

# THE GENTLE ART OF DOWSING

by Marc Regan

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica dowsing is defined as: "A means of remote locating beyond the limitations of one's five senses — sight, sound, smell, touch and taste — to establish communication at a distance with a sought after object (some liken it to the homing instinct of certain birds and mammals). That the dowser's powers lie beneath the level of conscious perception, and the index of some material or mental convention which otherwise could not be interpreted". This I found to be only part of the picture.

The world in the eyes of the dowser is not limited to the five senses, and according to the laws of quantum physics, which governs much of what we are today as an industrialized society, what lies beneath the level of conscious perception *is all*. This concept is found in many ancient texts and understood by many religions of the world, from Buddhist, Hindu, Hebrew, American Indian to the Dogon of Africa. We are taught as children to believe that the chairs we sit upon and the earth we walk upon are solid. By high school they are a mass of rapidly moving particles and by college the quantum physicists demonstrate that these particles are not really solid at all but "waves of probability", and in the lab they determine what this wave will appear as, wave form or particle. Outside the lab we determine what these waves become, in other words our PERCEPTION CREATES REALITY.

Before we get into the deeper facets of this art lets first look at some of the fundamental aspects such as; where did the word dowsing come from? The word Dowsing may have been coined from the German word "DUETZEN" which means to locate, to find. The Anglo-Saxon version meant "to pull down". The Canadians call it questing while in France and some other European countries dowsing is referred to as radiesthesia. Whatever you want to call it, dowsing has been practised throughout millennia and although the names and some of the instruments have changed the techniques have not.

Looking at the past, pictographs of people believed to be dowsing dating back over 8,000 years are found in caverns known as the Tassili Caves in North Africa. 4000 year old Egyptian temples show Pharaohs holding devices in their hands resembling dowsing instruments. Chinese use of the pendulum can be traced back to 4000 B.C. There is an etching of Emperor Ta Yu of the Hsia Dynasty holding a bulky prong device resembling a divining rod, dating as far back as 2500 years. The Greeks during the time of Homer used the word Rhabdos (Rhabdomancy) to describe divining by rod, whilst the Romans Cicero and Tacitus describe "Virgula Divina" as a practice of divination by means of casting bits of stick. By the 4th century

the dowsing art was widely practiced on the island of Crete. In Europe the “Striking Rod” was a popular tool used for mining. The Germans used the striking rod to locate deposits of gold, silver, lead, copper and tin. During the merchant ventures of Queen Elizabeth I, the striking rod was brought to England to assist in the locating of minerals such as tin, but as mining declined the rod was used to locate water.

People were often persecuted for dowsing, but the reason it wasn't eradicated was two fold, it was useful and it worked. Religions both condoned and condemned the art. There were many priests who dowsed, in fact one of the ways of checking the depth to an underground target is called the “Bishop's Rule”. But laymen and women were persecuted, probably due to the clerics fearing a loss of power and prestige. Today the situation remains about the same, “some fir, some agin”. As you can see the art of dowsing has been around for a long time, but as so aptly put in the book, *The Dowsing Mind* “With the approach of the 19th century electricity and magnetism became the watch-words of a burgeoning science. Interest in the art waned as those in material science waxed, while those who kept the art alive were and still are considered unorthodox”. So what has kept people dowsing, risking persecution and ridicule? I believe it is the same answer as what kept it alive through the ages, *need* and its *usefulness*.

What are some of the things that we can dowse for? The object of the quest that we are most familiar with is the locating of water, or water witching (the meaning may have been derived from the cutting of a forked switch from the witch hazel tree). Other things that have been successfully dowsed for are oil, minerals, and natural gas deposits, missing persons, pets, planes, boats, wires and underground cables, buried pipes and conduit (check the *Seattle Times Sunday*, June 9, 1991 which shows a Spokane Water Department employee searching for underground pipes with a set of swing rods), subterranean cavities, relocating survey markers, noxious earth energies – natural and man made, ley and other historic alignments, archeology and animal husbandry. During the Vietnam war dowsing was used to locate enemy mines, tunnels, ammunition caches etc. Weather predictions, testing seeds, soil and potential planting areas, working with nature spirits, alimentary dowsing (checking the potency of foods), checking the aura of animals, plants and people, healing, solving geomantic (Feng Shui) problems and working with spirit, to mention a few. I believe dowsing is limited only to the concept you give it; this follows two very basic and personal life rules which are: 1. What you believe becomes your reality, and 2. What you expect tends to be realized.

