

Puget Sound Ghost Hunters



Basic Training

PUGET SOUND GHOST HUNTERS OPEN MEMBER ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

PSGH is an amateur paranormal investigation club. The goals of the club are to formulate ways to understand events and activity that is outside our normal world. We meet regularly to discuss paranormal topics and to research claims of the paranormal. To accomplish our goals we investigate both public and private locations, separating natural causes from paranormal causes for the type of unusual activity reported.

This training manual is intended to serve as a reference source for PSGH members to prepare them to perform detailed investigations. The manual provides the user with pertinent information regarding types of paranormal activity reported, methods for gathering and analyzing the data collected during investigations and dealing effectively with clients.

WHO ARE OPEN MEMBERS?

Open membership is available to any who has an interest in the paranormal, wishes to attend our monthly meetings and participate in open investigations, trips and events. More information regarding the privileges and duties of open members can be found in the PSGH member handbook and club bylaws.

WHAT IS PARANORMAL ACTIVITY?

Paranormal activity is any event or phenomenon that is outside what is normal for that location, time, or person.

Xenonormal activity is normal events that are unknown or unrecognized by the observer due to cultural idiosyncrasies and how individual's process encounters with an increasingly complex environment

Supernatural is any activity, event or phenomenon that does not adhere to natural law.

A ghost is a generic term for the source of haunting phenomena. Commonly believed to be the spirit of a dead person, the origin or nature of ghosts has yet to be determined.

Spirit is sometimes interchanged with the word "ghost" but spirit can be other than that of a dead person. Other types of spirits include, earth spirits, elemental spirits, trans-dimensional spirits, etc.

Apparition is a visual image seen with the naked eye that takes a human or animal form representing a spirit. Apparitions may be solid or transparent.

Collective apparition is an apparition seen by more than one person at the same time. The viewers of collective apparition may be in separate locations.

Crisis apparition is an apparition of a person seen in conjunction with some kind of traumatic event. Crisis apparitions may appear even if the person is still living.

Death announcement apparition is an apparition of a person seen in conjunction with their death. The person seeing the apparition may or may not know of the death at the time of the apparition.

Residual haunting is like a recording. It is most often demonstrated with visual and auditory phenomenon. Because it's like a recording, it cannot interact with witnesses or the environment. And although it can be disconcerting, it poses no threat and may dissipate over time.

Active or Intelligent haunting is phenomena caused by an intelligence that can demonstrate interaction with the environment, creating apparitions, sights, sounds, feelings and moving objects,.

Poltergeist translates from the German as "Noisy Ghost". Poltergeist activity includes knocks and rapping, disembodied voices, shadows, furniture or other objects moving on their own, and sometimes violent physical assault. Poltergeist activity is usually short in duration and can stop as suddenly as it starts. Because of its unpredictability, poltergeist activity is difficult to investigate and document. Current theory states that poltergeist activity is associated with females going through extreme hormonal changes such as adolescence, menopause, pregnancy, miscarriage, and/or childbirth. It may be tied to latent psychic abilities. However, poltergeist activity is probably simply symptomatic of an extremely active intelligent haunting.

WHO INVESTIGATES THE PARANORMAL?

Parapsychologist is a person, typically a psychologist, who has an advanced degree in the study of paranormal phenomena from a psychological aspect using scientific means.

Paranormal Investigator is a person who may or may not have an advanced degree but who investigates the paranormal using scientific methods of experimentation, data collection, analysis and comparison to arrive at a conclusion.

Ghost Hunter is a person who may not use scientific methods to attempts to contact spirits.

WHAT HAS BEEN PUT FORWARD AS EVIDENCE OF THE PARANORMAL?

PSGH breaks our evidence down into four types. Type one and two are the most common types of evidence.

Anecdotal Evidence Stories passed down and witness statements of personal experiences that are not otherwise documented. Because it is sometimes hard to trace the origin of these stories anecdotal evidence is seldom promoted as proof of the paranormal.

Personal Experience of investigators is considered anecdotal evidence. This refers to phenomena experienced by the investigator during the course of an investigation that was not captured on video/photographic or audio recording devices.

Documentary Evidence Consists of photographs, video and audio recordings and written records of environmental changes during an investigation

Orb is a circular light anomaly that appears most commonly in photographs and video but can also sometimes be seen with the naked eye. The most common causes attributed to orb activity are insects, dust, lens flare and moisture. Orbs may appear as solid or transparent. Although most orbs are white, colors such as red, blue and green orbs have also been recorded.

EVP (Electronic Voice Phenomena) is a sound or voice that is recorded on audio or video recording devices. While not heard at the time of recording EVP's are only heard later at playback.

Physical Evidence May include "ectoplasm" which is a mucus-like substance associated with some hauntings or evidence of physical contact including bites and scratches.

Ectoplasm is physical spirit residue. It is sometimes seen as a mist, a shadow or a goeey substance that remains in the haunted location.

Statistical Evidence Consists of data from multiple sources that is analyzed for trends.

WHY DO PEOPLE THINK SOME EVENTS ARE PARANORMAL?

In a 2005 Gallup Poll, 73% of Americans reported that they believe in some form the paranormal. This includes psychic ability and UFO encounters. According to the poll 37% of Americans believe in ghosts and 32% believe that houses can be haunted.

Some events are odd but not paranormal, so why do some people attribute so much to the paranormal? Well, it's just how we're wired.

The human brain is an amazing muscle. It is not only the power center of our bodies, it is a vast storage center for information; much more information than we are consciously

aware of. Because it contains so much information, it attempts to put unconnected pieces of data together to form a picture that it recognizes. The picture is not always true so much as what we think we should see.

So, how does that work?

Pareidolia (pa-ri-DOE-lee-ə) or matrixing. This is that unique ability of the human brain to take random stimuli and put it together in such a way as to become recognizable. It's like seeing the Virgin Mary in the taco or hearing your dead mother whisper your name in a crowd.

