

Psychic & Paranormal Terms

Psychic and Paranormal Terms Explained

A comprehensive although not exhaustive glossary of terms that you may come upon whilst researching the psychic, alternative medicine or paranormal field. Please note that is a glossary is for information purposes and does not necessarily reflect the views or held belief of the author.

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A

*Absent Healing

Healing that takes place when the healer is not in direct contact with the person receiving healing. The healer is thought to have the ability to send energy for healing and heal from any geographical distance.

*Acupuncture

Traditional Chinese medical practice that involves the use of needles, cupping or heat and electric current into specific locations on the body. The body is mapped according to tradition and the guide lines used in acupuncture are known as meridians.

*Agent or Facilitator

The Person who attempts to communicate information to another in an ESP experiment by mentally sending thoughts and images. The subject in a psychokinesis experiment- the person being tested.

A Person who is the apparent focus of poltergeist activity, very often a teen.

*Akashic Records

Memories of all experiences catalogued since the beginning of time, believed by some mystical doctrines to be stored permanently in a spiritual substance (Akasha). A spiritual library of all deeds and acts. Some people claim to have been able to visit and browse them during meditation.

*Alien Abduction -Abductees

Increasingly reported experiences of being abducted by aliens. Abductees often experience lost time and suffer loss of memory. When memories are recovered, often using hypnotic regression, abductees may report that surgical operations were performed on them. Many psychiatrists explain this away as a common form of waking nightmare that shares the common theme of being helpless and controlled by an unknown force and not paranormal in nature. However, some interesting metal objects have been retrieved from abductees from sites on the body they claim to have been given implants. Until something more concrete can be proven- the jury is still out.

*Alpha Rhythm-Alpha Waves

Electrical activity in the brain, 10 cycles per second associated with a state of deep mental relaxation. Can be recorded scientifically and proven. Some people feel that many psychics get in to an 'alpha state' to work.

*Altered State of Consciousness

A term used to refer to any state of consciousness that is different from normal states of waking or sleeping that most of us experience. ASCs include hypnosis, trance, ecstasy, and meditative states that may produce euphoria. ASCs do not necessarily have anything at all to do with paranormal or psychic ability.

*Angels, Guardian Angels

Benevolent helpful spiritual beings who are thought to help people in need and are said to watch over us and only able to step in and provide assistance if asked by us directly. We are all said to have our own guardian angel.

*Animal Magnetism-Mesmerism

A phrase first coined by F.A. Mesmer to refer to a putative force or capable of being transmitted from one person to another, producing healing effects via an energy field transfer.

*Animal Mutilation

Cases in which animal corpses (almost exclusively sheep and cattle) have been found with bizarre injuries that do not seem to have a normal explanation in terms of illness, accident or action of a sick predators. Cuts and injuries often appear to have been carried out with surgical precision. Typically the corpse is drained of blood. Certain body parts may also be absent. Some surgical sites are said to have appeared so accurate in their execution that complex laser equipment must have been utilized. Thankfully a rare phenomena that remains as yet unexplained.

*Animal Psi

Paranormal abilities exhibited by animals. It has been documented that cats and wild animal may vacate an area en masse preceding and earthquake or fire.

*Animism

Religious practice and tradition based on the belief system that all living things and objects have individual spiritual essence or soul.

*Announcing Dream

A dream believed to announce an individual's rebirth or reincarnation. For example it is believed that the Dali Lama is reborn again and again and his return is prophesied by such dreams.

*Anomalous Experiences

A general term referring to an unusual experiences that cannot be explained in terms of current scientific knowledge or practice, EG. an anomalous result - a result that cannot be explained.

*Apparition

A visual appearance or hallucination, often of a person or scene, generally experienced in a waking or hypnagogic state. A spectre of a real or imagined ghost or spectre.

*Apport

A physical object which appears in a way that cannot be explained (seeming to come from nowhere). Apports are often associated with the seance room and physical mediumship. Cf. deport. See also materialization, teleportation.

*Astral Body

A term used by spiritualists and theosophists to refer to a energy copy of the person's physical body. The astral body is believed to be separable from the physical body during astral projection -out of body experience and at death also known as the KA.

***Astral Projection**

A term used by occultists, spiritualists and for an out of body experience. It is believed to result when the astral body separates from the physical body- whilst alive it is believed to be joined to the physical body via a cord allowing the person to return after astral travel. or projection. Some believe if the cord were broken a person would die.

***Astrology**

A practice which attempts to identify and link the ways in which astronomical events are thought to be correlated with events on earth, people's personalities, natural disasters or even politics. Mostly used in a very dilute form for entertainment purposes.

***Aura**

A field of energy believed by some to surround living creatures. Certain clairvoyants claim to be able to see the aura (generally as a luminous, colored halo). See also Kirlian photography.

***Automatic Writing or Drawings**

The ability to write intelligible messages without conscious control or knowledge of what is being written. Art and sketches of people and places can also be produced in the same way.

***Autoscopy**

Seeing your own 'double'

Looking back at one's own body from a position outside of the body, as in an out of body experience.

B***Ba**

Ancient Egyptian concept of a person's essence, believed to be immortal also described as the Soul.

***Banshee**

The Gaelic tradition of a female entity who calls a person to their death by groaning and screaming- not dissimilar to the Greek mythology Harpies.