What physically happens to us when we dowse? Well, there is a physical reaction, and this has been measured by Dr Edith Jurka, a medical doctor specializing in psychiatry, as part of her research on mind-developing techniques. On an electroencephalograph, a machine that measures the brain-wave patterns of activity, Dr Jurka measured the brain-wave activity of dowers as they dowsed. Normal brain activities are as follows:

- BETA – 30 to 14 Hz (or cycles per second) our normal awake state with attention focused on the outside world. Fear, anxiety and intense concentration increase the amplitude of brain waves in this frequency.
- ALPHA – 13 to 8 Hz, could be described the natural awake resting state, a place where one may find increased awareness or contentment often found through meditation.
- THETA – 7 to 4 Hz, in our awake state we can have creative breakthroughs and problem solving, and when asleep appears while dreaming, or in hypnogogic or hypnopompic states – those states just before and after sleep.
- DELTA – 4 to 1 Hz, not seen in the average person except in sleep too deep for dreams, and awake most active in the meditative state of sumadi or superconscious perception.

Dr Jurka found that when we dowse our brain wave frequencies increase in the ALPHA range without conscious effort, even in the novice dowser. The EEG shows that somehow the brain responds to the dowsing process in a way similar to that of the meditative process that creates increased awareness. And as the dowser gains experience, or as he or she engages in more subtle levels of dowsing, the frequency intensifies to THETA, and finally the functioning dowser may also reflect the DELTA state as well. In fact Dr Jurka found that some of the **experienced dowsers** stayed in ALPHA and THETA even when they were not dowsing. Most remarkable, according to Terry Ross and Richard Wright, authors of the 'Divining Mind', is that talented dowsers tested exhibited activity in all four ranges – beta, alpha, theta and delta – all at the same time. This was something apparently not even an accomplished yogi can exhibit when he performs his siddhis or paranormal wonders. According to Dr C. Maxwell Cade, a researcher into mind potential from London, the DELTA frequencies correlate with reaching out into the unknown. The yogi does not do this, he is not paying attention to the outside world, and is trying to merge with nirvana, so he would not need the BETA frequencies. But the dowser is doing both and needs both. Finally, we all live on a resonating cavity found between the ionosphere and the surface of the earth; this cavity resonates at a fundamental frequency of 8 Hz which is the frequency between ALPHA and THETA. So when the dowser practices the art he or she becomes in resonance or in tune with the basic frequency of this planet.

So how do we start the dowsing act? One begins by posing a question and visualizing the target in the mind, be it water for a well you need, your car keys or a missing pet. The instrument is held in hand, in the search position. You begin to get a response from your instrument. And according to your CODE, which is an established pattern or series of patterns previously worked out by you to gather information from your subconscious mind, you begin your search or get your answer. With a pendulum a clockwise rotation might mean *yes*, while anti-clockwise means *no* and a diagonal swing may mean question unclear or try again later.

*The most important part of this process is the question*, for without the proper question you will not get the proper answer. It is akin to using a computer: you know the old adage – garbage in, garbage out – well, this is what happens when we dowse. An example would be looking for water. If one says “I want to locate water for Mary Doe, well, you might find water at the depth and gallons per minute you predicted, but it might be unfit to drink and you will have an unhappy client. When I dowse for water I ask for moving underground water (if not moving it could be stagnant, or have lots of minerals leached into it), minerally balanced and unpolluted, that will supply Mary with all her water needs for the time to come. This goes for anything you dowse for. *The proper question will give you a proper result.*

Another important set of questions that should be asked prior to a search is *MAY I, CAN I* and *SHOULD I*. **May I?** do I have permission, we are trying to accomplish our work for the highest good. This is important especially when doing any healing work, as we should not impinge upon another’s life plan without their permission. **Can I?** do I have the dowsing skill to get the job done? **Should I?** Is this the time and am I the one to do it? As Terry puts it, we must realize that some situations are meant to stay as they are for reasons beyond our understanding or awareness. We must not let our egos get in the way, and we must learn to trust the answers that come through us.

