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# OPENING TO THE INFINITE

STEPHAN A. SCHWARTZ

*In this edited excerpt from his forthcoming book, renowned researcher and author Stephan Schwartz discusses the subtle and transformative impacts of “remote viewing” and accessing nonlocal mind.*

**T**HREE OF THE MOST MYSTERIOUS THINGS A PERSON can experience are spiritual ecstasy, the ah-ha! moment of creative genius, and a verifiable “nonlocal awareness” event—what is often called a psychic event. Let me propose what I think a growing body of interdisciplinary research and a millennia of ethnohistory both suggest: These three enigmatic occurrences are, in fact, different manifestations of the same process, sometimes seen as spiritual, sometimes as brilliance, and sometimes as merely strange. Each is modulated by the intent of the practitioner and the context in which the experience is placed.

A transcendentalist, for example, seeks spiritual experience and has one appropriate to their personal psychology. A scientist seeks, and sometimes discovers, a fundamental insight into how the world works. A person practicing a psychic discipline such as remote viewing seeks to describe a person, place, or event from which they are separated by reason of time or space. They get sense impressions and have a sense of knowingness just as if they were physically present. Sometimes these experiences come unbidden—and you yourself have probably had one at some point in your life.

The epiphany of the genius and the ecstasy of the transcendentalist are by intention life changing; the how of the process is not the focus. But in a remote viewing session, since the outcome is comparatively mundane, the process itself becomes more the focus of attention, something that can be studied and improved upon based on research rather than speculation. And as far as we can tell, the ability to access nonlocal awareness, to open to that aspect of our consciousness that seems to operate outside the bounds of time and space, is spread throughout the population in a bell curve—much like any other human skill such as learning music. A few people at one end are so gifted that they seem to master the task effortlessly, while a small group at the other end either cannot or will not achieve a similar result. The rest of us are bunched toward the middle, developing solid competence by nurturing our native ability with commitment and hard work. What makes remote viewing particularly interesting—the reason it has gone from an obscure laboratory protocol to a social movement (an Internet search will produce nearly a million hits)—is that it gives an ordinary person a pathway through which they can experience this aspect of themselves, often from the very first attempt.

## A MODERN MENTAL MARTIAL ART

Think of remote viewing as a form of mental yoga or a martial art. Consistent with any martial art, learning the required skills earns a student not only specialized abilities but a deeper and greater confidence in their own beingness. Forget about the psychic, the occult, the supernatural, and all the mind-set and emotional baggage that go with those terms and the world they conjure up. Think instead about learning how to do something as normal as seeing color, discovering a part of yourself that you didn't know existed. And while describing something as mundane as the location of a hidden tea cup across town may not feel very powerful, research has shown that proving to yourself—through your own powers—that part of you exists independent of the limitations of time and space is an exhilarating experience. It makes you look at yourself and the world differently.

Remote viewing is information transfer, like doing a Google search. As a metaphor for describing what goes on in remote viewing, think of each living being as a workstation in a network. Our interactions within the network take place at many levels and are written in different codes, from the physical to the subtle. By definition, the ineffable portion of this continuum, like that part of the light spectrum beyond the range of our eyes, lies outside of the physicalist model. Increasingly, although still with some controversy, physicists are thinking of remote viewing as a form of quantum entanglement, because the observed phenomenon strongly suggests that this aspect of our consciousness is nonlocal and involves some form of linkage. Almost all viewers come to believe that in learning these skills they have made a connection to a greater whole of life. Its reality for them is not an act of faith but an insight of direct knowledge—and this changes them.

Today, in fields as diverse as physics and medicine, the peer-reviewed literature that is science's benchmark contains papers on nonlocal mind, distant mental influence, and interactions between life-forms that do not involve standard models of reality. Taken one by one these studies may be impressive, but it is in the aggregate that they present their most compelling argument that materialism is no longer a fully adequate explanation of how our world works. ➔

## A NEW MODEL OF REALITY

In the physicalist-materialist model that has dominated our scientific and cultural thinking, certain precepts have been assumed:

1. The mind is solely the result of physiologic processes.
2. Each consciousness is a discrete entity.
3. No communication is possible except through the defined physiologic senses.
4. Consciousness dwells entirely within the time-space continuum.

In the emerging interdependent-interconnected consciousness model, those assumptions are being challenged. Some of the principal hallmarks of this new model include the following:

1. Only certain aspects of the mind are the result of physiologic processes.
2. Consciousness is causal, and physical reality is its manifestation.
3. All points of consciousness, regardless of their physical manifestations, are part of a network of life that they both inform and influence and are informed and influenced by. There is a passage back and forth between the individual and the collective.
4. Some aspects of consciousness are not limited by the time-space continuum.

This new model, with its inclusion of the subtle non-local aspects of consciousness, is not just an intellectual curiosity. It proposes a much more empowered vision of what it means to be a human, one remarkably consistent with the great spiritual traditions of inner work.

## THE MYSTIC, THE GENIUS, AND YOU

To an experienced remote viewer who reads the autobiographies and biographies of history's creative geniuses and religious ecstasies, the connection between what these individuals have experienced and what a viewer experiences is obvious. The context can be different, as can the level of intensity—remote viewing being a mild variant and religious ecstasy a profound and life-changing one—but the words of geniuses, mystics, and artists sound much like those of a viewer who has just successfully hit the “target.”

