

Energy magazine

Sharing Energy - Transforming the World

Jan/Feb 2017 - Issue Eighty-Nine



Never doubt your body. Both invisible and visible
blend into your unique body, and that body is an
image of unconditional love.

- Grand Master Nan Lu



A Brief Tour Through the Body-Mind for the Purpose of Reaching Spirit

Tiffany Barsotti, MTh, CHt and Paul J. Mills, PhD

There are many important axes in human anatomy, including the Hypothalamus-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) Axis, the Liver-Stomach-Intestines (known as the Liver Triad Axis) and the Brain-Gut Axis. We will discuss another body-mind axis worth considering.

The Reticular Activating System (RAS), acting in concert with the Vagus Nerve (CN-X), directs and modulates consciousness and functions throughout the body to maintain a dynamic balance—both with respect to the external environment and the body's internal environment (Turner & Knapp, 1995). Less well known to Western medical scientists is a parallel system supporting consciousness that develops in the subtle energy body of the human being. This energy body, while not visible with current Western and mainstream technologies, has been known in many of the ancient esoteric healing traditions of the East (Bailey, 1925; Hopking, Bailey, & Hopking, 2005; Settersten, 2011). According to these esoteric teachings, as the human being develops from a state of alert consciousness toward a condition of spiritually expanded or higher Consciousness, the locus of control over the functions of the bodies (physical and subtle) shifts from the physical brain to a higher mind within the developed subtle body. This shift occurs after activation of the alta major chakra (Figure 1).

This article proposes the RAS-Vagus Nerve-Alta Major

Chakra Axis as the nexus of communication from higher Consciousness to the physical and subtle energy bodies of the human being (Barsotti, 2010). By “higher Consciousness” we mean distinct from the consciousness contained within the local domain of our physical bodies and often referring to a state of being alert and focused. This type of consciousness is used to describe states such as waking, dream states, drug-induced states, hypnosis and others. In most medical references, consciousness is largely used by neuroscientists to designate various states of mental alertness and focus. The term higher Consciousness is used here to depict the human connection to God/Source.

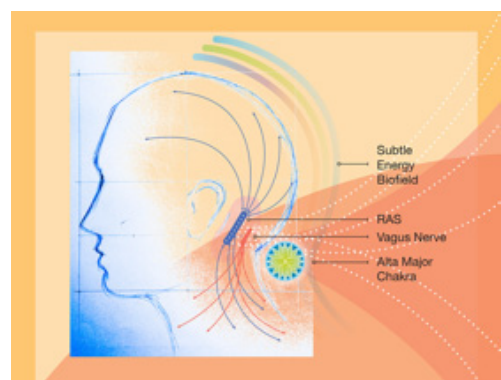


Figure 1. The alta major chakra resides in the etheric field, aligning with the location of the cerebellum, medulla oblongata and the Reticular Activating System (RAS).

Image credit: Sharon Belknap of Sharon Belknap Design



Reticular Activating System

Since its discovery over 60 years ago, the Reticular Activating System, or RAS, has been studied extensively (Magoun, 1951; Petty, 1996). The RAS helps direct, modulate and maintain functions throughout the body (Turner & Knapp, 1995). The RAS resides within the Reticular Formation (RF) (*reticulum* is Latin for “net like”), which serves as a gateway to conscious awareness (Figure 2). With its function as the afferent and efferent cholinergic conduit, the RAS activates a conscious status throughout the brain. The RAS is said to be the gas pedal that ignites the diencephalon (the hypothalamus and thalamus) as well as the

neuromodulators) conduct signals along long and short pathways, afferently and efferently. Without its principal and crucial involvement, any other cortical activity in the so-called “higher brain” cannot be registered throughout the body.

During his retirement speech, it was purported that Wilder Penfield (Penfield & Rasmussen, 1968) admonished his peers not to look for the mind within the brain, that he spent his career searching and could not find it there. We may come to find that neither consciousness nor Consciousness is under the control of a single structure, responding instead

The term higher Consciousness is used here to depict the human connection to God/Source.

cortical areas of the brain (Petty, 1996). Functional Magnetic Resonance Images (fMRI) have given us the view or neural maps of which brain cortices become activated with thoughts, emotions and memories. Results of MRI imaging, however, reveal only cortical brain activity, leaving out the important afferent and efferent messenger molecules through the brainstem, including the RAS.

