

Nostalgia and Dreams

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October 23, 1978 - Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio

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This talk may be a new approach to you in the field of psychology. And it is mostly psychological – it has to do with self-understanding. Of course, psychology does too, if you apply it rather than taking an objective form, following some psychological system, Freudian or more modern. Then you might not be interested in what I call intuitional psychology – or the business of looking inside the head directly as opposed to reading books or studying curves or norms.

This is a kind of a takeoff from the fifth chapter² of the book I've written, *The Albigen Papers*, which has to do with the obstacles you run into when you start trying to do something with your Self – your capital-S Self. And I noticed that the key things, which are pretty much ignored, were some very everyday, patent happenings. And they have to do with states of mind.

Now psychologists will play up cause and effect. For instance you'll have a stimulus and a reaction to the stimulus, and from this behavior they try to set up laws: the way you react to a stimulus. But I became interested when I was quite young in gestalt psychology;³ it was coming out when I was in college. The word "gestalt" came out – no one knew too much what was behind it, but it was quite different from Fritz Perls' gestalt psychology of today.⁴

This applied to thinking about patterns of the mind and watching them, rather than particular responses to stimuli. And I noticed that in the business of self observation – if you're observing yourself in meditation, or in self-analysis, or if you're analyzing someone else – we pay very little attention to what's really going on inside the person's head, and watch instead for physical reactions.

¹ <http://direct-mind.org/index.php5?title=1978-1023-Nostalgia-and-Dreams-Case-Western>
For access, send an email to editors@direct-mind.org

² "Obstacles to Transcendental Efforts"

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gestalt_psychology

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fritz_Perls

For instance, in this group we try to practice a method of going directly to a person's mind, as opposed to listening to a torrent of words – that possibly as Talleyrand says were invented to conceal meaning rather than to convey it.⁵ Most of the information given to a therapist is false, deliberately false. So if he's not intuitive, it's going to take him a long time to dope out his patient.

There are things that afflict the mind. First of all, we do not perceive with the senses – we perceive with the mind. The senses are imperfect, and the observations of physicists can tell you this: our lenses are inverted, our color range is different from what we actually witness, and a tremendous adjustment on distance and that sort of thing is carried out in the mind.

So when we get into such subjective things as human behavior, or the relationships between people, and you're no longer dealing with distances, colors, etc., you have to get a better view of the total man, not just the way he moves his arm or the way he swings at you.

States of perception

And our mind is colored before we start. Now – “before we start” – I don't know where it begins. I think it goes back maybe for generations. Jung says it may go back to ancient, archetypal patterns, mental patterns. But regardless, this is the way we're built. We see things through our mind, and they come through what I call states of perception.

To give an example of a state of perception: dope is a state of perception, to an extent. A kaleidoscope is a state of perception. A child looking through a kaleidoscope at the world sees an entirely different world, and sometimes becomes thrilled by it – by the different combinations of colors and shapes. It's really unreal.

But much of our life comes to us through states of perception – say, a person with a few drinks in him. I've had this experience and I think some of you have too, where you saw things differently after you had a few drinks. I used to be affected by cigarettes; I could smoke a couple cigarettes and then write poetry. I would suddenly see the world through a different lens, and I'd start writing poetry. I don't want to dwell too long on states of perception, but this is basically where we're headed.

States of mind

There's a takeoff from states of perception which we have to observe in order to understand the human mind. States of perception influence what I call states of mind. Now these are very common words, and you think, “Oh yes, I know what a state of mind

⁵ “We were given speech to hide our thoughts.”

is: I'm in a good state of mind or a bad state of mind." No. There are distinct-colored states of mind that can lead us to bliss or to murder.

For instance, you can join institutions that will desperately try to change your state of mind, by disciplines, until you'll be capable of committing murder. Or you'll be capable of going out and sacrificing your life as a martyr, once you get into this state of mind.

Now I maintain that unless we can perceive this mechanism that goes on, we cannot be free agents. And we cannot think clearly and get a true picture of ourselves unless we're free agents. And we are battered and assailed at all times by a tremendous amount of work going on by agencies. Now I'm not saying that they're necessarily plotting to take over our head or anything like that. I think everybody's plotting to take over your head in the commercial line, in television and that sort of thing. But it's not anything really evil.

But nevertheless, we are battered by a lot of demanding mentalities. We are battered by nature. Nature produces a state of mind. Nature produces a state of perception also, and the states of perception lead to states of mind. Now this is the direction of states of perception: we're not in a state of perception unless we're seeing through some coloration. That is, we see the world through some coloration, or we see actions through some coloration.

We're all acquainted with going down the street and meeting a person of the opposite sex, becoming carried away completely with the idea that this is a perfect creature, this is your future destiny – and then going to bed with it and waking up later and wondering how you got into bed. Because the state of perception changed with the amount of hormone in the bloodstream, presumably. I don't know all the endocrinology. But I do know that people are capable of profound changes in states of mind before and after sexual acts.

It's not something insignificant, where somebody says, "This happens to everybody." No, no – this is the basis for religions forming. This little thing is the basis for the whole quibble that man has with himself. Man is not satisfied with himself – and for ten thousand years he's not been satisfied with himself. Now he would like to tell himself that he's satisfied with himself, but he's getting more dissatisfied. The more he tells himself he's perfectly normal in all the wild things he does, the more dissatisfied and the more unhappy he gets - and the more people are hanging themselves. They're trying to get out of life.

