

Mind State Management

*"People who learn to control inner experience
will be able to determine the quality of their lives,
which is as close as any of us can come to being happy."
(Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p.2)*

In his book, "Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience", one of the foremost authors on the phenomena of peak experiences, Csikszentmihalyi, outlines the state of unity between subject and object, the observer and the observed, a total blend of process and outcome. This state of complete focus can also be described as the result of a learned skill or habit. Mind State Management (MSM), the skill of matching activation state and mental focus to the task at hand, is now available to virtually anyone who is willing to learn it. Once the cherished domain of a few yogis and supreme meditators, this ability can now be learned through the recent advances in the new field of neurotechnology.

Describing the consciousness continuum

Mind State Management involves many specific skills and strategies for effecting positive changes to human consciousness. Consciousness, the subjective state of awareness of one's mind state, can be viewed as a continuum. While this description does not take into account the structure and function of the brain, it does provide a useful framework upon which to map the general states of arousal which are associated to processing certain types of information and performing certain kinds of tasks. It is an oversimplification to describe all parts of the brain as if they resonate uniformly to one vibration; the brain is far more complex than that. Nor is it accurate to describe left brain functions only as primarily linear and logical, and right brain functions only as intuitive, unconscious, and spatial. The metaphor of a continuum, though, allows us a convenient way to understand the fairly consistent patterns of brain functioning common to most people.

The brain operates like a computer, which is not surprising, since computers were designed to emulate brain functions in the first place. There are input devices (data from our senses), coding systems (categorizations and cognitive appraisals of our perceptions based on previous experiences) and a central processing unit. There is also a power source (motivation) that pre-selects certain information for processing and ignores data considered irrelevant. There are also output devices in which data is categorized (cross-referenced in both the conscious and unconscious long-term memory systems). If the encoding is sloppy or the data has relatively low importance to functioning, it tends to be lost (forgotten). It is eventually overwritten or erased by subsequent information (new experiences).

While most of the information is stored, it is almost virtually unretrievable unless properly tagged to a retrieval path. For example, with no external cueing, try to remember who you had lunch with three Tuesdays ago. For most people this is not an easy assignment, yet the memory is there.

Imagine the distress of taking an examination and temporarily blocking the correct answers due to the stress of having to produce on demand. Imagine the difficulty in trying to fall asleep when your sleep cycle has been disrupted by jet lag. Or trying to read a chapter of a textbook when you are tired. Each of these activities requires certain levels of brain state activation in order to be carried out effectively. The importance of this principle is far from

insignificant. Disruptions to brain functioning can affect cognition, emotion, attitude and ultimately behavior. What is needed then is the ability to access the brain wave state that is optimal to the task at hand.

What are brainwaves? Essentially, our brain is a neurochemical information processor that gives off electrical signals as electrochemical circuits close and open a million each second. If this is so, why can't we detect these signals? Primarily because our skulls are too thick and the signals too weak for them to resonate outside our heads. With the exception of perhaps the most clairvoyant and telepathic among us, brain wave patterns are impossible to detect without the aid of a special amplifier called an electroencephalograph or EEG, which detects and records the changes in the voltage emanating from the brain. These electrical patterns tend to be similar in their general rhythm or rate of pulsation, and can be placed along the consciousness continuum.

The first pattern is described as **beta waves**, of short amplitude and very rapid pulsation of 30-14 cycles per second (Hertz or Hz). This pattern is optimal for intense mental activities such as calculations, linear logical analyses, and other highly structured functions.

The second pattern is described as **alpha waves**, characterized by slightly larger amplitude of 13-9 Hz. This pattern typically occurs in daydreaming, relaxed awareness, guided or focused imagery and smoothly rhythmic athletic activity. There is often an euphoric, effortless feeling of "flow" as the doer is absorbed in activity, and subject and object are felt to be united.

The third pattern is described as **theta waves**, pulsation that is more ragged and irregular, in the 8-4 Hz range. While this range is rather small, a difference of 1 or 2 Hz in this zone is very noticeable, as it is proportionately much larger than it would be in the beta or alpha range. This pattern is associated with deep unconscious imagery, and thus creativity, as the person drops into a state of drowsiness and near-sleep.

The last main pattern is that of **delta waves**, pulsation that ranges between 3-1 Hz. In this range of profound relaxation, images and dreams have largely subsided, as the person slides into a state of slow wave restorative sleep. Meditators who remain aware during this state of near unconsciousness report tranquility and peace.