So, if the human brain is just wired to find the odd normal how can we know what is truly paranormal and what has a logical explanation? The trick is to review all possible explanations to eliminate the normal but odd from the paranormal.

Belief and fear can also be a factor in someone believing a location is haunted. Whenever a person decides to accept that a location is haunted then every sound, they begin to attribute every movement to the paranormal. No matter what logical explanation can be put forward they will immediately believe it is the "ghost" doing it. When clients become actively involved in their homes haunting they begin to look for ways that the spirit is manifesting.

Events that they might otherwise have viewed as coincidental can take on more sinister meanings. This can lead to real fear that they cannot control their environment. When people are overcome by fear it can create a dangerous atmosphere. Fear can lead to accidents and injuries that contribute to the belief that a location is haunted.

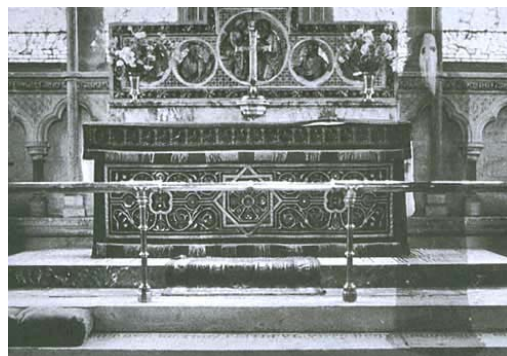
WHAT TYPES OF PLACES CAN BE HAUNTED?

A ghost can form an attachment to just about any noun: Place, Person or Thing. This means just about any place can become subjected to paranormal activity.

Ghosts that form attachments to a person or object are not tied to any one place and can travel with the subject of the attachment. Moving may not alleviate the haunting and can actually increase activity.

The typical locations where paranormal investigations are performed are:

- Cemeteries
- Historic sites
- Hotels
- Hospitals
- Businesses
- Parks
- Homes
- Military bases



Just about any place where people live, play or work can be haunted. But don't fall into the trap of thinking that only historic places or places where there has been significant trauma, like death, can be haunted. New homes can be just as haunted as old homes and historic locations might not be haunted at all. Especially with intelligent haunting, it just depends where the attachment is.

BASIC CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS

These basic rules are used by the majority of ghost hunting groups in the United States. Other protocols that relate to specific functions will be discussed in later chapters.

Investigators will:

- Show respect for:
 - Team members. Take direction from the team leader and perform assigned tasks in a professional manner. Team members will act in a courteous manner to other investigators.
 - Clients. Remember that you have been invited into the client's home or business and are there at the client's discretion. Always approach the client with respect and courtesy at all times.
 - Spirits. Some believe that spirits were once people. Always afford them the same respect as given to any live person. Although our aim is to collect evidence of paranormal experiences, at times we may be asked to perform spirit rescue or offer advice for removing a spirit from the location. Do so only if you are experienced and knowledgeable about such activities. PSGH members will not engage in any taunting, provoking or other activity designed to inflame spirits in an investigation site.
- Honor posted private property and "no trespassing" signs. Team leader will always obtain permission to perform investigation. PSGH will never trespass. Investigators will show reverence and respect for investigation sites at all times.
- Members will never knowingly alter or damage the investigation site, its contents or cause others to do so. Any item that requires moving will only be done with the client's consent.
- Never wander off on your own. All investigation activities must be witnessed by at least one other team member.
- Respect the privacy of persons involved in investigations including client, team members and spirits.
- Always conduct investigations in a professional manner.
- No weapons including, but not limited to, knives, firearms, tasers, and/or pepper spray are allowed at any investigation site.

- No running or horse play at investigation sites.
- No pranks or practical joking during an investigation.
- Be open-minded about all aspects of the investigation.
- No smoking, drinking or illegal drug use during an investigation.
- No littering at investigation sites.
- No obscene, foul or abusive language.
- No taking souvenirs from investigation sites.
- Wear appropriate attire for the location. This includes:
 - Safe, comfortable footwear
 - Comfortable, non-reflective clothing
 - No perfume or cologne. Hygiene products such as soaps, deodorants, and shampoos should be unscented to avoid sensory interference.
 - No revealing, torn or unclean garments.
 - No garments with offensive or obscene logos and/or designs.
- Each team member will keep written notes as well as an audio recording of the investigation including impressions and/or feelings and the actions and reactions of clients and other team members.
- Team members will coordinate as a group to review evidence and prepare a client report. All data must be reviewed prior to providing the client with a report.
- No member will indicate to the client, prior to evidence review, any belief regarding whether or not their location is haunted or what type of evidence may or may not have been collected. Such determination cannot be made until all evidence has been reviewed, the site research has been performed and other alternate sources have been eliminated.

APPLYING SCIENCE TO PARANORMAL INVESTIGATION

Conducting paranormal investigations in a scientific manner involves logic, critical thinking, experimentation and review to arrive at a demonstrable conclusion. Some things to understand when approaching an investigation in a scientific manner are:

- There are limitations to credible witness testimony. A witness can only report events from their personal point of view. This will include pre-existing belief system that will color how they view reported paranormal events. To get a complete picture multiple sources must be examined.

- Certain psychological and physiological factors can create a situation where the witness mistakes ordinary events as paranormal. When these psychological and physiological factors are undisclosed, it can make uncovering the truth harder.
- Our ability to document and understand the contributing factors that create paranormal events is limited to the existing technology. Few devices have been created specifically for paranormal investigation. Since we are primarily using devices from other technologies in ways they were not designed to be used, we cannot trust that what we are measuring has any value.
- Experimentation and research must conform to specific parameters to be of value in reaching a conclusion. The scientific method is a specific way to explore a question to reach a conclusion. Scientific method is achieved by following six very simple steps:

Step 1. Ask a question. All experimentation starts with the question. In paranormal investigation, the question might be is this location haunted?