Dowsing instruments come in many shapes and sizes, and as far as I see it, there is no best tool. What works great for you might not work for me and vice-versa. Instruments run from the very simple pendulum to the more intricate Aurameter. You can make a pendulum with a piece of string and tie a nut to it, or purchase a crystal on a chain. L-rods which are pieces of metal bent in an L-shape can be made from welding rods, coat hangers or old car antennas. Wands or bobbers can be made using an old door spring or a flexible branch cut from a tree. Y-rods, one of the traditional tools, are made from all kinds of tree forks, plastic (won’t dry out and lose its flexibility). One of the best Y-rods I saw was made by tying the ends of two fresh apple boughs, ¼” diameter, together with a rubber band at the top and holding the loose ends in each hand. There are more sophisticated instruments such as the Aurameter designed by the late world-renowned dowser Verne Cameron. It is compact and contains five instruments in one, now produced by his protégé and esteemed dowser Bill Cox. This is a first-rate instrument which costs a bit more but to me it is worth it. Remember, the instrument only amplifies what the dowser feels, and acts as a visual indicator or reference so you know the target is close at hand. Yes, the more you do it the more sensitive you become; that’s why it is important to find a *good* teacher that can explain what is going on and how to handle any problems you may encounter. In fact the good teacher always learns from his students so you both gain. What many dowsers are working towards is deviceless-dowsing, where no instrument is needed: they just know where the object of their search is. This is where we bridge the gap between intuition and logic, and reach into the cosmic consciousness to receive our answers. Here we have to learn to trust our inner voice, and dowsing is one way to learn how.

Like anything else we do, there is a progression to the dowsing art, and according to Terry Ross and Richard Wright it goes something like this. Learning to dowse first:

1. For physical targets *on site*. Such as your keys or water.
2. Location of physical targets at a distance and *up to the dowser's horizon*.
3. Locations of targets *over the horizon*.
4. Activity in steps 1, 2, and 3, in regard to *non physical and abstract problems*. i.e. Will it rain today? Will this vein of water flow all year long?
5. Cooperation with nature, as in moving underground streams in a totally mental act.
6. Co-creation with nature, as in some forms of distant healing of man, animal, and plant.
7. Experience, however brief, of total conscious union with the Creative Forces – “reflexive” union.

These are the usual stages, followed by most dowsers, although because of different interests and abilities some people pass one or more of these stages to move into their particular area of interests. And here another point can be made: the article is called “The *Gentle Art of Dowsing*”, so called because this skill cannot be forced. If you are anxious, emotionally upset, fatigued, your chance of getting a proper response is diminished considerably.

There are more theories of how dowsing works than there are flavors of ice cream in Baskins and Robins, so let's look at a few.

1. Physical – this dowser tends to rely on his instrument, he empowers it.
2. Instinctive – this dowser tends to feel a response, tingling, chills, sweating, may feel faint or nauseous as he walks over the land or from office.
3. Spiritual – believe they are being aided by spirit, and are told where to locate their target.
4. Intuitive – does not want any preconceived ideas, wants to rely on his intuition.
5. Emotional – these dowsers become happy or sad; these are usually women because women tend to be more in touch with their feelings.
6. Mental – this person wants to know everything he can about the site, he will research area well, look at land traits, talk with neighbors etc. to help get an answer.
7. Resonance – these dowsers believe that the nature of all physical material is intrinsically dynamic and is manifested as an energy form, a rate of vibration. The universe as we see it is alive, connected, and flowing in and out of itself, vibration manifesting as matter. A universe where everything is connected, enfolding and unfolding in one big symphonic holomovement. Space and time running together as one unit, of which we are, have been and always will be. And because our thoughts are things, when the idea of the target is formed in the mind of the dowser it resonates with the actual target causing the dowser's tool to respond by swinging sideways for the L-rod, bobbing up and down for the wand, or rotating clockwise for the pendulum, to the question which originated in the dowser's mind.

