

# The Sixth Sense - Can ESP Predict the Future?

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US Army Major Paul H. Smith (ret.), one of the Pentagon's "men in black" talks about ESP, remote viewing, and whether it is an effective tool for predicting the future.

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Dr. Laurie Nadel (LN): Can ESP predict the future? Will the world continue after 2012? What is the Mayan Calendar really saying? Is your mind a function of your brain and does your consciousness die when your brain dies? These are important and profound questions. I'm Dr. Laurie Nadel, and you're listening to The Sixth Sense. We'll be exploring these controversial, thought-provoking topics with U.S. Army Major Paul Smith who was one of the pioneers of the Pentagon's Remote Viewing Program.

Let's turn our attention to the profound questions of whether or not ESP can predict the future, and is the mind merely a function of the brain, or is there an aspect of consciousness that survives and goes beyond our physical survival? These questions and more, when we return to speak with Major Paul Smith.

LN: Our guest today, is Paul Smith who is one of the pioneers of remote viewing. He has been a guest on this show before when we spoke about his work in the Pentagon with remote viewing and thank you, Paul for being here today.

Paul Smith (PS): Well, I'm glad to be here.

LN: And we're glad that all the equipment is working, too after some technical difficulties earlier on. But –

PS: Hopefully there is some wood nearby for you to knock on!

LN: Oh, okay. You gave a talk recently at the Society for Scientific Exploration on remote viewing, but the title was Do-It-Yourself Prophecy, and can you tell us a little bit about that?

PS: Yeah. Actually, that was a talk for my Coast-To-Coast interview.

LN: Okay.

PS: The title of my talk at the SSE, I'm trying to think what the actual title was, but I'll tell you what the theme was. It was about consciousness and remote viewing.

LN: Okay. Consciousness and remote viewing, which I would imagine is a very important theme because you can remote view and not have a particularly evolved level of consciousness.

PS: Okay, yes. Well, what the idea was – The title, actually, now that I think about it was ESP Is Consciousness' Only Hope.

LN: Okay.

PS: Yeah, and of course, ESP, when I say that, I have specifically remote viewing in mind, although, obviously, there are other forms of ESP.

LN: Right.

PS: The idea that – Right now, the whole notion of consciousness is under attack. The whole notion of mind as mind is under attack. In philosophy, and psychology, and neurophysiology—all of those fields, the current suspicion is that the mind just is the brain; that all of our mental life is just a function and can ultimately be traced back to the firing of neurons and the interaction of brain cells.

LN: Right.

PS: That has an unfortunate consequence, and that means we're nothing more than a really complicated machine.

LN: Right.

PS: And complicated machines don't really have things like free will and lives aren't anything more than determined by physical facts. And so, that has some profound indications for our society, and my argument is that that whole premise is wrong. Yes, certainly, parts of mind, parts of our mental life are governed by the brain, but in fact, the evidence is that there's at least one aspect of mind that can't possibly be explained physically, and the evidence of that is the ESP research that says that there are things that are happening in the mind that can't possibly be explained by the laws of physics. They violate the laws of physics, and of course, the mainstream scientists and the skeptics want to reject that whole idea because it pretty well knocks the legs out from under the main explanatory framework, which they don't like as Galileo discovered several centuries ago.

LN: Right. Yeah, you don't want to kind of question the ruling assumptions even when they're wrong.

PS: Yeah, yeah. In fact, that's the worst time to question them is when they're wrong. – (Light laughter) –

LN: In the last chapter of my book *Sixth Sense*, I interviewed Roger Sperry, and Willis Harman, and Edgar Mitchell on this topic of consciousness and how it doesn't fit into the reductionist filter that says – Let's see. One of the assumptions of modern science or Western science is that everything can be reduced to matter –

PS: Right.

LN: -- and that in order to study ESP, we have to come up with a new model because it doesn't conform to that assumption. So, instead of claiming, as many scientists do, that's an artifact that couldn't possibly happen, you need to change your assumptions.

PS: Well, in fact, what many folks are worried about in scientific circles is that in fact, if it doesn't reduce to matter, then they're out of a job.

■ (Light laughter from both) –

LN: Yeah, there's always that.