The RAS is about the size of one’s little finger and sits centrally in the brainstem. Without a functioning RAS, there is no bodily connection. There is instead a type of disconnection akin to being “comatose” or “locked-in” (Young, 2009). The RAS responds to stimuli from all sensory systems through its afferent and efferent pathways, regardless of the state of consciousness. These pathways integrate sensory, visceral, limbic and motor functions. Reticular circuits branch throughout the central nervous system and exert important influences on autonomic regulation of vital organ systems, levels of alertness, sleep cycles, somatic motor activities, pain modulation and behavior. At this time, it has become increasingly apparent that the RAS is not only a neuronal superhighway, but also an active conduit by which messenger molecules (e.g., neuropeptides, neurotransmitters, hormones,

to reflexes within an axis of structures. At this time, realistically, we can only measure the influence of consciousness on physiological or physical processes.

Vagus Nerve

The vagus nerve originates in the medulla oblongata.

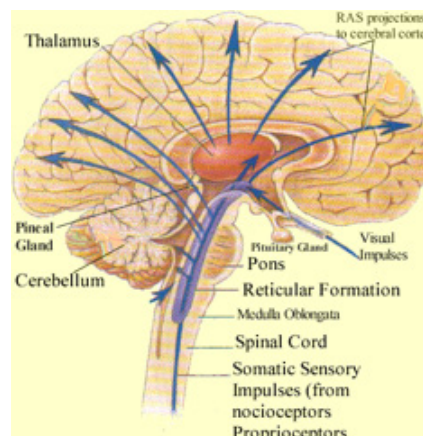


Figure 2. Site of the Reticular Formation (RF) and the Reticular Activating System (RAS) within the RF, along with its projections throughout the brain. (neurobiologychapter3.weebly.com/reticular-formation.html)



The medulla is located in the brainstem above the spinal cord and ventral to the reticular formation, and considered the main site in the brain for regulating the autonomic sympathetic and parasympathetic outflow. The vagus (Latin for “wandering”) is the tenth cranial nerve (CN X) (Wilson-Pauwels, 2010). This remarkable nerve has a more extensive course of distribution than any of the eleven other cranial nerves and is the main nerve of the autonomic nervous system (ANS). Efferent impulses start in the central nervous system and pass peripherally along spinal or cranial nerves. Afferent impulses start out peripherally and pass into the central nervous system. The vagus nerve, through its extensive motor and sensory fibers network, communicates sensory and motor information bidirectionally between the brain and body, supporting and helping regulate consciousness (Angeles Fernandez-Gil, Palacios-Bote, Leo-Barahona, & Mora-Encinas, 2010; Shi, Flanagan, & Samadani, 2013). There is substantial experimental evidence that demonstrates that immune and inflammatory responses are modulated by communications along the vagus nerve (Pavlov & Tracey, 2015).

Expanding the Mind

One of the beliefs within the new paradigm in biology and physiology is that cellular signaling and communication are providing an infrastructure of biological and subtle energy systems. Just as cells use their receptors to sense the environment in which they exist, the outer body receives information using the five senses. Our sensory responses are evidence of human contact with the world at large, as well as our inner-world of mind and body.

Spirit, from the Latin root of *Spiritus* meaning the breath of life (vitality), is the principle of conscious life and the vital principle in humans, animating a body or mediating between body and soul—the nonmaterial, intelligent and sentient part of a person. *The Kybalion*, an ancient Hermetic text states, “The Lips of Wisdom are closed, except to the ears of Understanding” (Three, 1908). Esoteric healers know how to move within the subtle energy fields, access information and assist with bringing awareness to the

person with whom they are working. The word *esoteric* is defined as “requiring or exhibiting knowledge that is restricted to a small group; and is designed for or understood by the specially initiated alone.” The esoteric texts teach us that the “specially initiated” are the ones willing to deepen self-awareness (Consciousness) and venture into unknown territory in a spiritually meaningful way.

