



# The Conclusion



Hopefully, the material from this class has shown you a balanced body of research of what remains a controversial field of science. If there are any useful take-away messages from all the research conducted in parapsychology, it is the importance of perspective when conducting good science and putting parapsychology into perspective. Consider the following:

1. Whether you're a believer or a skeptic, accept science as science. By any conventional and objective analysis, parapsychology research uses methods that often exceed the requirements of mainstream science. Its techniques are scientific, and its methods are exactly the same as mainstream scientific fields. Thus, any belief that parapsychology is not a science is simply not based in fact.
2. Regardless of whether you accept a scientific finding, you may still disagree with it or not like it. I regularly run into research in mainstream psychology that I think is missing something important or perhaps I personally do not agree with in terms of my beliefs. That is perfectly fine. However, I have to accept the findings for what they are, given the scientific method has been adequately conducted. I may or may not disagree with the interpretation. However, if our beliefs mandate that science itself is fundamentally flawed, then much of what we use for technology and much of science in general has to be invalidated.
3. Good evidence, good conclusions, and good science require us to be aware of and keep our beliefs in check. The most heated debates on any topic, including parapsychology, resulted because we stopped looking at evidence objectively and instead defended our beliefs. Due to the effects of ideological commitment, this is (unfortunately) normal and part of the human condition. However, we have to separate belief, which requires no proof, from science, theory, and fact, which require evidence, research, and data to justify its claims. The question we all have to ask ourselves, particularly with parapsychology, is whether you wish to be fair and objective in your scientific analysis. If the answer is yes, then the findings of parapsychology are valid and open a world of potential phenomena for scientists to explore. If you reject parapsychology and its findings, then by logical application, you must reject the scientific method, and thus, most other fields of science. If the answer is no, then there is likely no evidence or science that will affect your belief.

At the end of the day, we choose our reality. The question is how close our choice of reality matches the reality we actually live in.