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**What's in Your Blind Spot?**

**By Keith Varnum**

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We frantically search for our "lost" keys that are lying in plain sight on the kitchen counter. We don't see the keys. Why not? Because we already decided "the keys are not there." And once we make that decision, we create a blind spot in our awareness. The result is that we don't see the keys where we don't expect them to be.

If we miss seeing keys out in the open because we decide the keys aren't there, what else could we be missing because we decide it's not there? Could we be "blind" to other possibilities and opportunities that are right under our nose?

**What's New, Pussycat?**

A mind-blowing scientific experiment reveals how the early physical environment of kittens determines what they are able to see—and not see—as they grow up. Two-week-old kittens are placed in a room with walls painted with vertical stripes and kept there as they mature. Almost from the moment they are able to see, the kittens live in an environment of vertical stripes. Later, the cats' world changes. They're removed from their vertically striped surroundings and placed in a room painted with horizontal stripes. Surprisingly, our furry felines don't see the horizontal stripes. Bang! They run right smack into the walls painted with horizontal stripes, time and time again. Why? Scientists discovered that because the cats don't have horizontal stripes in their environment as they grow up, the brains of the cats don't develop the neurons that recognize horizontal stripes. So when elements they've never been exposed to appear in the cats' world, their brains don't register the new elements in their environment. Yikes! Could we be unable to recognize elements in our current

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environment because those elements were missing when we grew up? Yes, we could! But before we look for aspects of life we might not be seeing, let's look for aspects we might not be hearing as well.

### What'd You Say?

Studies with babies reveal how the early auditory environment of babies determines what they are able to hear—and not hear—as they grow up. Research shows that young babies have the ability to hear the full range of vocal sounds produced by the speech of all the human languages in the world. But then, babies are raised hearing only the narrow range of speech sounds within their social

environment. Eventually, because they hear solely the speech sounds found within one culture, babies lose their ability to distinguish the full range of vocal sounds found in all human cultures.

This explains why Japanese children are unable to pronounce the English "r" sound that does not exist in their native language. "The common result," according to a researcher at the University of California, "is essentially that if perceptual experience is limited, one will not be able to perceive things outside that experience." This is why, in everyday life, we're not able to recognize—or "hear"—concepts that we weren't exposed to in our upbringing.

### Casting a Spell of Limitations

We all grow up in families and societies where we are only exposed to a limited view of life—like kittens only viewing vertical stripes and babies only hearing speech sounds from their social environment. Our "stripes" consist of a limited range of cultural patterns of sights and sounds. These cultural patterns give signals to the brain that tell us "the way life is" within that limited environment. And the brain mistakenly "thinks" it knows "the way life is" outside of that narrow-minded environment.

Growing up in a limited environment has a comparable effect to being hypnotized. For example, when people are hypnotized, they can be told that certain elements exist or don't exist in their environment. With hypnotic suggestion, a person can be told that there are no red books in a bookstore. And, even though many of the books are red, the person won't see any red books. The hypnotic suggestion creates a blind spot, or filter, in the person's perception of the world.

Similarly, we're hypnotized by our parents and society to see certain

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aspects of reality—and not to see other aspects of reality. Then, as adults, we only see the range of possibilities that we were exposed to as we grew up. We don't recognize any alternatives outside of the range of viewpoints presented to us in our youth. Options and opportunities that we weren't exposed to don't even register with the brain.

By the very nature of how we're raised, we develop blind spots. And these blind spots often prevent us from seeing—and taking advantage of—options that are life-enriching and valuable to us. To what degree do these blind spots limit the abundance in our lives? What kinds of options could we be missing? Let's "see."

### Missed Opportunities

On the first day of a four-day workshop I was attending, Martin complained that he didn't have a way to get back and forth to the

workshop everyday. He had camped several miles outside of town down a narrow, rough dirt road. Our disgruntled camper talked on and on about his dilemma. Martin had decided that there was no way to get to the workshop other than to walk. He couldn't see any other options. He felt hopeless and discouraged. So, when someone in the group offered to give Martin a ride every day, Martin didn't even hear the proposal. He was totally hypnotized by his belief that "there is no solution other than walking." The person offered the ride several more times, yet the unexpected proposal continued to fall on Martin's deaf ears. Finally, several people in the group yelled at Martin that he was not hearing the offer of a ride. This group outburst snapped Martin out of his hypnotized state, his blind spot. Only then was Martin able to recognize that his transportation issue was resolved.

Julia's dream was to move out of her cramped apartment and buy her own home. Since she didn't have enough money for a down payment, she was busily doing everything she could to earn more income. When someone heard about Julia wanting a home to live in, they offered to give her their home for a year rent-free while they went overseas. Julia turned down the invitation. She didn't recognize her good fortune because the opportunity didn't appear in the form she expected. She was fixated on the idea that to get the living situation she wanted, she had to own the house. She was hypnotized by her belief that "I don't have enough money to buy my own house." Her blind spot prevented her from seeing another solution to her problem. It didn't register to her that her need had been fulfilled. She rejected an offer that would have allowed her to move out of her tiny

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apartment. If she'd accepted the gift, Julia would have enjoyed living in a spacious home right away. And she would have saved enough money during that year to reach her ultimate goal—to make a down payment on her own home.

