

174/06 - "Experimental Investigation of a Psi Training Program"

Instituição/*Institution*: Institute of Noetic Sciences, California - USA

Duração/*Duration*: 2007/05 - 2009/01

Investigadores/*Researchers*: Dr. Marilyn Schlitz, Dr. Dean Radin, Dr. Cassandra Vieten, Dr. Colin Cherot

Objectives:

1) Test the claim that transformative practices may lead to enhanced intuitive experiences. **2)** Develop a well-controlled experimental design for the “feeling of being stared at” paradigm that can be adapted to naturalistic settings, using the internet as a medium for carrying live video images.

Methods: We tested sixteen people who had been practicing the Transcendental Meditation TM-Sidhi technique for a minimum of 10 years, and 16 adult non-meditators.

One person is a sender (S) and one a receiver (R).

S viewed a screen showing a live video streaming image of the distant Receiver during sending periods, and during no-sending periods, S viewed a randomly selected static picture from a pool of pre-selected neutral photographs.

R viewed a web page that informs R that a trial is in progress, but does not indicate whether the distant sender was viewing their image or not. R is asked “Are you being stared at?”

Five seconds after each trial began, R saw a count-down timer and had 15 seconds to respond “yes” or “no.” If no response was received within 15 seconds, the trial was recorded as a pass. If R did respond, feedback was provided indicating that the response was correct or incorrect. S also saw this feedback. The assignment of staring vs. non-staring conditions per trial was determined by a random process.

Results: The two groups showed no differences in self-rated ability to perceive someone staring at them, in how well they thought they would do in the test, or in self-assessed psychic abilities. However, the non-meditator group reported having had the feeling of being stared at significantly more than the meditators.

Overall the control group performed slightly, but non-significantly better than the meditation group. On average the meditation group performed closely to chance expectation over the entire sequence of 100 trials, but the control group progressively improved.

Meditators reported higher levels of self-transcendence than non-meditators.

Contrary to prediction, meditators reported higher levels of stress than the controls.

Conclusion: Overall, this study did not show that attention training, in this case specifically meaning the technique known as the TM-Sidhis, would improve performance on a “feeling of being stared at” task.

The TM group’s self-transcendence scores were significantly higher than the control groups, but contrary to prediction, their perceived stress scores were not lower.

The most consistent finding in this experiment was the sheep-goat effect: Participants’ expectations and beliefs was the best predictor of their actual performance.

Keywords: Meditation, attention, intuition, transformation, Psychic