

PSYCHICS AND MEDIUMS

A Manual and Bibliography

for Students

BY

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[Chapters on Mediumship and Bibliography only]

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Folio Enclosed with Book: How to Conduct a Scientific Seance.

CHAPTER V

THE INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUMSHIP

THERE are many cults and organizations—spiritualistic, esoteric, and religious—which teach a following of practitioners and chelas, students, neophytes and illuminati, through prescribed exercises in meditation, concentration and aspiration, to open up and develop their psychic powers and sensitize their psychic centers from lower to higher degrees of response.

Their methods vary but fundamentally they rest upon these simple principles:

1. Regularity of effort.
2. A quieting and clearing of the everyday consciousness.
3. Active aspiration for growth and development of power.
4. Submission to instruction and to guidance by an experienced person.
5. Purposive concentration and meditation.
6. Attentive observation and encouragement of glimpses of supernormal consciousness.
7. Group or circle meetings in a class, with an expert leader or teacher, for the exercise of their gifts and for physical manifestations.

Some metaphysical cults and some religious bodies teach

the pupil that nothing "psychic" or "mediumistic" is to be permitted but that the opening up of "the psychic powers" or the "seven centers" in the nervous system must be for the pupil's own religious or mystical or esoteric advancement and for control of his own mundane affairs, or for his indifference to them.

Students of the psychic are not asked to subscribe to any of these schools of thought. Those who come with preconceived theories and notions to sit at the feet of this science find themselves treated with even-handed justice. Saint or sinner, mystic or iconoclast are seen impartially in her light. A humble desire to learn is her only admission requirement. Yet the schools and cults and religious orders have in their own degree succeeded because they have hit upon some of her essentials.

One desiring to know whether he or she may become an automatic writer, or develop other forms of psychic sensitiveness, by practice, should proceed methodically, somewhat as follows:

1. Regularity of experimentation is productive of results, no matter what the line of development may prove to be. Set aside a definite time, and keep the engagement.

We already know that effects of supernormal quality—clair-sensing of any sort—are linked up to supernormal causation. The intelligence that produces a supernormal effect that interests human beings appears to work best

when stated times and seasons of effort are observed. If the intelligence is personified, we can readily understand this characteristic. Our everyday experience abounds in examples of what can be attained by regular practice, from school to office, and from golf or tennis to prima-donnaship.

The period of practice must not be over-long in psychic work. For beginners, a half-hour two or three times a week or an hour once a week is sufficient. To overstrain is harmful and may leave the door open to trouble.

2. The practice period must be an uninterrupted time, when neither personal demands nor noise and confusion are likely to disturb the attention or make demands upon the bodily energies.

The reason for this is that in psychic work one must be un-self-conscious, alert to catch impressions, feelings, sounds, glimpses of a sort that do not register through the sensory channels of everyday conscious experience. Self-consciousness is as inhibitory in psychic development as it is in dream; when we fully waken, the dream, stops short and as we occupy ourselves consciously it begins to fade from memory—usually. (There are of course exceptional dreams that so impress themselves upon the mind, even in sleep, that their outlines remain clear and sharp for a lifetime. But these dreams are often probably psychic experiences of a nature quite different from the medley of inhibited thoughts and race-experience that jumble themselves

into the usual fantastic distortions of the dream state.)

In seeking growth of the normal psychic capacities, the effort must be to quiet the thought, clear the mind, take an attitude of attention and await what may present itself spontaneously from within.

3. The experimenter must safeguard himself or herself by asking definitely to be brought into touch with that which will be beneficial and wholesome, constructive and illuminating.

The mental attitude and spiritual aspiration actually form a shield, a wall of protection against intrusions of a lowering or destructive character. One is not placed at the mercy of every psychic wind that blows when he or she takes this precaution.

Failure to follow this procedure often leads to trouble, and becomes the principal cause of any confusion and deterioration of character that may occur in the psychic person's career. Those naturally gifted in psychic ways may be protected thus from harm, and should be taught in their early years to follow this method just as carefully as they are taught to avoid germ-infections by following simple rules of hygiene.

Depleted persons who have suffered from illness or shock, whether in youth or in age (many of the worst shocks are suffered during childhood and youth) may suffer from psychic bruises where infection by the wrong

order of psychic experience can readily be set *up and produce mental and physical twists and malformations, unless they follow this simple rule of psychic hygiene. It should be taught and understood in the ordinary school class-room as a matter of course. Until it is understood we shall continue to have our increasing crop of young criminals and problem children. It is very encouraging to observe the beneficial effects of this one simple precaution of resolute self-protection and aspiration.

4. Those experienced in psychic work who have made a study of their own best methods and results are able to interpret and educe more rapidly that which comes spontaneously to the pupil.

