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# The Story of Jose Silva

## How a Series of Coincidences Lead to Silva's Mind Training System

Welcome to Lesson 6

In our last four Lessons we have showed you how to:

- ➔ reach a deep meditative level of mind with ease. (Lesson 2)
- ➔ gain inspiration at alpha. (Lesson 3)
- ➔ use creative visualization to manifest your goals. (Lesson 4)
- ➔ accelerate your body's rate of healing. (Lesson 5)

In this Lesson, we'll take a look at how Jose Silva first became interested in the **workings of the human mind** and how this lead to his world-renowned mind-training programs.

The Silva story is fascinating and insightful. It will give you a clearer idea of how his methods work and how you can use them in your life. The story also mentions some amazing coincidences that Silva experienced - coincidences that seemed to guide him toward what would ultimately become a body of work that would **help millions of people discover their own latent abilities**.

### The Beginning

Jose Silva was born on August 11, 1914, in Laredo, Texas. When he was four, his father died. His mother later remarried, and he, his older sister, and younger brother moved in with their grandmother. Two years later he became the family bread-winner, selling newspapers, shining shoes, and doing odd jobs. In the evenings he watched his sister and brother do their homework, and they helped him learn to read and write.

[He has never gone to school, except to teach.](#)

Jose's rise from poverty began one day when he was waiting his turn in a barbershop. He reached for something to read. What he picked up was a lesson from a correspondence course on how to repair radios. Jose asked to borrow it, but the barber would only rent it, and only on the condition that Jose complete the correspondence

course examinations in the barber's name. Each week Jose paid a dollar, read the lesson, and completed the examination.

Soon a diploma hung in the barbershop, while across town Jose, at the age of fifteen, began to repair radios.

As the years passed, his repair business became one of the largest in the area, providing funds for the education of his brother and sister, the wherewithal for him to marry, plus eventually some half-million dollars to finance the twenty years of research that led to his mind-training systems.

The man who sparked Silva's research was a psychiatrist whose job was to ask questions of men being inducted into the Signal Corps during World War II.

"Do you wet your bed?" the Army psychiatrist asked. Jose was dumbfounded. "Do you like women?" Jose, the father of three, and destined one day to be the father of ten, was shocked.

Surely, he thought, the man knew more about the human mind than the barber knew about radios. Why such odd questions?

It was this perplexing moment that started Jose on an odyssey of scientific research that led to his becoming **one of the most creative scholars of his age**. Through their writings, Freud, Jung, and Adler became his early teachers.

The "odd" questions took on deeper meanings, and soon Jose was ready to ask a question of his own: Is it possible, using hypnosis, to **improve a person's learning ability** - in fact, to raise his I.Q.? In those days I.Q. was believed to be something we were born with, but Jose was not so sure.

The question had to wait while he studied advanced electronics to become an instructor in the Signal Corps. When he was discharged, with savings gone and \$200 in his pocket, he began slowly to rebuild his radio repair business. At the same time he took on a part-time teaching job at Laredo Junior College where he supervised three other teachers and was charged with creating the school's electronics laboratories.

Five years later, with television on the scene, his repair business began to flourish and Jose called a halt to his teaching career. His business once again became the largest in town. His workdays ended about 9pm each night. He would have dinner, help put the children to bed, and when the house was quiet, study for about three hours. His studies led him further into hypnosis.

What he learned about hypnosis, plus what he knew about electronics, and some F's on his children's report cards brought him back to the question he had raised earlier - **can learning ability, the I.Q., be improved through some kind of mental training?**

## Can Learning Ability Be Raised Through Mind Training?

Jose already knew that the mind generates electricity - he had read about experiments early in the century that revealed the Alpha brain wave rhythm. And he knew from his

work in electronics that the ideal circuit is the one with the least resistance, or impedance, because it makes the greatest use of its electrical energy.

Then he asked himself:

- ↳ Can we lower our brain impedance?
- ↳ If so, would the brain work more effectively by doing so?

