

***Intuition and ESP can now take a backseat.
The Silva Method promises all that and more with a
volitional control of the mind***

By Arundhati Mitra

"Most people go through life using only a small fraction of their brains," says Bimol Rakshit, head of the Indian chapter of the Silva Method of Mind Control. Predictably, this method teaches you how to use more of the mind—for increasing memory, honing mental skills or even healing and spiritual growth.

When I first met Rakshit, I had just read *The Silva Method of Mind Control* by Jose Silva and Philip Miele. The book makes interesting claims about the brain's capacity and the energies emitted by it. Measured by an electroencephalograph (EEG) in cycles per second (cps), it is this energy that determines our state of wakefulness or sleep.

There are four levels of this energy emission: between 14 to 21 cps is beta level, from 7 to 14 is alpha, 4 to 7 is theta and less than 4 cps is delta. Scientists claim that of the four levels, we can consciously experience only the beta level because it is the only one in which we are awake. The alpha level is the subconscious or, as the Silva people say, the inner conscious level. The state just after falling asleep or just before waking up is the alpha state. Theta and delta are realms of the unconscious and deep sleep.

So far, so good. But then the Silva Method goes on to claim that it's possible to stay awake at alpha and the deeper levels as well! Jose Silva, who created this method, explains in his autobiography, *I Have A Hunch*, how he once consciously entered and stayed in the alpha state at the University of Texas, San Antonio. All the while, he solved mathematical problems even as the EEG verified he was in alpha.

This immediately opens up many interesting possibilities. The right hemisphere of the brain, the seat of creativity and intuition, is believed to become active mostly at the lower levels. The Silva Method teaches you how to consciously go to alpha and use more of the brain's right side, which often makes the crucial difference between greatness and genius. There were a thousand questions on my mind. But to all of them, Rakshit returned one answer: "Do the course and you'll know for yourself."



With a mixture of excitement, apprehension and incredulity, I approached Hotel Le Meridien in New Delhi on a cold gray morning for the two-and-half-day course. Generally, Rakshit conducts a course whenever there are sufficient numbers of participants. In India, there are just three other instructors—Raka Rakshit, Dr Kalpana Desai and Jayesh Patel. Some others are under training.

The course started by 'going to level' together. This meant consciously lowering the brain's energy from beta to alpha level. Lights were dimmed. We closed our eyes, took a deep breath and began the journey into our mind.

It was a curious sensation. I was aware of the people around me, but it seemed they didn't physically exist. My head felt heavy. I could dimly hear Rakshit telling us we were now in alpha level. In the background was playing a tape that sounded like a moving train.

Day two was spent on memory control and problem solving. Most of these exercises involved strong visualization. We were asked to create a mental screen and project various objects on it. These were then examined minutely, sometimes changing their shapes and color, and feeling their texture, odor and taste. I could actually smell the varnish of a newly polished chair and taste a sugary sweet apple—vivid details to which I had paid no attention in my daily life.

Rakshit says: "No scientist has been able to invent a computer like the human mind. From the time a person is born, he records everything that he sees, hears, smells or tastes. The key lies in being able to tap the memory at will." This is what mind control is all about. According to Silva, a person can do this best when he is in alpha level.

An important exercise in the course involved setting and meeting targets. "Go to level everyday and tell yourself that within a set time you will meet your target," Rakshit announced. Many in the room claimed this had worked for them. A. Sawhney, an Indian businessman and one of the many graduates repeating the course, said he had first done the course 20 years ago. He used to smoke heavily then, he said, a habit that Silva helped him kick.

The Silva book is replete with examples of people who have been able to cure headaches, migraine and insomnia, lose weight or get promotions. One of the first-timers, Dev Ashish, told the remarkable story of his aunt who had been diagnosed with a tumor—which later dissolved by regular practice of the Silva method!

The course also included a dream control exercise. Rakshit pointed out that dreams are communications from the subconscious and have unique symbolic significance. He asked us to go to level, program ourselves to remember a dream and write it down in the morning. The Silva Method claims that by interpreting our dreams, we can explore our inner consciousness and solve problems. This involves going to level, stating the problem and asking for a solution.

That's about as far as the first workshop goes. For a deeper understanding of the Silva Method, there are two advanced courses—the Ultra Seminar, conducted once in three years by instructors chosen by Jose Silva, and the 12-day Ultimate Seminar, which Silva himself conducts at his Psychorientology Institute in Laredo, Texas, headquarters of the Silva organization. For both, you have to be a Silva graduate. The Laredo center also conducts regular research to keep improving the Silva Method. The Silva course material has been successfully translated into 29 languages across 106 countries.

According to Silva, the intuitive faculties developed through his method are not extrasensory but effective sensory perceptions. The chapter on ESP in *The Silva Method of Mind Control* explains the substitution thus: "Extrasensory means outside... our sensory apparatus. This seems to deny the existence of a sensory apparatus other than the five senses, though obviously one exists, since we do sense information without the use of them." Silva teaches

an individual to project his awareness to acquire knowledge without either using the five senses or losing control, as happens with intuition.

During the last session of the second day, Rakshit held a live demonstration to explain how this is done. He called a first-timer to the podium and asked her to go to level. Another girl, Pooja, wrote down her mother's name, age and address on a piece of paper and handed it to Rakshit. Also mentioned on the paper were a few ailments her mother was suffering from.

Rakshit read all the information, except the ailments bit, aloud to the person at level and asked her to visualize Pooja's mother. He asked her to examine the visualized body minutely and tell him wherever she felt something was wrong. The answers were part accurate.

More convincing was Anoop Murari, a graduate repeating the course. He asked Pooja if her mother had problems with her arms. A stunned Pooja admitted that her mother's arms sometimes got paralyzed—a problem not mentioned on the paper. Apparently, Murari had also gone to level while studying the case. "When I visualized the woman," he explained, "I suddenly saw she had no arms."

During the course, first-timers are paired with graduates to do case studies. In our case, both members of the team were asked to practice by turns as the psychic (the person at level trying to guess the ailments) and the orientologist, supplying relevant data to the psychic. Rakshit stressed the importance of following our instincts. "The moment you feel something is wrong with some part of the body, no matter how insignificant, voice it," he said.

This bit of advice proved invaluable when I was the psychic. Of the four cases I studied, the first two were my biggest successes. I could vividly visualize both people and was right on every count. Once, the moment I was given the relevant information, I visualized a cripple walking with a stick. It turned out that the concerned person's legs were deformed.

In the ultimate analysis, it's a bit difficult to draw conclusions. The human mind is still uncharted territory. It is suggestible, it can be hypnotized. Is that the secret of Silva? Maybe. Though, unlike hypnotism where a person is led to do something, Silva gives you the capacity to act volitionally. In any case, Silva's mind control has definitely exploded some myths about the mind and opened up a future where mind truly rules over matter.