Alta Major Chakra

Looking to the endocrine and lymphatic glands

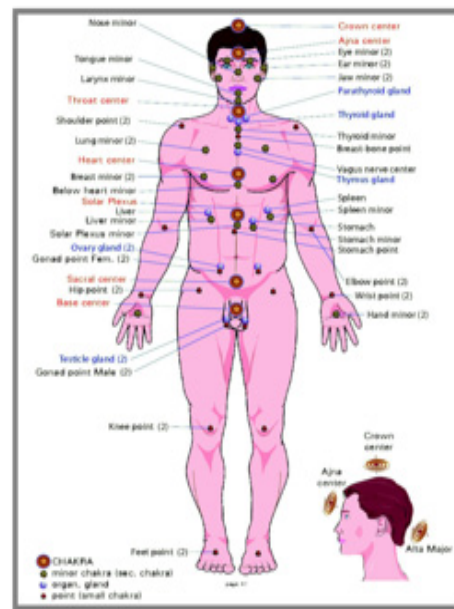


Figure 3. Overlay of glandular system and the minor and major chakras. Overlays of the glandular system (in blue) as well the minor chakras (medium-sized yellow and black circles) and major chakras (multi-color circles). The small red circles point to “minor chakras” which are key points along the body’s energy channels; these behave similarly to other chakras, but are less energetically dense by comparison to the major chakra points. The inset image of the head shows the three chakras as spinning vortices, and make up the three points of one of the head triangle sequences. Energetically speaking, the glands are denser energy channels as they are in the physical body and coordinate with the nervous system as a whole. Major chakras are believed to correspond to major nerve bundles in the physical body. (Barsotti, 2010)



throughout the body, we find an uncanny mapping to the micro and macro chakra centers (Figure 3). Theosophists were influenced by the Hermeticists of ancient Egypt and maintained the Hermetic arts and sciences, which they taught since the mid-19th century. Their teachings included the anatomical and physiological mapping of chakras with the physical and subtle energy surrounding the body—connecting our inner-world to the outer-world and vice versa.

Esoterically speaking, the alta major center, or chakra, resides in the etheric body. It is the final chakra or energy center of the human form to be activated for Conscious connection to Spirit. When the alta major center is activated, human consciousness expands to merge with Consciousness. There are several points worth considering regarding the alta major center, including how it becomes activated, its placement and interactions within the etheric/physical energy field, aligning with the outcropping of the vagus nerve and the RAS. This etheric bridge-like position enables purposeful communication between the physical human life and the human Spirit.

The alta major center is considered a minor chakra, but functions as a major chakra according the teachings of Master D.K. (Hopking et al., 2005). In the head triangle, the alta major chakra has a unique position, first because of its relationship in the head triangle, and second due to its powerful link to the cerebellum, the medulla oblongata, the spine and vagus nerve (Figure 1). The cerebellum is part of the hind-brain and controls voluntary muscles and, therefore, movement, and is energetically linked to the root or base chakra. The medulla oblongata, also part of the hindbrain, is closest to the spinal cord and is involved, as is the vagus nerve, with the regulation of heartbeat and heart rate, breathing, blood pressure and the reflex centers. The medulla is energetically connected to the throat and heart chakras.

In *Esoteric Healing*, Master D.K. writes, “Healers would do well to remember that when the three centres [sic] in the head are linked up and the magnetic field is therefore set up and the radiance is present, the

healer can then use the ajna centre [sic] as the directing agent for this ‘dispelling radiance’” (Hopking et al., 2005). (The ajna center, often referred to as the “third eye,” is related to etheric vision and can also be used to project energy.) You have, therefore, in the head three triangles, of which two are distributors of energy and the third is a distributor of force. The attention is placed; the magnetic field is spiritually vitalized; the generated vital radiance is then distributed and directed correctly through the medium of the third triangle (Figure 4).

In Bailey’s *Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (Bailey, 1925),

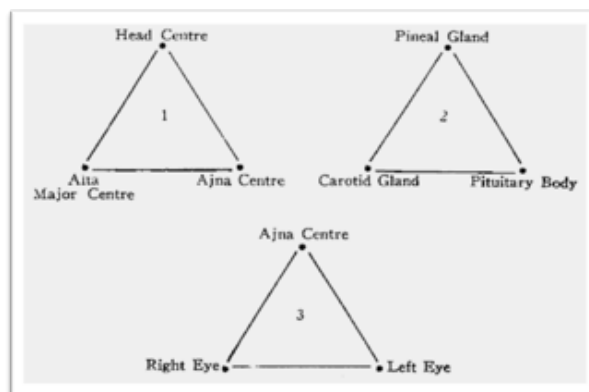


Figure 4. Esoteric Healing head triangles. These triangles and others are “magnetic in quality and radiant in activity.” (*A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, Alice Bailey (Bailey, 1925)