PS: Actually, that's probably not properly said. They're not necessarily out of a job, but of course, they have to reconfigure, reengineer what the whole underlying theory is that's supposed to explain the universe. But what they're really worried about is that if, in fact, ESP turns out not to be physical, in any capturable sense, that there'll be this hole that will never be explained because you can't explain it in physical terms. And so, that leaves part of this story of the world untellable in a material world, and that scares them. They do not want to admit that that's even possible, but I'm afraid they're going to find out that it is.

LN: Not only that it's possible but that it's a reality.

PS: Yeah.

LN: Yeah. Well, I think a lot of this, to me, comes down to the arrogance, I guess, of people who are rewarded and constantly reaffirmed from the time they're children that only left-brain intelligence is worthy of being cultivated and that these other parts of the mind, for example, intuition or emotional intelligence, they don't count because they're not as important as logic, and logic meaning the logic that starts with the assumption that everything is physical.

PS: The irony is that science itself has left that whole idea behind because they've now discovered that the emotional and the logic circuits are pretty much integrated in the brain, and you can't have one without the other. And in fact, purely logical decision making doesn't work, and neither does purely emotional decision making, and, of course, you have folks on both sides. You've got some folks who reject the left-brain approach completely, and you see their lives as kind of an ongoing train wreck.

LN: Right.

PS: -- (Light laughter) – And then you see other folks who completely reject the emotional part of it, and in fact, their lives are pretty – (unintelligible) – also a train wreck in a different direction.

LN: That's true, and I remember that it was Blaise Pascal who was one of the fathers of reason and one of the fathers of mathematics who said that there are two excesses: One is to exclude reason and the other is to admit only reason.

PS: Mmm-hmm.

LN: And I always thought that was kind of interesting that here is this mathematician who was kind of a genius and critical thinking, and he acknowledged that you couldn't do it all with logic.

PS: Yeah, and he was brilliant. He's absolutely correct. Although, I do actually – I'd like to take a moment to – (unintelligible) – the left-brain side for a moment. I think I said that twice, didn't I? Well, anyway, we don't want to put down [the left brain] too much because it is very important in a couple of respects: First of all, it helps provide a sanity check for the rest of the – all the claims that come in. So, in the field I'm in, remote viewing--I guess you can call it psychical research, ESP studies, whatever—not counting the standard philosophy I also have an interest in—in the ESP world, there are tons and tons of claims that people make, and they just expect you to accept them based on the fact that they made the claim.

LN: Right. Absolutely! Yeah.

PS: And if you don't have those left-brain scientific tests there, then any wild claim has just as much validity as any other claim, and we don't want that state, either. We want to be able to separate the wheat from the chaff and find out what really is ESP, what really does work and separate out the tall tales and the wishful thinking and all that so that we can know what's true. That's what we want to find out is what's true.

LN: Right. And I agree with you. I think that skepticism is very important because it means that you're open to doubt, but you're willing to look at the evidence.

PS: Yes.

LN: And there are also many people in the psychic field who make all kinds of claims based on the fact that they have a feeling when, in fact, the feeling could be a fantasy, or a projection, or –

PS: What they had for dinner the night before.

LN: Right. Or that they're getting triggered that somebody's face reminds them of their third-grade teacher, and so they come up with a projection of the future based on the fact that they're getting triggered emotionally, and they have no way of understanding their own process or validating it.

PS: Which actually leads us into the other topic you're interested in: The do-it-yourself prophecies, sort of speak.

LN: Right.

PS: In fact, that's the case. And you hear lots of very scary stories about where the future is going to go: What's going to happen after 2012; all this kind of stuff, and you have to look at the people making the claim and see what their basis is. Most of them say well, I have these psychic impulses, or intuitions, or whatever, but you have to wonder, often times, whether they're just on a – they're just on the same train a bunch of other people are on.

LN: Right.

PS: This is the one that hasn't wrecked yet, obviously. – (Light laughter) –

LN: Well, there's some kind of mystical – It's almost like Indiana Jones and the Holy Grail. This thing about the Mayan calendar and so many of us who are not Mayan just seem to think that this piece of archaeology has got the true wisdom about what's going to happen, and what I think is interesting is that last year, a group of Tibetan monks came out with prophecies about 2012 in which they said that in addition to many changes in the Earth that would be very dramatic, that divine beings were going to appear among us and would be performing miracles that would be televised before millions and millions of people, and I thought that was interesting that they picked the year 2012 because presumably, the Tibetans and the ancient Mayans weren't – we don't know if they had a connection of some kind that is –

PS: I would be more inclined – you have to realize that I don't know how you are on it, but I'm a very skeptical of the whole 2012 phenomenon.