Encouragement by the teacher is helpful when the student is in the initial stages of development and feels unsure that his impressions are anything but wandering thoughts. For it is difficult at first to recognize a psychic result for what it really is. Take, for example, my own experiment in telepathy with Mrs. Sanders (Chap. IV): my own consciousness was not quiet enough to avoid interpreting—and therefore misunderstanding—the source of the idea of white light that presented itself to me. I took it to be aspiration welling up into consciousness from my memory of the Biblical words in the book of Genesis. But what actually effected this welling up I should never have known had Mrs. Sanders not informed me.

How many of the sudden wellings-up in consciousness may occur from such causation it would be difficult to

estimate, but a little experience in psychic study and training leads one to conclude that thought and desire are potent powers and forces in the human world, and often active where least suspected. Ideas are quite evidently as "catching" as the measles or scarlet fever—and many times quite as dangerous, unless the protective wall of lofty desire and aspiration stands in the way.

Each psychic expert has individual advice to offer his or her students on the basis of his or her own development, because each has in that development come into relation with certain invisible help which he or she personifies and calls by name, as guide or control. As a matter of fact there is usually a group of several such aides, with one chief guide as a leader, who puts the strongest stamp of character upon the work done and organizes the workers in the invisible for the work to be achieved on the conscious plane of our everyday life. A student must therefore choose a teacher the quality of whose work he respects and admires if he is to come into good rapport for his own development under instruction.

No one rule of thumb can be followed in all cases. The situation is like that of ordinary life: complex and diverse. The units have to be harmonized and there must be a give and take just as there is in the best social order, so that there may be freedom of expression and action, yet without prejudice to the welfare of the group. The teacher is led to assist each pupil in ways particularly adapted to the individual case, if he be an able teacher.

5. Concentration of interest and meditation upon the line of thought or action suggested by teacher and guides, at stated times and intervals, is conducive to growth in psychic power.

This corresponds to the place given to prayers in religious organizations and accounts for the claim that many an apparently minor "prayer" is answered—petitions for this or that material gift or opportunity, so limited that it is no wonder we personalize the Answerer. And in so doing we have in a sense come nearer the truth than abstract reasoning concerning the nature of creation is apt to bring us. The attention and cooperation of the invisible and inaudible and intangible range of being is attracted by human projection of concentrated thought, attention and desire.

After he had abundantly proved his memory and identity, the deceased James Hyslop had this testimony to give from his new experience: [I paraphrase.]

"I can see your thoughts and ideas, even those only held in mind but not carried out, more clearly and easily than I can see your material environment: so you see, ours is more or less of a thought world, after all."

Our psychic attunement or synchronization with the next stage of existence is two-fold, then, in the times of concentration and meditation: we touch the supernormal world and receive information or enlightenment from it; and we present to it our own thoughts, desires, aspirations, hopes, ideals, purposes and plans, in a fashion more

tangible and real in that stage of life than in our own. Ugly or beautiful, coarse or fine, the shape of our thought registers in that range of life just beyond us and can be picked up and draw to itself associations of like character. This fact as reported by such a communicator as James Hyslop, the psychologist, is enough to emphasize the importance and value of the right sort of psychic development, and the dangers that lurk in low or mean or vicious ways of thought and feeling. Right guidance from supernormal sources must be deserved before it can be a permanent, not merely an experimental, result dependent upon the presence of the teacher or helper.

6. The student must give attention to the impressions and effects from the supernormal in order to encourage the effort put forth from the intangible.

If one expresses his impressions simply and endeavors to understand them, the guides and controls from the other end of the line of communication are able to judge of their success or failure in transmitting their ideas or information or feelings. The guiding helpers of the teacher of a psychic student or class are thus enabled to secure suitable guidance for the students, augmenting that of the teacher. They will discover that certain combinations produce direct, harmonious and clear effects, whereas others blur and produce antagonisms or distorted effects. The focus, as it were, varies with different combinations of psychic lenses, and some nullify others altogether. So the right adjustment of guidance is necessary before a clear vision can be secured.

7. The seventh point, group work, is taken up in Chapter VI.

After a development seance, or any seance, in fact, it is advisable to sit quietly for a few moments to permit an equilibration of forces. The psychic person has been attuned to supernormal conditions and should not be disturbed by chatter or by confusion during the resumption of the normal sensory conditions.

Confine your efforts to either mental or physical development, but do not try for both at the same time. To do so divides your powers and weakens the effect or nullifies it.