Moods

Now we come to a thing called *moods*. And a mood is a peculiarly strong state of perception. Again, you say, "He's in a bad mood," or "He's in a good mood," and we drop it at that. Nobody pays attention to moods. But if you stop and think, you'll realize that a person gets into a depression, or he gets into a mood, and he sees the world through that mood, and his actions are consequently influenced.

Why use the word *mood*? This is a significant factor in human reaction. It's not just now looking through a kaleidoscope. This is the case where the mind sets on something and acts upon it, and is incapable of escaping from that action until the mood passes. The mood can be so strong he'll be carried away – to a point where, in a sullen mood, or in a despondent mood, he may kill himself. And as he is dying he may regret it.

I know of one such case where a man stabbed himself in the heart and was on the operating table. He just wanted to spite the wife or girl or whatever it was, so he stabbed himself. He had been drinking, too. He cursed all the time they were sewing him up; they had cut him open and sewed up the opening in his heart. But he went back into his ranting and raving and this time he ripped the stitches out. And he knew then that he was dying, and the new realization came upon him very quickly. And instead of a look of anger that he had before – now he's alone in the universe and he knows it, and they can't save him. And he died with this look on his face. But the mood seemingly would not allow him to escape until he was dead.

Now to what we like to think of in scientific terms as *meaning*. What is meaning? We talk about the meaning of a certain word, like the word *psychosis*, and we go through a lot of babbling about causes of action and this sort of thing. But everything means something different to you at a different time of the day – and strangely enough, even more weirdly, at night. So that the best time to observe these moods is when you wake up: you've been in a mood, and you've been awakened to the mood by virtue of a striking dream.

You can get into moods in the daytime and never define them until they're gone. And generally you're just happy to get out of them – or they're followed by another mood – and you don't pay any attention to them. I maintain that the biggest part of our lifetime is spent in floating without any direction; we don't know that we're in moods, and we can't put ourselves into moods. I think we try, with booze sometime, to get into a carefree mood maybe, but generally after a time this just deepens the depression.

But I maintain that our life experience is a concatenation of moods. And we are subject to them; we are not the masters of them. They're pervasive as far as our consciousness is concerned, so we accept them as being *us*. But we can't be that which we hate – and a lot of our moods are rejected two or three hours later.

Now I approach this idea from the study of the dream world, because there, the moods become more significant – they become more blatant, let's say. In the daytime you can be in a subliminal mood or a halfway mood, in which you're not unhappy and you're not happy, and you think there's no mood. But you may be in a sort of diffident mood.

Fear and seduction

But regardless, we're always motivated by something, generally somewhere between an extreme high and an extreme low. And I find that these are reflected in dreams in two categories – as *fear* and *seduction*. Most dreams come under the categories of either

fear or seduction; either nightmares or acquisitive dreams – of possession, where you're stealing something, taking something from somebody, raping somebody or having sexual relationships. In the seduction dream we are getting something or pursuing something. In the fear dreams we are the victim; we are being pursued, something is about to kill us, or we're thrown into some weird picture that scares the wits out of us, and maybe we don't know why.

Now we talk about sanity, and of course I'm not going back to the cliché that sanity is the average point in the normal curve, or that whatever the majority of the people do is sanity. I believe that sanity could better be defined as what people in their saner moments – the more subtle moments in-between the highs and lows – would decide on then; the type of life they would decide upon.

Now fear is not sanity. We spend a lot of our daytime in fear. Almost every time you go out on the street you have to be afraid – either of the people in the neighborhood or of the police, who are hungry. But nevertheless, we can't leave our house without fear. And we don't want any part of this; we don't consider this normal. And our dreams I think are trying to tell us something.

On the other hand, we really enjoy the seduction moods. We enjoy grabbing something in the dream, and sometimes we even think, "Why did it stop?" – maybe we can pick up on the second edition next week. But these things leave of their own accord; they too are nothing permanent. This is not our life. When you get the object of the acquisition, you find out that it's not something you really wanted after all.

Speaking of poetry – I wrote a little poem once:⁶

I dreamed a dream of gold and ran for a chest;
with a fever cold, lost by running the joy of the quest.

In other words, I chased this dream of gold but by the time I got it I was too tired to enjoy the acquisition. And it seems like for everything you get by this seductive method, the price you pay takes the edge off of it.

Nostalgia

Now somewhere in between these two moods, there's another one. And it dawned on me that this was the contact of the human being with what some psychologists might have called the *zeitgeist*,⁷ or the spirit of man, or the universal mind of man – even in the present time. And I refer to this mood as *nostalgia*.

In other words, as we get older, from the time we're a small child, we become aware that we do not fit into society. But we also feel that somewhere there's a common language,

⁶ Is this in Carillon?

⁷ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeitgeist>

a common behavior, a way you can get along with everyone, if you act the right way – there's a tack you can take that will make you harmonious with your fellowman. And in this same mood, in this atmosphere of understanding among fellowmen, everything would run smoothly, seemingly. And it's an ideal state.

Now everybody is out of adjustment, and especially when they're children, because they grow up in what I call the family state of mind. Each family has its own state of mind, each race has its own state of mind, and this is coupled with the many other states of mind that are assailing it, like institutional states of mind. You go into a convent or a penitentiary and you'll find that there's a state of mind in that institution which is pervasive; and everybody has to share it – or somehow get into disharmony with it and either conquer it or be conquered by it.

Consequently, when a kid goes to school, he finds out that the other kids don't have his state of mind. He cracks jokes that aren't funny, he does things that aren't cute, and he gets punched. Some reaction happens. And he begins immediately to embark upon trying to discover that common state of mind by which he can become accepted by people. And as he grows older he still does that, for years and years of his life. He's still wondering whether he's in tune with humanity – and whether humanity has a tune to be in tune with.