Step 2. Do background research. Has this question been asked before? Has someone already reached a conclusion? Look at historical examples of similar cases and see what conclusions were drawn from other experiments.

Step 3. Construct your hypothesis based on your question. State your hypothesis in a way that is easy to test. “Client A experiences cold spots whenever her uncle’s name is mentioned. If we say her uncle’s name three times, the temperature will go down three times as much.”

Step 4. Test your hypothesis by conducting an experiment. Remember to repeat your experiment several times to validate the results.

Step 5. Analyze the data and come to a conclusion. How many times were your results repeated? Were the variables always the same? In the case of Client A and her uncle’s cold spots, did you say his name at the same time each day? Were weather conditions exactly the same? What conclusion can you draw from your results? Was it only colder on winter nights when the window was open?

Step 6. Share your results. Write up a report of your experiment and share it with other paranormal groups. This is exactly what professional scientists do whenever they publish study results.

Peer review can sometimes be brutal when the reviewer criticizes your work but don’t take it personally. The purpose of peer review is to enable others who are not closely associated with the experiment to view it objectively and help identify flaws and biases. Take all comments as positive feedback, look at where you should alter your experiment to achieve more objective results. You may have to start from the beginning to ensure that your experiments achieve the correct results. Don’t be afraid to admit your errors. When you have completed the new experiments re-submit a new report for further peer review.

PERFORMING AN PARANORMAL INVESTIGATION

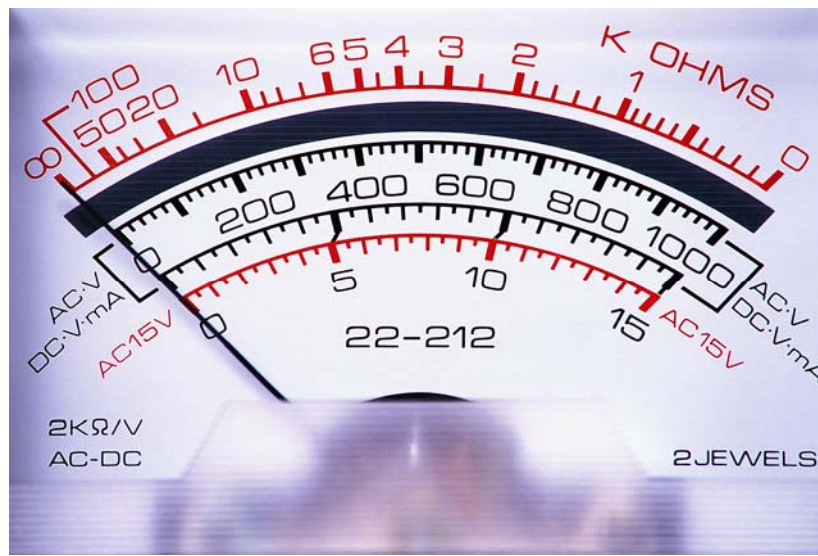
There are three general tasks performed on most investigations. Investigation teams are formed with these three tasks in mind. To properly investigate a team needs someone to operate the equipment (Technical Specialist), someone to document the investigation (Documentation Specialist) and someone to communicate with the spirits (Psychical Specialist.)

The next few pages break those positions down into individual duties with protocols and methods for performing assigned tasks.

Technical Specialist

The purpose of a technical specialist in any ghost hunting or paranormal investigation group is to help eliminate ordinary causes for what the client reports as possibly paranormal. Utilizing equipment such as EMF detectors, gas testers and Geiger counters can help identify contaminants in the location that may cause physiological and psychological changes in the witnesses that may simulate paranormal activity.

It is very important that all non-paranormal causes be eliminated prior to validating any client claims.



What is electro-magnetic field?

An Electro-magnetic field, or EMF, is a physical field produced by any electrically charged object. It is released as a smooth, continuous field that expands in a wavelike manner.

Every electrical signal produces a corresponding electromagnetic field. This field spreads out from the source in "rings" like the rippling of water in a pond. The further from the source it ripples, the weaker the field.

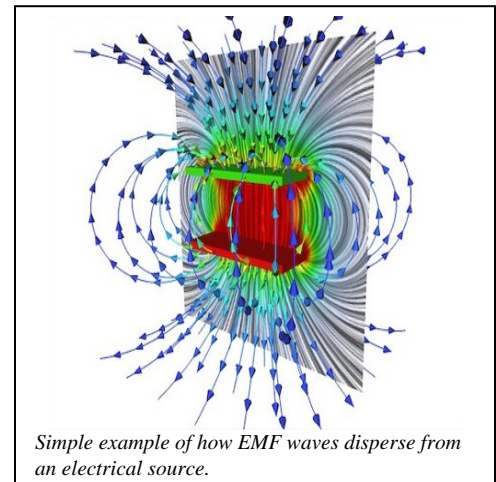
Depending on the strength of the field, the "ring" may extend several feet from the source before it dissipates. Electrical fields are measured in units of volts per meter. Magnetic fields are measured in units of gauss. The standard EMF meter combines both readings to provide an average reading.

Most electrical devices are shielded to weaken the waves produced. Poorly shielded devices can contribute to dangerous levels of EMF in the environment. The potential health effects of prolonged exposure to dangerous levels of EMF include:

- Fatigue
- Skin irritation
- Headaches
- Psychological changes such as paranoia and depression
- Cancer including breast cancer and leukemia

In 2002 the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) issued a report on the effects of EMF on the general public. This publication is the result of a review of numerous EMF studies regarding the effects of EMF exposure. While this report focused primarily on the health risks and effects of EMF exposure, it did provide numerous charts of standard acceptable EMF readings that can be of use to paranormal investigators in determining anomalous readings. Puget Sound Ghost Hunters provides a copy to each member. We recommend that all paranormal investigators read this publication.

PSGH technical specialists should refer to these charts for determining normal and anomalous EMF readings.