***Bardo**

In Tibetan Buddhism, an intermediate state of existence, usually referring to the state between life and rebirth. It refers to the state of existence intermediate between two lives on earth a time and place for reflection before rebirth.

***Billet Reading**

An arrangement in which a question is secretly written on a piece of paper which is then folded or sealed in an envelope, and handed to the psychic who attempts to answer the question without seeing the paper. In my humble opinion less of a test for psychic ability and more of a parlor trick.

***Bilocation**

Being, or appearing to be in two different places at the same time. Some believe that those they describe as ascended masters may have been able to have been not only at two places at once but to have been in control of more than one souls at a time.

***Biofeedback**

A general techniques that involve giving a person information about their current physiological state (EG. heart rate, EEG). Biofeedback is used to enable people to control consciously their own physiological autonomic processes.

***Bio-PK**

Psycho kinetic effects on biological processes. The fabled ability of being able to do such things as encourage rapid plant growth or increase a persons heart rate for example.

***Black Art**

A previously popular conjuring technique of concealing objects using black covers against a black background. Also used by fraudulent mediums in Victorian times.

***Black Magic**

Incantations, magical spells or rituals practiced with the intention of harming others.

***Blind Trial**

An experimental control group in which subjects are not privy to certain key features pertaining to the experiment. Also used to refer to a procedure where a judge is asked to compare targets and responses without knowing which responses were made to which targets.

C

***Cabinet Manifestation**

A box or curtained area in which a physical medium is secured and from which various phenomena may manifest, EG. lights, objects moving, instruments played). Often the realm of a stage magicians rather than a psychic.

***Candomble**

An African religion mostly practiced in Brazil, Although originally confined to the slave population, banned by the Catholic church, and even criminalized by some governments, Candomblé thrived for over four centuries.

***Cartomancy**

Fortune telling using cards. Ordinary playing cards may be used or Tarot.

***Cerebral Anoxia**

Lack of oxygen to the brain, often though to be responsible for sensory distortions and hallucinations. Sometimes used to explain the effects felt by those who feel they have had a (NDE) near-death experience.

***Chance**

Referred to as Lady luck, Random, unpredictable influences on events.

***Channeling**

Receiving messages and inspiration from discarnate spirits or entities.

***Charm**

A spell or object that the owner believes to possess magic power.

***Christian Science**

A religious healing movement founded by Mary Baker Eddy. Rejects orthodox medical practice, in particular blood transfusions or organ donation.

***Cipher Test**

A coded message left by a person who intends to communicate the cipher after their death hoping to provide evidence of life after death.

***Circle- Sitting In**

A group of people who hold seances, they meet, sit in a circle and meditate before trying to bring forth

spirit. A popular practice amongst spiritualists.

***Clairaudience**

A paranormal means of obtaining information by hearing sounds or voices from ones spirit guide or that of those whom have departed.

***Clairsentience**

A term that refers to the paranormal practice of obtaining information using faculties other than vision or hearing. Intuition and empathy being the main methods.

***Clairvoyance**

A generalized term that refers to the paranormal method of obtaining of information about an object or event. An umbrella term that can be used to point to psychic, clairaudient, clairsentient and mediumistic abilities.

***Clairvoyant**

A person with demonstrative psychic and paranormal abilities.

***Clairvoyant Medium**

Or clairvoyant. A person who obtains information paranormally either by spirit communication with many or just by working with their own personal spirit guide, without the need to enter into a trance state like mediums of old.

***Coincidence**

Just one of those things. The occurrence, within a short space of time, of two or more meaningfully related events and without any apparent causal connection or cause between them. Coincidences are sometimes bizarre and extraordinarily improbable but still are no more-than chance events.

***Cold Readings**

A reading given with no prior knowledge of the sitter. Often a mixture of very general statements which could apply to anyone, together with inferences made from cues presented by the sitter such as demeanor, physical appearance, clothes, tone of voice, statements made and or confirmed.

***Collective Apparition**

An apparition witnessed simultaneously by more than one person. EG. I have clients who are identical twins and located on opposite sides of the world. Both claim to have seen their fathers spirits at the exact same time in both places simultaneously 15 minuets after his death. Neither at this point had been informed of his passing.

***Collective Unconscious and Collective Consciousness**

Concept put forward by C.G. Jung to refer to a level of unconscious thought and experience shared collectively by all people on the planet. Or used to describe the phenomena of people simultaneously from all over the world with no seeming connection behaving or adopting a similar idea, belief or concept at the same time.

***Confederate, plant or accomplice**

A person who secretly provides information to a fraudulent psychic or medium.

***Conjuring**

Using slight of hand or trickery to simulate paranormal effects, most generally for the purpose of entertainment.

***Contact Mind Reading**

A technique simulating telepathy, in which the perceived mind reader who generally holds a hand responds to slight muscle movements produced unconsciously by the person whose mind is apparently being read. Also known as muscle reading and no paranormal or psychic ability is needed.

***Control Group**

A group of people whose performance is compared with that of experimental any subjects in a test group to have a yard stick from which to compare the results

***Crop Circles**

Circular and elaborate formations found in growing crops, most commonly in Southern Britain. Sometimes they are associated with UFO sightings in peoples minds. Many formations appear to have been intelligently created and to have some symbolic meaning. Despite several “confessions” made by various individuals and groups, the crop circle mystery remains unsolved however many people are convinced these are made by hoaxers, and in fact quite a few have come forward and claimed responsibility for them after the event.

