

Suspended Consciousness as a Method for Interstellar Human Travel to Proxima Centauri B

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ABSTRACT

Proxima Centauri b, an exoplanet orbiting our nearest stellar neighbor 4.24 light-years away, remains one of the most promising candidates for life beyond Earth. However, current technologies—whether chemical propulsion, ion propulsion, or solar sail-based CubeSat concepts such as NASA’s “Tree of Life” initiative—face extreme temporal constraints. Human travel to Proxima Centauri b at existing spacecraft speeds would take thousands of years. Even breakthrough propulsion technologies require decades to centuries to complete such a journey. This research introduces the theoretical framework of Suspended Consciousness, a concept proposing intentional long-duration suppression of active consciousness—akin to reversible coma induction—to minimize entropy, slow biological aging, and preserve the traveler’s physiological state during multi-century voyages. Unlike cryogenic stasis or suspended animation at the cellular level, Suspended Consciousness focuses on halting the subjective time of the individual rather than physically freezing the body. This paper examines the conceptual basis, biological feasibility, neurological assumptions, engineering requirements, mission architecture, ethical concerns, and projected implications for interstellar human expansion. Diagrams are included to illustrate operational models, consciousness-suspension cycles, and mission-stage integration.

KEYWORDS

Suspended Consciousness, Entropy, Reversible, Aging.

Introduction

Proxima Centauri, a red dwarf star 4.24 light-years away, hosts an exoplanet—**Proxima Centauri b**—with mass slightly greater than Earth and located in the star’s habitable zone. The exoplanet’s estimated conditions suggest possible:

- liquid water,
- atmospheric retention,
- moderate surface temperatures,
- and potential microbial life.

Despite these scientific incentives, interstellar human travel remains technologically distant. The fastest spacecraft humanity has built—the Parker Solar Probe—travels at ~0.064% the speed of light, requiring over **6,500 years** to reach Proxima Centauri b.

NASA’s **Tree of Life Cubesat Project**, along with laser-sail ambitions from Breakthrough Starshot, aims to send micro-probes at 10–20% the speed of light. However, these missions are uncrewed and still require decades to arrive.

Thus arises a central challenge:

How can humans themselves survive multi-century travel?

This paper proposes **Suspended Consciousness** as a unique solution:

- not freezing the body,
- not stopping biological processes entirely,
- but suspending self-awareness, cognition, perception, and subjective time.

Essentially, preserving the traveler in a self-induced reversible coma with artificial environmental stabilization, preventing entropy acceleration and aging.

Scientific Background: The Challenge of Human Longevity in Space

The Interstellar Distance Barrier

Table- Speed Comparison Table

| Vehicle/System | Speed (km/s) | Speed (% of light) | Time to Proxima b |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Parker Solar Probe | 200 km/s | 0.064% | ~6,500 years |
| Voyager 1 | 17 km/s | 0.006% | ~70,000 years |
| Breakthrough Starshot (concept) | 60,000 km/s | 20% | ~20 years |
| Current Human Spacecraft | < 8 km/s | < 0.003% | > 150,000 years |

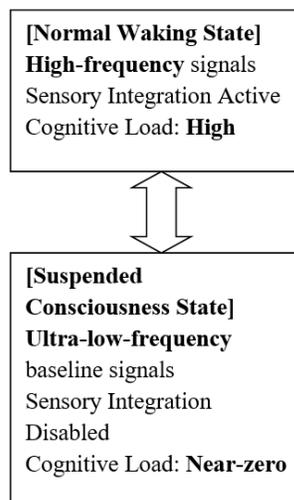
Human time scales cannot compete with cosmic distances.

Biological Aging and Entropy

Aging is associated with:

- mitochondrial degradation,
- telomere shortening,
- synaptic pruning,
- epigenetic drift,
- cellular oxidation,
- systemic entropy accumulation.

Model- Brain Activity Diagram



Source: Dr. Sadique Shaikh

If consciousness strongly influences biological entropy (e.g., via stress, cognitive load, neural activity), reducing conscious activity to near-zero may slow systemic aging.

This is the hypothesis behind Suspended Consciousness.

