

**Mind Control:
It Works – And It's Fantastic**

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It was the middle of a Sunday afternoon. I sat in a classroom in midtown Manhattan with twenty or so other people who were clustered together in groups of two or three. With my eyes closed, breathing deeply and regularly, totally relaxed, I told the woman sitting opposite me, a stranger, that I was ready.

She then gave me the name, age, and location of a friend of hers, someone I had never seen, and told me to visualize him and tell her what was wrong with him.

As soon as she'd given me the name of her friend and told me that he was a thirty-five year old New Jersey man, a picture began to form in my mind. I first saw a shock of wild black hair and got an impression of strong, dirty hands. The figure slowly emerged, lean and muscular, wearing jeans and a denim shirt, standing rigidly, staring fixedly, arms at his sides.

"Yes," the woman confirmed when I described my mental image. "He does have wild hair and he works with his hands, so they're often dirty. He's thin but very strong and always dresses casually. And you're absolutely right about his standing rigidly. He's very tense. Go on," she said.

I concentrated on the figure in my mind. "His stomach is red and angry. I get an impression of back pain and I see a lot of black spots on his brain. His heart seems healthy, but soft and pulpy."

"You're so right," the woman said excitedly. "There's really little wrong with him except his nervous tension, which upset his stomach, and his black out-look on life. There's nothing wrong with his heart as far as I know," she went on, "but you might have seen it as pulpy because he has no heart for living, doesn't really put any heart into anything he does. Now send him love and energy."

With my eyes still closed, I saw myself "washing" the man's brain and hands and pouring a soothing balm on his stomach and back. I saw him smiling relaxed and happy, and heard him say, "I feel terrific."

I opened my eyes to see the air in front of me shimmering with light. I was breathless, my mind completely clear, my body radiating pure energy. I was extraordinarily high, and judging from the gasps and excited whispers around me, everyone else was achieving the same success.

The woman who observed the friend whose name I

supplied saw chronic headaches that I completely forgotten. She also accurately described the physical and emotional characteristics of my friend. Another man had given his partner the names of a couple who were struggling with drugs. The psychic reader, as soon as she heard their names, said, "Heroin."

These mind-boggling psychic experiences took place among a group of former non-psychics on the last afternoon of the four-day Silva Method course, a fast easy way to change your life for the better. Before we took the course, my classmates and I never dreamed we could have psychic visions like those I just described. Now, after only four days of mental training, not only had we discovered that we all have psychic powers, but we had learned a host of techniques for improving our lives.

Graduates of the course have been able to stop smoking, lose weight, give up drugs, sleep without pills, and wake up on time without an alarm. They've found themselves having more creative ideas, discovered they could at last write that novel, win at love, pay the rent...in short, achieve whatever it is they want to achieve in life. And for those who aren't sure of what they want, there are techniques to help them find out.

Personally, I felt profoundly enriched, as if I had rediscovered a wealth within myself, as if a door had opened to me that was open in my childhood, but which had closed over the years.

Developed in the early 1960's by Mexican-American Jose Silva, a dynamic natural psychic, the course now boasts over two million graduates in fifty countries. The four-day experience comes with a money-back guarantee, if you're not completely satisfied at the end of the four days. Fewer than 1 percent of the graduates have taken advantage of that guarantee. Once you're graduated you can take the course again as often as you'd like, anywhere in the world, completely free of charge, and there are special "graduate meetings" devoted to specific aspects of the Silva philosophy.

While several of the Mind Control centers advertise, most people hear of the course from friends whose lives have been changed by it. There are thousands and thousands of testimonials, a handful of which are reported in [The Silva Mind Control Method](#), a book by Jose and Philip Miele.

It's no wonder that Silva has become so popular. It's the perfect therapy for this fast-moving age: It's quick it's enjoyable, and it works. It can accomplish in four days the same kind of mental freeing achieved after years of psychoanalysis, meditation or other rigorous disciplines. Several scientific studies have been made of personality changes in graduates of the course, and the results have been remarkable.

In September 1972 the Silva course was given to 2200 students at Hallahan High School Personality Questionnaire,

a standard personality test, was administered to those students by educator Dr. George DeSau before, and two weeks after, they took the course. The results showed impressive growth in the direction of greater ego strength, maturity, calmness, self-assurance, tranquility, composure, and intelligence.

Dr. DeSau then studied students at Pittsburgh's Lawrenceville and St. Fidelis High Schools before, two weeks after, and four months after they took the course.

Dr. Clancy D. McKenzie, a Philadelphia psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, conducted a study of 189 of his patients who agreed to take the mind control course. Of these, seventy-five were psychotic or borderline psychotic, while the other 114 were neurotic. Of the psychotics, fifty-eight were tested before and after the course and of these thirty-six showed dramatic improvement in reality perception. All the neurotics showed beneficial changes.

