

FACT SHEET:

# The Experiences of Mediums I



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For many phenomena like pain, depression, fatigue, anger, and psychic abilities, no biological or otherwise objective features exist that can be measured. Thus, researchers rely on examining reports from the people having the experience. While there are limitations to using testimony from humans as evidence, “it is still the best method we have” to study consciousness (4, p. 46).

Our current research focus at the Windbridge Research Center is *mediums*, people who experience regular communication with the deceased (called *discarnates*) and report the resulting information to the discarnates’ living friends or relatives (called *sitters*) during specific events (called *readings*).

The study of experiences as they are experienced by the experiencer is called *phenomenology*. We use phenomenological methods that are *quantitative* (i.e., analyzing numerical data) and *qualitative* (i.e., analyzing reports about the quality) to examine the unique characteristics of mediums’ experiences.

Here, we will review mediums’ general states of consciousness and sensory experiences. In a subsequent Fact Sheet, we will cover how mediums’ experiences relate to the source of their information.

## General Mental State

Research examining mediums' states of mind during readings has demonstrated that interacting with discarnates represents an unusual experience or altered state of consciousness. Their experience is different from their own ordinary, waking consciousness as well as different from the way others experience reality and space-time. Specifically, the experience is transpersonal, spiritual, and/or transcendental. Their bodily sensations and perceptions expand beyond the parameters of their skin and their rationality is limited. During readings, mediums' volitional control is low; that is, they are not controlling their mental experiences. The mediums relinquish control to the discarnate and just experience the communication (5). They experience discarnates as autonomous, independent beings who may startle, advise, or argue with the medium (6).

Mediums' subjective perception of the passage of time may be altered as is the way they store memory (5). Often, a research medium will be surprised when informed that the time limit for a research reading has expired and unable to later recall what they reported during the reading.

In addition, the mediums' attention is directed inward toward internal, mental communication phenomena which lessens their self-awareness (5). One research medium reported that when connecting with discarnates, “I feel like I don’t know who I am any more. I lose myself. My identity is gone” (1).

Mediums may experience a sensory sign like sound, light, heat, or vibration that indicates that they have connected with the right discarnate. For example, one research medium reported, “I have asked for communication and suddenly hear inside my ears, a high ringing sound. I am thrilled to know this is contact” (6, p. 81). Mediums may also adopt the idiosyncrasies, personality traits, word choice, tone, or mannerisms of the discarnate (6).

### Senses

Mediums may experience multiple quasi-sensory mental modalities functioning simultaneously without related objective physical stimuli present. That is, mediums may mentally see, hear, and/or smell things that are not present in their physical location as messages from discarnates. They may also feel physical sensations related to the discarnate’s cause of death (6). One medium reported,

*I know it is information about or from the deceased when I hear a phrase or words in my head, or see an image, or smell something, or feel a physical sensation or emotion while talking with someone about their loved one. (2, p. 69)*

Moreover, a medium may taste a discarnate’s favorite flavor or food (2).

Finally, mediums may spontaneously 'just know' things about the discarnate and report that information more quickly than that acquired through the mental senses (6), or even all at once (2).

Other researchers have also noted that sometimes mediums “just ‘g-know’ (pronounced ‘guh-know’) things intuitively,” a term based on the word *gnostic* (3, p. 243).

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