Obviously, being able to control a mind state (the subjective mental state that typically accompanies a brainwave pattern) would be helpful in optimizing human functioning in contexts that required specific kinds of concentration and relaxation. While there have always been brainwaves, only recently have we become aware of them and been able to effect their change. This accessibility with demonstrable, rapid results has great potential for the relief of suffering and the evolution of the social mind of our society.

Thus, in this next section the intent is to put mind state management in a context that allows you to see the rich human tradition from which it springs, and the way these independent sources form interdependent streams of consciousness. You can get a sense of the expansive direction in which this energy can flow, not only in your own development, but also in the development of all human consciousness.

Mind state management in an historical context

Meditation and Prayer. Throughout history, in virtually every culture and religion, there has been a tradition of some kind of meditation or chanting prayer. Prayer is typically used to focus and calm the mind, promote healing, or invoke the blessing of a deity. Usually the prayer takes about 15-20 minutes. It may involve the repetition of a simple phrase or series of actions and rhythmic sounds jumping, swaying, dancing or chanting. The participant

continues repeating the action or mantra long past the point of boredom, until a higher state or spiritual awareness occurs. If distracting thoughts occur, the participant is told not to resist them. Let them pass through the mind and exit by themselves, allowing the mind to return to the mantra. These rituals have been successful in invoking a relaxation response, but only to dedicated devotees who practiced religiously. The required discipline often had to be maintained externally through social constraints against leaving the place of meditation or the practice of prayer. The reason for such control was obvious. The tasks were inherently boring and ineffective unless practiced diligently, so the sessions needed to be practiced often enough for the benefit to be realized.

Nevertheless, over the centuries and across cultures, a general principle of the mind-body unity seems to operate:

- Stimulate the mind-body with rapid movement and loud sounds.
- Soothe and settle the mind-body with slower and quieter movement and sound.
- Transport the mind-body to altered states of consciousness through very slow pulsing of movement and sound.
- The principles of mind state management are similar:
- Repeated rhythmic stimulation reduces the distraction imposed by the external world.
- Attention gradually and consistently turns to internal experiences.

If slower rhythms were better for inducing deeper states of consciousness, then it would seem that the ultimate meditation would be to cultivate total stillness and quietness, a slowing of all movement in a total focus of concentration. In fact, many forms of yogic meditation attempt to do just this. However, they flourish in cultures where patience, acceptance and the concept of "no-thing-ness" are taught from an early age. The effort required focusing the wandering and impatient mind is unbearably demanding and tedious to the undisciplined Western mind. Some would argue that this lack of patience and discipline is the very attitude that the practice of meditation is designed to over-come, the antidote to Western thinking. However, such an argument is actually a taunting tautology, describing a condition that prevents its own remedy. After we watch the dog chasing its own tail, we know he is merely playing with his dilemma. Not so with meditation. For whatever reason, most people in our Western culture will not meditate in a consistent way long enough for thorough learning of the skills of MSM.

Hypnosis: The advent of formal hypnosis in the past two centuries provided a new and perhaps more readily acquired method of learning MSM. In hypnosis, a state of focus is generated by the use of language, with words, phrases, and ideas using the contradictions provided in the language itself. Words can twist and reflect upon themselves, leaving the listener confused and detached.

Hypnosis as a path to MSM was limited by two popular perceptions:

- Hypnotic suggestibility was thought to be an inherent, almost fixed, capacity rather than a learned skill, which some people acquire more easily than others.
- Hypnosis was thought of as a weird state in which the hypnotist somehow took control of a subject with a weak or suggestible mind.

As a result of these misconceptions, hypnosis held a relatively narrow path for learning MSM skills. Nevertheless, a dedicated person can usually learn hypnosis and ultimately self-

hypnosis with the help of an instructor, or from books and tapes. However, for this individual the results are often hit-or-miss. Practice is abandoned before the MSM skills are properly learned and integrated.

Mind alteration: North American consciousness explorers in the 70s and 80s began experimenting with the mind-altering properties of hallucinogenic drugs. These did indeed alter the user's state of consciousness, but in largely uncontrolled, and some-times dangerous ways. What's more, many of these drugs were not only illegal, but also toxic, which required the body to metabolize the substance before returning to a normal state of consciousness. What people really wanted was a quick, effective, natural process for mind-state alteration.