This list is not the only way the dowsing art can be understood; a dowser could use a combination of the above mentioned practices. And remember I as the author of this article am only a piece to the puzzle. Like the four blind men touching the elephant, they all get different impressions; one touching the tusk says it is like bone; one touching the leg might say it is like a tree trunk; one touching the tail might say it feels like rope; one touching the trunk proclaims it feels like a snake. I am also one of these blind men getting my own impressions and learning from others, putting together a picture, a vibration, a song that makes sense to me and trying to help others find their own.

There is another aspect of this work that I would like to comment on and that is ESP, *not* Extra Sensory Perception but as my friend Bill Cox puts it "EXTENDED SENSORY PERCEPTION", where one reaches and touches, sees or hears at a distance. Experienced dowsers will tell you that while working they can sometimes look and see the veins of running water under the ground, Clairvoyance. Some will be able to hear the sounds of rushing water, clairaudience. When over a vein of geothermal or hot water they can sometimes smell and taste the sulfur in the water, olfaction and gustation. And last touch, they might tell you the temperature or say how it feels, clairsentience. We initially carry all these skills with us, but as children have been taught that we cannot do these things. Children at the age of four test 96% creative but by the time they are seven they test 4% creative according to a study for human potential. My wife and I made a New Year's resolution this year to unlearn much of our childhood programming that made us believe in the limits society places upon us and make us dependent on its machines. Remember folks, it is never too late to have a happy childhood, and there are lots of things to get excited about. And dowsing is one of them.

Last but not least, how can we find out more about the dowsing art? There are a few ways. One is to find a dowser with a good track record (ask for referrals) and see if he will let you go out on a job with him. This can be difficult at times due to the short notice of calls and the proximity of you to the teacher. If there are any classes going on in your neighborhood, try and get in one; if there aren't, you can get some folks together then invite a dowser in to teach you the basic skills. Join a local dowsing chapter. Spokane has the "*Inland Empire Dowsers*" who hold monthly meetings and discuss many of the different aspects of the art, and it gives dowsers a place to network, share experiences, learn from each other and also provide an outlet for dowsing books and supplies that you might not be able to find locally. Experience is not necessary to join in the fun. For information on this chapter call (509) 935-6243. There is also a chapter in the Puget sound area. In Canada there is the "Canadian Society of Questers" and Britain has the "British Society of Dowsers". Both put out a quarterly digest which have lots of information for one to glean ideas from. And last there is the "*American Society of Dowsers*" a nonprofit educational and scientific society with a membership open to all who show interest. Operating from their headquarters in Vermont and with membership of over 4000 from all

over the world, they publish a Quarterly Digest representing all manners of dowsing theories, ideas, techniques, applications, instrumentation and experiences with articles supplied by you the dowser. They hold a yearly conference with noted dowsers from all over the world speaking. They also are a good source of dowsing books and instruments that you may not be able to find locally. The A.S.D. can be reached by phone at (802) 684-3417.

I hope this article sparks your interest in this art form. There is an old story about three Buddhist monks looking at a flag being whipped around by the wind. One monk looks and says "Flag moving", another says "Wind moving", the last one looks up and says "Mind moving". Object - Action - Essence, and it is the essence that dowsing is all about.

*Bibliography:*

'*Aquavideo and Techniques of Swing Rod Dowsing*' by Bill Cox.

'*The Divining Mind*' by Terry Ross and Richard Wright - Destiny Books

'*The Divining Hand*' by Christopher Bird - New Age Press

'*American Society of Dowsers digest: Fall 1991, Volume 31, No. 4*'.

All the above literature can be ordered from the American Society of Dowsers. The Bill Cox material can be ordered through Marc and Lesley Regan at (509) 935-6243.

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**(Books available from the BSD Office:**

'*The Divining Mind*', £7.95 + £1.20 p&p.

'*The Divining Hand*', £18 + £2.70 p&p. Ed.)