The Concept of Suspended Consciousness

Definition

“Suspended Consciousness is a controlled, reversible state of deep unconsciousness designed to halt subjective experience and dramatically slow perceived time during interstellar travel-Dr. Sadique Shaikh”

Unlike cryogenic suspension, which aims to freeze physical processes, Suspended Consciousness focuses on:

- shutting down sensory input,
- stopping cognitive processing,
- minimizing brain metabolic activity,
- maintaining body integrity through artificial homeostasis,
- preventing psychological time perception.

Time for the traveler becomes nonexistent.

Why Consciousness Matters More Than Physical Time

Humans do not experience chronological time directly. Instead:

- We perceive time through consciousness.
- Without consciousness, time is not experienced.
- A person who awakens experiences no delay—seconds, years, or centuries feel identical.

Suspended Consciousness therefore solves:

- the **subjective time** problem
- the **psychological endurance** problem
- the **generational crew** problem

A traveler could awaken on Proxima Centauri b as if a moment had passed.

Proposed Mechanism

Artificially Induced Reversible Coma

Not a medical coma, but a new engineered category:

- controlled neural silencing
- minimal metabolic function
- continuous biological monitoring
- reversible awakening using external triggers

Entropy Reduction Hypothesis

If consciousness contributes to energy expenditure:

- silencing neural activity
- reducing endocrine fluctuations
- avoiding mental stress
- limiting sensory processing

can induce a long-term low-entropy biological state.

Theoretical Biological Feasibility

Neurobiological Requirements

The brain must remain:

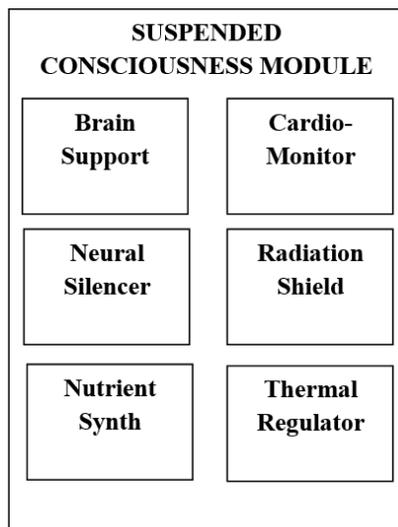
- structurally intact
- oxygenated
- electrically stable
- non-degenerative
- protected from sensory overload
- connected to an external life-support system

Body Preservation Requirements

To avoid aging during centuries-long travel:

- microgravity isolation chambers
- muscle electro-stimulation
- periodic passive circulation boosting
- radiation shielding
- gene-expression stabilization
- synthetic nutrient infusion

Model- Concept Diagram



Source: Dr. Sadique Shaikh

Mission Architecture for Proxima Centauri b

Mission Phases

Phase 1: Pre-Launch Preparation

- medical scanning
- neural-state mapping
- consciousness suspension initiation
- long-term metabolic calibration

Phase 2: Interstellar Transit

- automated spacecraft operation
- micro-adjustments
- environmental stability
- cosmic radiation mitigation

Phase 3: Arrival Procedures

- spacecraft enters Proxima b's orbit
- pre-programmed awakening protocol begins
- consciousness restoration
- physiological re-acclimation

Phase 4: Planet Surface Descent

- habitat deployment
- environmental scanning
- initial colonization

Consciousness Suspension Systems

System Layers

1. Primary Neural Silencing Interface
2. Bio-Stasis Environmental Chamber
3. AI Monitoring System
4. Emergency Revival Mechanism
5. External Time-Trigger Circuit

Trigger Types

- chronometric (year-based)
- location-based (arrival detection)
- manual override from Earth

Models, Diagrams & Conceptual Figures

Source: Dr. Sadique Shaikh

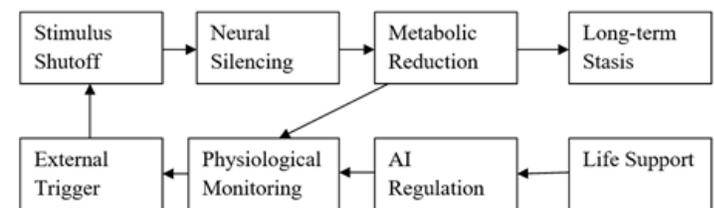


Figure 1: Conceptual Flow of Suspended Consciousness.

Ethical, Philosophical, and Psychological Implications

Ethical Challenges

- Who approves long-duration human suspension?
- Is a suspended person fully “alive”?
- What legal rights do they have?