***Correlation**

An association between two or more events or variable results

***Correlation Coefficient**

A mathematical of the degree of association between two or more measures used for comparison.

***Cosmic Consciousness**

A blissful experience in which the person becomes aware of the whole universe as a living being. A spiritual or mystical state of being, can be described as an altered state also.

***Coven**

A group of practicing witches who meet to socialize and share knowledge and experience, practicing magic as a group or individually.

***Crisis Apparition**

An appearance of an apparition, ghost or spirit in which a person is seen within a few hours of an important crisis such as death, accident or illness.

***Cross-correspondence**

Separate items of information, received independently by two or more mediums, which make sense, correlate and only piece accurately together.

***Cryptomnesia**

Knowledge (picked up in a non paranormal way about a person) that may be revealed without the person knowing or remembering its source, being regurgitated parrot fashion back to them. Such memories may falsely appear to be paranormal revelations.

***Crystal Gazing and Scrying**

Staring into a reflecting surfaces such as a mirror, glass, crystals or water in order to obtain paranormal information and incite. The object itself if not terribly important, it just provides a focus for the psychic to enable them to quickly tune in with their innate ability.

***Curse, Hex or Evil Spell**

Words spoken or written in order to influence others magically, causing them harm and misfortune.

D

***Daemon**

A guardian spirit who communicates inspiration and advice as in a muse.

***Death**

The physical extinction of a living thing's life. Many people do not accept or believe that physical death is the end of our spirit or personality.

***Deathbed Paranormal Epiphany**

A commonly reported occurrence where a dying person's awareness of the presence of dead friends or relatives is perceived.

***Decline Effect**

A curious unexplained decrease in performance on a psi test when the test is repeated- could be due to boredom of the test subject mentally switching off from the dull repetitions!

***Deja Vu**

Is experienced by the sometimes split second 'knowing' that we have done the task at hand, met the new person, or been to a new place before, perhaps even had the same conversations. Most people you will talk to anywhere will admit to having experienced this.

***Delta**

A term used to refer to any kind of anomalous event.

***Dematerialization**

The paranormal fading and or disappearance of a physical object right in front of your eyes.

***Demonic Possession**

Possession by evil spirits. A person may believe that they have been taken over by an evil entity.

***Deport**

The paranormal non physical movement of objects out of a secure enclosed space. The ability to influence the physical world and objects with just your mind power alone.

***Dice Experiments**

Experimental technique for investigating psychokinesis, in which a subject attempts to influence the fall of dice.

***Direct Voice**

A voice heard in a seance which does not seem to emanate from any person present. The voice may seem to come out of thin air and be extremely difficult to pinpoint from which direction it came.

***Discarnate Entity or Spirit**

A soul or non-material entity. Often used to refer to the personality of a deceased individual no longer in possession of a physical body.

***Displacement**

Responses on a psi test that correspond systematically to targets other than the intended one for example, a psychic giving you the wrong answer to the current question, but that answer proving to be correct for the next question.

***Dissociation**

Activity performed outside of normal conscious awareness, or mental processes that suggest the existence of separate centers of consciousness.

***Divination**

Practices involving the interpretation of signs or symbols that seek to obtain knowledge of events via patterns perceived. Examples of divinatory practices are geomancy, tarot, and reading the tea leaves.

***Divining Rods**

A forked rod, often a pair of L-shaped rods used in dowsing. Dowsing can be employed to locate water, mineral deposits, lost objects and people or oil. A pendulum can also be employed for this purpose.

***Doppelganger**

A mirror image or double of a person, it was thought that you would immediately die should you ever bump in to your own doppelganger by some.

***Double**

A duplicate of one's self in physical form

***Double Blind**

An experiment procedure in which neither the subject nor experimenter is aware of key features of the experiment or the goal to help insure fairness.

***Drop-in Communication- Walk Ins**

An uninvited communicator or spirit who 'drops in' at a seance or may even invade and temporarily take over a mediums body in order to communicate in physical form.

E***Ecstasy**

An altered state of consciousness in which the person experiences great rapture, joy and peace.

***Ectoplasm**

A semi-fluid like and often white substance exuded by a physical medium from which materializations may take form. Ectoplasm is "a seemingly life like substance, solid or vaporous in nature, which allegedly extrudes from the body of a medium and can be transformed into materialized limbs, faces or even entire bodies of spirits.

***EEG Electroencephalography**

A scientific method of recording variations and patterns of electrical activity in the cortex of the brain.

***Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP)** Voice of spirits and loved ones whom have passed being caught on ordinary tape players in conversation or even appearing to respond to our questions.

***Elemental Spirit , fairies Salamanders or Spirits**

A spirit associated with one of the classical four elements fire, earth, air and water.

***Elongation**

Paranormal extension of the physical body, reported in some mystics and physical mediums if the propoerted spirit guide is said to have been taller in stature, it has been witnessed that while the medium is thought to have been taken over by the guide, that the medium has been noted to appear as if they have grown suddenly and physically.

***Empath-Empathy**

Someone who shows considerable empathy, especially on a psychic level as they are able to tune in and accurately describe the exact emotions or emotional state people were in at the time of the event being investigated.

The ability to understand the experience or emotional state of another person or animal. Often used to refer to an apparently psychic ability to experience another person's sensations, pain or emotions.

