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Monroe Institute of Applied Sciences

PRESENTS

THE GATEWAY PROGRAM

WHO ARE WE?

In 1958, Robert Monroe, a New York broadcasting executive, began having experiences that drastically altered his life. Unpredictably, and without willing it, Monroe found himself leaving his physical body to travel, via a "second body," to locales far removed from the physical and spiritual realities of his life. He was inhabiting a place unbounded by time or space. With some trepidation he wrote a book about his experiences. Doubleday published *Journeys Out of the Body* in 1971. Anchor brought out a second edition in 1977. Throughout the book Monroe maintains the stance of a careful, objective reporter who often reports his own confusion in this unusual area. He relies upon personal experiences for interpretation rather than any occult, religious or spiritual framework.

In the 1960's, Monroe became interested in the possible connection between non-verbal audio patterns and brain-wave rhythms. From his long experience with sound, he advanced from rotating disc circuit breakers to sophisticated, custom-built signal generators and the production of tape recordings in which he has as many as sixteen patterns of sound mixed together on stereo channels.

Drawing upon his discoveries and the work of others, he employs a system of binaural beats to create a *frequency following response* (FFR) by the brain-wave rhythms. The FFR not only gives some control over the brainwave emission of each hemisphere, it also promotes brain-wave synchronization between the two hemispheres. In May, 1975, Monroe received a generic patent for this method.

In 1971, the Monroe Institute of Applied Sciences was founded and located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge in Virginia. After he shared his findings with others pursuing the same interests, an Advisory Board representing several major scientific disciplines formed around the Institute. The Institute then developed a highly experimental program for the training of consciousness itself.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

We are instructing and training individuals in the art of switching perceptual modes, the art of becoming more conscious of one's particular inner resources, inner abilities, and, most of all, of one's inner guidance.

From Samadhi and Satori to the "Vision Quest" and the "Cloud of Unknowing," cultures in all times and all places have harbored a few individuals who reached and practiced profound levels of self-exploration. Most of these individuals practiced within a mythology, an epistemological groundwork by which they could interpret and give meaning to their experiences.

Present day Western epistemology, just recovering from an entrancing flirtation with materialism, provides little in the way of a ladder toward other perceptual modes. What investigation has been done within our current theory of knowledge has centered on the physiology of the brain and on the possible correlation between the brain's physical state and the subjective state of the mind. First, brain-wave profiles and then lateral brain specialization and hemispheric synchronization have offered potential tools for the description of the subjective state and the mind's operational function.

Yet, in our work, we suspect that while the tremendous variety of subjective states may each have physiological correlates, the ability to determine these correlates lies beyond our present techniques. It may well be, as Elmer Green suggests in *Beyond Biofeedback*, that the brain, as a physical mechanism, cannot register "non-physical" events. If this is the case, the Western idea of "knowledge" will have to be enlarged. But how?

It is precisely this that we are investigating. First, we are training interested individuals to switch their perception to areas or fields outside the realm of our physical matter reality. We call these, "non-physical realities." Then we examine the "data" they "bring back." Such examination presents problems peculiar to this investigation. Often the experiences in these non-physical realities appear to be in and come from a qualitatively greater consciousness than our usual consciousness in physical matter reality. Therefore, in order not to miss or misinterpret important patterns and information, we need to take the qualitatively greater perspective into account while at the same time, in

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order for the patterns and information to be useful to us here in physical reality, we try to interpret them from the perspective of physical matter reality.

It would be easier, of course, if we all would switch perceptual modes and rise into a greater consciousness. That may be the only way we can enlarge our ideas about knowledge itself; the only way we can create a "mythology" sufficient for the coming years.

Our Gateway Program provides the instruction, the training and the environment for making this transition. On a wide scale we have no idea how successful the program would be. On a small scale we do know that it is successful for those who have the volition and courage and desire to rise into the "truly" unknown.