Ritual practices: The 1970s brought an increasing awareness of the value rituals practiced by other cultures might offer to our secular consumer-oriented society. Besides Eastern religions and philosophies, there was a growing appreciation for North American aboriginal people and the reverence they held for nature. This resonated with the dawn of the ecology movement. The idea of using natural rituals somehow seemed to make more sense. The idea of social and mind altering ceremonies - bathing in the warmth and flicker of firelight, chanting, drumming and dancing - invoked a curiosity and earned a place in the North American cultural mosaic.

Sensory deprivation: Meanwhile, some researchers were experimenting with sensory deprivation. In float tanks, one floated in large, dark, quiet tanks of water at body temperature. The buoyancy provided by a high level of Epsom salt allowed the user to float effortlessly. All sensory input - sight, sound, smell, taste, kinesthetic feeling - was denied. This was effective in inducing relaxation, euphoria, accelerated learning, and various mind state phenomena (Hutchison, 1984, *The Book of Floating*).

The real secret lays in enticing the participant to stay with the training long enough for a beneficial effect to be realized. What is often required is gentle encouragement, enthusiasm, and a set of focusing instructions that are easy to follow. Rather than having a few programs meant to meet everyone's needs, it made sense to develop customized programs for specialized purposes.

Applications: how to use the principles of mind state management

In this section I will first guide you through the types of applications found in the Psychonavigation Path - Relax, Explore, Learn, Change and Energize. I will discuss the health-oriented applications first, and then branch out to the realms of exploration and consciousness expansion. Many people are first attracted to this technology for the instant relief it provides from stress. Once they address some of these essential needs of balance and wellness, they can have greater focus toward the higher objectives of consciousness exploration, the realm of inner space.

I would like to describe some of the experiences I have encountered. I'll review the theory of how each type of session works and possible applications.

RELAX SESSIONS

Generally alpha programs are used to lower activation and provide relief from stress.

Stress management and high performance: floatation tanks have perhaps received most credit for their ability to reduce stress and match the activation state to the task at hand. When executives are too high-strung to attempt any kind of meditation, too busy to learn self-hypnosis or yoga, and too exhausted to exercise, they place themselves at

medical risk, susceptible to burnout. Overstressed executives may cause mismanagement and, as centers of corporate influence, contaminate the work environment with their dysfunctional thinking and demanding behavior. Related disturbances in marital and family relations can further compound this systemic breakdown. In such cases, it is often easier to alleviate the immediate symptom by passively responding to the floatation sessions with binaural beats.

Once engaged in this relief, they are more likely to examine the cognitive styles and communication patterns that underlie their condition. With therapeutic input they can use floatation-induced mind-states to reprogram attitudes to be more in harmony with team functioning. Athletes can learn to set realistic goals, manage their energy and effort, coordinate team energy with maximum efficiency and focus, and perform with flexibility and resistance to distraction or discouragement.

Insomnia and other sleep disorders: In chronic stress situations or posttraumatic stress disorders, a person's sleep patterns are often quite disturbed. This further compounds the stress so the person becomes even more vulnerable to confusion, attention lapses, anxiety, mood swings, and depression. In such cases, training with floatation has promoted awareness of the consciousness continuum and been used to induce lucid dreams and control nightmares. They have been very useful in promoting near sleep states in which goals of restful sleep and pleasant dreams can be incubated. Such theta and delta states are ideal for treating sleep onset insomnia. Binaural beats used in conjunction with floatation REST can extend the length and depth of the sleep. It is important that the trainer is sensitive to the causes of stress in the client's life, to help manage the gradient of expectation so that the client is not overwhelmed with performance anxiety in this attempt to sleep.

The theory of how Relax sessions operate

While thousands of people have used floatation REST to control stress, it is possible to use these technique and not become relaxed. For one thing, we all differ in our baseline activation rates, i.e., how physiologically agitated or relaxed we are to begin with. One person might normally be more relaxed than another who started extremely "wired" and used a floatation session to slow down and unwind. Some people, although they know a floatation session would be helpful, are too far-gone by the end of a stressful day to go to a floatation center. In this case, and with virtually all relaxation situations, it is helpful to have the benefit of a binaural beat induction. This can accelerate the rate of tension release and the learning of a deep relaxation response.