Jose began using hypnosis to quiet the minds of his children and he discovered what to many appeared to be a paradox. He found that the brain was more energetic when it was less active. At lower frequencies the brain received and stored more information. The crucial problem was to **keep the mind alert at these frequencies**, which are associated more with daydreaming and sleep than with practical activity.

Hypnosis permitted the receptivity Jose was looking for, **but not the kind of independent thought that leads to reasoning things out** so they can be understood. Having a head full of remembered facts is not enough; insight and understanding is necessary, too.

### Jose Finds the Answers with Mental Training

Jose soon abandoned hypnosis and began experimenting with mental training exercises to quiet the brain yet keep it more independently alert than in hypnosis. This, he reasoned, would lead to improved memory combined with understanding and hence to higher I.Q. scores.

The exercises from which Silva's techniques evolved called for relaxed concentration and vivid mental visualization and ways of reaching lower levels. Once reached, these levels proved more effective than the fully awake level, the Beta level, in learning.

### The Proof

His children's grades improved sharply over a three-year period while he continued to improve his techniques.

Jose had scored a new discovery - a very significant one, which other research, principally biofeedback, has since confirmed. He was the first person to prove that **we can learn to function with awareness at the Alpha and Theta frequencies of the brain.**

Another discovery, an equally astonishing one, was soon to come.

### Silva's Child Reads His Mind

One evening Jose's daughter had gone to her "center" (to use today's Silva UltraMind terminology), and Jose was questioning her about her studies. As she answered each question, he framed the next in his mind. This was the usual procedure, and so far the session was no different from hundreds that had gone before. Suddenly, the routine was

momentously changed.

Jose would frame the question in his mind first, before verbally asking the question. All of a sudden, **his daughter answered the very question he was planning on asking - before** he had a chance to verbally express the question.

She repeated this again and again. Jose would only frame the question in his mind and she would answer it. She was reading his mind.

This was in 1953, when ESP was becoming a respectable subject for scientific inquiry, largely through the published work of Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University. Jose wrote to Dr. Rhine to report that he had trained his daughter to practice ESP and received a disappointing answer. Dr. Rhine hinted that the girl might have been psychic to begin with. Without tests of the girl before the training, there was no way to tell.

Meanwhile, Jose's neighbors noticed that his children's schoolwork had remarkably improved. At the beginning of his experiments these highly religious people had been wary of his probing into the unknown. However, **the success of a man working with his own children** could not be ignored. Would Jose train their children too?

**"He had developed the first method in history that can train anyone to use ESP."**

After the letter from Dr. Rhine, this was just what Jose needed. If what he had accomplished with one child could be accomplished with others, he would have chalked up the kind of repeatable experiments that are the basis to the scientific method.

Over the next 10 years he trained 39 Laredo children, with even better results because he improved his techniques a little with each child.

He had developed the first method in history that can train anyone to use ESP, and he had 39 repeatable experiments to prove it. Now to perfect the method.

## Silva's Course Takes Shape

Within another three years, **Jose developed the course of mind training**, which is now standard and as effective with adults as with children. Back then it took 40 to 48 hours. It has since been reduced to 18 to 20 hours through further refinement of the techniques.

So far it has been validated by some 1,000,000 *experiments* - the graduates of his course. This is a measure of repeatability that no open-minded scientist can ignore.

These long years of research were financed by Jose's growing electronics business. No university, foundation or government grants were available for such an unusual and unfamiliar field of research. With all this success, Jose did not become a celebrity, nor a guru or spiritual leader with followers or disciples. He was a plain man of simple ways, who spoke with the soft, almost lost accent of a Mexican-American. He was a powerfully built, stocky man with a kindly face that creases easily into a smile.

Anyone who asked Jose what success has meant to him was answered with a flood of

success stories.

Here are a few examples:

## Health

A woman wrote to the *Boston Herald American* begging for some way to help her husband, who was tormented by migraine headaches. The newspaper printed her letter, then another letter the next day from someone else also pleading for a way to control such headaches.