***ESP**

Extra sensory Perception. A sixth sense not present in the normal five senses

***Ethereic Body**

Same as the astral body.

***Evil Eye**

Alleged ability of some people to harm others by looking at them. Peacock feather have been feared at different times in history as they seem to sport a human eye motive and were therefore deemed unlucky.

***EVP or Raudive Voice**

Electronic Voice Phenomena. Seeⁱ

***Evocation/Invokation**

The summoning of spirits using a magical incantation or ritual spell, used to summon good or bad spirits.

***Exorcism**

A quasi-religious rite to drive out evil spirits thought to be in possession of a persons body and soul.

***Experiment**

A test carried out under controlled conditions.

***Experimental Group**

A group of subjects who undergo a specific experimental procedure. Often results from this group are compared with those of a control group.

***Experimenter**

The person who conducts the experiment and is responsible for it.

***Experimenter Effect**

Influence that the experimenter's personality or behavior may have on the results of an experiment. It is vitally important that the person in charge of an experiment remains unemotional about the outcome and as impartial as possible.

***Extradimensional**

Originating outside our normal space-time reality possibly from a previously unknown dimension.

***Extrasensory Perception (ESP) (PSI)**

Paranormal acquisition of information not obtained from the five senses. Includes clairvoyance, telepathy and precognition.

***Extraterrestrial**

Originating beyond planet Earth-coming from space.

F

***Faith Healing**

Healing not thought to originate from the person providing healing- but via the healer from some divine source. Healing that is associated with prayer or belief in divine power or deity.

***False Awakening**

An experience in which a person believes he or she has woken up, but actually is still dreaming.

***Faraday Cage**

A wire mesh enclosure or cage that provides a shield to radio waves and electrical current.

***Feedback**

The giving of information to subjects about their performance on a test.

***Fire Walking**

Walking on red-hot coals, without pain or damage to the feet. I can attest to this one as I have done it personally. It is accomplished by mind over matter. You get yourself in a state of what can be described as 'Confidence' a weird hyper state where you convince yourself that you won't get hurt or burnt- and you don't!

***Flying Saucer or UFOs**

A term, coined in 1947, to refer to unknown disk-like aerial objects, often believed to be extraterrestrial spacecraft. The term has now been largely superseded by 'UFO' Unidentified flying objects.

***Focal Personality**

Person who appears to be at the centre of poltergeist activity.

***Fortean Phenomena- Forteana**

Strange phenomena, especially those which challenge conventional scientific knowledge. Named after the American researcher and writer Charles Fort. Forteana phenomena include those generally considered paranormal, but also bizarre non-paranormal events such as monsters and prodigies, cryptozoology, (strange unidentified creatures) extraordinary coincidences, and unusual rains or plagues, such as fish or frogs falling from the sky. Encapsulated perfectly by the Fortean Times. A secret pleasure I indulge in from time to time.

***Fortune Telling**

Various and different practices which aim to divine future events. eg. I-Ching.

***Free-Response Testing**

An ESP or PSI test in which the subject responds freely and does not choose from a fixed list of targets. For example, the subject may write down or draw their impressions, or may talk freely into a tape recorder. In order to assess the accuracy of the responses, they are compared the actual target and are then rated for accuracy judge.

G***Geomancy**

Any type of divination involving the interpretation of lines or figures.

***Ghost**

Popular term for an experience believed to indicate the presence of the spirit of a deceased person. See also apparition, haunting, poltergeist.

***Guide**

A spirit who is believed to assist a person's spiritual journey or impart accurate information to psychics to impart to those who seek their services for a psychic reading.

H

***Hallucination**

A sensory experience that does not correspond to physical reality- sometimes difficult to tell apart from what is real. Anyone for example with a high fever can experience them.

***Haunting**

Paranormal phenomena, orbs, visible sightings such as apparitions, unexplained sounds, smells or other sensations that are associated over a lengthy period of time with a specific location which is then perceived as being a haunted area.

***Healer**

Someone who is thought to some how have the ability to heal.

***Healing**

The cessation of illness or disease not brought about by medicine or conventional treatments. Generally indicates cures that cannot be explained in terms of accepted medical practice.

***Hit**

A response that absolutely matches the target sought.

***Huna**

A Hawaiian religious observance involving clairvoyance, precognition, healing, miracles and ritual.

***Hyperaesthesia**

Exceptionally acute sensory acuity.

***Hypnagogic State**

A relaxed state occurring while or just at the point of dropping off to sleep

***Hypnopompic Imagery**

Imagery occurring in the hypnopompic state occurring at the point where you regain awareness after sleep.

***Hypnosis Mesmerism Hypnotism**

A practice that involves getting a susceptible person into a heightened degree of suggestibility.

I***I Ching**

Ancient Chinese 'Book of Changes'. Consisting of 64 hexagrams patterns of 6 broken and unbroken lines which are used in a divinatory practice involving the throwing of yarrow stalks or three coins to determine the correct pattern to answer your question.

***Illusions**

A visual conjuring, a perceptual trick that leads the person to draw the mistaken conclusion that something false is real.

***Immortality or Imortals**

The belief in imortal beings and stories about them can be found in many faiths and cultures. An imortal is a living or un-dead soul who cannot die or be destroyed.

***Incorruptibility**

Inexplicable lack of decay in an aged corpse. Various cultures have both chosen to view this as a sign of an evil doer or saint!