EM Field Meter

An EMF meter is one that measures the electric-magnetic fields in the environment. These fields occur naturally, however fluctuations are also believed to be associated with spirit phenomena.



- AC EMF Meters

EMF meters are designed to detect changes in electric and magnetic fields. Most EMF meters detect AC or *alternating* electric and magnetic fields. AC currents are most commonly found in man-made electronic devices.

- DC EMF Meters

Naturally emitted EMF is static (non-alternating) electric and magnetic fields. The Earth's natural EM field measures at approximately 300-600 milliGauss.

EMF Detection Protocols.

Many believe that extreme deviations in EMF may indicate the presence of a spirit. Because EM fields occur naturally and are produced by all electrical devices, it is vital that all EMF readings be determined to be produced by a natural or man made cause or some unknown cause.

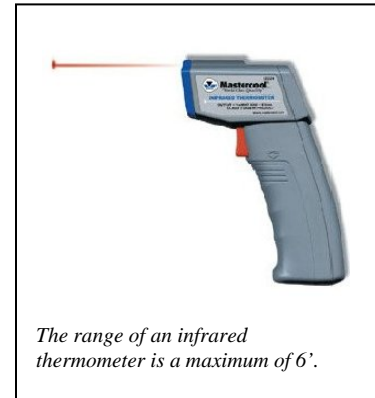
- Walk the entire investigation location recording baseline or normal EMF.
- Document the location of any electrical appliances or devices that might create deviations in the baseline EMF.
- Document any deviations from normal or baseline EMF. Include the time and location of all EMF extremes and any possible source or cause.
- Coordinate with other team members or witnesses to determine if any other paranormal activity was present at the time of the EMF deviation.

Prolonged exposure to extremely high EMF may also result in psychological and physical reactions that simulate the perception of haunting phenomena in people who have a predisposed sensitivity. For this reason, PSGH will endeavor to determine if reports of phenomena are the result of high EMF exposure.

Why do ghost hunters take the temperature?

Sudden or dramatic changes in the atmosphere are often reported in connection with paranormal activity. Most ghost hunting groups use two different temperature devices.

- Infrared temperature devices will record surface temperature. These are usually a hand held gun with a laser sight. While great for obtaining a baseline or average temperature of a location, they will not record the temperature of the air within the location.
- A thermocouple temperature device will measure the temperature of the air within the location. They usually come with a probe that will measure the temperature of the air surrounding it. These are ideal to record and validate when a cold spot is felt within the investigation site.



Temperature monitoring Protocols.

Many believe that extreme cold spots may indicate the presence of a spirit, however hot spots have also been associated with paranormal activity. PSGH takes baseline and periodic readings to monitor the temperature in any investigation site.

- Walk the entire investigation location recording baseline or normal temperature.
- Document any deviations from normal or baseline temperature. Include the time and location of all temperature extremes and any possible source or cause.
- Coordinate with other team members or witnesses to determine if any other paranormal activity was present at the time of the temperature deviation.

Many changes in atmospheric temperature are simply perceived by humans and do not correspond to readings from monitoring devices. Each time a team member “feels” a change in the temperature, a reading is taken to corroborate.

Documentation Specialist

The purpose of a documentation specialist is to record and document all aspects of the investigation. Full documentation of an investigation includes taking photographs, operating video and audio recording devices as well as taking handwritten notes.



What kind of information is important?

All information is important, from what the client does, says and feels to the results of any experiments performed by the team. What may seem small or insignificant at the time could be the key to the puzzle when all evidence is reviewed.

What kind of equipment does a Documentation Specialist use?

Because a documentation specialist is recording the investigation the types of equipment available will relate to those activities. This includes still and video cameras, audio recorders and we can't forget the basic pen and paper.

Photographic Protocols:

- Always take multiple successive shots during an investigation. This is important for verification of anomalies.
- Take sufficient photographs to fully document the entire location and activity.
- No smoking or breathing when taking photographs. Hold your breath for a brief period while taking a photograph to avoid false anomalies.
- If your camera has a strap, use it. Neck straps are recommended as they enable the investigator to take their hands off their cameras if necessary.
- Avoid shooting into the sun. This may result in lens flare.
- Avoid shooting with flash directly at reflective or shiny surfaces.
- Keep fingers and other objects away from the lens of the camera when taking photos.
- If you have long hair keep it secured.
- Compare anomalous prints with negatives for confirmation.
- When using 35mm camera, use the whole roll of film and ask for all photos to be processed and printed. This is important as most developers will not print photographs that may have blurs or light anomalies.
- Ask permission from the spirits to take their photograph and thank them.
- Flash is only good for 9-12 feet from camera so focus on that range.
- If you camera uses infrared, keep it stationary when taking pictures. A tripod works best to avoid infrared flare up.



- Avoid false orbs
 - Clean lens often. Remove all dust, spots and fingerprints from camera lens. Dust on the lens can be mistaken for spirit orbs.
 - Excessive dust in the air may cause false spirit orbs. Dust will sparkle in your flash, so be aware that this may cause dust orbs to appear in the printed photo.
 - Do not take photos from moving vehicles or while walking on dusty surfaces.
 - Avoid taking investigation photographs in the rain, snow or fog as these can show false orbs, streaks or other light anomalies.

Video Recording Protocols:

- Use new name-brand video tapes.
- Open and load all tapes in front witnesses.
- Pop tabs on all cassettes after recording to eliminate the chance of accidental over-recording.
- Record the date, time and location on the cassette label, as well as verbalize it at the beginning of recording.
- No distorting your voice during recording. This includes whispering which may be confused for EVP during playback.
- No whistling, deliberate rustling of papers or clothing or creating any noises that might be confused for EVP during playback. Clearly and vocally identify any accidental noises to eliminate them as possible EVP during playback.
- EVP's will often be recorded during normal team conversation, so no shouting, abusive language, or inflammatory topics are allowed. Keep non-investigation related chit-chat to a minimum.
- Vocalize to identify any background noises, including the conversations of other team members.
- Ask permission of the spirits to record them and encourage them to appear on camera.
- Each time you move to a new location, verbalize the time, change of location and the names of persons present in the location.
- Thoroughly record the entire location before focusing on the team or client activity.