Typically, a relaxation session begins in the beta zone (30-14 Hz) to match the frazzled state of the user's mind at the point man and machine begin their interplay. Within varying periods of time, but usually within the first ten minutes, the pulsation rate has drops into the alpha zone (13-9 Hz). An associated cd might play soft wave-like music, focus on relaxing muscles, or invoke imagery that recalls pleasant scenes. If time or inclination permit, the session may stay longer in alpha to allow for further relaxation or go into the theta zone (8-4 Hz). Typically, the sessions are about 20 minutes long because users rarely have more time available in their lives to train in stress release. Some stress management programs return the user to a high alpha or low beta state (12-14 Hz) before finishing, to provide a period of readjustment to the active pace of the outside world. Sessions devoted to sleep induction tend to ramp progressively down to theta and even go as far as ending in the delta zone (3-1 Hz).

In addition to stress management, there are several other wellness applications that require activation control to move into the second main area of mind state management. In these applications, when the mind state is pre-pared with slower states of deep relaxation, the curtains of the unconscious can be drawn back so that old fears can be faced, old

resentments and grief processed, and new patterns for healing can be implanted as guides for further recovery and personal development.

EXPLORE SESSIONS

These are open-ended mind expansion and exploration sessions designed to access altered states of consciousness.

There appear to be few people who are willing to invest in consciousness training using floatation REST. However, for those few that do, almost nothing is more fun and exciting than the pursuit of higher consciousness. This is a thrilling and wondrous world of images, metaphors, symbols, stories, spirituality, and oneness with the universe. There are narratives of a vast future and a resourceful past in spirits that transcend time, space, mortality, and the limits of boundaries. Conversations and shared experiences with fellow travelers on this journey make most of life pale by comparison.

It is quite amazing to find that many people who are open to such exploration are quite restrictive in the vehicles they elect to use. Meditation, yes; dreaming, perhaps; but using technology, no! It is as if using a method that has a modicum of precision and predictability aborts the natural flow of the spiritual process. It is similar to the disdain of the cross-country touring skiers who watch a helicopter filled with downhill skiers being airlifted to the top of the same powder mountain.

The theory of how Explore sessions work

The vehicle for our exploration is the TTI Pathfinder. Like the space probe of the same name, this vehicle can take you beyond the gravitational pull of ordinary consciousness, past the planetary markers of conventional thought, and into the vast universe of inner space. Imagine sweeping aside the curtains of beta-analytic mind states, moving beyond the veils of alpha-directed daydreams, and gaining access to the unconscious through the portals of theta and delta consciousness. Unconsciously de-rived memories, images, messages, and feelings of transpersonal connectedness can act as icons for our mental and spiritual development, and perhaps even our evolution as a species. We are likely on the threshold of superconsciousness, developing new and more ecologically-balanced paradigms of meaning and purpose.

If the words in the preceding paragraph seem too abstract or overly optimistic, please remember that it is one of the few areas in which I allow myself to extrapolate beyond the data of the empirical world in which we all are grounded. Nevertheless, this is an opportunity to share a mission statement of evolved consciousness as my ultimate dream for the future of neurotechnology, and one of the reasons I am so passionately involved in this field. From the comments of other explorers and designers in this field, it seems that we are indeed aligned in this mission.

LEARN SESSIONS

This group of sessions allows for superlearning of detailed knowledge, general pattern learning, developing personal creativity, subliminal learning, enhancing imagery in learning and lucid dreaming. The focus is not recovery of health or remediation of problem patterns. Instead, it is the attainment of mind state management skills that enhance functioning, especially in the field of learning and creativity.

Creativity and lucid dreaming: Floatation REST assist in the recognition of subtle shifts in the consciousness continuum allowing the user to glide through the gradient into theta

reverie and its images. These images can become personal icons or symbols of the unconscious, communicating a message or creative solution to a problem that was incubated before the floatation session.

The theory of how Learn sessions work

Both Hutchison (1986, 1993) and Budzynski (1992), among others, have recounted empirical studies showing the beneficial effects of various mind entrainment devices and protocols in enhancing learning.

The mind needs to prepare for learning by being clear of distraction. Floatation REST operates by blocking out external stimulation. Learning occurs best when the mind is open, receptive and curiously involved with the material, enriching it through associations and connections involving the whole brain. The mind also needs to be focused on the task at hand, understanding and learning the material being studied. It is noteworthy for those with Attention Deficit Disorder, there seems to be a paradoxical effect. More intense stimulation in the high alpha and beta zones appears to satisfy a natural stimulation deficit in these brainwaves, and thus allows for a greater ability to sustain focus and concentration on a task or topic.