***Intuition**

Often described as a ‘Gut Feeling’. A strange feeling on just ‘knowing’ the non-paranormal ability to grasp the elements of a situation or to draw conclusions about complex events in ways that go beyond a purely rational or intellectual analysis.

J

K

*Ka

Ancient Egyptian term for the double or astral body.

*Karma

A widely held belief that ‘as you sow, so shall you reap. No good deed will go unrewarded and no bad one unpunished.

*Kirlian Photography

A photographic method involving high frequency electric current, V. Kirlian in the Soviet Union first discovered the technique. Kirlian photographs show actual colored halos, energy fields or “auras” surrounding living things.

*Kundalini

A Yogic belief, that we all have a source of tremendous vital energy that may be stimulated by various practices. Kundalini, or the “Serpent Power”, is often represented in drawings as two coiled serpents much like the Caduceus .

L

*Levitation

The paranormal ability thought to enable a person the ability of raising or suspension of an object or person by no physical means.

*Life Review

Flashback memories of the whole of a person’s life acts, deeds and experiences, often associated with the near-death experience.

*Lucid Dreams

Dreams in which the experiencer is aware that the experience is a dream. Often associated with feelings of aliveness and freedom, and with the ability to control dreams.

*Lycanthropy or Werewolves

The alleged magical transformation of a person into a wolf. The trigger for this is often thought to be a full moon

M

*Mantra

A sacred sound, string of words or sacred syllables used to facilitate deeper meditation.

*Match

Another or alternative term for hit when referring to a correct piece of information given by a psychic.

*Matching Tests

Card guessing tests in which the subject uses key cards when making guesses. See also blind matching, open matching, screen touch matching. Virtually useless for testing psychic ability or responses in my

opinion.

***Materialization**

The formation of a visible and tangible object or human shape in thin air when the said object or person is not present.

***(MCE) Mean Chance Expectation**

The most likely and predictable chance score in a psi test.

***Medicine Man /Woman**

A witchdoctor or shaman or Wise man or Woman.

***Meditation**

Mental and sometimes physical- techniques which aim to produce spiritually and physically peaceful states of consciousness.

***Medium**

A person believed to have the ability to act as an intermediary between spirit/entities and the living. Having the ability to behave as a conduit between the two and enable two way communication.

***Mediumship**

What a Medium does or is. Activity of a medium.

***Mentalism**

A branch of conjuring or magic involving the simulation of psi.

***Mesmerism**

A system of healing developed by F.A. Mesmer, involving the induction of trance states and the supposed transfer of animal magnetism. People in Mesmeric trance often showed paranormal abilities such as clairvoyance is it said.

***Message**

Communication.

***Metal Bending and Morphing**

Psychokinetic ability to bend metal objects. A phenomenon popularized by Uri Geller with his alleged ability to bend spoons.

***Metamorphosis**

Shape-shifting. Changing and shifting either or your physical or mental self into another form or object such as an animal or tree.

***Metempsychosis**

An alternative term for reincarnation.

***Micro-PK**

Psychokinetic effects that cannot be directly observed, but only inferred from the statistical analysis or manipulation of data

***Mind Reading**

Same as telepathy.

***Miracle**

A beneficial event attributed to supernatural or divine intervention.

***Misdirection**

Techniques used by conjurers, magicians and mentalists to distract a person's attention or confuse their thinking enabling them to do something else unseen as your mind is busy being misdirected to focus on

***Miss**

A mismatch between the target and response. A wrong response.

***Morphic Resonance**

A term coined by Rupert Sheldrake to refer to the way in which the "morphogenetic field" of an object or organism may influence distant fields of resonance.

***Multiple Personality**

A psychiatric condition in which the person manifests two or more distinct and separate personalities at different times. Has been known to be mistaken in the past for possession.

***Mystic**

A person who has mystical experiences or who is capable of displaying mystical powers.

***Mystical Experience**

Involving experiences of ecstasy, unity, timelessness, loss of self, divine revelation, or spirit communication.

***Mysticism**

Religious or spiritual doctrines which argue that the human mind or soul can directly experience and feel the divine.

N

***Near Death Experience. NDE**

When a person has officially died for a few moments, there is often a commonly reported and similar series of perceived events according to reports from survivors.

Experiences of people after they have been pronounced clinically dead, seem to bear a shocking similarity. Typical features of the NDE are, life review, a tunnel experience, light, coming to a boundary (marking death), seeing dead friends and relatives, experiencing a loving or divine presence, and making a choice (or being told) to return. Occasionally NDEs can be frightening and distressing. NDEs often have profound effects on the person's later life continues approach to life.

***Necromancy**

Black magic practices involving communing with the dead.

***Null hypothesis**

The hypothesis that experimental results are due to chance.

***Numerology**

A system of divination involving the interpretation of numbers.

O

***Object Reading**

Same as psychometry.

***Occam's Razor**

The principle that we should always prefer and look for the simplest explanation of events.

***Occultism**

Esoteric systems of belief and practice that assume the existence of mysterious forces and entities and deities.

***Omen**

A sign or signal that foretells events.

***Open Deck**

A series of cards used in a card guessing test where each card is chosen randomly and independently. This enables each target to be selected any number of times. Statistical analysis of research data using an open deck differs from statistical analysis of data using a closed deck it seems.