So in the business of dreams, I discovered that a great percentage of our dreams are nostalgic. They are neither seduction nor fear; the nostalgic dream doesn't carry the traces of either one. All of us have had them. And I'd say that possibly there are more nostalgic dreams than there are either fear dreams or seduction dreams.

And what is a nostalgic dream? If you haven't had one, or if you had one and maybe didn't identify it – it could be something that is just a bunch of geometric figures. But somehow it sets you, when you waken, with a longing for college, the old college spirit. It awakens something in you – you remember twenty years ago that you had been in such a class, maybe you dropped out, and you wish you had stayed in – and it sets up a nostalgia in you.

Incidentally, the reason dreams are much easier and better to observe than daytime moods, is that there's less sensory factoring allowed. For instance, when you're awake you're confused: If we're talking now, the lights might confuse, the colored rug, the people's faces. In a dream this is all shut out; you're only dealing with stuff from the memory bank.

Very seldom in a dream do you smell anything; I've never heard of anybody smelling anything in a dream or tasting anything in a dream. Hearing, yes. But seeing is the primary thing in a dream. Now again, I'm only going by some people I have checked in my life and that sort of thing. But I've found that even hearing is diminished; a person says something, and if you're watching them in a dream and you wake up, you realize they didn't move their lips. The hearing is almost a mind-to-mind communication, of a certain word or a certain conversation. But the primary senses are seeing and hearing.

And incidentally, for some reason, some of the eastern yogis latched onto this sleeping consciousness faculty, of seeing and hearing. And those are the two things they harp on to develop, so that you'll be able to have some sensory faculty after death. And they call it the *darshan* and the *shabd*,⁸ if I'm not mistaken. The *shabd* means the ability to hear the sound current. There was quite a business run on these, incidentally; they put it on the market.

Studying moods

Getting back to this business now of the mind at sleep – we can study these moods in a sleeping person better than we can in a waking person, and I think that's the reason they come out so brightly, because this other sensory input is shut off.

I maintain that one of the objectives of meditation is to shut off sensory input into the computer. I was talking in Pittsburgh the other day,⁹ and I spoke to an electronic engineer, and he said, "Oh I don't think the analogy holds good," that you can solve problems best by shutting the computer down; that is, shutting down the input and the output. But this is what I advocate: closing off the problem inside the computer until it's solved.

Now this is the basis of meditating for the purpose of a subjective answer. In other words, you want a subjective answer, and you're putting in almost all objective data – only words out of philosophy books. But you throw all this data in, and you have to shut the computer down – or it will continue to put data in, which will confuse your answer. As long as data is coming in it will confuse your answer; it will affect it.

Trying to examine the mood of a person – in talking to him you say, "Well, you're in a bad mood." And he says, "Oh, no, you're wrong. I'm very cheerful. I was just thinking deeply." Because perhaps the words you spoke to him, telling him he's in a bad mood – if he's an obstinate type of person, he might change immediately. The course of a conversation may take him out of the mood, or something you'll see if you're walking down the street together may take him out of it – at least to a point where he'll not be able to see it clearly. But let him have an outstanding dream, and then there's no argument.

I think that some of the great psychologists of our time have not been psychologists, but have been poets and artists – who sense this stuff but can't put it into words. I think this has been the key to a tremendous lot of understanding of human nature. Whereas you read bales of psychology and you'll not get the mood. A man's trying to tell you about moods, but you can't get it. But read a couple of poems, or go down to the art gallery and look at some of these portraits – and notice if you stand in front of them a few minutes, the different moods that this thing will project you into.

⁸ *Yoga: Hatha, Shabd, and Raja*, Richard Rose <http://www.searchwithin.org/download/yoga.pdf>

⁹ Missing tape. Next earlier talk we have before this is June 1978.

Now – what is the advantage of this? There's a disadvantage to moods, and there's possibly an advantage to them.

First of all, who cares about what humanity's common denominator is, whether we have to worry or dream? I'm not bringing this up for that point. I don't care whether anybody conforms to the language of mankind, and I don't think that that would be a very good aim.

Sure, it's good to get along with your fellowman. It's good not to get into a mood where you're going to commit murder. And I think if you understand your moods, you won't allow that kind of mood to return to where you'll do something harmful, maybe get into kleptomania, or just anger – allowing yourself to drift into a mood which may cause mayhem. I think once you understand this from that psychological viewpoint, then automatically you're free of it. So we don't have to worry about that.

But the main thing is to know what effect the mood has on your mind, when you're studying yourself. And I think that all moods are *not us*.

If you get sick and you run a fever and you wake up in the middle of the night in a delirium – this is a mood. You're looking at the world through a different lens. You'll hear noises that are magnified. You'll see motions of the physical world that are not true, that are magnified, like a person who is on a bad trip. But this delirium is not sanity, and we do not want any part of it. Although it's a natural thing that happens to a lot of people – I think it has a message. If we look at all these moods we get into, we find that there's a reason behind them. You may learn something, and you may alter your life's course.

Features of nostalgia

But the nostalgia mood is the least harmful. And it too can impede your sense of veracity about yourself. But it has a tremendous binding force upon humanity, in that it's not too dangerous socially, and it aims at beauty. And for tonight's talk, I have put together the key features, certain things that are earmarked in nostalgia.