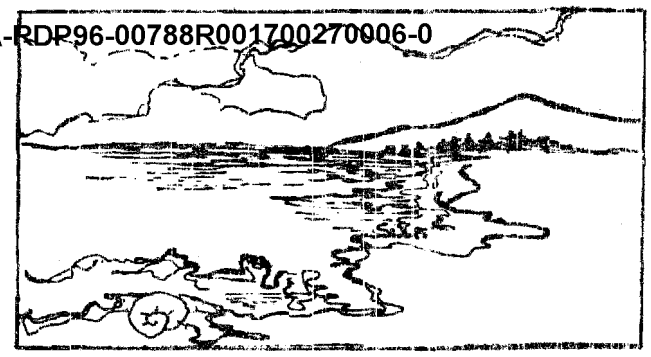
HOW IT WORKS

In appearance the Gateway Program presents a puzzling facade. A group of twenty people stand around talking, stretching. Then they all enter a large room, lie down on individual mattresses, pull blankets over them, put on padded stereo headphones, and become motionless. The room is darkened. For the first five minutes slight coughs and rustlings can be heard. For the next forty minutes there is not a sound or movement save an occasional snore. Then, all at the same time, everyone sits up and looks around. Soon they resume their talking, stretching and running outside. This happens several times during the day, evening, and sometimes at three in the morning. Retreat center personnel often ask, "What is going on here?"

These individuals are practicing and participating in a progressive series of Frequency Following Response recordings. The major component of these recordings is a series of non-verbal audio patterns, most of them masked by a "pink sound" similar to waves rolling along a beach or wind slipping through the trees. There may be several patterns going on at once, or only one. The patterns may change slowly or rapidly. They may be complex wave-forms beating against each other, or a simple wave in one ear only. For the brain and mind are complex, and it appears that they must be coaxed into certain formations by an orchestration of complex audio patterns rather than by a static mix of audio frequencies. It is, indeed, an art. And, by drawing from much practice and from hints we receive, we have approached it from an artist's, or creative engineer's, view. Whatever works, we use, and attempt to improve.

Verbal instruction carefully synchronized with the audio patterns in the recordings demand that the listener not wait passively on his mattress for new experiences to overtake him. He must use a large amount of volition and concentration in order to cooperate with the verbal instructions in the conducive environment generated by the audio stimulation.

From long experience, we know that the brain and mind do respond with great regularity to shifting FFR patterns. Some researchers have studied the brain's response. They have noted, in the brain-wave profile, strong and regular shifts in the frequency, the power, and in the amount of synchronization. For the most part, we have restricted ourselves to the study of the mind's response. Our interest lies here.



THE GATEWAY PROGRAM

We call it this because this series of techniques do lead to a gateway, a gateway into different modes of perception. From our observation, the individuals who become involved in this Program find it both deeply disturbing and deeply satisfying. From time to time, one response outweighs the other.

Some participants run into what we call the "fear barrier" particularly if they try to advance too fast. One way or another this manifests as a fear about the potential loss of the self as they know it. For this reason the Program develops along carefully controlled steps, each with a strong and positive base. This permits a self-protective mechanism to work. Hundreds of times we have observed that when an individual begins to stimulate himself more than his level of adjustment will allow, he blanks out the experience. He feels either that he went to sleep or that he "clicked out" for a period of time. Perhaps the next time, or the fifth time he repeats that exercise, he will remember the experience and then edge his level of adjustment, his homeostatic network, into a larger awareness.

But we also see that as individuals advance through these stages, they develop a deep sense of self-worth. Much as a child proclaims his new worth when he shouts, "Now, I am seven!" so they feel that vital sense of growth and of enjoyment from new levels of ability, creativity, and self-control. Best of all, their interior sense of direction strengthens. For most, all of this takes re-adjustment, dedication, time, and occasionally, courage. Yet, as this inner process begins, as they learn to cooperate with it and encourage it, they often experience a sense of lightness, deftness, even a great playfulness.

Focus 10 - Deep Relaxation

In order to avoid the connotations often associated with names, we use numbers to designate different levels of consciousness.

