PART ONE

Welcome to the Panorama

Pre-Emptive Listening

Witness Report

A New Beginning

PART TWO

Survival Strategies

Beliefs and Safety

Practical Psychology

The Central Exercises