***Oracle**

An answer to a question, believed to come from the gods.

***Orgone Energy**

A term used by Wilhelm Reich to refer to a universal life force, associated with sexuality.

***Ouija Board**

A board with letters and numbers on which messages are spelled out by unconsciously moving (with the fingers) a glass or planchette. Some believe the movements are guided by spirits.

***Out of Body Experience (OBE)**

A fully conscious experience in which the person's center of awareness appears to be outside of the physical body.

P***Palmistry**

The process of assessing a person's character and forecasting life events by examining features of the hand. A form of divination.

***Paranormal**

Beside and beyond the normal. Inexplicable in terms of our ordinary understanding and current scientific knowledge.

***Parapsychology**

The study of paranormal phenomena. Now generally used instead of "psychical research" to refer to all scientific investigation of the paranormal.

***Past-Life Memories**

Mental images that are believed to be memories of previous lives. Some times via hypnosis it is induced by way of past-life regression.

***Past-Life Regression**

A technique of hypnosis involving regressing people to alleged previous lives and times.

***Pendulum**

An object suspended on a cord. Movements of a pendulum are often used by dowsers to locate objects or answer questions.

***Percipient**

Person who receives impressions in a PSI test.

***Phantasm**

An apparition or spirit.

***Phenomenology**

An approach to research that aims to describe and clarify a person's own experience and understanding of an event or phenomenon.

***Phrenology**

The reading of character and mental ability from the shape of a person's skull. A popular practice with the Victorians.

***Physical Mediumship**

The production of paranormal physical phenomena eg. lights, sounds, materialization, elongation, levitation, by a medium. Physical mediumship often involves a state of trance. See also mental mediumship.

***Picture Drawing**

A free-response ESP test in which the subject attempts to draw impressions of the target EG. person or object.

***Pilot Study**

A preliminary study, generally of modest scale.

***Placebo**

An inactive/dummy treatment often given to a control group.

***Placement Test**

A test for PK in which the subject attempts to influence the place in which dice or other objects land.

***Planchette**

A small platform on casters generally used with a Ouija board. Sometimes used with an attached pencil to produce automatic writing.

***Pocomania**

A Jamaican spirit religion, similar to Voodoo.

***Poltergeist**

A suspected troublesome entity. Poltergeist-German word meaning 'noisy or troublesome spirit'. Poltergeist activity may include unexplained noises, movements of objects, outbreaks of fire, floods, pricks or scratches to a person's body. Unlike hauntings, which are associated with specific locations, poltergeists typically focus on a person the focal person or poltergeist agent.

***Possession**

Referring to cases in which a person's body is apparently taken over by another personality or entity. As in demonic possession.

***Prayer**

A solemn attempt to communicate with a spiritual being or power.

***Precognition**

The paranormal awareness of future events, prediction, premonition, or prophecy.

***Prediction**

A statement from a psychic that claims to foretell future events.

***Preexistence**

Belief that the personality or soul exists prior to actual birth.

***Premonition**

An experience believed to foretell future events.

***Presence**

A subjective feeling that a person, animal or discarnate entity is present.

***Probability Scale**

The likelihood that results in a test were due to chance.

***Proof Research**

Research that aims to demonstrate the existence of psi.

***Pseudo-Random Numbers**

Numbers generated by an electronic calculator or computer using a complex mathematical algorithm that simulates a random process. Although the numbers generated are essentially unpredictable, they are not strictly random. See also random numbers, random event generator.

***Psi**

A term used to encompass all paranormal abilities. Includes both ESP and PK abilities.

***Psi-Missing**

Significantly worse than chance performance on a psi test. Psi-missing is also evidence for psi, because a target can only be missed consistently if the person already knows what it is.

***Psyche**

Generally refers to the mind.

***Psychedelic**

Expanding and revealing mind. A class of plants and drugs such as peyote, psilocybin, LSD that can produce such feelings of this effect.

***Psychic**

A person who exhibits psi ability

***Psychic Healing**

Forms of healing using psychic energy. Eg. laying on of hands and psychic surgery.

***Psychic Photography**

Term used to refer to paranormal photographic images. See also Kirlian photography, spirit photography, thoughtography.

***Psychic Surgery**

Actual or simulated surgical procedures carried out by healers.

***Psychokinesis (PK)**

The paranormal influence of the mind on physical events and processes.

***Psychometry**

Obtaining paranormal knowledge using a physical object as a focus. Also known as object reading. The

proffered material is metal as many psychics feel it retains the energy and memory of events the best.

*Pyramid Power

Belief that pyramid shapes can produce paranormal effects. It is unknown why you can place say a blunt razor under a pyramid and it will appear to be sharp again after a few days.

Q

Qabalah (Hermetic Kabbalah) cabala: an esoteric or occult matter resembling the Kabbalah that is traditionally secret

R

*Radiesthesia

Theory based on the assumption that living organisms emit some kind of radiation or emanation that is capable of being detected using instruments or by dowsing. Similar assumption to the existence of aura or radionics.

*Radionics

Use of instruments to detect radiation from living organisms EG.. radiesthesia.

*Random

Refers to events that are, in principle, haphazard and unpredictable as in by pure chance.

*Random Event Generator (REG)

An electronic device which uses a random physical process to generate random events or random numbers.

*Random Number Generator (RNG) e

Like random event generator.

