

THE CENTRAL EXERCISES

At best – go outside where things are moving and changing, randomly... surprisingly... sit down for stability, and take off any glasses.

Seeing

Find a boring, neutral, and motionless area straight ahead, a blank wall, or a monotonous area of sky, anything which has no focal point, and look at it.

Then, don't move your head, or your eyes to focus on anything, but pay attention all around the periphery of your field of vision. Then just wait and watch anything and everything happening within the entire oval field of vision.

Listening

Listen-out for changes. Listen-out for sudden sounds. This is pre-emptive listening, ready and waiting for the first sign of anything new.

It's often useful to listen-out for children and dogs. You might not hear them, that's irrelevant, listening-out for them is the vital part.

Going Panoramic

At first, do the listening and seeing separately. Then combine them.

Do these two exercises as well as you can, for just one minute at least once a day, and repeat frequently, whenever you think of them.

It may be more practical to do it for five minutes a day. Do it once, have a cup of tea, and then do it again.

Short periods of intense practice replicate the immediacy animals feel. The repetitive impulse of short regular periods of stimulation will act as a catalyst: they are the best way to tell your subconscious "it's time to remember".

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.

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.

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.