Source: Dr. Sadique Shaikh

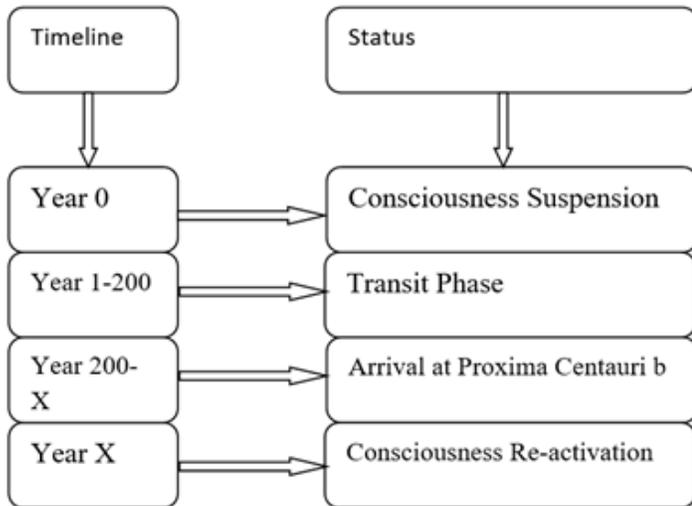


Figure 2: Interstellar Mission Timeline

Source: Dr. Sadique Shaikh

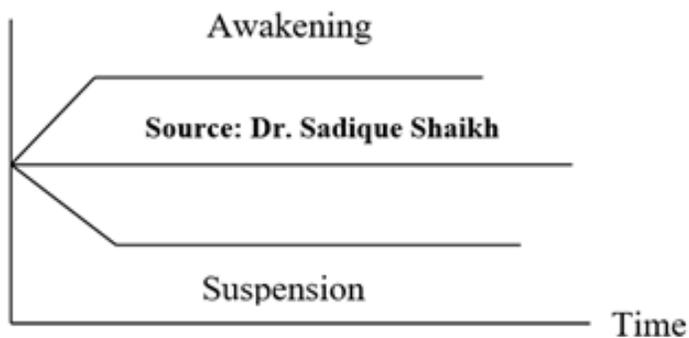


Figure 3: Consciousness Activation Curve.

Identity and Continuity

If consciousness halts completely:

- Does identity remain intact?
- Is memory unaffected?
- Is the traveler still “the same person”?

These questions intersect with:

- philosophy of mind,
- continuity of consciousness,
- neural identity theory.

Psychological Considerations

Awakening in another star system involves:

- cultural isolation
- existential shock
- environmental alienation
- survival-related cognitive stress

Future missions require psychological conditioning prior to

suspension.

Engineering Requirements for Spacecraft Hull Structure and Radiation Shielding

- multi-layered composite hull
- magnetic deflection shielding
- hydrogen-rich polymer layers
- micro-meteor protection

Propulsion

Possible propulsion systems include:

- fusion drive
- antimatter catalytic drive
- laser sail
- ion-plasma hybrid drives

Travel time for humans may still span 100–200 years.

AI Management System

The spacecraft must operate autonomously:

- navigation
- diagnostics
- threat assessment
- biological monitoring
- awakening protocols

Practical Feasibility Assessment

Suspended Consciousness is currently theoretical. Key unknowns:

- full reversibility of long-term neural silence
- long-term body integrity under low metabolic load
- cosmic radiation impacts over centuries
- spacecraft reliability across generations

Yet, conceptually, it may offer the *only human-survivable method* for long-duration interstellar travel.

Conclusion

The challenge of reaching Proxima Centauri b pushes the boundaries of human imagination, biology, and engineering. Current propulsion cannot meet human lifespan constraints. Cryogenic stasis is still technologically unachieved. This paper argues that Suspended Consciousness—a long-term reversible suppression of awareness—offers a plausible speculative direction for interstellar survival by eliminating subjective time and slowing biological entropy.

It presents an alternative vision:

Humanity may reach nearby stars not by living long enough, but by pausing consciousness long enough. Suspended Consciousness may represent the bridge between human biology and cosmic distances, enabling the first living human to awaken under the sky of an alien world.

References

1. Sadique Shaikh. Hyperspace and Higher Dimensions.