*Raps

The name given to unexplained knocking sounds associated with physical mediumship or poltergeist activity.

*Raudive Voices

Intelligible voices recorded on magnetic tape under conditions of silence or white noise which are heard only when the tape is played. A phenomenon discovered by Konstantin Raudive.

*Reading

Information given by a psychic or medium to a querent.

*Rebirth

In Buddhism, the belief that there is some continuity of mind and spirit from one life to the next. Buddhism, does not accept the existence of the individual soul and therefore does not view rebirth as the soul's literal re-incarnation.

*Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis (RSPK)

A term for poltergeist activity.

*Regression

A technique used in hypnosis, involving suggesting to hypnotized persons that they are returning to an earlier time. Sometimes the regression occurs spontaneously, without suggestion and its thought that memories of past-life regression can become apparent.

***Reincarnation**

The belief that some aspect of a person's being consciousness, personality, or soul survives death and can be reborn in a new body at some future time. Reincarnation is often seen as a repeating cycle of death and rebirth in which future lives are influenced by past and present actions through the law of karma cause and effect.

***Remote Viewing (RV)**

An ESP procedure in which a percipient attempts to become aware psychically of the experience of an agent who is at a distant, unknown target location. Actual almost having the experience of being there.

***Response**

An action made by a test subject in an experiment.

***Response Bias**

Tendency of a subject to prefer particular responses.

***Retroactive Psychokinesis**

Paranormal influence that an agent can have on an experiment after it has been completed.

***Retrocognition**

Paranormal knowledge of past previously unknown events.

***Ritual Magic**

Magical activity involving rites, passages and ceremonies.

Run

A set of trials in psi testing.

S***Skeptic**

A person inclined to discount the reality of the paranormal and to be critical of para psychological research. Generally seeks rational or scientific explanations for the phenomena studied by parapsychologists. May be extremely aggressive in their forceful manner of trying to prove non validity of all psychic subjects.

***Screen Touch Matching**

A card-guessing procedure in which the subject and experimenter sit on opposite sides of a screen which has a small gap at the bottom. Key cards are hung on the screen in front of the subject. Underneath each key card is a blank card that can be seen by both subject and experimenter. The experimenter holds the target cards and the subject indicates the guess on each trial by pointing to the corresponding blank card. The experimenter then places the card in a pile on his or her side of the screen in a position corresponding to that of the indicated blank card and all is recorded for later analysis.

***Scrying**

EG. crystal or water gazing.

***Seance**

A sitting with a medium.

***Second Sight**

Another description clairvoyance.

***Sender**

Another name for the agent in an experiment.

*Sensitive or Empath

Another name for a psychic.

*Sensory Deprivation

Conditions of greatly restricted sensory input. To be deprived of all five senses.

*Series

A sequence of runs of a psi experiment.

*Serpent Power

Kundalini energy.

*Shaman

A witchdoctor or medicine person of either gender who communicates with spirits while in trance and who has the power of healing and other paranormal abilities.

*Shape-Shifting

Paranormal ability to assume the form of another person, animal or entity.

*Siddhis

Name given to paranormal powers associated with the practice of Yoga.

*Significance

Results of an experiment are said to be statistically significant when they are very unlikely to be due to chance in a psi test, are more likely to be due to psi. The chance probability is reported as the 'significance level'. To be considered significant, the chance probability must generally be less than 1 in 20 5%, or 0.05.

*Simultaneous Dream

A dream whose elements correspond closely with those in the dream of another person. Possibly a shared dream experience.

*Sitter or Querent

A person who has a session with a medium.

*Sitting

A seance.

*Sixth Sense

Popular term for ESP.

*Slate-Writing

Writing that appears on a slate during a seance. Maybe produced by fraudulent means.

*Sleep Paralysis

An often frightening state of seeming to be awake but unable to move. See also false awakening.

*Somnambule

Person who performs physical activity while asleep EG. sleep-walking, a person in a deep hypnotic state.

*Sorcery

Magic-Black or White

***Sortilege**

Divination by lots.

***Soul**

The spiritual element of a person, generally believed to be immortal. The soul is thought to weigh 13'5 ounces. As moments after death we become exactly that precise amount lighter.

***Space Beings**

Extraterrestrial entities, claimed to be channeled by some mediums.

***Spectre**

A ghost, entity or apparition.

***Spell**

Written or spoken words believed to have magical power.

***Spirit**

A discarnate entity, Soul, Divine essence.

***Spirit Cure**

Healing that is believed to result from the intervention of spirit entity.

***Spirit Photography**

Photographs of figures or faces, believed by some to be those of deceased persons. These photographs are generally hard to prove to be authentic.

***Spiritualism**

Religious doctrine that advocate communication between the living and the spirits of the dead using a medium as intermediary.

***Spontaneous Cases**

Paranormal phenomena occurrences that occur in everyday life, unsought, unplanned and unexpected.

***Spontaneous Human Combustion (SHC)**

Refers to cases in which a badly burned (or virtually no human remains) human body has been discovered in circumstances suggesting that the fire originated spontaneously in or on the body of the victim. With no external cause found.

***Statistics**

Mathematical techniques for analyzing and interpreting numerical data.

***Stigmata**

Unexplained markings and bleeding on a person's body that correspond to the wounds of Christ on the cross. Recorded on devout Christians and non believers alike.

***Subject**

The person whose psi ability is being investigated.