Audio Recording Protocols:

- Use new name-brand audio tapes.
- Open and load all tapes in front witnesses.
- An external microphone is required for analog recording devices. An external microphone is not required for digital recorders but the use of one will greatly aid in recording.
- Pop tabs on all cassettes after recording to eliminate the chance of accidental over-recording.
- Only record on one side of the tape to prevent bleed-through and never over-record on tapes.
- Obtain a sample voice print of team members and clients at the beginning of recording.
- Record the date, time and location on the cassette label, as well as verbalize it at the beginning of recording.
- No distorting your voice during recording. This includes whispering which may be confused for EVP during playback.
- No whistling, deliberate rustling of papers or clothing or creating any noises that might be confused for EVP during playback. Clearly and vocally identify any accidental noises to eliminate them as possible EVP during playback.
- EVP's will often be recorded during normal team conversation, so no shouting, abusive language, or inflammatory topics are allowed. Keep non-investigation related chit-chat to a minimum.
- Vocalize to identify any background noises, including the conversations of other team members.
- For Analog recorders, make a copy of each cassette and store the original in a safe climate controlled place. Copies may be used for repeated playback.
- For digital recorders, transfer your recordings to your computer. This will allow you to make copies as needed or to isolate certain portions.
- Ask permission of the spirits to record their voices and encourage them to speak into the microphone.
- Each time you move to a new location, verbalize the time, change of location and the names of persons present in the location.



- For EVP recordings, allow a quiet time of 15-20 seconds between each question to allow the spirit to answer. Record for 4 to 5 minutes before playback. Playback is essential for spirit interaction.

Documentation Specialist Protocols.

Documentation Specialists must document a witnessing account of all aspects of the investigation. This may include keeping a record of readings taken by technical specialist and verbal impressions from psychical specialist.

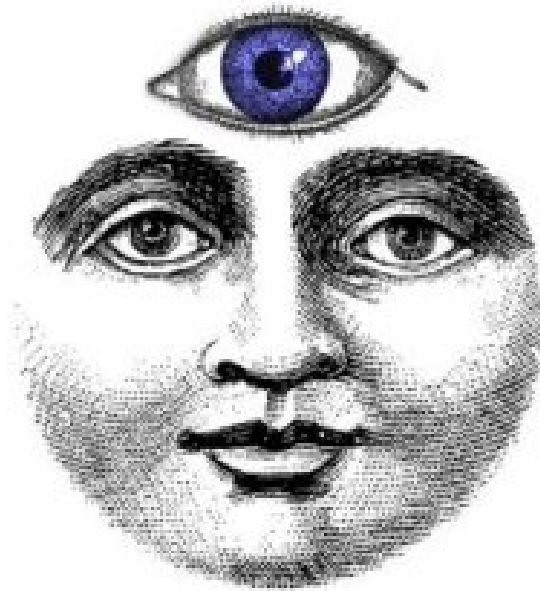
Documentation Specialists need to be aware of the actions and reactions of those around them including clients, other Documentation Specialists, psychical specialist and technical specialist.

Documentation Specialists should make note of any impressions they have. These will include feelings and thoughts that cannot be documented by video, audio or photographs.

Documentation Specialists need to keep an open mind coupled with some skepticism in their approach to investigation activity.

Psychical Specialist

The purpose of a psychical specialist is to access information about an investigation site that is not otherwise available through experimentation or research. This information comes to the psychic mentally or through what is often called the “third eye”. Psychics participating in PSGH investigations must attend advanced training and be tested and approved by Core leadership.



What is a psychic?

Psychic energy, or “psi” is the transfer of information or energy that cannot be explained by a physical process.

People who can do this consciously are called psychics. It is commonly believed that the majority of people in the world have psychic ability to some degree, however not all can access that ability at will or utilize it to the degree necessary to function as a “psychic”.

What are other names for psychics?

Over the centuries, cultures around the world have developed words to describe the ability to gather information by non-traditional means. Some of these terms are still used today.

- Sensitive
- Intuitive
- Diviner
- Medium
- Augur
- Seer
- Soothsayer
- Prophet
- Oracle
- Mind Reader
- Fortune Teller



What are the different types of psychic ability?

■ Clairvoyance (Clear-Seeing)

To see things not apparent to others, like receiving a vision of events or a visual impression about a person. This ability is often combined with others and is the most common.

■ Clairsentience (Clear-Knowing)

To receive impressions which are more feeling in nature. Psychics associated with this ability are often called Empaths because they can feel the emotions of others.

■ Clairaudience (Clear-Hearing)

To hear things which are outside the normal hearing range. This can be aided by persons who have passed on or a spirit guide.

Where does psychic ability come from?

There are many common beliefs about the origin of psychic ability. There is a well known, but false, belief that humans only use 10% of their brain ability in conscious thought and that the remain 90% make it possible for extra-ordinary thought.

Our brains are the control centers for our bodies. The brain interprets external stimuli or information and fires off electrical impulses that tell our bodies to blink our eyes, breathe or even to wiggle our toes. Many of those impulses are subconscious, or performed automatically by the brain without our making a conscious decision to act. These electrical signals travel through the body in waves of electromagnetic energy. The neuro-receptors throughout our body receive those signals and perform the desired function. This is why doctors and scientists can map the brain using Electroencephalography (EEG) machines.



Did everyone catch that?

The signals are sent in waves of ELECTROMAGNETIC ENERGY. Sound familiar?