The first series of exercises in the Gateway Program instructs and trains the participant in the art of deep relaxation. Most types of interior exploration depend upon reaching profoundly relaxed levels. Even many of those who practiced this art for years have found that they need to reach yet deeper levels before the Program becomes effective. The level needed is close to the lucid dream state. Our key phrase is "body asleep; mind awake." At this level, the mind focuses on interior events in a different and more concentrated perceptual focus than in our usual waking state. We call this level, "Focus 10."

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The training at this level combines three techniques, each advantageous to the other. The first and by far most powerful is the FFR stimulation. We have found that most individuals who listen to these masked audio patterns, with no instruction and no other stimulation, can reach and maintain a level of relaxation beyond any conscious level they have had previously. (It is for this that the patent has been granted.) The second is a standard progressive relaxation technique. Counting slowly from one to ten the participant relaxes in the environment generated by the FFR and tells his body to relax part by part. The third technique is suggestion. After several repetitions of this process, the participant finds that he no longer needs the FFR or the progressive relaxation exercise to reach Focus 10.

Is this self-hypnosis? It depends upon definition. If hypnosis is a generic term given to all altered states of awareness and all use of suggestion, then this is a form of hypnosis. So would be many other areas of life, such as watching television. We do know that the brain-wave profile of an individual in Focus 10 differs greatly from that of an individual in a standard "hypnotic trance." What this difference means, we do not know.

In Focus 10, individuals find themselves thinking more with images than with words. Though we all do this in the dream state, few non-visualizers have achieved that level of relaxation that permits them to do it in the waking state. They find it a peculiar experience. Strong energies can flow in Focus 10, energies similar to electrical or vibratory sensations. We call them "non-physical energies." To establish more control in this state, the next series of exercises concentrate on building and using very simple "image-inary" tools for the gathering, focusing, and distributing of these non-physical energies. To their delight, the participants find that these energies do affect the physical reality.

This particular non-physical energy system appears to be connected with the channels between the mind and body, for it is especially useful in healing and in preparing the body for stronger use. It also appears to be the system responsible for much of the "psychic" attunement between individuals some distance apart. One of the most important exercises at this level involves "distant viewing," the discernment of the emotional and, perhaps, the physical state of a familiar individual not in the immediate vicinity. Anyone in Focus 10 finds this to be a relatively simple exercise.

Focus 12 - High Energy

After the participants have explored and used Focus 10 to their satisfaction, they advance to the next stage of the Gateway Program, Focus 12. Occasionally, an individual in Focus 10 feels a sudden or gradual heightening or expansion of his mind and possibly of his body. He also feels a strong vibration or a charged feeling. He knows, unmistakeably, that he is in a different state of energy. Many people have this experience in "high dreams" or accompanying out of body experiences. We call this expanded, high-energy state, Focus 12.

The next series of FFR recordings instruct and train the participants in the creation of a device that will, in the Focus 10 state, generate energy from this new energy system, then transport them to Focus 12, help them acclimate to this new world, and finally, bring them back to Focus 10. After a gradual, carefully controlled introduction to Focus 12, the participants learn to stay there longer and then to use it.

We give them several exercises with the three major practical areas of Focus 12 we have discovered. The first is self-patterning. In this state, they can project changes they wish to have in the various aspects of their future being. An apparently larger self of each individual does appear to help bring about those conditions needed for making these changes.

Also in this state comes more direct contact with this apparently larger self. It appears, usually, in the form of an external guide or guides, or as an inner voice, an internal movie maker, or as an inner knowing. One can ask questions from the most mundane to the most profound; and often this source will answer from an apparently larger perspective. This opens the door to great creative expression. With this resource, the participant's life increases in both responsibility and complexity. At the same time, he feels a corresponding increase in his ability to handle the new situations.

After much practice in intensifying Focus 12, some participants have found that they can control out of body experience. They become identified with a second body, apparently composed of non-physical energy, and leave the physical body. After they have reduced their cultural shock through more practice, they then find themselves able to roam through other energy systems.