Master D.K. explains, “The alta major centre [is] that nerve centre at the top of the spine where the cranium and the spine make approximate contact. When this congerly of nerves is fully developed, it forms a centre [sic] of communication between the vital energy of the spinal column (the kundalini fire) and the energy of the two head centres... (in the pineal, pituitary, carotid triangle) (Figure 4). It is the physical correspondence to the antaskarana [the antaskarana is a thread or channel between the personality (lower worlds) and the higher worlds of Consciousness].” In the full text version of this thesis, it is referred to as the Science of the Triple Thread.

The RAS-Vagus Nerve-Alta Major Chakra Axis

It was more than thirty years after the publication of



A *Treatise on Cosmic Fire* in 1925 (Bailey, 1925) that knowledge of the reticular formation first came to Western medical science (Magoun, 1951). Master D.K.'s words "the nerve center at the top of the spine" and "conger of nerves" could represent what we see as the reticulum and currently call the RAS and reticular formation. To know for certain there is a correlation here, a proper investigation will have to wait until there are more robust imaging capabilities since we cannot functionally evaluate the RAS using current fMRI technologies.

Interestingly, the Vedic tradition represents these concepts through the developed and energetically activated sutratma, antaskarana and antahkarana, which are energy threads comprising the sushumna (the central channel along the spinal column). The ida and pingala represent the male and female subconscious mind aspects and are the channels which allow for the interweaving of kundalini as it moves upward from the perineum. The proper raising of kundalini energy occurs with the development of the antaskarana and antahkarana, which once empowered and intertwined, supports activation of the alta major center (Figure 5).

There are specific practices, such as Kundalini Yoga, aimed at raising kundalini energy. While there are significant upsides to these practices, there are also significant downsides. Upsides include that the practitioner learns to move energies throughout the physical and subtle bodies. This can be very effective for clearing, cleansing and strengthening the energy centers and sushumna. Downsides include that not everyone is prepared to deal with what those energies are doing in the different energy centers. It is possible to raise energy much too fast and transfer "dirty" energy from one center to another. There is something called "Kundalini Syndrome" (Greyson, 1993; Modestino, 2016) which is a systemic energy contamination characterized by a host of symptoms including insomnia, over heating, hypertension, irritability, mood swings, increased sex drive, various pains and discomfort, and a feeling of overstimulation of the senses. From time to time, I (T.B.) have treated in my practice





Figure 5. The Central Channel, or Sushumna (which comprises the three threads, the sutratma, antaskarana and antahkarana), and the ascending and descending routes of Kundalini energy. (templeofspirit.wordpress.com/2014/01/07/central-channel-or-sushumna-nadi)

individuals with Kundalini Syndrome. I have found that if a person with Kundalini Syndrome has a lot of unfinished business, psychological disturbances, overly empathic or addiction tendencies, it is best for them to slow down the kundalini-directed practices or in some cases, it is much better for them to find a different type of yoga practice, such as raja or hatha yoga. In addition, breath work, regular salt baths and physical exercise, a diet without animal protein and pranic healing protocols that deal specifically with Kundalini Syndrome are very useful.

Dedication to the path of Consciousness means that the activated alta major chakra becomes the distribution center of life-force energy. This life-force energy moves down and up the antahkarana, the energetic spinal column, radiating magnetically to open the chakra centers. The RAS is the network hub of the physical nervous system, sending and receiving signals, creating connections using the endogenous hormones, neurotransmitters and neuropeptides



that move throughout the body. The vagus nerve carries the signals that coordinate these collective movements and activations, creating a homeodynamically balanced nervous system within the body. The RAS-Vagus Nerve-Alta Major Chakra axis speaks to the anatomy of the Spirit in the self and may serve as a communication nexus between the physical systems and Consciousness, which when activated, consciously arouses profound spiritual connection. 