For instance – what are the moods we get into if we dream about people? The rose-covered cottage by the side of the road, the children playing in the house, and the happy housewife. This is the perfect picture, let's say, that every young girl longs for. The perfect home, the perfect bliss, no troubles, that sort of thing. And when you're dreaming in this mood – all people are kind. Not even the enemy is rude. People whom you know in the daytime become suddenly kind in the dream. Everybody is seemingly understanding. So the most outstanding feature of this is the kindness, or you can say love, a certain amount of love.

There's another thing that's there all the time and not seen: the sense of *eternity*. There's a longing for whatever this is. Supposing you've been away from home for twenty years and you've forgotten all about the people next door when you were a kid.

And then one night you dream about the people, and in this dream there's just a small part of your yard that's visible in the dream. Or maybe your birthplace is visible. But the people next door occupy the main part of the dream. And when you wake up you wonder why you dreamt of those people, because you haven't thought about them for ten years.

But what happens is that you're in a strange mood when you wake up. Despite the people – they had nothing to do with the mood, when you knew them twenty years ago. But you went back to this idea, that the old place is the same as it was. Sometimes the people are the same as they were. Maybe this man died when he was seventy years of age, and in the dream you noticed he was forty; he was dressed as he did when he was forty years of age, his complexion was younger, and all this sort of thing.

This type of dream is based upon this hunger for eternity in every individual. And it isn't necessarily an emanation of his theology. I maintain that whether you have a religion, whether you're an atheist or whatever, you'll have this longing for the good old days – that's one of the ways they have of putting it – the eternity of that which was pleasant. We try to perpetuate it. We're always trying. It's like the drink of wine – I've made the remark that you only get one drink of wine, and after that you get the habit of chasing that, to try to get it again.

Another aspect of this is peace, serenity, inoffensiveness. And of course in some respects the possession of property, the possession of things – whatever was beautiful to you. It could be a person; it could be somebody who in the experiences you had with them, they were wonderful. Or maybe it was somebody whom you parted from. Not a sexual dream. But in the dream you go back and you're talking to this person, and the only thing you have in common now is the memories of something that was beautiful. This is what seems to be foremost in your head, and when you awaken it has a profound thrust upon your mind – and wipes out, or puts in the background, all the unfortunate troubles you may have had between you.

Inner voice

I think that this observation of nostalgia will bring you to a realization of the basic structure of the mind, and what the mind wants to do. It's almost like a soul-voice. It's almost a voice from inside that says, "This is the way things are, if you allow them to be that way." Things aren't that way now because your daily life has been one of furious fighting or endless ambition, something along those lines.

I think that it's possible too, that this is like a voice of what Paul Brunton would call the Overself,¹⁰ or the oversoul. In more objective terms you could call it the intuitive rendition of a computer. That if you were to throw all of your life's actions into the computer, you would come out with a certain wisdom, I believe. In other words, by trial and error, by doing things and failing, by charging the wall and being thrown back, and then by

¹⁰ *Wisdom of the Overself*. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Brunton

acquiring some very beautiful experiences in life by resignation – I think the computer is bound to come up with some sort of language that says manifestly that you're putting too much pressure on the wrong things.

And this is caused by your accepting states of mind which carried you away, instead of helping you. And I think of course that certain states of mind and certain states of perception, and certain moods, can help us get through. I believe that primitive peoples in fact allow themselves to get into certain moods. The martyrs allowed themselves to get into a mood in which they felt no pain when the lions tore them apart. Primitive peoples have been known to undergo operations without anesthetics, by allowing themselves to get into a certain mood. And I think this is lost to our so-called civilized people.

Examples

Now I wanted to give you some examples, and I know you've all had your own. You can even pick up some psychology books that have examples of moods. I was reading Karl Jung's book, *Memories, Dream, Reflections* – but I was awakened more to the types of dreams he reported than the significance he gave to them.

I think Freud has a whole book full of case histories of dreams,¹¹ as does Kraft-Ebing.¹² But they're all what I call seduction dreams. And I don't think that the whole of life, the whole of mankind, is built around the seduction part of human nature – that that's all we could get done, and that all of our actions are dependent on that. This carries over into the Freudian type of thinking that everything we do is because of sex – I don't believe it.

There's an enormous amount of our daily activity – the fact that the fellow goes down to the mill and works every day for forty years of his life – that's not always done for sex. He may marry out of sex, he may get tired of it in five years, but he keeps on working – because he's got another language he's living by. And it may be the mood, the family mood, the family state of mind, that he wants to perpetuate. And he just keeps on plodding along.

On the other hand, as I said, the moods can become disastrous. Because logic can build up a million-dollar business for us, and one dream in one night can destroy everything. And I'm sure you've read cases of this – well, the fellow the other day, the actor Gig Young, was seemingly very happy. And his mood changed, somewhere between the time the people left him and the morning, and he shot himself and he killed the girl.¹³ I don't believe any man kills himself unless he's able to go into a mood to get it done.

¹¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Interpretation_of_Dreams

¹² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_von_Krafft-Ebing

¹³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gig_Young

There was another story that I heard years ago, that started my thinking on this. It was a man who left his family and had been away for twenty years, and he was in a hobo camp in Arkansas. And another hobo had a violin and was playing violin music. And this man was so moved by this music that he packed his gear and went back to his family, or at least tried to find them.¹⁴

This ideas of violins – there are certain things that produce moods of this type. And I don't know why. I think there should be some study given to it – a person working in the field of psychology might be able to get some of this information.

And I believe that certain colors produce certain moods – and I think that the media know this. I think that some of our greatest psychologists are people who are just selling their wares, and they instinctively use certain ploys to get it sold. You turn on the television and you get the nostalgic music while they're selling Oleo. You get the seductive stuff too; you see the beautiful girl draped on the side of the automobile. That's supposed to mean that people who are going to meet good-looking girls have to buy Buicks.