Focus 15

Much as Focus 12 appears to rise naturally out of Focus 10, the state we call Focus 15 grows naturally out of a strong and stable Focus 12. Yet a different energy level, Focus 15 leads into a different set of energy systems marked most of all by the nonsignificance of time. In fact, time as we know it no longer exists. Our explorers have reported that in one area of Focus 15, they have some ability to manipulate time.

One To One

At the Institute we have done much investigation of one phenomenon that can appear in Focus 12 and Focus 15. With great care and compassion, a strong and guiding figure will lead an explorer out of the body, place him in a comfortable position, and watch over him while talking to us, using the explorer's vocal cords, thought patterns and vocabulary. The onset of this phenomenon in several explorers, each without knowing about the others, has been astoundingly similar. Even more fascinating is the fact that the information these sources give, all of it being of a gentle and instructional nature, has a high degree of correlation. We have no way, of course, to remove all possible contamination or leakage between each explorer and between them and ourselves. While we do not promote this information nor make any claims about its authenticity, we have been most impressed with its quality.

Individual Tests

On the way to Focus 10 and Focus 12 most participants encounter a few obstacles. A small percentage develop physical symptoms. If these persist, we recommend they leave the Program for a period of time and concentrate on physical health and on a mind-body integration technique such as Reichian therapy, Yoga asanas, or Tai-Chi.

Almost every participant, at first, has some difficulty maintaining waking consciousness. What triggers the loss of consciousness before they reach the lucid dream level of Focus 10, we do not know. We do know that when the

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participants practice it gently over a period of time they learn to enter Focus 10 consistently.

Some who have great difficulty with physical and mental relaxation may have minds held tense to keep unwanted material repressed, a natural self-protective mechanism. At first, in the Focus 10 exercises, they either sleep or remain wide awake at what we call the Focus 1 level. Then, as they repeat the exercises many times, they learn to relax more deeply while maintaining consciousness. Bit by bit, in a self-regulating process, they begin conscious assimilation of repressed material. For some, this process is a matter of hours; for a few, it is a matter of months. At times, they express and release a great deal of negative emotion. If an individual should pass our screening process who does have a great deal of repressed material and little ego strength, we do not permit him to continue. We are not practicing psychotherapy. Our task is not to repair, but to build on solid foundations.

Homeostasis impedes most participants at times. Physicians use the term, "homeostasis," for the tendency of the body to establish an equilibrium of functioning between all the body systems. This equilibrium sets up an inertia, somewhat like a spinning gyroscope, that resists any new method of physical functioning, even if the new method is beneficial. Elmer and Alyce Green have remarked that the term also describes the resistance of the mind to any new mental system. In the Gateway Program this resistance manifests as the thought and feeling that Focus 10 and Focus 12 may be interesting but that they are just imagination inside the head and have little to do with "real" reality. Interest wanes, and the mind keeps its homeostatic network intact.

The homestatic network may be threatened by existentially disturbing experiences. In this Program, experiences of a larger awareness do come. Often they are overpowering in a way not previously conceived by the participant. They can be overpowering to the extent that they disturb the participant's concept of who he is; his homeostatic network is threatened. With guidance from himself and others, the participant can assimilate the new level of awareness. If he does not wish to assimilate it, he can push the experience into the background and preserve his present homeostatis.

Deep relaxation with the intent of personal growth appears to trigger an internal process toward better physical and mental health. Some participants find themselves spontaneously giving up tobacco, alcohol, drugs, even television. Others may go through an over-due divorce, change jobs, or move to another State.

But, as the participant approaches Focus 12, his contact with this source of direction becomes clearer, setting up a feedback loop about his particular path. All he has to do is pay attention to these inner directions and exercise the volition to follow the changes.

The Gateway Affirmation

"I am more than my physical body. Because I am more than physical matter, I can perceive that which is greater than the physical world. I deeply desire to Expand, and to Experience, to Know, to Understand, to Control, to Use such greater energies and energy systems as may be beneficial and constructive to me and to those who follow me.

Also, I deeply desire the help and cooperation, the assistance, the understanding of those individuals whose wisdom, development and experience is equal to or greater than my own. I ask their guidance and protection from any influence or any source that might provide me with less than my stated desires."

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