If you try for the development of your subjective and mental psychic powers, you may do so by yourself or with one other person present, but not more. Both persons must be of one purpose and aim, interjecting no side-issues or distractions, but *quietly*, though not tensely holding to the line of experimental interest. To try for automatic writing, have either a ouija board, a planchette, or a pad and pencils ready sharpened and not too hard. The pencil in the planchette should be a soft one, of course, if that instrument is used. Hold the fingers of one hand lightly on the planchette or the ouija indicator. If two persons are trying together, each may place a hand lightly on the instrument, so lightly that it can almost slip from under the fingers. If a pencil is to be used, hold it easily in the writing hand, resting the point on the pad, which is preferably of large size and bound at the top to a linen binder that will keep the pages in place. Number the sheet

at the bottom right-hand corner before you begin work. Fold them back but do not tear them off, if you wish to keep the record. If the writing is mere fragments or evidently only practice work) keep it nevertheless as a mark of progress.

It is by the study of such records that the psychology of one's own development can be discerned and compared with that of others.

Annotate the record as you go along, inserting within parentheses any remark by yourself or the person who may be with you, and noting any questions or suggestions in their place. Do not trust to memory for this.

Also, at the end of the record, jot down the memoranda that explain the references to various matters in the record. This prevents your I weakening or strengthening the material by erroneous memories, to which everyone is humanly liable now and again, despite every intention and effort to be accurate.

Date the record with day and hour. It may also be of some interest to note the weather, though we do not yet know just what part the conditions of weather may play in such work. If you watch your own experiments you may discover some relation between the states of the atmosphere and your own failure or success. Note failures as well as successful results.

Many psychics find it useful to have an open dish of water in the seance room while at work, and most psychics require plenty of water to drink before or after the sitting.

In no seance should there be any moving about or desultory remarks by the sitter or sitters. In one historic instance at a seance with the famous Mrs. Leonora Piper, of Boston, a sitter made the mistake of walking completely around the medium and cut lines of force, apparently, or did something comparable to cutting lines of force, while the medium was in the trance state. It brought the sitting to a premature close and left both the medium and her communicator, who had been automatically writing through her hand, in an uncomfortable and confused state of consciousness for some days.

We do not know just why such conditions prevail, but results show that they do, and we must adjust ourselves to the facts of experience in the psychic laboratory, just as carefully as in the laboratories of physical science.

Each person's development attracts guidance and instructors from trans-material sources that make a unique set-up for work. Hence each psychic teacher and trainer will advise details of procedure peculiar to his or her own gifts and powers. No one person can make infallible rules for all, save in the most general terms. Indeed, no one knows a great deal about psychic mediumship from the scientific angle as yet, and the most we can do is to point the safe and tried methods of approach to experiment for further discovery and enlightenment. Dr. W. J. Crawford and "M. A. Oxon.")—"The Rev. Wm. Stainton Moses—have made helpful suggestions, which are listed in the Bibliography.

CHAPTER VI

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSICO-PSYCHIC POWERS: THE PSYCHIC CIRCLE

GROUP meetings or circles of psychic students prove to be especially useful when physical phenomena having psychic origin are the desired result.

For the lifting of objects super-physically, the superphysical rap or voice, the passage of matter through matter, the development of astral or psychic light-effects on photographic plates or films, for ectoplasmic phenomena of every description, a circle or group is helpful. It augments force and increases the strength of the results and makes possible a wider variety.

Have in readiness a notebook in which you keep a running record of your experiments, with date, hour, place) and membership of the group recorded. One member should be responsible for the record of each experiment.

It is the experience of psychic persons when they are at work that crossing the knees or clasping the hands weakens their clair-sensitivity, especially at the opening of a seance. They theorize that the "current" is prevented from running through the system normally but is crossed and completes a circuit within the body instead of being grounded through touching the floor with the feet. Therefore

they admonish those who are developing their powers to sit with both feet on the floor and hands and arms not crossed.

It is found useful to clasp hands around the group or to rest the hands lightly on a table-top, flat, with little finger ends touching those of one's neighbor on either side, if table-tilting or lifting is desired.

At the close of such an experiment it is advisable to join hands around the circle for several minutes, to even up the flow of energy which has been centered in the most sensitive member. This was amply proved in the work of Crawford with the Goligher circle, when weight-tests before, during and after sittings held for physical phenomena registered the variations.

It is well to form only a small group of family or friends, who can be depended upon to keep the hour regularly free for experiment once or twice a week. Group work augments the flow of psychoplasm at the disposal of the invisible operators, whoever and whatever they may be. The group may sit in a circle to advantage, around a table of comfortable height so that the open palms may rest upon it easily and very lightly. There should be no strain or tenseness, but complete relaxation. If table-tilting results, establish a code, requesting of the intelligence animating the table to tilt once at any letter of the alphabet desired, as you have a spokesman for the group repeat the alphabet slowly. One tilt may also mean "Yes," two tilts "No," and three doubtful. This saves time when errors occur. It also provides a means for shortening the work by securing

answers to direct questions. Record all questions or remarks and all answers, perfect or imperfect.