But if you notice, there's a lot of nostalgic appeal in advertising. And I think the reason for this is they somehow sense that with this appeal, people will buy that product, especially if it's a movie. Now we have quite a a run of *Little House on the Prairie*; this seems to have been very successful. And this I call schmaltz,¹⁵ and that's what Hollywood calls it. Because they don't care about the sacredness of the mood; this is just a little method of getting into people's minds, once they see a story like this, with a cereal commercial.

The soap operas that were on the radio – I watched my mother listen to them for twenty years: The little girl from the coal-mining town is going to marry the rich man. The music in the background puts you into a certain mood. And even the language, if you notice it – the man who's talking doesn't sound like a man, he sounds like a pimp. He goes into this strange talk, with a strange sounding falsetto voice even.

And you know that no two people in everyday life would be talking to each other this way. This is the guy, the sex-starved man who's waiting for ten years to marry this girl, and they're still talking to each other like he's the bishop and she's a nun. But nevertheless, it builds up this nostalgic mood, and the eternity of this love affair – it's never going to stop. And every day you tune in to suffer a little bit more with these two people who are suffering. Because that's part of the beauty.

But anyhow, it's done with a violin background. A lot of it has a violin background – or organ music, piano music, and a few of these stringed instruments. Not necessarily a guitar; we associate that with jungle music today – excuse me all you music majors.
[laughs]

¹⁴ Story related to Rose by his father (see Moods lecture).

¹⁵ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schmaltz>

Now, getting to colors – why certain colors? The little old lady crossing the street is always dressed in lavender, or lace, this kind of thing. But bright reds do not inspire a nostalgic mood. Maybe they'd have the same effect they're supposed to have on a bull – you might want to charge, I don't know. But they don't fill you with peace and serenity and quiet.

Aborigines

I know very little about this, but I do know that we've underdeveloped our dream world; we've gotten away from it. And one of the outstanding instances today is the Australian aborigine.¹⁶ We like to think we're so far progressed, but we do not have abilities that are common in their culture. And I don't know that they have the vocabulary we have, so maybe they'll never be able to really teach or share this with the rest of the world.

But the Australian aborigine enters a dream world to kill a rabbit. If he has to do anything that requires any dexterity, he enters into a dream world; he communicates with what he calls his older brother – some of you who have studied anthropology will be aware of this. And he throws a boomerang, which is a difficult instrument to begin with, over a hilltop, and hits a rabbit that he can't see from where he's standing. Now this is a known fact. They have trackers – they'll get an aborigine to do tracking for them. He consults with his older brother, which is invisible. It's a spirit, presumably, or it might be his higher consciousness – maybe that's what he means. I don't know.

But he calls this a dream world. He talks about it as a dream state – that he enters a kind of a dream state to do this. I call it a state of *betweenness*. I don't know what manipulations go on, but I maintain that the human mind is capable of doing great things when it's in a state of neither anxiety nor extreme laziness. But regardless, this man is able to do this consciously.

The senses

There's another thing in this business of dreams. We were talking about the lack of sensory interruption in dreams from taste or smell and touch. Sometimes there's a case where you will get hold of something. Anybody read Robert Monroe's book on astral projection?¹⁷ He talks of encountering astral creatures that would get ahold of him and he couldn't get away from them. But then he'd find that they would just melt, that there was nothing really tangible to them. There seemed to be a sense of touch but there was no firm grip. There was nothing that felt either hot or cold, let's put it that way. You could get ahold of things, but nothing burned you or chilled you.

¹⁶ See "The Magical World of the Australian Aborigines" by Mark Jaqua; *TAT Journal*, #10: http://www.searchwithin.org/journal/tat_journal-10.html#2

¹⁷ *Journeys Out of the Body*.

Back again to colors – we’re limited in dreams to color. How many here have had colored dreams – would you mind putting up your hand? Now did you have them more than once a year? See, the hands are considerably fewer. Personally, I have had only one or two colored dreams in my life – that’s the reason I ask you. I’ve heard people say they dream in color quite a bit. But again, if I ask you, aren’t the majority of your dreams gray – neither black nor white?

This is the point. We’re limited, we don’t have this input, we’re not assailed by these colors – but we still have the moods. Except that we do have the gray color – it’s like being at sea and there’s nothing but heavy fog, and you can’t tell where you’re going. Your perspective is limited.

I remember a little story I wrote for the TAT Journal.¹⁸ I had a dream about a bunch of people. We were sitting and talking about death, and I couldn’t see in the dream any more than ten feet. The room was full of people but I could only recognize the people right in front of me. And these people were holding a conversation with me. I knew there were other people there, and I could get glimpses of them, but it was so foggy that you couldn’t see them.

Poetry

Now I brought some examples of nostalgic poetry. I think if you pick up some of the old literature, or some of the old poets like Longfellow, you get this sense of nostalgia. I think Longfellow, Whittier and some of the others were very nostalgic. Some of these I had never heard of before – I just ran across them – this one’s from Whittier:¹⁹

Of when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead;
And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms,
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

This was Whittier’s Maud Muller. In other words, the idyllic scene of old – and this is expressed so much in poetry, of going back. In the days of Whittier nearly everyone grew up on a farm, and if he were lucky or wealthy enough he moved to a village to retire. But they always longed for the scene of their boyhood.