"The Way Life Is?"

When we're young, we learn a lot about "the way life is" by observing the adults in our lives. And, these adults can, for the most part, only pass along their limited views of life.

For example, did you grow up being instilled with the viewpoint that "people work at jobs they don't like to pay the bills?" If you were exposed solely to this narrow perspective about work, you might not recognize the available option that "people work at jobs they love that also pay the bills." When you were young, perhaps you noticed that "many adults compromise and sacrifice in order to make a relationship work." Spell-bound by watching this model of how partnerships function, you might not be able to see another viable alternative in which "adults find ways for relationships to be easy, fun and mutual." If all you saw as a child was that "people become more stubborn and opinionated as they grow older," then you wouldn't

have it in your realm of possibilities that "people become more flexible and allowing as they grow older."

When our role models demonstrate that it's "normal" to have jobs without passion or relationships without mutuality, we don't see other options when we become adults. When our elders aren't open and adaptable, we find ourselves accepting rigidity and narrow-mindedness as normal.

Unfortunately, the cats keep bumping into horizontal stripes for the rest of their lives. Likewise, many of us keep bumping into our personal "invisible" limits for the rest of our lives. But we don't have to.

Intuition Saves the Day

There's a way out of this conundrum! There's a way around the fact that our mind is programmed with limitations. We've got intuition! Using intuition, it doesn't matter that our brain doesn't see or hear new life opportunities. Only the mind is restricted by the narrow options of childhood. Only the mind is hypnotized. Our intuition doesn't have these limitations.

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Using intuition, we have a natural ability to see into our blind spots. Although the brain doesn't develop neurons to recognize "horizontal stripes," intuition can detect them. Although the mind is hypnotized not to discern red books, intuition can discern them. Not being brainwashed with limitations, intuition can see options the mind doesn't see. Intuition can lead us to options that didn't exist in our childhood environment.

If we truly desire to discover fresh options, our intuition will guide us all the way. There are lots of other fulfilling alternatives out there. We just don't see them. The more we stop looking with our minds and start looking with our intuition, the more opportunities we'll see for happiness and prosperity. Our intuition will help us find the harmonious and loving future we dreamed of when we couldn't wait to grow up!

For information on the kitten and baby studies, see <http://crl.ucsd.edu/~elman/Papers/cogsci98.pdf>.

Drawing from the wisdom of native and ancient spiritual traditions, Keith Varnum shares his 30 years of practical success as an author, personal coach, acupuncturist, filmmaker, radio host, restaurateur, vision quest guide and international seminar leader (The Dream Workshops). Keith helps people get the love, money and health they want with his FREE "Prosperity Ezine" at [www.TheDream.com](http://www.TheDream.com).

### **How a Blind Date Can Increase Your Psychic Abilities**

**By Stephanie Yeh**

So how can a blind date increase your psychic abilities? It's probably not what you're thinking. We're not talking about having a few drinks with someone you've never met before. We're talking about developing your psychic abilities by deliberately shutting down one or more of your five senses.

Because we are such physical creatures, we have a tendency to use our five senses in everything we do. That's not a bad idea for driving, walking, or working on the computer, but if you want to increase your psychic or spirit abilities, using your five senses less will help.

That's where the blind date comes in. A blind date is where you blindfold yourself and have a buddy walk you around on a "date." Your buddy's job is to make sure that you're safe and you don't walk into anything or fall in a ditch. Your buddy is your guide and will lead you around, keeping you safe and upright.

Your part of this date is to extend your psychic abilities outward as your buddy walks you around. Sense what is around you. Do you sense a large object ahead or just open space? Sense what is behind and above you as well, since your psychic abilities will allow you to see in 360 degrees.

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You might want to have your buddy walk you around for a while, in many directions until you no longer have a sense of where you are. Then spin slowly around and extend your spirit perceptions. Tell your buddy what you sense in each direction and have him or her tell you if you're right.

If you don't have a buddy to do this with, you can do it by yourself outside. Start in a relatively open space and just move slowly so you don't get hurt. Give a whole new meaning to the term "blind date," right?

Stephanie Yeh, co-founder of the Esoteric School of Shamanism and Magic (

), helps clients learn magical and shamanic techniques. Her current

project, a free teleconference series on a variety of magickal and shamanic topics with guest speakers, is designed to share information and promote interaction between people of varying spiritual practices.

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Learning To Back Up A Vehicle Safely For The Beginner And Inexperienced Driver

Seeing Eye Dogs – A Brief History

Roman Blinds: Making Your Home More Inviting

The Blind Village and the Elephant

Free Government Grants

Newbie's Guide to Stop Spam

Baby's First Year –What Parent Needs To Know

How To Improve Blood Circulation

How to Buy a Car Without Getting Ripped Off!

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