What happens in those four days that makes such profound and lasting changes in a person's way of thinking and being? The course teaches many specific techniques for improving actions and attitudes, but the basic training is in meditation, an ancient technique currently being popularized by the TM courses offered around the world and taught by many other gurus of the human potential movement.

When you meditate your brain generates what are called alpha waves. These are waves that come at seven to fourteen cycles per second, slower than the beta waves produced in the normal waking state and faster than theta or delta waves, the long, slow waves of sleep. (In fact, all these types of waves are being produced by different sections of the brain at all times, but one type of wave tends to dominate in each state of consciousness).

For some years now it has been believed that the waves produced by yogis and Zen masters in their trances are alpha waves. Research has proven that functions of the body such as heartbeat, blood pressure, and digestion, long believed to be involuntary, can be under our conscious control, and there have been indications of a correlation between the production of alpha waves and incidences of remarkable body control.

The course teaches you how to get into that blissfully tranquil, receptive alpha state, but goes beyond that, giving visualization techniques to use while you're meditating, mental exercises which can improve your life (more on that later).

Nothing that is presented in those four days is new. The information is a grab bag of material from sources as varied as Norman Vincent Peale, Eastern mysticism, Baba Ram Dass, and Emile Coue, the Frenchman who popularized auto-suggestion in America in the 1920's with the phrase, "Every day in every way I am getting better and better."

You hear a lot of that kind of talk in the Silva course. The emphasis throughout is on a positive mental attitude and positive thoughts.

"Thoughts are things," exhorts Paul Grivas, our stocky, gentle, smiling lecturer. Throughout the first day we are blasted by the full force of Paul's sunny positivism. We are shown again and again, through case histories and examples, how common our negative thoughts and attitudes are and how they always prevent us from getting and doing what prevent us from getting and doing what we want. We are told that whenever we slip into negative thinking we should say "Cancel--Cancel" to ourselves.

This, for me, is the low point of the course. While I appreciate the intent behind the advice, there's something obnoxiously cute about "Cancel--Cancel," and I'm surprised to find it popping into my head that evening at home as I talk about a project I don't think I'll be able to complete.

On that first day Paul also stresses that we look at our problems in a new way. "Don't see them as problems," he says, "See them as projects." I love this suggestion and use it often.

These attempts to reshape our thinking are made via simple, often very funny lectures, followed by equally unintellectual question-and-answer periods. But these are the pudding of the Silva course. The plum in the pudding are the conditionings, which are done five or six times a day to teach us alpha control.

To transport us into the alpha state, Paul reads us the following from a notebook on his desk: "Find a comfortable position. Relax your body completely. Close your eyes. Take a deep breath and while exhaling, mentally repeat and visualize the number three, three times. Take another deep breath and while exhaling, mentally repeat and visualize the number two, three times. Take another deep breath and while exhaling, mentally repeat and visualize the number one, three times. You are now at a deeper, healthier level of mind. You are now at the basic level that you may use for any purpose you desire. To enter deeper, healthier levels of mind, you may count downward from ten to one."

At the end of each conditioning the class is brought slowly back to a normal waking state with suggestions that we feel fine.

After the first conditioning I feel deliciously relaxed, but I am full of questions as is everyone else. "I don't think I was really in an alpha state," one girl says. "How do I know if I'm really in alpha?" A murmur of agreement goes around the room. "Don't worry about it," Paul reassures her, "You will be in alpha. Just relax."

Another hand goes up, "I didn't hear a lot of what you said. I think I fell asleep." Everyone laughs. "Don't worry about that, either," says Paul, smiling. "Listen, people, I tell you everything three times. I tell you what I'm going to

say before I bring you down to your level. I say it again when you're at level, and I repeat it again when you come out of level. And even if you're asleep, you're still getting it. You can't miss a thing."

Detractors of Silva claim that "going to level" is just another phrase for hypnosis, and Paul spends some time on the second day explaining how mind control differs from hypnosis. The subject under hypnosis must be told by the hypnotist whether the reality he perceives is subjective or objective. A person practicing Mind Control, on the other hand, will not hallucinate, only imagine. In order to use self-hypnosis, a subject must initially be placed in an hypnotic state by a hypnotist, who must give the subject a post-hypnotic suggestion enabling him to hypnotize himself. Any form of "hypnotism" which does not initially use the services of a hypnotist is actually an auto--conditioning technique--like mind control.