Ask only one question at a time. Have it clearly stated and terse. Do not talk all around the question and do not talk all around the circle, but leave it to a spokesman to do the talking. Time should not be wasted in patter and chatter at seances; the real aim should be to let the phenomena speak for themselves.

Give no gratuitous information in your questions or replies. Save your own information for your notes upon what you receive.

Sometimes the table will rise from the floor. Sometimes it will indicate interest in some special member of the circle, tilting especially toward that person or moving toward her or him. The line of interest should be followed up to ascertain who or what is causing this, and why.

The group may well include members of both sexes, and there is taken to be some advantage in alternating them in the circle, because of the feeling that there will be some electrical or magnetic balance thus secured. This needs far more precise proof before it can be scientifically accepted. Try variations and see what the results are and record them, thus laying a basis for your own judgment in the matter.

If you are hopeful of securing voice-phenomena, secure a small tin megaphone trumpet or a collapsible aluminum one, in two or three sections, putting a strip of adhesive tape around the outside at each end of the trumpet, and

paint these strips with luminous paint. Expose the trumpet to the daylight or electric light before the s6ance in order that it may absorb light in the painted areas, by which you can better follow its movement during experiment. For trumpet work, it is well to dim the light in the room somewhat, but do not sit in total darkness. The work will be far more satisfactory in the light and you can accustom the circle to working thus, by starting out right. The room should be of comfortable temperature, not extreme in either direction. Provide a dictaphone recorder for the trumpet voices, to secure an objective record.

If photographic experiments are to be tried, two methods are possible:

A. Load the camera in advance with a roll of films or load the necessary number of plate-holders in advance, dating and initialing the films in the dark room, for identification. When the circle or the one or two personsit does not require a larger number necessarily- are quietly seated and at ease, expose the films in the usual way, but do not close the shutter of the camera until there is a definite impression that it is time to do so. It is unnecessary to darken the room. You may focus the camera upon anyone in the circle or upon any portion of the room, but it is wise to place a dark background in the line of focus (black cloth or velveteen will serve) on a movable frame that can be set up at a height of about six feet from the floor, extending down nearly to the floor. A dark wood

paneling or open clothes-closet, without a window, will do. B. Prepare films in light-proof holders, in the way the commercial photographers do. You can buy them thus, or secure the opaque envelopes for the purpose, from camera supply houses. A red and a black envelope, one within the other, with the film inside, is complete protection. Let the experimenters pile their left hands, palms upward, on the table. Place the film in its envelopes on the top of the pile and the right hands over it, holding it thus, for longer and shorter periods in different experiments, until some knowledge is gained of the most favorable length of time. Sit quietly, chatting a little harmoniously, if you like, or listening to some quiet music, during the nonexposure of the film. It is not removed from its envelopes until it comes to be developed in the ordinary way, in the dark room. Although it is never exposed to ordinary actinic light, many times remarkable light effects have been registered on such films.

Each film should be tested by a print, even though the effects are not superficially interesting. The B variety are known as psychographs or skotographs, a name coined by Miss Felicia Scatcherd, of England, a very able worker in this field.

It is well to have both a dark and a light print, to bring out all possible details.

A wide range of effects is possible in psychic photography. Everything from definite portraits and photographed writing to distinct objects not materially present

in the room, and rays and clouds of light and spicules of light, dotted over the surface like rain or snow, have been obtained in such experiments. Some psychic photographers feel it necessary to hold their hands above the film before it is exposed, to "magnetize" it. But others do nothing of the sort, even having their cameras loaded by commercial photographers and having all the developing and printing done at a shop, by disinterested workmen. It is probable that the "magnetization" provides a quiet time when the invisible intelligence directing the operation can adjust its apparatus to produce a result. And this is true, whether you regard the directing intelligence as the subconscious of the experimenters, or as some outside entity. We do not have to decide such points before undertaking the research. After all, theory must be checked up by practice, and it is well to emphasize points of agreement and work from them, letting questions in dispute remain unsettled until conclusive light is gained.

It is thus that the X-ray and all its progeny have been studied and psychic photography may well follow in such footsteps.

If one of the experimenters should fall into a spontaneous trance or sleep, note the fact and keep quiet in your chairs. Do not disturb conditions by walking about at any seance, and do not disturb an entranced person with efforts to rouse him.

The entranced person, like a somnambulant or sleepwalker, will usually answer when spoken to, and you may

learn why the trance has occurred by a quiet conversation, of which note must be made verbatim as you proceed.

