

## **My Experiences of the Paranormal**

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Although I have only used the term recently, I have had paranormal experiences often, from childhood and through the present.

My family has always been aware of it. Dozens of stories accumulated over the years. Finally once, my skeptical and pregnant sister challenged me: what sex and weight would her baby be?

Somehow I knew what to do. That night before I went to bed, I asked for a dream that would give me the answer. In the dream I picked up a phone and asked the question. The answer came: "It's a girl. Six pounds, eight ounces." Three weeks later when the doctor said those same words, my sister and her husband's mouths dropped open, and her skepticism ended.

(Before me, my grandmother had had some similar talents. She would communicate with dead relatives. Pour hot wax over a broom above your head if you had a problem to find out what was the matter. And if she cursed you, you were in serious trouble.)

Over the past 7 years, I have participated in experiments at Interval Research and The Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS), where scientists Dean Radin, Russell Targ, Ed May, and others have employed me as a subject in remote viewing and other experiments. Scientifically, these experiments have often been very successful. Still, they often seem to miss many of the most exciting paranormal events going on, by design.

For one thing, it is a challenge for the scientists trying to 'code' descriptions of pictures for computers, to objectively confirm whether our descriptions were accurate. In one series of experiments on precognitive remote viewing, I had to describe a picture I would be shown three hours later, from a collection of hundreds of pictures I had never seen. For one picture, I repeatedly told Russell, "Dome" and he recorded it. When they showed me the picture, it was the mountain face at Yosemite that I know as "Half Dome." But the automatic computer coding system had no way of recording that kind of match.

As a teenager, I got involved with Mind Dynamics, which was being promoted as a method of intuitive medical diagnosis. They trained us using a kind of hypnosis. I became very good at diagnosing patients given only a name, an age, and a city of residence. The seminar leaders began to use me in front of audiences as a way to recruit new people. But when I began being pursued by the spirits of people I had diagnosed, and experiencing their symptoms, none of the organizers knew how to help me. I had to find a way myself. I quit the program. In the coming months, one of the Mind Dynamics seminar leaders who was using me – named Werner Erhardt – left the group to start another program called Erhardt Seminars Training or EST. I never used the Mind Dynamics techniques to diagnose anyone again.

Occasionally I would still get powerful information about a family member, or even someone I had just met. While traveling in the remote mountains of Mexico, I suddenly left a group of native Huichole peyoteros because I dreamed my daughter Nancy was seriously ill. When I reached my husband by phone from a switchboard in Mexico, he insisted Nancy was fine. I returned home immediately anyway. They picked me up and, on the way back from the airport, Nancy became seriously ill. At first the attending doctors thought she had the flu. But before long the doctors realized she needed surgery. When he made the incision, Nancy's infected appendix burst in his hand. She was in the hospital for ten days.

In another case I met the husband of a worker in my catering kitchen, and realized he was going to die very soon. He was a strong man with no known health problems, but my feeling made me very sure. Two weeks later he died suddenly of a rare heart disease. I never knew what to tell his wife. I catered his funeral at my expense.

Most often the paranormal information comes up in gentle, useful ways. I wake from a dream in which my housekeeper's son is vomiting, and I tell my husband. The phone rings and my husband takes the message: the housekeeper has to cancel – her son is vomiting.

In the late 1990's I began to discover a community of people who experience frequent paranormal events or try to understand them better. It started with research scientists like Dean and Russell, and expanded to include many people familiar with extraordinary experiences. Some people see detailed crime scenes in their dreams and see the headlines in the news the next week.

Others, like Bev Jaeger founder of the Psi Squad have been asked by the police to help with unsolved crimes; I've worked with her successor, Lance Daniels, and others like me on a crime project.

Like me, they're often reluctant to call themselves psychics, mediums, clairvoyant, or anything like that – except with a sense of humor or a grain of salt. But it can be hard to find the right word.

Often people are concerned or troubled when they seem to be having precognitive dreams, spontaneous out of body experiences, or communicating with a dead relative. A family member may believe they are possessed by a demon or in need of psychiatric help.

These people sometimes contact scientists who don't feel comfortable talking to them and can't be much help. In turn, a scientist friend will often forward an email or transfer a call to me.

If I've had an experience like that, I tell them so. And immediately the person relaxes. Suddenly they're not victims with no one to talk to, or lunatics who need an exorcist. They're dealing with physical and mental states, situations and experiences – kundalini, out-of-body, clairvoyance, psychokinesis -- that many others have encountered before. And they're extremely grateful to talk to me. Sometimes we form lasting relationships.

I was delighted to see the television series *Medium*, which premiered in 2004. Allison's dreams and premonitions, the resulting social situations, the difficult decisions about how or whether to deliver news – all are very familiar to me.