 Author Tiffany Barsotti, MTh can be found at www.HealAndThrive.com and author Paul J. Mills, PhD can be found at www.BehavioralMedicine.ucsd.edu/paul-mills-phd.html.

References

1. Angeles Fernandez-Gil, M., Palacios-Bote, R., Leo-Barahona, M., and Mora-Encinas, J. P. Anatomy of the Brainstem: A Gaze into the Stem of Life. *Seminars in Ultrasound CT and MR*, 2010: 31(3), 196-219. DOI:10.1053/j.sult.2010.03.006. Source Pub-Med.
2. Bailey, A. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (First ed.). New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1925.
3. Barsotti, T. A Proposed Spiritual Axis of the Bodymind How the Reticular Activating System (RAS), Vagus Nerve and the Alta Major Chakra Axis May Be the Nexus of Bodymind/Spirit Consciousness. *Holos University, Masters Thesis*. 2010.
4. Greyson, B. Near-Death Experiences and the Physio-Kundalini Syndrome. *Journal of Religion and Health*. 1993: 32(4), 277-290. DOI:10.1007/BF00990954.
5. Hopking, A. N., Bailey, A., & Hopking, A. *Esoteric Healing: A Practical Guide Based on the Teachings of the Tibetan in the Works of Alice A. Bailey*. Nevada City, CA: Blue Dolphin Publishing, Inc. 2005.
6. Magoun, H. W. An Ascending Reticular Activating System in the Brain Stem. *The Harvey Society Lecture Series*. 1951: 47, 53-71.
7. Modestino, E. J. Neurophenomenology of an Altered State of Consciousness: An fMRI Case Study. *Explore (New York)*, 2016: 12(2), 128-135. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26775225/>.
8. Pavlov, V. A., & Tracey, K. J. Neural Circuitry and Immunity. *Immunologic Research*. 2015. 63(1-3), 38-57. DOI:10.1007/s12026-015-8718-1.
9. Penfield, W., & Rasmussen, T. *The Cerebral Cortex of Man; A Clinical Study of Localization of Function*. New York: Hafner Publishing Company. 1968.
10. Petty, P. G. Consciousness. *Journal of Clinical Neuroscience*. 1996: 3(4), 390.
11. Settersten, L.. What Is Esoteric Healing? *Journal of Holistic Nursing*. 2011: 29(2), 132-139. DOI:10.1177/0898010110385247.
12. Shi, C., Flanagan, S. R., & Samadani, U. Vagus Nerve Stimulation to Augment Recovery from Severe Traumatic Brain Injury Impeding Consciousness: A Prospective Pilot Clinical Trial. *Journal of Neurology Research*. 2013: 35(3), 263-276. DOI:10.1179/1743132813Y.0000000167.
13. Three, I. *The Kybalion; A Study of the Hermetic Philosophy of Ancient Egypt and Greece, by Three Initiates*. Chicago, IL: The Yogi Publication Society. 1908.
14. Turner, B. H., & Knapp, M. E. Consciousness: A Neurobiological Approach. *Integrative Physiological and Behavioral Science*, 1995: 30(2), 151-156.
15. Wilson-Pauwels, L. *Cranial Nerves: Function and Dysfunction* (Third ed.). Shelton, CT: People's Medical Publishing House. 2010.
16. Young, G. B. Coma. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 2009:1157, 32-47. DOI:10.1111/j.1749-6632.2009.04471.x.



Energy Magazine

www.EnergyMagazineOnline.com

info@EnergyMagazineOnline.com

phone (631) 331-5764

fax (210) 497-8532

—Magazine Staff—

Editor-In-Chief

Margaret Nies

Editor

Nancy Strick

Assistant Editor

Karin Ogren

Graphic Artist

Billy Courtney

Webmaster

Matt Courtney



Rev. Tiffany Barsotti, MTh, CHt, is a spiritual, medical counselor and researcher at HEAL and THRIVE in Encinitas, California. A focus of her clinical work is subtle energy, biofield therapies and energy psychology. With her spiritual and intuitive guidance, she serves as an integrative practitioner working alongside MDs, NDs, DOs and other allied health professionals. Tiffany received her Masters of Theology in Energy Medicine with special emphasis in medical and spiritual counseling from Holos University Graduate Seminary. www.HealAndThrive.com