A physician read these letters and wrote that she has **had migraine headaches all her life**. She had taken Jose Silva's course and had not had one since. "And would you believe it, the next introductory lecture was mobbed. Absolutely mobbed," said Jose.

Another physician and prominent psychiatrist, advises all his patients to **study Silva techniques because it gives them insights** that in some cases would require two years of therapy to produce.

## Creativity and Business

An entire marketing company was organized as a co-op by graduates who used what they learned in the Silva Mind Method to **invent new products and devise ways of marketing them**. In its third year, the company had eighteen products on the market.

An advertising man used to need about two months to **create a campaign for new clients** - about average in his field. Then after Silva training, the basic ideas come in twenty minutes and the rest of the work was done in two weeks.

## Sports Performance

Fourteen Chicago White Sox players took Silva's class. All their individual **averages improved**, most of them dramatically.

## Weight Control and Bad Habits

A husband of an overweight woman suggested she try the class because all her diets had failed. She agreed, provided he went too. **She lost twenty pounds in six weeks; he stopped smoking.**

## Better Grades

A professor at a college of pharmacy **teaches Silva techniques to his students**. "Their grades are going up in all their courses, with less studying, and they're more relaxed. ... Everybody already knows how to use his or her imagination. I just get my students to practice it more."

## In the Press

The press also wrote about Silva's new program. The following extract from an April 16, 1972 **New York Times** article "*Can Man Control His Mind*" says it all.

"A recent study by Trinity University, San Antonio, Tex. would appear to indicate that **graduates of Mind Control do attain a high degree of Alpha production**. C. W. Post College, Greenvale, L. I., is planning to offer the course at its business school this fall and Canisius College will offer it in its Department of Religious Studies.

"A visit to a Mind Control class in New York discloses more stockbrokers than bearded way out and the dress style is closer to Brooks Brothers than to the East Village. **A major New York company has sent all its top executives through the course** and its president, a hard-headed businessman, is seriously thinking of instituting an in-house training program for all employees. He refused to speak for the record, saying, "We think there is something there, but I don't want to alarm our stockbrokers at the moment."

Other businessmen are not so reluctant. Lee Epstein, a vice- president and art group supervisor at Doyle Dane Bernbach volunteered: **"It opened the gates for me. It has re-energized me, made me more creative and yet more relaxed. I practice it every day and get better and better at my job and my life."**

Although Jose smiled easily, when he heard people tell him "Jose, you've changed my life!" the smile fades a little and he would say, "No, I didn't do it. You did, with your own mind."

Jose passed away peacefully in February of 1999. The Silva UltraMind System was his final creation and was completed shortly before he departed

## **A Series of Remarkable Coincidences**

Here we have included a **personal story from Jose Silva** about a fascinating experience he went through while developing his Silva mind training methods. We have re-printed the story from Jose's first-person perspective.

"I want to mention an experience that I went through, which I feel was responsible for the continuation of our research. In fact, I will say that if this experience had not taken place, our mind training system would not exist today.

This happened while **I was still studying psychology**. I had studied and practiced hypnosis and was investigating parapsychology, but had not yet trained the first subject to function as a clairvoyant. During this time **I went through a period of disillusionment**. I worked long hours and I was the one to close our electronics business establishment at 9pm each night

Usually after closing the business at 9pm I would go home, have dinner and help Paula, my wife, put the children to bed. By that time it would be about 11pm at night and I would take out the psychology books and study for two, three and sometimes four hours.

**One night I suddenly realized that what I was reading did not make sense any more**. I said, "What am I doing to myself, studying psychology? I am not a psychologist, nor do I plan to become one. I had a heavy day's work yesterday and I am going to have another heavy day of work tomorrow, and I am wasting good hours of sleep, studying psychology!"

I closed the book and threw it on the floor. It slid under a couch and I said to myself, "That is the last time I will have anything to do with psychology!"

**I went to sleep immediately but two hours later a bright light inside my head woke me up**. It was a light like the mid-day sun when you look up into space on a cloudless sunny day. Hanging in space were two sets of numbers, one set over the other.