If there should prove to be one of the group who can produce ectoplasm, objects in the room may be moved without apparent physical contact. It is therefore well to have the room not too large and not crowded with many things, in order that what is done may be readily checked up. I have been told in trance communications, from psychic investigators who have passed from life, that changes in the room, even too much glitter of mirrors, etc., within the room, are distracting to the intelligences at work during trance. In ectoplasmic work, it is useful to provide a screened space, such as may be made by a three-leaved screen or clothes-horse, hung with dark cloth of some sort—thick black cotton cloth or dark shawls or lap-ropes or blankets will do. Across the front the curtain should be light in weight, so as to be easily parted. The developing medium may sit in front of this enclosed space, or within, on a comfortable chair, high-backed to support the head. In circle work, red light is preferable, and a rheostat for dimming or increasing the light is useful. It is well also to have a platform scale on which the medium's chair may be fixed, so that variations in the weight, during the lifting of any weights, or the production of any material forms, may be checked up. A red light near the scale-beam enables the worker to read these variations. The light should not shine into the medium's eyes. In the

history of the Goligher case will be found interesting data concerning results obtained in this field by Dr. Crawford. (See Bibliography.)

In materialization seances, independent writing is sometimes secured. It is well to have a tablet and soft pencils ready for such writing. Sir William Crookes occasionally secured it from invisible intelligences. On one occasion during his work with the trance medium, Mrs. Minnie M. Soule ("Chenoweth") of Boston, Dr. Hyslop watched a spontaneous effort on the part of the communicating intelligence to get a pencil lying at hand into an upright position on the writing tablet, in order to produce independent writing in full daylight. The pencil, he told me, repeatedly tilted up to nearly the proper angle, but then the point would slip and down it would fall.

The order of sitters in a group and the room arrangements should be regular. If there is a lack of harmony in the group, reform the group, eliminating the misfits. They may find themselves suitably placed in some other group. Harmony is essential in psychic work and has a meaning that is almost tangible. The group should assemble before, not after, a meal, and alcoholic beverages are to be avoided before a sitting. The psychic threshold is too unstable under the stimulus of alcohol. Subconscious and other associations emerge under the stimulus of alcohol that are undesirable and may even prove harmful or dangerous. Much amateur psychic work has been injured by making a "party" out of what should be a laboratory experiment.

CHAPTER VIII

HOW TO CONDUCT A PSYCHIC SEANCE FOR SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES

A MODE of procedure for the scientific seance I outlined some years since, to assist the many inquirers who came to me in the American Society for Psychical Research. With the approval of James H. Hyslop, the head of our Society, these suggestions were printed as a leaflet and given to prospective sitters to prepare them for experiments with psychics in private sittings. (See loose folio.) It embodied a series of eleven points of instruction which, with the addition of a twelfth point, we shall now proceed to discuss.

1. Use an assumed name, or no name at all, until you have secured good evidence. Go alone.

The assumed name is not advised for the sake of mystifying the psychic worker, but in order that all the evidence received of the names of relatives may be the stronger. Complete anonymity is simpler when it can be arranged agreeably. If the initial "A" is given you as referring to some communicator and you have already confessed to the name of "Adams" you feel a natural question rising in mind. But if you are anonymous or known only as "Brown" the "A" is a good hit, and you are quite right in accepting it as a good beginning. Merely

reply, however, that you would like to hear further about "A" and do not enter into conversation as to whose name it can or can not be.

Keep your anonymity. This is much easier when you go alone to a sitting. Leakage of names is too easy when two who are acquainted are present together. Inadvertently we use the name in addressing a friend and may readily fail to make note of the fact. But the ear of the psychic may catch it and hold it in full consciousness or trance consciousness, where it may cause actual confusion.

Mediums sometimes "hear" clairaudiently the name of a well known public person or of a personal acquaintance of their own. They explain that it is probably given to indicate not the presence of any such character as Abraham Lincoln, let us say, but the presence of one whose initials are A. L., or possibly one whose name is Abraham. It simplifies matters not to have suggested any names whatever to the medium, oneself.

Even in the effort to understand what is received, the same reticence should be observed. Simply accept what comes, saying "I'll make a note of that. It will interest me when I am thinking this over later." This you will find satisfies any sincere worker and keeps the flow of communications running.

2. Be prepared with several sharp, soft lead pencils or a fountain-pen and a thick note-book or pad whose leaves you can turn quietly. Take verbatim notes. Include your own remarks or questions in parentheses, verbatim.