LN: Mmm-hmm.

PS: I know sort of where it came from and its roots are not, in my opinion, credible.

LN: Right.

PS: People would take the Mayan calendar, and they interpret it however they want, but the Mayan calendar itself doesn't specify exactly what's going to happen. It talks about us moving into a new age. It does not end at 2012 as some people – In fact, you hear a lot of people claim that. The Mayan calendar continues on after 2012, and so there's always – In fact, I'm really excited for 2012 to come because I think there's going to be a lot of people with egg on their face! (Light laughter) –

LN: Yes. – (Light laughter) –

PS: Yeah. But what happens is a lot of people out there kind of hang their futures based on the sayings that other people utter about the future. Some of my fellow colleagues are particularly wild in some of their claims about what's going to happen and it mostly

centers on catastrophes, and Earth changes, and all this kind of stuff, and one claims that you can't even remote view past 2012, I think was what his date was or was it 2026, something like that. Well...

LN: Now, you're talking about self-fulfilling prophecy there, in a way.

PS: Yeah, probably true, yeah.

■ (Light laughter from both) –

PS: Well, one of the questions somebody raised was well, what makes you think that person can remote view now? -- (Laughter) –

LN: Well, there's that, yeah. There's that, too.

PS: I'm not naming names here, obviously, but it was pretty funny I thought.

LN: Yeah.

PS: But yeah, that's true. You say you can't do something, well, then you're sort of confirming that to yourself, and even if you really could, you've convinced yourself you can't, and therefore you won't.

LN: Right, exactly.

PS: Yeah. But in my interview about do-it-yourself prophecies, why turn your future over to somebody else? Take control of your own future.

LN: That is a great question, and it's something that, as one of the premises of my book and my work, which is rather than base your decisions on my intuition, why don't you let me help you uncover your own intuition?—and you will be able to tap into your inner knowing forever, and it's a skill that you'll have for the rest of your life.

PS: Mmm-hmm.

LN: Why in the world would you want to depend on mine?

PS: In a way, something we were talking about before we went on the air here, of micro loans and stuff in the Third World to help people help themselves. The old Chinese saying: You should teach somebody to fish, not just give them the fish, right?

LN: Right.

PS: Well, in a way, people who tune in and base their future decisions on what some other supposedly psychic person says about the future, in a sense, they're getting a fish, rather than learning how to fish themselves.

LN: Right.

PS: And so, my idea is that if you're going to try and find out what's in the future for you, why don't you find out yourself instead of relying on somebody else? It was interesting. A while back, again, one of my colleagues—this is almost a decade ago, now—was predicting the end of the world. It was going to end – He even gave a date when it was going to end, and I got a number of phone calls. People saying, “Well, should I trust him? I mean, I'm almost ready to quit my job.” In fact, one person said “I did quit my job. I'm going to move to where he said is a safe place.”

LN: Wow!

PS: And they're making these huge life changes based on these predictions that somebody else made, instead of trying to take their own responsibility and empower themselves and then determine whether that's really what they have to do or not.

LN: So, what's the first thing that – That's a great point. And what is the first thing that people need to know about tuning in to their own ESP? For example, in terms of do-it-yourself prophecy, what's the first step or idea that people need to embrace?

PS: Well, the very first thing is they need to understand what can be predicted and what can't.

LN: Okay.

PS: Now, some things can be predicted to some degree. Now, you have to understand how the future is set up. At least my view of it and many other people's – it's not original with me -- is that the future actually doesn't exist yet. Some people find that kind of a no-brainer. Of COURSE it doesn't exist. Other people think that the entire time stream exists, and all that happens is that we move along it. Well, if that's the case, then you can't do anything about the future anyway. – (Laughter) -- So why bother, right?

LN: Right. Well, I think it was Albert Einstein. He said, “I never worry about the future. It comes soon enough.”

PS: Yeah. – (Light laughter) -- He also said that time – something like this: Time exists just to keep everything from happening at once.