Whether it's a scientist or a lay person, it's easy to miss paranormal information. A few weeks ago, someone at Inpresence suggested that a dozen of us each pick a set of lottery numbers for upcoming Missouri and Powerball lotteries. The process was informal. Afterward the person who proposed the experiment explained she had bought one ticket, using the most popular numbers chosen by the group for each drawing, and simply reported that she had won nothing. She didn't point out that in this, our only experiment, two participants – including me – had each picked three out of six Missouri numbers correctly in advance of the drawing – a chance of more than 100,000 to 1, ordinarily worth a \$100 prize. And the same day, I had also correctly picked two of the 6 numbers for the Powerball drawing correctly – a probability of about 2500 to 1.

Similarly, typical scientific methods, which often average together information and try to use statistics to find trends, seem to hide more of the paranormal events than they reveal.

I have dozens of documented paranormal stories and events. Sometimes they seem to come in waves. At the Mind and Matter conference at IONS, Russell Targ and Cornell Professor Dr. Daryl Bem each happened to give presentations in which an item was hidden in a bag. Russell was offering an introduction to Remote Viewing and asked audience members to describe the color, shape, material, or other properties of the hidden object. I wound up saying: "It's one of those heavy 8-armed Shivas made of brass, with a lotus base." He pulled it out, and that's what it was. Suddenly I felt like I'd spoiled the lecture. The audience was hopelessly confused; I am a friend of Russell, but I had never seen or heard about the object. Russell looked more shocked than anyone, as he wondered how to explain I was not a shill. It took a minute to convince them this was not a joke or a trick.

An hour later, during Daryl's presentation – which actually *was* a deceptive bit of stage magic – somehow I suddenly felt sure a bag of assorted objects he was hiding contained a sand dollar, and I said so out loud. On the videotape of the session, you can hear Jeffrey Mishlove and the others sitting near me squeal as Daryl then removes a sand dollar from the bag. Daryl is a mentalist-a magician who specializes in faking ESP, and an honest scientist. After the show, he said: "What I was doing with this audience was 'magic'. Gail, what *you* did was *real*."

After my 1998 interview with Russell Targ and Dean Radin they each separately took me to the side and said " You know you should write a book". So from their words of encouragement *Small Medium at Large* was written. To my surprise, this last December Putnam Books released a book called *Small Mediums At Large* by Terry Iacuzzo. I was in NY the day it was released with my NY sceptical relatives who suggested that the title and idea were taken from my website [www.smallmediumatlarge.net](http://www.smallmediumatlarge.net). I started to become suspicious also.

Upon returning to California I purchased her book from a large display at Barnes and Noble. As I read the book I started to see lines I had written from my experiences that were the same as hers

and the family stories mirrored some of mine. I e mailed her with the subject heading "Same Title Same Life" immediately and we have become friends sharing our stories. It was a wonderful connection that felt more like connecting with my sister, all from a similar book title. Terry paid me a lovely compliment that " I have to tell you, one of the loveliest things about writing my book was meeting you. We are definately twin souls." So I want to share a short story from my manuscript *Small Medium at Large*.

### **Impromptu Missing Person Case**

I'm at my post, performing the dreaded task of washing the breakfast dishes when the phone rings. My hands covered in dish soap, I reach for the phone. I'm surprised to hear the voice of Abe, a well-known psychiatrist in Berkeley.

"I've got a patient in my office whose mother has been missing for eight days. Would you mind speaking to him?"

I haven't talked to Abe in six months. He had enjoyed reading a draft of my manuscript, *Small Medium at Large*. When he asked if he could call me sometime, he seemed to be referring to the psychic thing.

Abe continues. "I know from reading your manuscript, the different psychic abilities you have, and I was hoping you might be able to see where his mother is, and whether she might be dead or alive."

I take a deep breath and hold it. I feel something tightening in my stomach.

"Well, I don't know that I could do any of this, it's not like it's somebody that I know. I've met people at conferences who do this kind of thing. They even assist in difficult cases with the police. I could give you their numbers."

"Can you speak to this young man in my office right now?"

"OK, put him on."

The young man introduces himself. His voice is gentle.

"My mother's been missing for the last eight days, and the Colorado police haven't been able to find her. They went to her house and found all her things there. Nothing had been touched."

"When was the last time you saw your mother?"

"I went out to spend Christmas with her in Colorado. She was staying on a ranch. We had a great time together."

"Was she sick? Had she been dealing with any life threatening illnesses? Cancer?"

"No. She's fifty-seven. In great health. She just moved from Berkeley a year ago to live in Colorado with her boyfriend."

"Are you close to your mom? Do you have a good relationship?"

"Yes. We had a wonderful Christmas together. A couple of days later, I went home to Berkeley and received \$700 she sent me as a New Year's gift. For her, that's a lot of money. I'd been calling to thank her, and she never answered the phone.

"I was wondering if you had any feelings about it?" he asks.

In that moment I see a complete vision. A woman slumped over a steering wheel, dead in a car on the side of the road. Dry brown desert and large boulders around.

This surprises me. I say nothing about it to him.

I ask, "Do you think your mother is alive, or do you think she's dead? Tell me how you feel inside, because you're more connected to her than any other person -- you're her son."