The recording of your work is most important. Those who are not shorthand writers will do well to employ a competent stenographer who should be instructed to note every word uttered in the room, from the entrance to the exit of all concerned. The dramatic play should be noted when and as it occurs. For there is often some trick of manner, a gesture, or a sigh, or a shiver, stertorous breathing, or a chuckle, which may be entirely out of character for the psychic himself or herself and utterly convincing and natural for the purporting communicator. These items often clear up some doubts as to which of two persons of the same name may be intended. Memory cannot be trusted to hold and place all such details correctly after a seance is ended.

A plentiful supply of paper and pencils makes interruption unnecessary and no avoidable noise of rattling or sharpening disturbs the even flow of the work. To inclose in parentheses all 'remarks by anyone save the psychic clearly indicates who was speaking at any point. If two beside the psychic are present as sitters—which is permissible on rare occasions for special reasons only—initials should precede their individual contributions.

Sometimes an entranced psychic is in rapport with only one person and any communicators are deaf to the responses of anyone else in the room, which have to be relayed. This is a curious experience.

3. Every word should be noted, in the language in which it is given, whether its significance be or be not understood.

The very manner of expression is essential to a proper study of the record afterward. Do not edit to suit your own judgment at the moment. If the psychic says, "I hear the name of Thomas," it is not enough to jot down "Thomas." "I *hear*" is quite as important; for the *hearing* may mistake Thomas when Jonas is actually fitting. On the other hand, if the psychic says, "I *see* the name Thomas," there is little likelihood of such an error for Jonas. Yet again, the psychic worker might *misread* Thomas for *Thomson*. Thus an error might be found to be wide of the mark in the one case (of clairaudient hearing), which in the other (of clairvoyant seeing) would be a comparatively close approximation.

The very sequence of the material throws light on a record when it is studied, complete. Initials and references, totally rejected or even denied at their reception, become sometimes pellucid in meaning, on study.

For example: the relative with whom I secured the scratching sound from "Chas." (Page 142) had never attended a seance given by any other psychic. One was arranged for her. For the first thirty minutes she shook her head repeatedly, not understanding the messages. I, conducting the seance, kept saying "All right, I'll make note of that and we'll see the meaning later when we go over the record," though I did not understand at the time. The second half-hour yielded some easily recognized matter from her husband, which she expected, but none more vitally pertinent than those early, unrecognized messages.

Such an experience negates theoretical telepathy. It proved that they identified the sitter's brother, whom I had scarcely known: his initials; the cause of his death; the locality of his death; the fact that he died away from home; that he was transferred from one house to another during his last illness; the initials of the man who thus befriended him. The medium was a total stranger to the family. The brother had predeceased the husband by about fourteen years, and his death, her first deep loss, had been a real grief. So many deaths had followed that, without the verbatim record, this valuable bit would have been lost entirely.

In an experience covering twenty-five years in which this writer has taken notes for hundreds of single sitters and for many long series of sittings for herself and others, the proportion of *total* failures is, at a rough estimate, one-third of one-half of one per cent—one in two or three hundred sittings. But this could never be safely assumed or granted to be true had one not kept accurate note and studied thousands of verbatim records. It is far too easy—and lazy—to throw away the gold with the waste. Many •good sitting has no doubt gone into the discard and left a lazy sitter railing at "chaff" and "stuffing" when he should have berated himself for a sloth and a dullard.

4. Speak little. Mention no names or personal affairs in conversation with the medium, at any time. Only thus do you preserve the value of that evidence of identity you receive from communicators.

It is so natural to the consciousness, whether of the psychic himself, or of the communicating intelligence, to follow a line suggested by others, that one must seal the lips in the seance laboratory and listen attentively to gain the utmost from the effort that is being made, whatever its origin may be supposed to be.

It is illuminating to imagine what would happen, in a telephone conversation, were the instrument capable of joining in the conversation. How it would cut things up if it could interpolate, "Oh, I think you must mean *George and Anna* not *Georgiana!*" The two concerned in opening up their conversation would have their minds and time consumed with explanations and counter-explanations, denials, reassurances that they knew what they were talking about—and so on, tiresomely.

Speak little.

5. When asked a question by the psychic, respond noncommittally. Give no unnecessary information. It confuses the medium and the communicators to have you do so. Parry with a counter question or a word of encouragement to draw out the reason for the medium's inquiry. Show yourself courteous and interested.

If you do not understand the meaning of what is asked you, say so in a way to lead the communicators to explain further. In short, treat the matter with the open-minded courtesy you would show to a long-distance inquirer by telephone, trying to introduce himself or herself to you.

When you do speak, use judgment: a well-devised

question is of ten provocative of excellent evidential matter. It can be so worded as to be crystal-clear to a presumed communicator and yet devoid of all suggestion as to the correct response. An even tone, laying no stress upon any aspect of the matter of the inquiry, leaves an open line for the reply. Many a communicator, through a medium, stands out with a stoutly maintained assertion even against the positive denial of a sitter who has later to confess his own error of memory or information. But it takes a well-trained, experienced psychic to stand up to a fire of negation without flinching.