■ (Light laughter from both) –

LN: Yeah, well –

PS: Well, anyway, if time is just a fixed object that we're traveling along, it doesn't matter whether you know about the future or not; it's going to happen. But my view of

the future—and I think it’s supported by the evidence—is that the future doesn’t exist. What the future – How we can represent the future is a bunch of possible alternative outcomes. So, kind of a braided time stream, and any one of those could be the one that gets actuated, just depending on which particular decision nodes get tripped in between. So, an example I often use is I could walk out the front door or the back door of my house, if I’m on my way somewhere, and let’s say I walk out the front door and I get in the car, and I go down, and my life continues on. But if I were to go out the back door and just in a huge coincidence, a huge meteor comes own and kills me at that point. And then, anything that I might have done in the future will never happen then, because I’d be dead, and all that matters is that I made one choice or the other.

LN: That’s very interesting.

PS: So, hopefully, I’ll go out the front door, right?

LN: Right, right.

PS: -- (Light laughter) – Okay.

LN: Unless some people say that it was your destiny to be killed by the meteor. Like, in Hungary, they have a saying: “If a bullet has your name on it, no knife can ever kill you.”

PS: Yeah. Well, that’s a belief in a fixed future.

LN: Mmm-hmm, yeah.

PS: That’s a belief in a deterministic future, and if that’s the case, you can’t beat it. In fact, I’m reading this book by the philosopher Daniel Dennett now, and one of the chapters, he starts out with an old tale from the Middle East. It has to do with the servant of a rich man in Baghdad, and the servant goes to the market, and he comes rushing back to his master and says, “Master, may I have your horse? I need to ride away to Samarra.” And he says, “Why?” He said, “While I was in the marketplace, and I ran into Death, and Death said she had an appointment with me tonight, and so I need to get away so she can’t find me.” The man says, “Okay, take the horse.” And then the master goes down to the marketplace and finds Death and says, “Why did you frighten my servant like that?” And Death said, “I didn’t frighten him. I was just startled. I hadn’t expected to see him here. I have an appointment with him in Samarra tonight.”

LN: Oh!

■ (Laughter from both) –

PS: It’s sort of humorous, but it does capture the fatalistic notion of Islam, of course, and also many people’s view of what time is that it’s fixed, that we can actually – In fact, the idea if you can predict the future 100%, that means that the future is not changeable.

LN: Right.

PS: Interesting kind of irony, there. So, what I want to propose here, the evidence is that you can't predict the future 100%. In fact, you can't even really come close, except in a few very exceptional cases. What you can do is determine which things are worth trying to predict. One thing that you can predict—and this is where the catastrophe thing comes in, and a little bit better than chance is—future catastrophes that are deterministic in nature. What that means is there are certain things that just the way the facts are today, make these events inevitable. For example, the earthquake and tsunami in Asia.

LN: Right, right.

PS: That was a result of a number of deterministic events; things that happen way in the past and continue to unfold in a certain way that made that inevitable. That was going to happen no matter what you did.

LN: Well, let's take a look at something that is kind of unfolding; Al Gore's inconvenient predictions for the East Coast of the United States.

PS: Mmm-hmm.

LN: And in 30, 50, or 100 years, most of the East Coast is going to be flooded.

PS: According to Al Gore.

LN: According to Al Gore and according to what he claims are the geological implications of global warming.

PS: Yeah. Based on his analysis, it's a very plausible scenario. But here's the problem: You can't actually predict that reliably using ESP, and here's the reason. Precognition, of course, is what we're talking about.

LN: Yeah.

PS: It's because – Okay. I talked about deterministic events like that –

LN: The tsunami, yeah.

PS: My prediction is going to happen. It's bound to happen. Nothing can change its course because of the way the world is. But there are other events that involve human intentions – human intentionality, and those things — If humans do have free will—which I believe they do, and I think ESP is evidence they do—if humans have free will, their intentions then, can change things about the future where humans are involved. And since -- If global warming is a human-caused thing, then human intentions, being what

they are, we could get together and change things before the Al Gore scenario comes to pass. In fact, that's what he's trying to do. He's trying to change the future now.

LN: Right, by getting people aware and –

PS: Yes. Now, his prediction methodology is more scientific; more left brain.

LN: Mmm-hmm.