The first set was **3-4-3**, the second set under the first one was **3-7-3**.

Right after that an impression of Christ and the "One Solitary Life" poem given to me at the army reception center came to me. "Why Christ?" I wondered, "Why me? What does this have to do with the numbers?"

I opened my eyes and it was dark. I glanced at the clock on the bed stand and it was 4:30 in the morning.

Fascinated, I tried some experiments with myself and the light. **I closed my eyes trying to keep the bright light from disappearing since it was fading gradually**. I tried breathing slowly, but that did not help. I tried changing positions, but that did not help either. I tried to slow down my heart, but whatever I did was not enough. The bright light continued to fade, until it went out completely.

**I stayed awake from there on, trying to analyze what had happened**. I thought of Paula, and how she used to jokingly tell me, "They say that people who read too much go crazy." I was not going to tell her about the light in my head because I knew her answer would be, "I told you so!" But one thing I kept thinking of was that for whatever reason this happened, it must be all right because of the

impression of Christ (my inherited religious belief system) that came to me with the experience.

The first explanation I thought of was that maybe I was supposed to call someone who has that phone number. I went through the telephone book from cover to cover but did not find any listing for the numbers I had seen. My next idea was that maybe I should go to someone's home who has these numbers as their address and if I find it, they might have a message for me. But when I studied a city map, I found that the home addresses in Laredo did not use those numbers.

It was about four in the afternoon when I came up with another idea: I'd look at automobile and truck license plate numbers. I did this for the rest of the day, ready to ask for my message from the driver of any vehicle that had those numbers, but I did not find a car or truck license to match my mysterious numbers.

It was fifteen minutes before nine when I started to close my business. Paula came in from our house next door and said to me, "If you go across the river into Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, for a service call, please get me a bottle of alcohol." We use Mexican alcohol for medicinal purposes because it is pure and costs less than alcohol in Laredo. We have to let them put a cube of camphor in it when they sell it to us, so we do not have to pay a liquor tax on it. When the tax people at the border smell the camphor in the alcohol they don't charge us any liquor tax. I told Paula, "Honey, I don't have service calls from across the border, but I will go and get you a bottle anyway."

At that very moment, an old friend of mine came in to invite me to go for some coffee. I said, "Help me to close my place and we'll leave immediately" I then asked him how much time he had and he answered, "All the time in the world. Why?" I told him I wanted to go across into Mexico to get Paula a bottle of alcohol. He said, "Fine. I'll go with you."

While on the way **I figured I could tell my friend about my experience** since he had been studying psychology with me for one year. I felt sure he was not going to think I was crazy. I had not told anyone all day and I needed to tell someone, so I told him.

While crossing the bridge into Mexico my friend suggested, "Now that we are coming into Mexico and **a national lottery operates in Mexico, maybe there is such a number.**" I had not thought of that. "What have we got to lose?" I said. The lottery agency was just one block and a half further up the same street where we were going to get the alcohol.

We stopped right in front of the lottery agency. It was closed. It closed at nine o'clock and we had just missed it. "Finding it closed means for me to forget it. It is not supposed to be here," I told my friend. We then went to the liquor store and while I was getting Paula's alcohol and getting the clerk to put the camphor in the bottle my friend went to a back room where he found some lottery tickets that were hanging on a string.

"What numbers are you looking for?" my friend called from the adjoining room. I said, "3-4-3 and 3-7-3." He called back "I found 3-4-3. " I said. "You are kidding

me, are you not?" My friend then answered, "**Come and see.**"

Sure enough, there were five segments of an active series numbered 3-4-3. A whole or complete, series contained 20 segments or units. Someone had already purchased the other 15 segments. My friend asked, "What do you intend to do now? Buy these, of course!" So I bought them. I had not thought of buying lottery tickets, but now I was buying 5 segments and would find out in 2 days if the number 3-4-3 would win anything.