Here’s an old Canadian example. It’s supposed to be a song that the timbermen sang.²⁰

From the lonely shieling of the misty island,
(shieling is a wood shanty out in the woods)
mountains divide us and a waste of seas,
yet still the blood is strong,

¹⁸ “Last Act,” Issue 2. http://www.searchwithin.org/journal/tat_journal-02.html#3

¹⁹ John Greenleaf Whittier, “Maud Muller.”

²⁰ Attributed to John Galt, “Canadian Boat Song.”

the heart is highland,
and we in dreams behold the Hebrides.

These were Scotsmen who came to Canada and they were still dreaming of the Hebrides, the islands off the coast of Scotland.

Now I notice something else. Psychologically today we look upon melancholia as a disease, and there have been books written on it as being so. I think if anything, it isn't a disease but it accompanies a disease. In other words if a person is dying and he gets melancholic – well, he's got a disease, he's dying. But I don't think melancholy in itself is a disease. If so, then all our poets were diseased – a good many of them, like Whittier and those.

This is what Dyer says:²¹

There is kindly mood of melancholy that wings the soul.

And Fletcher wrote:²²

There's naught in this life sweet,
If men were wise to see't,
But only melancholy –
O sweetest melancholy!

In other words, I think this fellow's trying to say the same thing: that through nostalgia his life had much more meaning to him than everything else he'd learned.

Q & A begins

I have a lot of notes here but I'm not going to belabor you with a step-by-step rendition of them. I want to stop and get into questions and answers, because I'd like to know your feelings, find out what you want to know, and what you think about this. So I think it would be better if we went in that direction.

Q. Occasionally I'll have a dream and wake up, and it's so real that I'd be surprised when I wake up.

R. This is something I neglected to bring out, and it's one of the main aspects. If this were not real, this nostalgic mood wouldn't mean a thing. That's what I'm talking about – dreams of that nature. That when you wake up, you question which is more valid: "Am I awake?" It takes a bit of reconnoitering. "Which is the real world – the one I'm in now, or the one I was in before?"

²¹ John Dyer (1699 – 1757), "The Ruins of Rome."

²² John Fletcher (1579 – 1625), "Melancholy."

And then even further: “What am I doing, kidding myself with this fretful life I’m leading?” “Is there a path that leads to the rose-colored cottage, without any trouble?” Or, “Is there a place where this condition exists?” Because this type of dream makes your daily life look like a massacre. And it’s this sense of unreality, I think, that’s the main keynote: that at that point of consciousness we have no proof that this waking life is real – any more than we have when we’re in a deep acid trip, that this life is real. So you don’t have to get into acid; just watch your dreams – whenever you waken with that feeling: “Am I dreaming, or am I in the electric chair?” [laughs] “Is the guy going to pull the switch?”

Now again, don’t get the idea that all dreams are nostalgic or that all dreams are seduction or fear. I’m just saying that these are three main categories. Also there are dreams that are prophetic – and I don’t know why. I think there are many things you can contact through the mind, but you can’t contact them through the waking mind. People have had dreams in which they were quite sure they talked to a dead relative. It’s very possible they do. I wouldn’t argue with them on the point.

And sometimes a person can be worried over a problem in business or in school – a math problem or an engineering problem, how he’s going to do something. And he goes to sleep and finally puts it out of his head – and dreams the solution. Now this is not nostalgia, it’s not fear, it’s not seduction. But I realize they exist and they too should be studied. I was just bringing out the ones I thought had the most profound effect upon our life.

And you can trace a lot of stuff back to the daytime before. A lot of psychologists will ask this immediately, “What were you doing that day?” To check that out first, if something happens.

Q. Is it possible that in the nostalgia dreams there is less ego-complication? It seems like there’s more clarity of mind.

R. Right, right. In daily life we’ve got to keep up with our egos. One of the boys had a case in court – a fellow took a cue stick and knocked another guy’s eye out. They put him in the penitentiary and Dave was defending him. The guy was in a beer joint and what he was doing was keeping up his ego. He was a tough guy and he couldn’t take certain insults. Of course, he had insulted this other fellow – he was really in the wrong, by being aggressive. And finally the other guy called him a name and said, ‘Don’t bother me.’ So he just hit him with a cue stick and knocked his eye out.

Now of course, if he goes to sleep at night and has a dream – and he’ll have them, because he’s under that pressure of being sent to the penitentiary – he’s going to dream of another reality. He’s going to realize in his nostalgic state that there’s a state he’s leaving behind, created by virtue of his egos. He’ll realize that he was supporting a false person. And that’s what put him in the penitentiary, not his living up for some ideal. Now if he had to do it to protect his child from harm, he might not have a qualm of conscience – that would be his rose-covered cottage that he’s protecting. But not just his male ego,

not just some pride. You notice this, as I said, that one of the aspects of the nostalgic dream is inoffensiveness. No one in them seems to have egos, except compassion.

Q. I notice that in the seductive and the fear dreams, there's a lot of material to worry about – what the motivation of other people is, stuff like that.

R. Yes, but not in the nostalgic dreams. In the seductive dream you become aggressive. You may want to rape somebody, and you may in your dream rape somebody. That ego is manifesting there; that's your acquisition. But not in the nostalgic moods.

This is the reason I thought there was a possibility that sometime the nostalgic mood could get so strong – that you would pledge your life to a certain peacefulness on earth, as opposed to finding the answer out for yourself. Trying to find this common denominator of behavior – which would be so beneficial to everybody, that we'd all live in this nostalgic mood – and in that respect lose our spiritual directive, and it might be detrimental to you. That's the possible bad aspect of it. But the good part is, that it sure isn't going to give you any harm; you're not going to get into trouble with your fellowman by listening to it.