PS: But if a remote viewing team, which some have tried to do, if a remote viewing team tries to capture whether global warming turns out real or not, they could very easily find out that nothing has changed in the future as far as that aspect of the world, and it may well be the case because humans, in the meantime, get wise and change things.

LN: Right, but could humans, in the meantime, get wise enough and change things quickly enough to avert the deterministic or probable factors that have already begun to kind of gain their momentum.

PS: Yeah, the probabilistic [ones].

LN: Yeah.

PS: And the answer to that is yes, they could. The real question, I think, is will they?

LN: Mmm-hmm.

PS: And that, you can't answer.

LN: Right.

PS: Because that is a human intentionality and it is not predictable in the same way that a deterministic earthquake is.

LN: Right. I would tell people that anything that depends on another person is always a mystery, and it could be yes or no. I mean, you can't control another person's decision.

PS: Right. Now, there are two ways you can change the future. I don't know how we're doing on time.

LN: We've got a few minutes, and this is fascinating!

PS: Okay. There are two ways you can change the future: One is to change the event, but there are some events you can't change such as the earthquake. So literally, you can change the future if you change your response to it.

LN: Mmm-hmm.

PS: So, that's the advantage. Of course, if you were able to predict a deterministic catastrophe, what would be helpful there is you couldn't change, oh, the course of the tornado that eventually comes through your neighborhood, right? But you can change where you are when it does that, for example.

■ (Laughter from both) –

PS: So there's some value in being able to predict that.

LN: Right.

PS: But if there is some other event that is human-caused – For example, human intentionality is pretty much, in most cases involved in car accidents.

LN: Right.

PS: So, there's some car accidents that are deterministic events, but in most cases, there's some part of it that human intentionality is also involved, and those kind of things you can actually do something about. A really good example, my Web Master actually told me this story. Her brother had a dream. He drove the same way to work everyday, and he has this dream at night that when he got to a certain intersection, he entered the intersection and a car came down and slammed into his.

LN: Yeah, in the dream.

PS: And so, the next day, he's driving to work, and he didn't think much about it. He didn't give much credence to it. But he came to that intersection, and he remembered the dream.

LN: Yeah.

PS: And that caused him to wait just a few more moments after the light changed before he entered the intersection, longer than he would have normally.

LN: Yeah.

PS: And at that moment, a car came through at somewhere 60, 70, 80 miles an hour; something like that. If he had been out there, he would have gotten creamed.

LN: Wow!

PS: And he would have been, had he not had that dream.

LN: So the dream was giving him information about the future that he could pay attention to, when the future became the present.

PS: Yes.

LN: That's fantastic!

PS: Yeah. So, it was quite interesting. She told me that – Actually, during the Coast-To-Coast show I was on, so, and I never got to use it.

ON: Oh!

PS: -- (Light laughter) – So, you get to hear that the first time.

LN: Well, that's terrific! We're about to get interrupted by the god of thunder here, and since I live on a small – we broadcast from a small barrier island, the likelihood of a power outage, I would say, is greater than 50%.

PS: Okay.

LN: So, I'm going to suggest that we close the interview for now, and I'd would love to have you back again in a week or two so we can continue this conversation.

PS: Okay. Can I pass up some URL's first?

LN: Oh, absolutely!

PS: Okay. First off, where you'll end up going is – some tools to predict things...and I'll mention a couple that I offer -- One is a dowsing training course on DVD and then I'll explain in our next interview how you can use it for this, and you can find out about that at the URL [LearnDowsing.com](http://LearnDowsing.com).

LN: [LearnDowsing.com](http://LearnDowsing.com), and we'll put that up on our site, as well.

PS: Yeah, okay. The other site is my own site—and I've just announced the Associative Remote Viewing course—which is also another way of using remote viewing yourself, enabling and empowering yourself to predict the future, and you can find out about that at [rviewer.com](http://rviewer.com), which is the word viewer with an r in front of it; [rviewer.com](http://rviewer.com).

LN: Okay. We'll put that site up as well, and Paul, I want to thank you again for being a fascinating and thought-provoking guest. You're going to have me revisit my concept of the future, and I hope we'll be able to continue this fascinating conversation in another week or so.

PS: Well, I'd love to do that.

LN: Okay. I think we've just beat the god of thunder.

PS: Thank you.

End of Interview with Guest Major Paul Smith