## The Winning Lottery Ticket

At the time I did not know that you could call the lottery agency by phone and find out if the ticket had won anything. I thought I had to go in person, which is what I did. I found out that the ticket 3-7-3 had been sold in Mexico City. It could not have been found anywhere else because the 3-7-3 was assigned to be sold in Mexico City only. If I had purchased the 3-7-3, I would clear, after paying the Mexican income tax, about one thousand dollars.

On the other hand, the 3-4-3 was assigned to be sold by the liquor store in Nuevo Laredo and nobody else in the whole Republic of Mexico could have had it. The 3-4-3 had a prize too and after paying the Mexican income tax and exchanging the Mexican Pesos into United States dollars, I cleared a little above ten thousand dollars with just my 5 segments out of the 20 on the ticket.

**I came home dazed, with \$10,000 dollars in my pockets**, and in 1949 that was a lot of cash!

[Editors Note: \$10,000 in 1949 is roughly equal to \$50,000 in today's monetary value.]

In trying to figure out who had put that number in my head and why, **I went back over my experience step by step and found many coincidences**. For example, Paula wanted a bottle of alcohol from Mexico and came over and asked me on that particular day. She had said, "Whenever you go to make a service call across the border, get me a bottle of alcohol." I could have said, "I will get you a bottle the next time I make a service call." Or I could have said, "Send someone else, I don't have time for those petty things." Instead I said, "I will go tonight and get you a bottle, honey." Paula did not know about my experience, much less did I know that she was sending me to the one place in the entire Republic of Mexico where the ticket was sold.

And **what timing!** If my friend had come only ten minutes later, I would have already been gone, by myself. If the clerk had not had to put camphor into the bottle, we would have been out of the store before my friend had a chance to look around and find the adjacent room with the lottery tickets. If my friend had not gone with me, I would not have gotten the idea of buying a lottery ticket, nor would I have walked into the other room and seen the tickets.

After backtracking and after going over every detail of the experience I found

myself faced with many coincidences. I felt that those coincidences were trying to tell me something or that **somebody was trying to tell me something through those coincidences**. There were so many coincidences that I was sure there were a pattern and a purpose. I then felt that I must seek and find out what it was that I was supposed to do, or not to do.

I started going back prior to having the experience, hour by hour, step by step, seeking a clue. The only thing I saw that could have had a connection and could have brought on the series of coincidences was the decision I made not to continue studying psychology. Two hours after I had decided to discontinue to study psychology the experience took place and in the experience came the awareness of the "One Solitary Life" or Christ.

I then made the connection and remembered that the first impression I had about psychology came accompanied by the impression of the "One Solitary Life" of Christ. That happened when I finished talking with the psychiatrist at the reception center as I was inducted into the army. The next person in line gave me the picture of Christ that I still carry in my wallet to this day. On the back of the picture of Christ is written the "One Solitary Life" by an unknown author. I had not read the "One Solitary Life" of Christ before being inducted into the army and I do not know why when I finished reading it there were tears in my eyes. To this day, when I think about it, I get a lump in my throat.

With that realization I got on my knees and looked under the couch for the book on psychology, pulled it out, dusted it off and continued with the study-of-psychology routine. **I choose to believe that the experience with the psychiatrist at the reception center, along with this awareness of Christ, was the beginning of my research into the human mind.**

My many coincidences with the lottery ticket experience were a means of getting back on track and reinforcing the original reception center-psychiatrist-Christ awareness experience. From then on I started experimenting, trying to put together a method that would help to enhance what I used to call "the guessing faculty." What I called "the guessing faculty" turned out to be psi, or the intuitive factor.

And so Jose Silva began the work that was to lead to the Silva UltraMind System.

Silva would later develop a technique he called the Mental-Video technique, which anyone could use to gain similar types of coincidences and "a-ha" moments that Jose Silva experienced during the events mentioned above.

Sources for this Lesson:

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3. Jose Silva and Phillip Miele, "The Silva Mind Control Method," (London: Grafton Books, 1978).