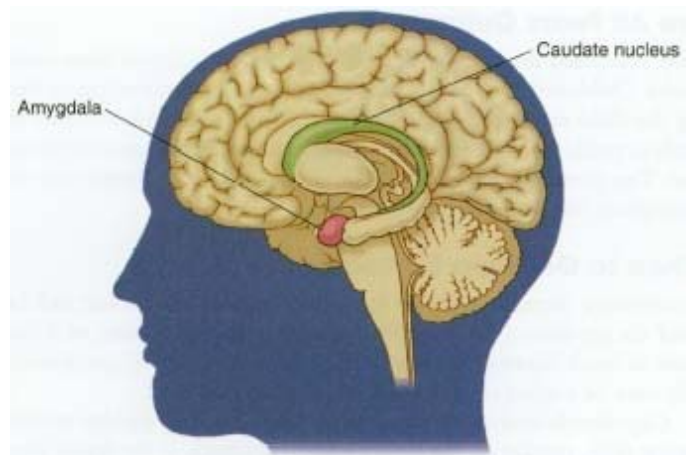
Those electrical impulses work both ways. Our bodies also send information back to the brain using those same electromagnetic waves. The brain receives information from the body and reacts with additional impulses. We step into a freezer and our body sends an impulse to the brain that says “Burr! it’s cold!” The brain reacts by burning additional fat molecules to adjust our internal thermostat to compensate for the change in temperature.

That multi-directional flow of information is what allows those who are pre-disposed to psychic ability to gather and interpret information that may otherwise be lost.

So, how exactly does it work?

Our brains are formed in two hemispheres. The left hemisphere functions to control our cognitive thought, problems solving and communication. The right hemisphere is more visual, more emotional. Deep between the two hemispheres, but joined to both, is a gland called the amygdala. This gland controls much of our subconscious activities. The amygdala is where our dreams and imagination come from. It’s where our most primal fight/flight instincts come from. It is the oldest and most under appreciated part of our brain.

The amygdala allows us to take our minds places where our bodies can’t go. Astral travel, remote viewing are all functions of the amygdala. For some people the amygdala’s impulses are strong enough to be perceived as cognitive information and not as dream or imagination.





What kind of psychic skills are important on a paranormal investigation?

■ Psychometry

The psychic ability in which a person can sense or "read" the history of an object by touching it. Most closely associated with Clairsentience.

■ Remote Viewing

The ability to gather information about a distant or unseen target using paranormal means or ESP. Most closely associated with Clairvoyance.

■ Telepathy

The direct transference of thought from one person (sender) to another person (receiver) without using normal sensory channels. Associated with Clairvoyance, Clairsentience and Clairaudience.

■ Dowsing

The ability to use tools to detect energy fields. Most common tools include pendulums and dowsing rods. Associated with Clairsentience.

■ Mediumship

The ability communicate with spirits using telepathic means. Most closely associated with Clairaudience.

■ Channeling

The process whereby a human instrument, known as a Trance Medium or Channel, is used by one or more discarnate, spirit personalities for the purpose of presenting information. Associated with Clairvoyance, Clairsentience and Clairaudience.

Why kinds of equipment do psychics use?

Psychics use a number of tools to help them direct their ability and obtain the information they seek. Many of these tools are not adequate for paranormal investigation because they focus too closely on introspection. The following is a list of tools that can be used during paranormal investigations.

Crystals

Some crystals and other gems are thought to be good for psychic protection while others, like quartz, are thought to absorb energy. Crystals can be used during a paranormal investigation, like an EMF meter, detecting abnormal energy fields.

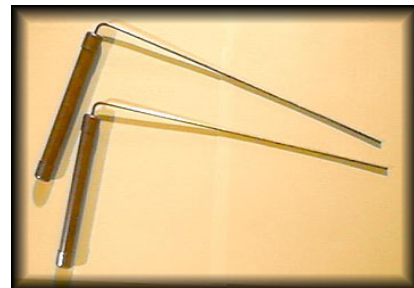


Dowsing tools

The theory behind the use of dowsing tools is that rods held near an energy source will vibrate or cross. Because popular belief holds that spirits are comprised of energy, it makes sense for paranormal investigators to utilize a tool that detects energy to identify "hot spots". The most common dowsing tools are dowsing rods and the dowsing pendulum.

Dowsing Rods

Dowsing rods consist of a single "Y" shape rod or two "L" shape rods. Both can be effective in locating energy sources, like an EMF detector, however the "L" shape is more conducive for spirit communication.



Dowsing Pendulum

While most pendulums consist of a crystal suspended on a short chain, pendulums can be made of almost any household object. All you need is some kind of weight, called a bobber, and a chain or string. As with rods, dowsing pendulums conduct the energy that flows around it causing it to swing so using a conductive material makes for a better pendulum.

Protection

Each time a team of investigators enters an allegedly haunted location, each time we attempt to communicate with a disincarnate spirit, we are stepping into an area that we, admittedly, know very little about. We may be in for a long and uneventful night or we may be placing ourselves in harm's way. No matter what the eventual outcome, it is vital that we know how to protect ourselves against any intrusive or dangerous spirit that may turn up.



When Spirits Attack

Two specific areas of concern are spirit attacks and spirit attachments. Neither is all that common and I don't want to create undue anxiety regarding this. However, any PSGH investigator could tell you stories of being struck, tripped or pushed during an investigation. Such attack can be frightening but spirit attachments are even more insidious and can be much more difficult to deal with.

Attachment is defined as the invasion of one's body by a disincarnate entity or by negative energies. Earthbound spirits and dark energy forces are the most common types of entities involved in attachments.

Why would Spirits try to attach themselves to you? The prevailing theory is that these spirits are attracted to life energy. They attach themselves to living beings in order to feed off that energy, or in rarer cases, in an attempt to regain the earthly life they have lost. Such spirits exist in a state of confusion, anxiety, agitation and fear which blinds them to the reality of their situation, making it impossible for them to move on to the next phase of their existence. This is only theory, but it certainly fits many case studies.