Q. Does that imply that that the nostalgic mood is directly opposed to a spiritual drive you might have?

R. No, I don't think so. Because of the simple fact that the nostalgia or the eternality of a home life, especially a non-turbulent home life, parallels the spiritual direction. The spiritual direction also, is aimed at social life. I'd say that seventy-five percent of all spiritual direction today is social.

Q. What is the point of being aware of your dreaming?

R. Well, of course, like I said, there are dreams that aren't nostalgic. I think that this is a goal that a lot of people reach for, to be able to be aware of their dreaming. And I know myself that I've been in situations where I became aware that I was dreaming in order to wake up – because I couldn't get away from the nightmare I was having.

Q. I've read a few people who say they can wake themselves up during a dream – not actually physically waking up: they say they actually wake up within the dream. And they say they really learned a lot from doing that, following their dream more consciously. Have you ever done that? Is there a benefit of it?

R. Yes. This is basically the reason I'm talking, that I don't think we pay enough attention to this side of our dreams. A lot of people are looking into the prophecy of dreams – trying to prophesize or find out what's going to make money on the stock market tomorrow, to dream the right dream. But I think that as far as psychology is concerned, it's legitimate to be able to live somewhat in this state of mind.

I think that it's very similar to the state of mind you'll have after death, for one thing. It's very similar. Because you're going to lose most of your senses, in a certain order. Almost any doctor will tell you,

d that after the sight goes, the hearing is the last to go. So those two senses are the last contact with this dimension, so to speak.

I believe that there's not enough known. The trouble we have had in our group – several psychologists have come in, talking about dreams at the Chautauquas. And I notice that the public interest is always, "If I dream of a seven should I go bet on horse number seven?" Or, "Does this dream mean I'll meet the man I'm going to marry?" That there's a very shallow, pragmatic study of dreams. And even all the books are written on this shallow idea – getting what you want. And unfortunately, getting what you want isn't what you want. That's only temporary, what you want.

Q. You said that generally our perception is colored by different moods. Do you believe that in a higher state of consciousness there are moods also?

R. What do you mean by a higher state of consciousness?

Q. Well, when you generally are less controlled by your environment and your senses.

R. I thought maybe you were going to give me another answer. [laughs] Well, the states they talk about are cosmic consciousness, which is kevala samadhi, and then sahaja samadhi. Now, if you mean where you're actually leaving the physical dimension, with your consciousness, I agree that there are moods – until you've reach the final one, and then there are no moods. I'm talking from personal experience. Because in the state of cosmic consciousness there's still a nostalgia for the earth, and a tremendous longing for the people you leave behind, especially when you know that you're leaving them incomplete. So I believe there are moods associated with that, until you pass clear through to what they call the sahaja samadhi state – that's the highest known level, the realization of the absolute.

Q. A lot of meditation stuff that I have read tries to cultivate a certain betweenness, such as not to think of things, or to get rid of objects in your perception. Do you think that's feasible at all?

R. I think if your intuition tells you that, then yes. Now, there are different forms of meditation going around the marketplace, and I think a lot of them are good for the people who are practicing them. I don't prescribe some of the things that are practiced. But I maintain that people are drawn to something that heals them.

And people will avoid stuff that will cause them too much trauma. And naturally, the system that I advise is one of trauma – causing trauma. But I'll say that for people who already have trauma – don't touch this. Don't touch it. You've got enough trouble. It's like the Zen koan – don't give a koan to a man who's already got a koan. One koan at a time.

And you don't have to give people koans, because some of them have more than they can carry. Consequently, for a person with a lot of trouble, I'd say that the idea of possibly making his mind vacuous may be a good exercise. It will take away the trauma. And then when he has the trauma taken away – then go to trauma. Then start digging at yourself, looking at yourself, worrying a bit with your thinking processes.

Q. We dream several hours every night, according to scientists who study this, and yet we only seem to remember a few minutes of it. I've often wondered whether we remember just the more prosaic dreams, that are closely related to our normal life, where there's some relation that we can understand. And then we might have very wild dreams that we just can't relate to during the day.

R. Yes. Not only that, but I sometimes think that what you get into in dreams is again what you're capable of getting into. I don't know how they gauge this. I do know that a person's able to time a dream: say if he wakes up and goes back to sleep, and maybe the alarm rings in ten minutes – and he had a dream in which he may have fought a whole battle. And he knows it had to happen in less than ten minutes.

And by putting electroencephalograms on a person's head, they can pretty much find corresponding waves that show that his mind is agitated. Now if you're going by that – I don't know whether you could actually say whether he was dreaming or not. But I don't think the mind is dead in sleep; this is the point.²³ I don't know what gives the idea of oblivion in sleep, unless this is what we want. We're so tired, or we're so fed up that we want to check out completely, and nature checks us out.

And the reason I say this is I've seen children do it; they'll do it in the daytime. The kid gets to be two years old and when life becomes too much for him – they can get into something they call eclampsia, and the kid will just blank out. And if he keeps it up he goes into epilepsy; he can become an epileptic from just checking out. A lot of epilepsy in children I think is self-induced, the first few trips around. And then after awhile they can't escape from it. It becomes a habit they can't escape from, and they become more or less incurable epileptics.

Back to dreams – there are people who have studied them, who have spent maybe ten years of their life doing nothing but trying to get inside their dreams. And strangely enough, I haven't encountered any of their books. I met a fellow in Columbus when I was about twenty-three years of age – he considered himself a yogi – and this is what he did. I expected a yogi to stand on his head or chant OM. Instead of this, this fellow was doing nothing but observing his dreams; he became dream-conscious.