The meditative state quiets the conscious mind, stilling the thousands of thoughts that flash through it every minute. When these thoughts are stilled, the unconscious mind can emerge, we become more in tune with ourselves, and many benefits result. Problems that our conscious mind grapples with unsuccessfully are often easily solved when the unconscious is free to do its work. I have often used Silva techniques to help me find creative inspiration, to clarify my thinking, or to focus on a goal. Many researchers believe psychic powers are tapped when the conscious mind is stilled because conscious thought blocks out the psychic impression we always receive.

Profound, sensual relaxation and a new awareness of the body also accompany this state. The unconscious mind is a more direct link with the body, and instruction given to the body when the conscious mind is quiet is remarkably effective. Paul talks about the consciousness in every cell and stresses that we can control that sluggish cell consciousness with instructions from our unconscious minds. We talk about sickness and health and how the body can be "talked into" healing itself. I have used Silva techniques effectively for many aches and pains since taking the course.

On the second day we learn one of the most valuable techniques of the course, Mirror of the Mind. An ancient meditative technique, Mirror of the Mind can be used to solve any problem, to change any bad habit, to attain any materialistic goal.

Paul tells us, "First focus on a problem you want to solve. Let's say you want to lose ten pounds. Go to your level and picture a mirror, framed in black. See your problems in this mirror. See yourself as too fat, eating too much, craving food when your body doesn't really need it, leaving the table feeling too full, eating after you've had an argument or when you feel unloved. See the problem in all its aspects. Really visualize yourself in that mirror.

"Then smash that mirror and replace it with a mirror framed in white, in which you see the solution to the problem. See yourself thin, fitting into your new clothes, feeling lighter, brighter, more attractive, hearing people tell you how wonderful you look since you've lost weight. From then on keep visualizing that solution. Whenever you think of the problem replace it with a picture of the solution."

Paul explains that we can use this technique to achieve any end. Want a new car? Don't moan about how expensive a new car would be. Instead, picture yourself driving around in a new car, the color you want, the model you want, just as you would like it to be. Want to improve a relationship? Picture you and your loved one in close harmony. Really see what you want. Don't worry about how far-fetched or difficult to achieve it may seem, just keep energizing that solution for at least twenty seconds a day. This may sound like idle day-dreaming, but is really a new kind of discipline. By repeatedly focusing on your goal, you are motivated to go after it in ways you may not have thought of before.

I've used the visualization technique time and again, and it works. For instance, I visualized my by-line in a certain magazine to which I'd long yearned to contribute, and sure enough I received word that one of my articles had just been accepted for publication.

We are taught techniques to improve our memory using visualization. We are taught to hold the first three fingers of either hand together as a trigger mechanism to quickly get us into the alpha state. We are told to use this mechanism whenever our desires require instant results--when we need a taxi or a parking space, for instance. In the alpha state our senses are fully alert so I'll probably spot that taxi before someone else does. But I also feel that when I put my three fingers together I am in tune with the flow of the universe. Because I am relaxed and receptive, I am more likely to receive psychic signals that I would not ordinarily pick up. By following the hunches triggered by these signals, I am guided to the right place at the right time--to get that taxi in the pouring rain, for example.

On the third night we develop our psychic laboratory, an imaginary room where we will go to try to use our psychic powers to help others and ourselves with medical problems. We also visualize counselors, imaginary or real people who stay in our laboratories and help us whenever we need help.

On the morning of the fourth day we imagine ourselves traveling through a healthy human body to prepare us for the psychic observations and healing that will take place later that afternoon. Doctors attending the Silva course have expressed astonishment when a fellow classmate made a completely accurate diagnosis of one of their patients. And Silva instructors have evidence that the sending of love and energy, as they call the attempt to use psychic

powers to heal actually works. They've received letters telling of miraculous recoveries after a class thousands of miles away had concentrated its love and energy on a particular patient.

Somehow, no matter how doubtful we were during the first three and a half days, on the fourth afternoon everyone succeeds on making an accurate psychic observation. Some are more successful than others, but everyone in my class is bursting with uncanny psychic visions. The classroom glows with warmth and intense love. Although learning mind control is a very private experience, by the end of four days the class has become close. We have all shared in an extraordinary adventure.

For weeks afterward I can talk of nothing else. I am enmeshed in chains of fortuitous coincidences. My work goes better. I feel better. My enthusiasm sends eight of my friends to Silva. Seven of them enjoyed it enormously, use the techniques, and feel it was of great value. The eighth grumbled and complained and said that he didn't get anything out of it, but he admits he fought it all the way. And to this day he boasts about how he can always get a cab merely by pressing three fingers together.

Now, after two and a half years, I still feel the course has changed my life for the better. I use the techniques often and if life gets too hectic and I let the techniques slip for a while, I go back and take a refresher course, which I always consider a treat. All in all, I'm grateful to Silva Mind Control for helping me move closer to my full potential.