***Subjective Paranormal Experience (SPE)**

Or Subjective Psi Experience. An experience that the person who has it believes to be paranormal.

***Subliminal Perception**

Perceiving without conscious awareness.

***Super-ESP Hypothesis**

The suggestion that people are capable of unlimited ESP. The super-ESP hypothesis is often presented as an alternative to the survival hypothesis in explaining mediumistic phenomena a medium is believed to obtain accurate information using super-ESP powers and not directly from the spirit of a deceased person.

***Supernatural
Paranormal*****Survival**

The belief that some aspect of the persons, consciousness, mind, personality, soul lives on after death of the body.

***Synchronicity**

A term used by C.G. Jung to refer to coincidental events that are meaningfully but not causally connected.

T***Table-Tilting**

Unexplained movements of a table, usually occurring in a seance when a group of people place their hands on the surface of the table. Often the movements are interpreted as spirit communications. Also known as table-turning or table-tipping. Tables can also be seen to almost hover.

***Target**

The object or event which the subject attempts to perceive (ESP tests) or influence (PK tests).

***Tarot**

A special deck of cards (usually 78) used in fortune telling. 56 Major Arcana the rest being minor cards.

***Telekinesis**

Paranormal movement of objects.

***Telepathy**

Paranormal awareness of another person's experience thoughts and feelings. In practice it is difficult to distinguish between telepathy and clairvoyance at times.

***Teleportation**

Paranormal transportation of objects to another location.

***Temporal Lobe Activity**

Electrical activity in the temporal lobes of the brain. Often associated with strange sensations, time distortions and even hallucinations. Sometimes used as an explanation for seemingly paranormal experiences such as apparitions and alien abduction experiences.

***Theosophy**

Quasi-religious and philosophical system of the Theosophical Society, founded in 1875 by Madame Blavatsky. Its paranormal claims were controversially and damningly reported upon by the Society for Psychical Research in 1885 as being in the main fraudulent.

***Therianthropy**

The supposed ability to change from human to animal form and back. As in werewolf type transformations.

***Theurgy**

Magical practices which aim to contact and communicate with the gods.

***Thoughtography**

Paranormal ability to produce images on photographic film by concentrating on a mental image. Most famously demonstrated by Ted Serios images.

***Thought Transference**

Telepathy

***Trance**

A dissociated state of consciousness, generally involving reduced awareness of surroundings and external events, turning within and mentally going to another place.

***Trance Medium**

A person who enters a state of trance in order to produce mediumistic phenomena.

***Transcendental Meditation**

A technique of meditation taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, involving the repetition of a mantras.

***Transmigration of Souls**

As in reincarnation.

***Transpersonal Psychology**

The study of experiences, beliefs and practices that suggest that the sense of self can extend beyond our personal or individual reality.

***Trial**

In psi tests, a single attempt to demonstrate paranormal ability.

***Trumpet**

A conical tube used in seances to produce direct voice communication.

U***Ufology**

The study of UFOs.

***Umbanda**

A Brazilian spirit religion.

***Unidentified Flying Object (UFO)**

Unexplained sightings of lights or objects in the sky.

V***Veridical**

Information or experience that is confirmed by facts and events.

***Veridical Dream**

A dream that corresponds to real events: past, present or future that are unknown to the dreamer.

***Vision**

A psychic or religious incite.

***Voodoo**

A spirit and ancestor based religion, originating in Africa, and now found in Haiti, Jamaica and Cuba. Magical rites, trance states and possession all play a major role in Voodoo.

W

*Werewolf

A person who has been transformed into a wolf or other dangerous beast named lycanthropy.

*White Magic

Magical spells or rituals to produce beneficial effects harming none

*White Noise

A hiss-like sound, formed by combining all audible frequencies.

*Wicca or Witchcraft

System of witchcraft, practiced in western countries.

*Witch/Wiccan

Someone who practices witchcraft.

X

*Xenoglossy

The ability to speak or write in a language that has not been learned. e.g. glossolalia.

Y

*Yoga

Religious philosophy originating in India. It advocates the use of physical and psycho-spiritual techniques to lead the person to higher consciousness and enhanced suppleness of body.

Z

*Zener Cards or Psi Cards

Set of 25 cards (5 each of circle, square, Greek cross, five-pointed star, three wavy lines- designed by the psychologist Karl Zener for use in card-guessing tests of ESP testing.

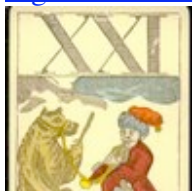
Zombie

*A corpse that has been partly brought back to (soul-less) life by magical means. A popular concept in Voodoo.

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[Jim Wickson](#)

Definition of Tarot is culturally biased

It should be noted that Tarot cards are not only used for divination. People, especially in European countries such as France, play actual card games with Tarot decks. In fact, playing card historians will also tell you that game playing is the original purpose of Tarot cards. From what I've also seen on the internet, there appears to be some non-Europeans such as Americans discovering the Tarot family of card games. I don't believe any definition of "Tarot" is complete unless it includes some mention of the fact that people play games with these cards.

Jan 22, 2009 8:18 PM

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[Joshua Wisdom](#)

Untitled

This article was good for an all around overview of the paranormal, although descriptions were too short and opinionated for use as a resource.

Must have taken quite a few hours to assemble, kudos for the variety.

Last edited Sep 15, 2008 7:25 AM

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