

OVERVIEW OF FOCUS LEVELS

For those unfamiliar with the focus levels a little background is in order. The story goes back to Robert A. Monroe, who began to experience involuntary Out of Body Experiences (OBE) in 1957. These early experiences have been documented in his first book "Journeys Out of The Body" (Monroe, 1971). It was also during this time that Monroe discovered that sound patterns could induce certain states of consciousness, which eventually led to the creation of the Monroe Institute and patented sound technology called Hemi-Sync.

While the early experiences of Monroe were often characterized by a sensation of leaving the body his development took a different turn in later years. Monroe discovered the "quick-switch", which allowed him to move from one "location" to another in an instant by stretching or reaching out with his consciousness. Eventually, this led Monroe to consider the "second body" to be no more than "local traffic" – mere habit due to the physical experience (Atwater, 2001). Thus, the implicit philosophical background behind 'phasing' is that there is no such thing as "leaving the body", since consciousness is never really 'in the body' to begin with. Rather, all experiences which constitute things such as "trance", "hypnosis", "altered states", "meditation", "OBEs", and "astral projections" are simply variations on the same theme where consciousness is focused in different ways and in different degrees away from the physical.

The term phasing is a metaphor derived from physics, which conceptualizes consciousness as a waveform that can either be aligned or not aligned with physical reality. For example, when we are 100% phased into the physical we are considered perfectly aligned with normal physical input and waking reality. In Monroe speak, this is called C-1 consciousness or primary phasing. As consciousness moves further away from the physical (and the senses) consciousness is said to phase into other "focus levels".

Achieving various focus levels can be facilitated by tapes or CD's, which utilize binaural beats to influence brain wave patterns in the person listening to them. These tapes are sold as part of a set of tapes/CDs called The Gateway Experience by the Monroe Institute. In particular, the set of tapes (Wave I) of the Gateway Experience is geared towards establishing the focus 10 state, while subsequent series (Wave II to VI) gradually increase the phase shift away from the physical.

The first set of these focus levels (and the focus levels the Gateway Experience pertain to), can be said to a extent maintain varying degrees of relationship to the physical in that they usually do not automatically include being fully present at a certain 'astral

location', but rather, involve an expanded state of awareness of some kind while still remaining in the same "location".

These focus levels have been described as follows (Monroe, 1994, p. 248):

Focus 3: State of increased mental coherency and balance

Focus 10: Mind Awake/Body Asleep

Focus 12: A state of expanded awareness

Focus 15: State of no time

Focus 21: The edge of time/space where it is possible to contact other energy systems.

There is some confusion and uncertainty regarding the Focus 12 through 21 states and differentiating them appropriately. Frank, our in-house expert on phasing, and several others have noted how the transition from Focus 10 to 12 is often characterized by seeing several abstract forms and colors, often very quickly followed by a 3-D effect in the blackness surrounding you. Hence, there is some controversy on the exact delineation between Focus 12, 15 and 21. Perhaps the 3-D blackness of Focus 21 can be said to be more expansive to the extent that it starts to touch upon 'astral locations' beyond Focus 21.

It is important to realize these focus levels are merely arbitrary numbers and signposts to identify the state of consciousness one is in. In case you're wondering, there is no Focus 14 or Focus 16. However, beyond Focus 21, several other focus levels have been identified further removed from the physical, and which involve among other systems the perception of belief system territories ("astral planes"). Thus, The Gateway Experience is meant as a platform from which to explore further on your own.

This brings us to phenomena in Focus 21, which is the ideal platform for further experiences in the other Focus levels. The following quote will serve nicely to understand the transition into 12 up until 21, and how to reach the 'higher' Focus levels:

With me, I begin to perceive swirling clouds of color and various textures and so on. Following which there is a distinct forwards progression into the 3-D blackness. So I tend to look at it that way around. Like I was propelling myself into it. Or you could look at it the other way around like you were being drawn into it. Either way makes no difference, I guess. Sometimes I'll just float in the blackness as I find it mentally relaxing. But normally I just pass through this stage. It helps if you have a fairly strong idea about what it is you want to do. Within the Astral, navigating is all about using intent. When I say "intent" I mean you develop a clear picture in mind and wish for it to happen. If you do this at the 3-D blackness stage, you should find some kind of portal will open up and you just flow along it. Though, chances are, you will need to practice a number of times before you get the hang of it. At first, simply float in the blackness and

think of something very basic. Like, sitting by a lake or walking in the countryside, or whatever. It can be anything you wish but make it very basic and simple. In other words, don't try to do anything detailed like visiting someone in particular at some specific place. Doing such a thing can be quite tricky, so it's best not to aim too high too quickly. Develop a picture in mind and place the intent, i.e. mentally wish that you were doing such a thing. As you do so, you might see an area of the blackness becomes not quite so black as the rest. Maybe a swirling grayness begins to develop in one part. Maybe a light begins shining in the distance. Whatever comes about, focus your attention on it. As you do so, the transition experience should begin to unfold. At this stage you don't really need to do anything. Simply remain open to the experience and allow it to happen. After what feels like a few seconds you should find yourself within some non-physical place which, hopefully, relates to your initial intent in some way." Frank Kepple –The Astral Pulse