6. When a correct fact is given, tending to identify the communicator, recognize it frankly and express your gratification, but do not state its bearings. More may come spontaneously. Do not spoil evidence by gratuitous information.

It often occurs that one seance whets the appetite for a sequence of several with the same psychic, especially after a careful study of the record of the initial experiment. Do not discuss your results and your affairs after the sitting, when the psychic is still in semi-rapport with the communicating intelligences, lest you lose some final impression which, though only a word or two, would prove far more valuable than any possible element in your own garrulities. And in addition, every word volunteered by the sitter is just so much obstruction to a clear field for any further work that may be undertaken. It is utter foolishness, a bore to the psychic worker and a trespass upon his or her time and energy.

7. When you do not understand a reference, do not deny its pertinence, but make a note of it and try to find out the meaning later. It is often thus that the best identifications are obtained.

For example: Medium: "Do you know somebody by the name J? I don't know whether it's J-a-y or J for Joseph or some name beginning with J."

Answer: "I shall be glad to hear further about J." Not: "O, of course everybody knows a J, that doesn't indicate anything definite enough to be sure of," etc., which would discourage anyone even in ordinary life from giving further communications, even though he had something important to say.

Medium: "Well, I don't get the name, but I am seeing a lady, now, who has lots of light hair and wears it high on her head. I don't know whether the J. belongs with her or not. She smiles and nods her head."

Answer: "Yes, I see the meaning of that. Go on." Not: "O, yes, that's my daughter Jennie," etc. etc. Or if the meaning is not clear, just let the evidence come freely, merely remarking: "I'll make note of it, and find out later about it." Such an instance as that of Georgiana points the moral most clearly. (See point 4.)

8. Do not be disturbed at physical symptoms of pain or distress in the medium when at work. These are but the dramatic play which represents as in a living picture, and for the moment only, the remembered physical experiences of one or another of your communicators.

Recalling the past naturally brings up memory of a last illness, failing health, or the like. State that you know why the psychic reacts in such a way, and that it need not continue, as the physical suffering is over now—and it will pass in a short time. Communicators are not always aware of the effect they are producing until we note it in this manner in the seance.

The dramatic play in a seance is not to be taken at its face value. It has no more effect upon the living psychic medium than your image has upon the structure of a mirror. No matter how often you are mirrored in a glass, you do not wear it out. The mirror exposed to light continuously must reflect images, pleasing or distressing, grave or gay, bright or sombre, and it is not impaired. Very much the same is true of psychic mediumship, when it mirrors smiles or a bad cough or paralysis. Apparently the nervous system is merely manifesting a borrowed consciousness for a short time; the psychic's own consciousness being involved in no *sense* in the literal meaning of that term. The mistake would be to recall the medium's consciousness suddenly, mirroring one's own alarm or fear in the psychic's mind thereby. Even to mention the occurrence afterward would be foolish. In many cases it is evident that psychic communication is by direct block impression of idea much more vivid than any wordy explanation can render it. I have seen many such instances in studying pathological psychic influence, when the communicator may be totally unaware that he is producing

physiological reflections of his own memories, or even that he has died and become a communicator. These abnormal cases throw a flood of light upon problems of health and upon the wise procedure in normal mediumship.

9. Do not touch the medium unexpectedly while at work. The shock may disturb the worker. In physical phenomena hand and foot control must be arranged and maintained continuously.

If you have an article to hand the medium for psychometric purposes, bring it carefully wrapped to hide its character, and before you hand it over state that you are about to do so. But choose a time when there is no apparent counter-current. Able communicators prepare their work, oftentimes. Do not interrupt a flow of messages which might prove as valuable as anything received in response to your special stimulus. The nervous mechanism of the "instrument" is in a special state of responsiveness to stimuli whose origin is obscure to us. A sudden interruption or infraction of the responses of the psychic's nervous system to supernormal stimuli, by the interposition of a stimulus affecting the sensory system, plays havoc with both lines of response.

There is a classic instance of such foolhardiness in the abortive and ignorant attempts of the late Stanley Hall to work with that impeccable psychic, Mrs. Piper. The honesty of her trance had been thoroughly verified years before by the sagacious Dr. Richard Hodgson. Nevertheless, the misguided Dr. Hall, on Hodgson's death, in a series of

trance seances with her, applied "tests" of the crudest and most inexcusably foolhardy order which, for years thereafter, as she personally informed me, impaired her senses. Nothing new was learned, no discoveries made that had not already been made by the expert Hodgson.*

There is no need or excuse for causing inconvenience of more than the most passing character to any honest psychic.