There appear to be optimal mind states for different types of tasks. The optimal mind state for metaphorical, literary, analogical or spatial learning is likely the alpha state; for intensely logical or computational problems, the beta state. For learning material that is quite foreign to the person's previous experience, or material reflecting points of view that differ widely from the person's basic beliefs, the theta state is recommended.

Right after the learning session, the mind needs a period of several minutes to one hour to allow the previous learning to set or gel in long-term memory. This process requires protein synthesis in the brain. Floatation REST-induced relaxation allows the central processing unit of our computing mind to be relieved of new input. Following this computer analogy, it stores data from its existing "random access memory", which is highly volatile, onto hard disk memory (protein cells) for long term memory and cross-referencing synthesis. Existing research indicates that if this phase is enhanced properly, the memory improves in volume, detail, richness, complexity, and breadth of application. It is even better a day later than on the day the material was studied. This is the well-known *superlearning* effect for which light and sound devices became famous.

Beyond superlearning, floatation REST promotes learning by assisting in the breaking of rigid thinking and cognitive sets. Fluid mind state management enhances set-breaking and cognitive flexibility so important in the paradigm shifts that are the essential ingredient of creative thinking. Furthermore, floatation REST is highly effective to assist in the incubation of theta reverie states and dreams, the source of creative images. Even more exciting is their untapped potential for incubating the lucid dream.

CHANGE SESSIONS

These repatterning sessions help people make positive changes in their lives by overcoming obstacles posed by fear, anger, and limiting beliefs. Growth and transformation are possible, often with the use of guided imagery to access abilities and raise self-esteem.

Phobias, Anxiety and Panic Disorders: The prototypical use of mind state management for change is the situation in which a person, thwarted by their fear, needs to remain composed and effective. An accelerated form of desensitization using floatation REST has been effective in rapidly (one to six sessions) correcting monophobias and anxiety disorders (five to 15 sessions).

Anger control and conflict resolution: In this area, mind state management offers many more skills than the control of activation levels. Nevertheless, there is a need to be able to turn down arousal and focus on key cognitive messages when anger is invoked. Often when anger is fully sparked, rational conduct and clear thinking “fly out the window”, as the person is consumed with affect. If, however, you are able to access a message for an alternate behavior that you have previously linked to these states (anchoring), then you can regain control, exercising alternative behaviors that are assertive, but not destructive. It is also very effective to have a close friend or family member participate in the sessions to help resolve some of the systemic loops of reciprocal tension that contribute to anger disorders. In guided imagery, activation control is linked with desensitization of scenes in which the person perceives the frustration of a blocked need or a threatened loss of relationship, status, or identity. Floatation REST gives a reassuring sense of mastery over emotions, and thus feel less vulnerable and defensive. This allows for greater self-acceptance and, therefore, better listening and assertive problem-solving skills to emerge in conflict situations.

Psychophysiological disorders: Disorders such as ulcers, skin conditions, migraine headaches, chronic pain, fibromyalgia, and several immune-deficient conditions can be treated with fairly holistic methods including extensive use of floatation REST sessions. The results for headaches and temporal mandibular joint pain have been very encouraging and have been replicated by other clinicians and researchers in dental and chronic pain settings (Boersma, 1987). Virtually all clients noticed a definite feeling of well-being and endorphin-like suppression of pain and remission of symptoms. These glimpses of well-being became more and more prominent in their lives until they were able to function with total absence of their disorder, or in the case of fibromyalgia, a substantial lessening of symptoms. This seems like a promising area for further investigation.

Substance abuse and eating disorders: Floatation REST can be used to treat self-esteem issues - distorted body image, overcoming fear of fatness, reducing panic and anxiety states that lead to episodes of drinking, drug abuse, or bulimia. Incidentally, it is also likely that alcoholics have a natural deficit or underproduction of alpha waves when sober, with higher production of alpha after the ingestion of alcohol (Wise, 1992). The mellow feelings that accompany frequent usage of floatation REST extend throughout the days to get over “bad periods” in the client’s life. Such treatment is startlingly successful with some cases of Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS), although the numbers are too small to make generalizations.