In recounting their sessions, viewers consistently report certain feelings and experiences. Psychiatrist and author Judith Orloff, who began working with me as a viewer when she was still a medical resident, put it this way after one of our first sessions: “It’s funny; I can’t exactly say I saw it, but I knew what that place looked like. I knew what colors were there . . . what it smelled like . . . where things were located . . . even what people were feeling. It all just fell into place as you asked me questions. It’s hard sometimes to stop thinking, but when you do, it’s like a fantasy, intense and gauzy at the same time.”<sup>1</sup>

Others have said, “I kind of space out,” or “It’s sort of like focusing my mind at some middle distance.” They describe the moment itself by saying, “It came in a flash,” or “Images are all there . . . as if it were a hologram hanging in my mind.”<sup>2</sup>

Brahms described his moments of creative breakthroughs this way:

*“ . . . in this exalted state I see clearly what is obscure in my ordinary moods; then I feel capable of drawing inspiration from above as Beethoven did . . . Those vibrations assume the form of distinct mental images . . . Straightaway the ideas flow in upon me . . . and not only do I see distinct themes in the mind’s eye, but they are clothed in the right forms, harmonies, and orchestration. Measure by measure the finished product is revealed to me.”<sup>3</sup>*

Mozart and Aaron Copeland also seem to have had similar experiences. In Mozart’s case the connection was so clear and strong that the pages of his compositions show few alterations; they look like finished transcriptions.

The French mathematician Jules Henri Poincaré told friends that on two occasions major breakthroughs seemed to come “from thin air.”<sup>4</sup> Einstein said he “saw” relativity as he idled away time in a canoe after an illness.<sup>5</sup> Darwin said that after years of collecting data, on a day when he was relaxed and away from his workplace, “the key elements of evolution fell into place in an instant.”<sup>6</sup>

In accounts of religious ecstasy the same process is also reported, only in a more profound context—in the quest for spiritual rather than creative insight or target information. The lives of St. John, St. Francis, and St. Teresa are filled with events that resonate with Brahms’s observations and the experiences of remote viewers. And the accounts of saints and ecstasies stress even more strong-

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*The Central Intelligence Agency has just released nearly 12,000 documents (90,000 pages) detailing the U.S. government's history of research into remote viewing. Go to [www.rviewer.com/SGArchive.html](http://www.rviewer.com/SGArchive.html) for more information.*

ly a sense of connection with something greater than themselves. Of Beatrice of Ornacieu (circa 1309 CE) it is reported: "As we are accustomed to find in mystics who have many visions and other sensible communications with the unseen . . ."7

The Gospel of Mary Magdalene, found in the Nag Hammadi Library and among the earliest of Christian writings, is a collection of thirteen codices comprising more than fifty texts. Their emphasis provides insight into early Christian history and the place of Gnosticism, a word based on Greek roots. The Greeks distinguished between two kinds of knowledge: rational propositional knowledge, and direct knowledge obtained through sense experience and knowingness. They called the second kind of knowledge *gnosis*, and its attributes are remarkably similar to the experiences of creative breakthroughs and remote viewing.

Mary said to Peter, "I said to Him, 'Lord, how does he who sees the vision see it, through the soul or through the spirit?' The Savior answered and said, 'He does not see through the soul nor through the spirit, but the mind which [is] between the two—that is [what] sees the vision.'"8

Soul in this instance seems to represent that aspect of the self outside of time-space. This is the part that seems to be involved with illumination, out-of-body, and near-death experiences. Spirit in traditional Christian terms means the power of God's action.

However the words are parsed, it is obvious that geniuses, religious ecstasies, near-death survivors, and remote viewers are all struggling to find words to describe the same ineffable sense of connection.

There are differences, of course, between these states. Two obvious differences are the context and the significance of the imagery. Remote viewing is designed to elicit testable information, not the religious ecstatic's life trans-

formation. A moment of genius falls somewhere between these two extremes. But all these experiences, regardless of their context, are defined by in-flowing awareness and a sense of connection with a greater whole.

## A SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT

This confluence of experiences, whether one is speaking of transcendence, intellectual breakthrough, or a remote viewing description, is in some way the most important insight to take from these occurrences. Their universality pulls aside a veil and reveals something of how our world works. From these accounts, across time, geography, and culture, we can see that some part of our consciousness is nonlocal and linked to a greater whole. We are shown how we can affect our reality in subtle ways, not immediately apparent, and are left with a sense of our own empowerment.

These interactions may be how archetypes are formed, from thousands and thousands of individual personal reactions; how nations develop character, so that the arbitrary lines drawn on maps have meaning; how geniuses make the great leaps that change our lives; and how spiritual adepts make the contact they experience as divine. 🌐

## Notes

1. Judith Orloff in an interview with the author, June 1986.
2. Stephan A. Schwartz, "Applications of Anomalous Cognition," Proceedings of the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness, 1981.
3. A.M. Abell, *Talks With Great Composers* (G. E. Schroeder-Verlag: Garmisch-Parten-Kirchen, 1964).
4. Gail Delaney, "Creativity in Music," Proceedings of the Association for the Anthropological Study of Consciousness, Annual Meeting, 1984.
5. Albert Einstein, *Collected Papers* (Princeton Center for Advanced Studies).
6. William I. B. Benneridge, *The Art of Scientific Investigation* (New York: Vintage, 1957).
7. *Butler's Life of the Saints*, compiled by Donald Attwater (Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1938).
8. James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988).

**STEPHAN A. SCHWARTZ** is a writer, researcher, adventurer, and philosopher. He is the author of several books, most recently *Opening to the Infinite: The Art and Science of Remote Viewing* (in press), and writes prolifically for major newspapers, magazines, and scientific journals. To learn more, visit [www.stephanaschwartz.com](http://www.stephanaschwartz.com) and [www.schwartzreport.net](http://www.schwartzreport.net).