There is a silence. "I feel she's gone. When I was with her in Colorado, I felt like I was never going to see her again, and I didn't know why."

"You should trust your inner feeling."

I start to feel uncomfortable, not telling him the vision I've just seen.

Instead I say, "You really might want to contact the Psi Squad, experienced psychic investigators who work with the police to find missing people. And feel free to call me if you need to talk to me any more. I really hope you find her soon. Would you mind putting Abe back on the line?"

I'm trembling. "Abe, I couldn't tell him what I just saw. I saw his mother, dead in her car by the side of the road. But I couldn't tell him. That's not my job to do. What if I made a mistake? Maybe it's not true. It's just what I saw. So I just told him to trust his gut feeling that she had passed on. What was I supposed to do?"

"You did the right thing. I appreciate it very much. We'll let you know when we hear something."

Three hours later Abe calls back.

"The Colorado police just found his mother. She was dead in her car on the side of the road. They think it was carbon monoxide poisoning."

I'm vibrating, as if a tremendous amount of electricity is surging through my body. It's a familiar feeling. I've had it whenever I brush along the edges of death. I made the connection. I was at the scene with the mother.

My mind is racing. Have I done the right thing for this man who just lost his mother?

I try to take slower breaths. Actually, I just prepared this young man for this devastating news, by asking him all these questions. By having him say what he was intuitively feeling and denying.

There are so many places a woman who has been missing for 8 days could be. But I only saw the car scene with her slumped over. It did not look like an accident and there was no blood anywhere. She was not in a hotel or a hospital; she was where I was able to see her by just being asked a question. My body was in California, but my vision expanded out to Colorado to see what was there.

I'm pacing up and down my kitchen, my arms waving around in the typical Jewish New York fashion. I need to talk to someone to calm myself down. Someone to validate me, and to let me know it was all OK.

I had learned over the years not to call someone who would try to dismiss this as a coincidence. I now had a larger network of friends who understood my unusual dreams and visions.

Who better to call than Russell Targ? After all, he was the co-founder of the Stanford Research Institute's investigation into psychic ability, and he continues to talk and write about Remote Viewing, using me in experiments. He is a friend who would understand what I was feeling.

"I'm not surprised you were able to do this Gail," he says when I tell him the situation. "It's Remote Viewing. You went to the place and saw his mother."

I'm back at my post doing the dinner dishes when the phone rings again. It's Abe. "I was asked to call you again to see if you had any feelings about whether there was foul play in this woman's death. The police are concerned about a relationship she had with a boyfriend who might have done her harm. What do you think?"

This time I answer without hesitating. "I see no one else involved in this, not even another car or person. I didn't feel any negative scary energy surrounding this," I said. "No! This woman was all alone."

"Are you sure," he repeats, "as there may have been foul play?"

"I am very sure."

A few days later, Abe calls to let me know what happened.

"Gail, the police found a suicide letter written by the woman in Colorado, saying how much she loved her family and friends, and that in Berkeley she had been diagnosed with terminal cancer.

She came out to Colorado and took her life to spare the family and herself all the agonizing pain."

Anyway, it's not the psychic thing here that astounded me. Death is my "specialty." It was that this was not a friend or family. It was instant, with no thoughts or dreams.

I think there was a part of him that could see that his mother was dead and where she was. Perhaps I was seeing through his eyes. He wasn't open or aware that he had a psychic side. It was as if he needed me to clean his glasses or something because he couldn't see, and so I saw for him.

I speak to Abe later to be sure that I said and did all the right things for such a traumatic circumstance.

"You helped this man, Gail. What you said was perfect."

### **Conclusion**

I don't know why some of us evidently have these kinds of paranormal experiences more than others. I don't know how they work.

I had a very unusual childhood – from the time my birth mother drove to the hospital in a stolen car and checked into maternity under my adoptive mother's name. My parents broke with many conventions, invented their own way of living, and weren't always honest with their children. Perhaps all this helped make me more sensitive to unusual ways of discovering and learning things.

I've had many dreams that bring important personal information. I've foreseen accidents and emergencies, saving family members from harm. I've correctly diagnosed illnesses of loved ones as well as total strangers. I've experienced the final breaths of distant loved ones – when there was no normal way I could have known this was happening. Perhaps these deep connections with life and health provide some inherited benefit that has evolved to help my ancestors and my children survive and thrive.

I've found missing objects, and accurately described the condition of people whose family and police could not locate them. And I've listened and shared with others who had unexplained experiences, in ways that helped them better accept those experiences, or the behavior of a family member – sometimes bringing them insight and comfort.

I've enjoyed contributing to scientific experiments on paranormal phenomena. Still, it's hard to tell whether we're developing an understanding how they work, or mainly confirming that these experiences don't follow our normal ideas of space, time and information. It seems like the paranormal events don't care what the experiment is, or whether there is an experiment going on or not.

Many of them seem destined to remain mysteries.