Self-esteem, autonomy, confidence, and identity: Probably one of the best areas of application for floatation REST-assisted therapy is instilling confidence and overcoming social anxiety and self-consciousness in personal presentation. Desensitization of performance anxiety and phobias can proceed fairly rapidly with a specific technique that uses floatation REST to promote deep relaxation prior to scene exposure. Of course, the development of identity and autonomy in young adults often involves redefining relationships with family and loved ones, which naturally leads into the next area of application.

Marital and Family Disturbances: Putting family members on the same brief floatation REST program before a family therapy session allows them to “get on the same wavelength”. This seems to help in conflict resolution and the creation of harmony, but it is difficult to assess whether similar results would be obtained without the use of the device.

The theory of how Change sessions operate

The first principle of how Change sessions work is desensitization, a simple behavior therapy. People typically overcome a negative affect by allowing it to exhaust itself, or by substituting it with more effective coping methods that deal with the negative situation

more effectively. It involves distancing yourself in some way from the feared situation or object, and then changing one element of it (e.g., your proximity to it, the number of people involved, the setting, or the task), then deal with that element in a relaxed and confident way. For example, in a floatation REST-induced, relaxed alpha state you can visualize dealing with that element by itself, then do the same for other elements, until you can re-assemble the elements so that the situation is no longer a problem. This process is first rehearsed in imagery, then practiced with coaching and support in real life until the problem situation is mastered.

Floatation REST is useful in inducing the alpha states required for this work, and is probably assisted by the generation of endorphins, which counteract physical pain and lessen emotional threat, fostering a sense of well being and confidence.

Thus the second crucial element of the operation of mind states is learning how to access dependably and confidently this endorphin state within the stimulus situation that caused the original pain or fear. Being able to invoke a preferred mind state at will is crucial for overcoming compulsions and various forms of substance abuse in which a ritual - the ingestion of a substance - is used to squelch or suppress negative effect. Mind state management, with its access to mind states, provides the skills that allow the power of the ritual to be broken, the compulsion to be weakened and dissolved.

A third way in which Change sessions work is by changing deeply held personal beliefs and convictions, many of which are the sources of the problem. The strong emotions attached to these beliefs can also be a factor that maintains the structure of the problem. Often these structures are heavily protected by deep unconscious embedding, and the over-alert defenses of the rational, analytic mind.

Imagery practice is the fourth element in the operation of Change sessions. Imagery is necessary for the creation and transformation of a person's self-image, and self statements are a vital part of a person's self-appraisal of identity and worth. It follows that both imagery and self-affirmation are powerful tools for the establishing and maintaining of enhanced self-esteem. Therefore, several of the tapes designed to go with the Mind Machine's Change sessions have as their major focus the promotion of self-esteem through imagery and affirmation.

ENERGIZE SESSIONS

These sessions include revitalizing, re-energizing, and sport psychology applications. They are designed to enhance performance and promote wellness. They promote healing and recovery from injury, the building of natural immunity systems, and the promotion of brain stimulation and growth.

Performance enhancement: An abundance of literature, notably in the field of sport psychology, attests to the fact that rehearsal in imagery dramatically affects future performance. In many sport psychology applications, floatation REST can be used to promote the control of activation level, a crucial skill in sport performance. Another application is imagery training in skill acquisition and in being able to perform in a highly competitive environment without being distracted. The athlete uses floatation REST-induced states of focus, then learns how to anchor these states with self-generated cues, rehearsing, then re-instating the ideal performance state in competition. In working with national teams, professional athletes, and Olympians, it has been gratifying to see the acceleration of positive results, especially in confidence building and focus. Of course, one can extrapolate easily from sport performance situations to sales, management, and other areas of effective functioning.

The theory of how Energize sessions work

Both accurate skill acquisitions in training and consistency of performance in competitive environments require access of the state of "flow". Beyond the joy of performance and mastery, in order to sustain optimal mental capacities, repetitive and frequent stimulation of the brain is necessary. Therefore, mental exercises and puzzles, especially those involving creativity and set breaking, are valuable in honing these mind skills. These can operate even more optimally in floatation REST. Liberation of the brain results in the regeneration in growth and complexity in brain tissue and functioning.

The higher beta pulsation that typify energizing programs may lend increased access to transpersonal consciousness, although at this point such notions are not substantiated by research.

Pathways of learning

Dr. Thomas Budzynski suggests that, for the sake of continuity, you use the floatation REST on a weekly basis for at least seven consecutive months in order to reach your desired outcome. Like anything worthwhile in life, goals in mind state management need consistency of practice to be achieved and then enjoyed fully.

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