10. Do not move about the room during a seance. Sit still and be quiet mentally and physically. Wait for the seance to end itself. Do not shake or try to rouse the entranced or resting medium, whose guides will see to closing the sitting at the proper time.

Every psychically endowed individual appears, on analysis, to be attended by one or more invisible helpers, "guides" whose function it is to lead the psychic to correct information from various possible supernormal sources, linking up the inquirers or "sitters" in our "living" world and communicators "alive" or "dead." Some guides name themselves. Some claim recognized family or historic names, but frequently their identity is too remote to be proved.

These aides take the initiative: they bring on a trance, if one does occur; they interpret the identifications offered

*For J. H. Hyslop's detailed expose of this matter see Journal A. S. P. R., January, 1911.

by waiting communicators who are trying to get in touch with sitters; they close the seance on request or when they find the "power" exhausted so far that further effort would be blurred and ineffective. The behavior of worn-out radio tubes gives a sort of analogy for this, though I am not to be construed as meaning that the wave-energy involved is the same as that of the radio. We do not know, yet, what wave-lengths are involved, therefore we must rely upon the intelligences producing the effect to use their judgment as to when to stop.

It is disturbing and injurious to the feelings of the psychic to be jarred after a seance by rough handling or loud talking. There is no occasion for anxiety if the trance ends slowly. Nervous tension in the environment is to be avoided. A quiet mind in a quiet body is the best assistant in the seance room, and everyone present should thus assist.

11. After the seance do not repeat what the medium said while in trance or while at work, saying that this or that was the case in your family, et cetera. State your satisfaction, if you feel it, at having heard a number of facts you could recognize, but do not discuss the facts. Be grateful, not garrulous.

This rule will save you much valuable evidence for the future, will save the psychic's subconsciousness from repletion with a store of what does not concern him or her, and will save everyone's time.

12. Make mental appointments with those from whom you would be interested to hear, if it were possible, when you book for a mediumistic experiment.

Regard the mental call for presences as a part of the experiment and watch the results. Do not mention the matter to the psychic, of course, for that would ruin the evidence to start with and clutter up the psychic's mind with preconceived ideas. Merely to jot a date and hour in a notebook without thinking of the possibilities of getting into touch with some supernormal communicators is to make no real appointment for a sitting. I have seen this illustrated dearly more than once. Two instances stand out: those of very busy professional men, one a university professor and the other the rector of a large and busy parish. The latter had a very efficient secretary who kept track of his engagements for him regularly, as they were crowded and numerous. He reached the appointment on time, but was so weary—or possibly himself so psychically approachable—that he nodded and fell asleep while work was in progress. He found almost no value in the record afterward on reading it over with me. The other gentleman was evidently a somewhat absent-minded professor. He had engaged to be present at three or four seances in a series. One he forgot, one he reached forty-five minutes late, interrupting the work, first by his arrival and thereafter by interposing a question at a very finely adjusted point in the communications, thereby shutting off the climax of the morning's work which never again was taken up and properly completed. One sitting he cancelled

in favor of meeting a ship and arriving guests from abroad. Manifestly, he had no concept of having made engagements with any invisible forces at the seances. They seemed to him "merely interesting exhibitions of what a medium might do under properly safeguarded conditions of work. He is a professional psychologist of high repute who makes no secret of his interest in the study of psychics. His purpose was sincere, but he had no conception of the communicator's adjustments for psychic work.

The contention is often made by apologists for mediumistic failure that the adverse or critical judgment of the sitter is a bar to the best work or to any work at all. This is plain foolishness. The workers who have secured the best work, such as Hodgson and Hyslop, started out in utter scepticism of results, yet their results have blazed a wide trail for those who come after. They followed the method of making appointments with "communicators" even when they were entirely unsure of the nature of those same intelligences, not having sufficient evidence at the start to imagine that they could be in communication with any other than layers of the medium's own subconscious or subliminal mind. *The method worked*, and in science that is a test of method.

The proper purpose of a scientific seance is not merely to collect proof or disproof of survival. Scientifically speaking, that has already been settled. Survival is abundantly proved by such work as that of Hodgson and Hyslop, and by the collective evidence of the many organizations

that for years have been at work upon the problem. No one can seriously study that evidence and remain unconvinced, if the study is made without prejudice and bias. The perplexing questions that remain concern the process involved in mediumship and the possibilities of improving our method and the results. Light is often thrown on this aspect of our research by the communications we receive from those who are working on the other side of the screen with conditions and apparatus of which we are mainly ignorant. A thoughtful and studious reception of what we do receive is our best means of progress. Personal interest, while a powerful motive, must not be allowed to overshadow the broader issues.

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