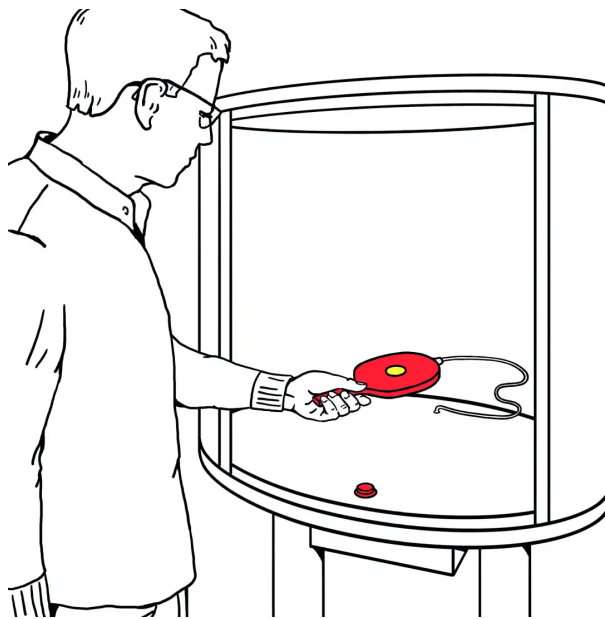


Illusory Ping Pong

Can you move the "ball" on the racket?



Hold the paddle flat and move it back and forth in the dark.

Pay attention to the glowing "ball".

Switch on the strobe light with the button. What do you see now?

Change your movement of the paddle, e.g. from horizontal to vertical.

Ask someone else to hold and move the paddle. Does it look different now?

The glowing “ball” is fastened down to the paddle and can’t bounce off the paddle.

When the strobe light is switched on, we only see the paddle in short glimpses with each flash. When the paddle is moving, the paddle seems to bounce from one place to another. On the other hand, we can follow the movement of the “ball” precisely, because the “ball” is self-lit, rather than being illuminated by the flashing strobe light. If we move the paddle fast enough, the “ball” can appear to be next to the paddle.

When you move the paddle, you can also sense its location as you move. This awareness weakens the illusion that the “ball” is bouncing on the paddle. If someone else moves the paddle, the bouncing illusion can be stronger.