It should be kept in mind that there is still considerable controversy regarding the "higher" Focus levels, and it's unlikely you'll find them nicely laid out in easy to understandable ways when phasing or astral projecting. In fact, these levels are far less easily identifiable than you may assume, nor is it area of a purely shared reality between inhabitants, and it is possible to meet various aspects of your own consciousness.

However, staying with the "traditional view" the following focus levels can be identified as follows on the basis of Monroe's and Bruce Moen's work (From Bruce Moen, Afterlife Knowledge Website).

Focus 1

(Also called C 1 or Full, Physical Waking Consciousness)

The level of awareness in which most of us spend our normal, waking lives. The everyday, ordinary reality of the physical world in which we live. The level of consciousness we learn to move beyond during the **Gateway Voyage**.

Focus 3

(Basic Hemi-Sync®)

This level is a participant's first exposure to the concept and technology of Hemi-Sync.

Focus 10

(Mind Awake/Body Asleep)

This is the level at which the physical body is asleep, but the mind is awake and alert. Consciousness is fully retained without dependence upon signals from the physical body. Conceptual tools are developed that the participant may use to reduce anxiety and tension, for healing, for remote viewing and for establishing resonance with other

individuals. In Focus 10, much like the dream state, we learn to think in images rather than in words.

Focus 12

(Expanded Awareness)

This is a state where conscious awareness is expanded beyond the limits of the physical body. Focus 12 has many different facets, including: exploring nonphysical realities, decision making, problem solving and enhanced creative expression.

Focus 15

(No Time)

The state of "No Time" is a level of consciousness which opens avenues of the mind that offer vast opportunities for self-exploration beyond the constraints of time and place.

Focus 21

(Other Energy Systems)

This level offers the opportunity to explore other realities and energy systems beyond what we call time-space-physical-matter.

Within Focus 22 we often find those perhaps still physically alive who are in an unconscious state. These include people in comas, in drug induced states, who are dreaming, who are insane or deranged. This is a very chaotic level.

Focus 23: In Focus 23, the human inhabitants tend to be those no longer physically alive who have become "stuck" for one reason or another. Often they are confused about or unaware of their death. Many here attempt to maintain contact with the physical world around familiar people or places. These are the ones we call ghosts. Focus 23 inhabitants are stuck because they are unable to leave through their own resources. The range of their free-will choices is extremely narrow. They are typically alone and completely isolated from communication with other humans. This can occur through the circumstances of their death or habitual patterns of thinking prior to death.

Focus 24,25,26: Inhabitants of The Belief System Territories are attracted to specific locations by Afterlife beliefs they held while physically alive. Every set of Afterlife beliefs held by humans at any time has a specific location with these Focus levels. In a sense, Belief System Territory inhabitants are stuck like those in Focus 23. The difference is that they are not isolated from contact with others. All inhabitants of a specific Territory are in contact with all others sharing their beliefs. Contact with anyone holding conflicting beliefs is severely limited. Free will choices here are restricted to only those compatible with the prevailing beliefs. Some of these areas look like Heavens, some look like Hells. Each one is rigidly structured around the beliefs held by the inhabitants.

In my experience, it is extremely difficult to move people from this area to areas of greater free will choice.

Focus 27: Focus 27 is the Afterlife area of greatest free will choice for its inhabitants. It's an area created by humans and often resembles physical earth environments. Contact and communication is open between all inhabitants. Many people living in Focus 27 provide assistance to new arrivals in their adjustment to living in the Afterlife. It is a highly organized and structured area. There are Centers of activity here providing for the needs of human beings in their continuing development in the Afterlife. In my explorations, I've found Centers for: Education, Life Review, Health and Rejuvenation, Planning, Scheduling, Rehabilitation, Humor, and many others. These Centers also coordinate activities in the physical world to assist in human development.

Lastly, there is beyond focus 27, which is outside of the realm of human consciousness as we know it.