Effects of spirit attachments range from mild energy loss to extreme personality changes. Some possible signs of spirit attachments are:

- Hearing voices
- Extreme behavior changes
- Extreme mood changes
- Unexplained depression
- Fears and phobias
- Serious illness of unknown cause
- Loss of energy
- Memory and concentration problems
- Migraine headaches
- Nightmares or insomnia
- Panic or anxiety attacks
- Apparent multiple personalities

The symptoms shown on this list may also be explained by ordinary medical causes. Always look for the most mundane explanation first. If you experience any of these symptoms, you should always contact a physician before attributing the cause to spirit attachment.

If, however, the symptoms continue and cannot be explained medically, you may be dealing with a nasty attachment, perhaps similar to the following encounter.

The clients had been experiencing very frightening and sometimes violent phenomena in their home. They asked an investigator to perform a clearing and the psychic attached to the group agreed to do so. She received impressions of a negative spirit that had been involved in a murder/suicide. Video taken during the investigation and during the clearing itself revealed unusual orb and shadow activity. Still, the procedure appeared to be successful and when the team packed up for the evening, there was no sign that there would be any repercussions.

The next day, however, the investigator woke to excruciating pain in her neck, back and shoulders. She was unable to move for three days and continued to feel pain for three months. Without medical explanation, she was forced to consider that what she was experiencing was spirit attachment. The spirit was eventually banished; however the investigator experienced residual pain for some time afterwards.

Protection Methods

One of the best pieces of advice I can give a paranormal investigator is to “know yourself.” It sounds simple, but people in this day and age are not always given to self-examination. If you are able to recognize how you typically feel, think and react under normal circumstances, you will be better able to recognize those subtle shifts which may be indications of trouble.

Typically, an entity that seeks to attach itself to a living person is of a low vibrational energy and cannot gain entry to a person who maintains a healthy and positive energy himself. A person is most susceptible to attachment when in a state of physical, mental or spiritual stress. Severe anxiety or exhaustion can leave a person open for attachment as can grief, uncontrolled anger or fear. Poor health, addictions, and emotional instability can also make a person vulnerable. The back of the neck is the most common area of assault, so be especially watchful of any discomfort or stress in this area.

Mystics and spiritual teachers have long believed that the universe is not the physical place we see but instead a matrix of energies vibrating at various levels. Physicists are finally coming around to the same conclusion. Everything in the Universe, animal, vegetable or mineral, has its own energy signature. High energy vibrations attract other high energy vibrations. Low energy vibrations attract other low energy vibrations. Most spirit attacks and attachment are made by earthbound spirits of a low energetic vibration. Therefore the best defense against such a spirit is to maintain your personal energy at a healthy level. The higher you maintain your own energetic vibration, the better protected you are against psychic attack from any source.

Following are some simple methods that can be used by ghost hunters for personal protection. Many of these techniques employ creative visualization. Just as ancient philosophers believed that all energy was essentially mental projection, we have found that visualization is one of the strongest tools we have for creating powerful and effective protection around us.

1. Self-Check

Before beginning any investigation perform a quick check of yourself

Check your emotions. Are you calm and cheerful? Or are you angry, anxious or depressed?

How do you feel physically? Are you feeling strong and healthy? Do you feel energized? Or do you feel like you're coming down with something? Are your allergies kicking up? Are you're having problems breathing?

If you're not feeling your best, consider staying home. Or at the very least, take extra precautions and continue to do self-checks during the investigation. Be aware of any shifts in your energy or changes in your mood. Ask yourself if this shift has an explainable cause or if it is coming out of no where.

2. Eat Something

This is the quickest and easiest way to raise your energy. Never go into an investigation on an empty stomach.

3. Take Time To Ground & Center Yourself

Grounding is defined as the dispelling of negative or excess energy generated during the day. You should then center yourself in the physical world in order to be balanced emotionally and energetically. There are a number of techniques for this but here's a very simple and common one.

- Whether you are standing or sitting, make sure that your legs are uncrossed and your feet are flat on the ground. This will allow the energy to flow properly.
- Close your eyes and begin regular deep breathing. This calms the body and stills the mind. Nothing can be achieved with a mind that is in disharmony.
- With every inhale visualize yourself breathing in clear white light. Each breath drives the light through every inch of your body, filling your body with light.
- Visualize the light breaking down all the negativity and toxins in your body. It might look like bits of soot and grit floating in the river of light that's now flowing through your body.
- As you exhale, visualize all that dirty blackness being flushed down your body, down your legs and out through your feet into the earth beneath you. There it will be recycled into clean positive energy again.
- Keep up this process until it's all gone. All the negative energy gone from your heart, from your head, from your blood stream, leaving only a clean, shiny, healthy feeling.
- When you are done, stand up and walk around for a while. Make solid contact with the Earth. This will complete the process by centering you firmly in the physical world.

4. Develop And Use Your Own Form Of Personal Protection.

I recommend that each individual develop a personalized method of protection to be used at every investigation. Make it a habit and it will become stronger every time you use it. Some common methods include:

Prayer

Whatever your personal belief is, a simple prayer for protection is always the easiest and most effective defense you have against attack. The more powerful your belief, the stronger the protection.

Creating Shields

This is also achieved by visualization and there are many techniques available but the following is very simple and easy to perform.

- Begin as you did when grounding, with your eyes closed and your feet flat on the ground. Breathe deeply and steadily.
- In your mind's eye, see a golden light forming above you. See the light form into a sphere of pure gold, as warm and bright as a small sun.
- Visualize a single ray beaming down on you from the sphere. The light of this ray enters into you through the crown of your head and shoots down to fill your entire body with light. Every breath you take is like a bellows, making the light brighter and stronger. Feel your body hum with energy.
- Now see that light begin to expand. With each breath you take see the light pushing through the pores of your skin and out into the air around you until the light not only fills your body, but forms an energy field around your body. A shield of pure light. Keep expanding this shield until it surrounds you with about six inches of light on every side.
- Once the shield feels firmly in place, see the light begin to fade to transparency. Acknowledge in your mind that, although you can no longer see it, the shield remains firmly around you--that although you can see and hear everything around you, nothing can pass through the shield without your permission and that all harm and negativity directed at you will be deflected off the shield and back to the sender.
- When you are done, open your eyes, stand up and walk around for a while. This will ground out any excess energy that has built up inside you. But understand and accept that wherever you go, the shield moves with you.