Heather Campbell has extensive medical experience, as a patient. She took that experience and transformed it into Ready Set Recover, helping people prepare for and recover from surgery. Previously, in ESPN's Synergy Department, she leveraged all assets across Walt Disney to promote ESPN and vice versa. At New York University's Stern School of Business, she received one of ten full scholarships. She is a speaker, activist and professional who sets others up to succeed. www.ReadySetRecover.com



Melinda Chichester is an HTCP/I and End-of-Life Doula. Her focus is to release trauma within the energy system, easing the dying transition. Melinda's current position as the National Coordinator for Energy Medicine Specialists empowers advanced practitioners to continue their personal development in the field of energy medicine. She is a self-starter with high enthusiasm and she strives to create an atmosphere for motivating people within the Healing Touch community. www.HealingTouchTransitions.com



Lynne Gillespie is a third generation farmer. She has been gardening and working on her family farm for 29 years. Her dairy sheep flock is one of her pride and joys. The flock provides milk for cheese making and wool for spinning, weaving and felting. She has written two gardening books and created two online gardening video courses. www.TheLivingFarm.org



Lisa Golden, HTCP, CAVS, oversees a variety of integrative services offered to patients within the scope of her professional role as Manager of Volunteer Services at Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center. A Healing Touch Certified Practitioner since 2015, Lisa facilitates a monthly Healing Touch practice group and is currently working toward becoming a Certified Instructor with the goal of bringing Healing Touch to Spanish-speaking communities both in the U.S. and Mexico.

Disclaimer: The statements, views and opinions expressed in Energy Magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Energy Magazine, its editors and staff or Healing Touch Program. Energy Magazine makes no representation as to the completeness or validity of the information. All articles in this magazine are for informational purposes only.

Copyright © 2006-2017 Healing Touch Program Inc. All content is copyrighted by Healing Touch Program Inc. all rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without specific written permission from Energy Magazine or Healing Touch Program Inc. Articles and columns in Energy Magazine may be printed for private individual use only. Multiple copies or reprinting for any other purpose requires specific written permission from Energy Magazine. The views expressed herein are those of the authors, and not necessarily of the publisher or its advertisers. The informational, editorial, and advertising content in Energy Magazine is provided for educational and entertainment purposes only and is not intended as technical training, medical advice, or legal advice. Readers are encouraged to consult qualified professionals for individual training and advice related to their specific needs.



Vera Kaur is from Sikh Indian origin. Holistic healthcare was part of her upbringing and in her twenties she visited ashrams in India where she observed the remarkable results of the self-healing practices used by traditional energy healers. Through her dreams and meditations, she was guided to write her book *Diagnose, Treat, and Cure All Dis-ease with Traditional Indian Holistic Therapies* to empower everyone with this ancient Indian wisdom and to take responsibility for their own well-being. www.VeraKaur.com



Paul J. Mills is a Professor of Family Medicine and Public Health, and Director of the Center of Excellence for Research and Training in Integrative Health at the University of California, San Diego. He has expertise in psychoneuroimmunology and integrative medicine with over 300 publications. He is a former Associate Editor of several scientific journals and former Guest Editor of a special journal issue on the topic of spirituality, religiousness and health. www.BehavioralMedicine.ucsd.edu/paul-mills-phd.html



Nancy Murphy is a muse, catalyst, and business coach who has helped hundreds of clients spark their brilliance into action to reach success and fulfillment. She has been marketing strategist for BMW of North America, the Benetton Group (Italy), and the Atlantic Committee for the Olympic Games, she brings tried-and-true success secrets to solopreneurs, entrepreneurs, and small businesses. She has a passion for making business fun and exciting for non-business people. www.InertialCombustion.com



Karin Ogren, HTCP, is on staff at Energy Magazine and owner of Healing Touch Studio of Seattle. Previous to her career in energy medicine, Karin worked in theatre administration and social services. Her passion for service to humanity and creativity continues in her Healing Touch practice.



Greg Storozuk has been a professional dowser for 34 years, primarily dowsing for water, oil, minerals, geopathic zones and various items. He is a Past President and Trustee of the American Society of Dowsers; taught basic dowsing at schools in the U.S. and Canada; and has been interviewed on television and radio both here and abroad. He has authored "A Dowsers Series" of booklets and been published in numerous journals.

