

## **79/08 - "Absorption Experiences and their relationships to dreams, imaginary companions and Parapsychological experiences"**

Instituição/*Institution*: Division of Perceptual Studies, University of Virginia Health System - USA

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**Objectives:** Conducted with Dr. Carlos S. Alvarado, the research described here was an exploratory survey of the relationship of Tellegen's Absorption Scale (TAS) scores, the frequency of absorption experiences and, adult memories of childhood imaginary companions, and dream-related, mystical, déjà vu, synesthesia-like and seemingly psychic experiences.

**Method:** Two surveys were conducted, one a random survey of the population of Richmond, Virginia (S1) and the other, an English-language web-based volunteer survey (S2).

**Results:** 263 individuals completed the random survey and 622 the web-based survey. S2 respondents obtained higher TAS scores, and claimed more of all other experiences surveyed. 14% S1 respondents claimed childhood imaginary companions compared to 26% S2 respondents. For both groups, TAS scores were significantly higher for those who remembered imaginary companions (IC-Yes) than for those who did not (IC-No) (Mann-Whitney z scores, S1z = 4.23, S2z = 6.61,  $p < .0001$ ), as were frequency of absorption experience scores (S1z = 4.03, S2z = 6.96,  $p < .0001$ ). IC-Yes and IC-No groups differed significantly in S2 on frequency of dream-related, seemingly psychic, mystical, déjà vu, and synesthesia-like experiences while in S1, disturbing dreams, mystical and déjà vu experiences were not significantly different when parsed by IC-Yes/IC-No. TAS scores and absorption frequency scores correlated with other experiences in both surveys, with differing patterns of significance. For example, of the significant outcomes, TAS scores correlated most highly with the frequency of lucid dreams ( $r_s = .498$ ), claimed apparitional experiences ( $r_s = .538$ ), mystical experience ( $r_s = .581$ ) and synesthesia-like experiences of color with music ( $r_s = .614$ ) in S1, but with dream recall frequency ( $r_s = .283$ ), claimed ESP experiences during dreams ( $r_s = .489$ ), and déjà vu ( $r_s = .524$ ) in S2.

**Conclusion/Discussion:** This research replicated results of previous studies we have conducted in that they show a consistent set of relationships between exceptional experiences and with such psychological states/traits as absorption. Future research that includes measures of psychological and psychosocial adjustment is warranted.

**Keywords:** Absorption, Imaginary Companions, Exceptional Experiences