Open Your Chakras

The Chakra system is a complex structure but, simply put, it consists of seven energy centers in the body located at major branchings of the human nervous system. Each chakra is a spinning wheel of bio-energetic activity emanating from a major nerve ganglia branching forward from the spinal column.



Each is a center of activity that receives, assimilates, and expresses life force energy

The reason so many psychics especially like to focus on chakra work is that, in addition being an excellent method for raising their energetic vibration, it's also wonderful way of increasing the psychic ability that's so useful in spirit communication.

To anyone interested in studying the subject, I would recommend any of the works of Anodea Judith. Dr. Judith is a recognized expert in the field of chakra healing.

Use Talismans

The use of talismans has been an effective form of protection since ancient times. Anything from a religious symbol to a piece of quartz crystal can serve as a protection talisman. The most important factor in the use of talismans is the power you yourself put into it.

Religious symbol do little good to persons with no religious faith. Tourmaline is said to be a powerful protection crystal, but dropping a piece in your pocket and forgetting about it probably won't help much.

If you wish to use a talisman, I would advise you put together a little ritual of your own to charge the item with the task of protecting you from harm. Bless it in the name of your God or fill it with light in the same way described for creating the shield of light. Then your talisman is going to have some potency.

5. Use a Team Method of Protection

This can be complicated by the varied belief systems of the team members. One member may be Christian, another Buddhist, another may have no religious belief. For this reason, instead of a group, all-purpose prayer with little meaning, I would recommend something like the White Light shielding method described earlier. It usually works best if one person takes the lead and walks the others through the procedure. Doing it together also serves to link the team members energetically. This is especially helpful in making the team more aware if an individual member gets into trouble during the investigation.

If You Are Attacked During An Investigation:

If you or a team member is attacked during an investigation, it's important to know what to do. Like any kind of emergency preparedness; you don't want to wait until the emergency happens to start thinking about remedies.

1. Keep Calm & Assess the Situation

Not every bump or push requires banishment.

2. Immediately Reinforce Your Personal Protection

It's like securing your own mask on an airplane before doing the same for others. You can't help anyone else unless you yourself are secure.

Use visualization to pump up that white light around you or invoke your guardians. Prayer again is one of the simplest and most powerful methods of protection. Anytime you connect with the divine you fill yourself with light, raising your vibration to a point where no negative energy can touch you.

3. Reassure the Entity That You Mean No Harm

It's very possible that the entity is acting out of fear. Remember many earth-bound spirits exist in an atmosphere of confusion and anxiety. That's why they're earth-bound in the first place. Reassure it that you mean no harm. Encourage it to communicate with you.

4. Banish The Entity Only If You Feel You Have To

If you assess the situation to be dangerous to you or to your team members, you may need to drive the spirit away. This is not the same as an exorcism. This is purely a defensive measure.

a. Compel the Spirit to Depart

"The power of God compels you." We've all seen it done in the movies. It may sound hokey but it works. Command the spirit to depart using the name of whatever God you worship.

a. White Light

Again, the same way you created your shield of light, draw that light into your body and this time push it out to illuminate the whole area. Drive the dark out by filling yourself with light. It should banish any negative spirit.

b. Call Upon Your Guardians

Call upon your guardian angel, your spirit guide or your protection totem to ward off the attack. The Archangel Michael is said to be a particularly powerful protector in these cases.

After The Investigation

Many people who are very diligent about setting up protective measures prior to an investigation, neglect to follow through at the end. Here are a few suggestions for closing out an investigation.

1. "Please, Don't Follow Me Home"

Before you leave the site, make sure all spirits understand they are not welcome to follow you home. You may feel foolish as you are doing it, but do it anyway. Thank the spirits for their presence and then bid them farewell. Set boundaries and don't leave any room for interpretation. Say it out loud: "To all spirits present, I ask that you do NOT follow me home."

2. Remove Your Shield

Once you get home, remove your shield. Leaving the shield in place won't harm you; eventually it will break down on its own. But it's a better practice to deal with excess energy immediately. You can combine it with your Grounding and Centering practice by drawing the energy back into yourself and flushing it down into Earth.

3. Grounding & Centering

Even if you don't have a shield to remove, take a few more minutes and ground again. Then eat something to rebalance yourself. Hunting ghosts can be a tense and anxious experience. If you ground off that excess energy and center yourself properly, you'll sleep better and feel more refreshed the next day.

In Conclusion

We ghost hunters don't scare easily. Our aim is to make contact with ghosts, not to avoid them. But, like big game hunting, it's foolish to go looking for spirits without taking proper precautions first. Here's one last look at the DO'S and DON'TS of ghost hunting.

DO be willing to set boundaries
DO ground and center before and after each investigation
DO develop and use your own personal protection ritual
DO know and be watchful for the signs of spirit attack or attachment
DO listen to your gut instinct during an investigation
DO be prepared to take immediate action against potentially harmful spirits
DO have fun but STAY ON GUARD

DON'T take your safety or that of your team for granted
DON'T go ghost hunting alone
DON'T participate if you are feeling ill, over-tired, angry or stressed-out
DON'T ever go hunting ghosts while under the influence of drugs or alcohol
DON'T attempt to raise anything you don't know how to get rid of

Following these simple guidelines won't diminish anyone's chances of discovering and communicating with spirits. It will, however, ensure that nothing you're hunting will end up catching you.



"Hey, let's all be careful out there."
Sgt. Phil Esterhaus
Hill Street Blues