Now I tried that at the time, and I didn't get the same results that he did. I got in touch with dead people and I had to quit. [laughs] Whether they were real or not, I don't know. A brother who got killed, and that sort of thing.

Q. What did you say was the significance of a color, when you see color?

²³ See chart from Ramana Maharshi: <http://www.albigen.com/uarelove/sahaja.aspx>

R. I don't know. All I'm saying is that I thought this deserves some study. But I know that there are certain things that are adductive to nostalgic dreams, and the gray dreams seem to be more nostalgic. And in advertizing or the movies, or any of this television seduction, they use colors very artfully, and they use musical tones, to induce moods. And we're never aware of this. We're aware of somebody going out to buy a certain type of super-suds, some soap powder, but there's a subliminal music in the background. Or there's something done in the social interaction between the people that implies good neighbors and so on, to inspire a sort of nostalgic mood. Because I maintain that if you watch these commercials, all of them will employ the nostalgic mood, if not the seductive mood.

Q. I don't usually remember my dreams, but recently I had one that I couldn't forget. I even told maybe five people over the day, because I remembered it. And it had color in it; I couldn't ever remember having color in a dream before.

R. Right. This is the reason I asked everybody to put their hand up. I had a dream of a girl in a colored dress, a red dress – I was seventeen or eighteen years of age – and it struck my mind so forcefully that I never forgot it. I saw the girl's face and it was imprinted in my mind. It was out on the farm – this girl was coming down the road toward my farm. And I married her about twenty years later. She wasn't born at the time of the dream. But I met that same girl twenty years later and married her.²⁴

Q. You mention contacting dead people when you studied your dreams.

R. Oh, this was my brother, when I was in Columbus. What I was doing was deliberately encouraging dreams. Like I said, you watch them. What you do incidentally, Tim, is you get a tablet and place it alongside your bed. Everybody dreams every night – that's the way you start into it. You were asking about getting into the deeper studies to see what goes on all night. Well, you might have more than you can record, I think, once you start doing this. It becomes a real story.

But if you keep recording them, you'll get more every night. And you'll get all kinds of stuff too. I used to keep a book for something like twenty years on dreams. I'd keep it close to the bed and I'd write them down. And it got so I'd write it down rather briefly because I didn't think much of it: "Oh, so what, I dreamt of an orange" Ok, so I'd write "orange".

But maybe I found out later that the orange meant something. I had a date in my dream book – 1957 I think it was – where I dreamt of a man planting an American flag on the moon. And I was leafing through this just a couple years ago and I wondered what significance that had to the real thing. Because this is what they were doing. They were sticking this flag in the dirt, and this is what happened several years later.

²⁴ Rose married in 1950, approximately age 33, so the math is a little off.
<http://www.richardroseteachings.com/about.html>

So that was precognitive, or – what? Now, we say that possibly everything exists in the space-time continuum. You've got to take this into account when you're dealing with dreams. There's nothing precognitive if we live in a space-time continuum. Everything is now. We have a sort of a mixup in our consciousness, caused by living in a solar system with a body that seems to age and grow older and die. We seem to have a passing of time. But according to certain people like Einstein and Ouspensky, there is no passing of time. Time stands still and we pass.

Consequently, this so-called precognitive dream would just be looking into the room next door, that's all. Maybe it's ten years, twenty years away, but it would be just like looking into what's happening next door. Or down the line of film – the film is passing through the shutter, and if you turn your attention to someplace else on the film, you may see what's coming up to the shutter.

So I believe a lot of that should be taken into consideration when you're observing dreams. That it might explain a lot of the real strange stuff that comes in the line of precognition. And the same with stuff that happens in the past. Why recall something? Nearly everyone has had a dream of somebody they haven't talked to for years and years, and they say, "Why did I dream of that guy?" And you check the day before and the week before, and there's no reason. But if you write that dream down, I'm sure that sometime you'll read it and realize the reason why you dreamt it. There's some message.

Q. In other words, you're saying that there are specific moods that get us into the states of mind, and they are triggered in. It's almost as if some intelligence knows what will get us into these moods, so these are the things it uses.

R. Right, right. There's something that's trying to communicate, that's what I said. I used the word *oversoul*. Because I would rather believe that we have a higher consciousness. Or let's say the memory bank of the computer if nothing else – and it's able to communicate with us better if it isn't loused up with ten thousand factors bombarding the data room, the memory bank. So then you get a better rendition. But I also believe it's very possible that there may be a departed relative, or a guide, or somebody who's interested in your future – who can't get through to you in the daytime.

Q. I could just imagine that if somebody had control of all these different things, how they could cause a person to do about anything.

R. Well they do. We find people who are very skillful at that. And they can control, and they can sell a million dollars of merchandise – but can't control their own lives. So as far as they're concerned, it doesn't do them any good.

That's what I say. I believe, for instance, that if a person is dedicated to really getting to themselves and being honest with themselves, they will reject television advertizing. They will just start and learn to reject it. Because they'll know it's coming to them not from a scientific truth as to the value of the product, as much as that they're creating a

mood – or it follows a moody play on TV. After *Little House on the Prairie*, why, hit the guys with the commercials and see what happens. The advertisers demand certain spots because they know the effects.

Q. A friend of mine was involved in the study of colors, and they came to the conclusion that red and orange are passionate colors, and if the restaurants use them as part of their decor, they would sell more hamburgers. And so Burger King and McDonalds both went that way, and the volume of sales increased at such a rate that they changed all their stores.

R. Yes. Speaking of colors, there was a fellow from India who was healing people with colors about fifty years ago. I found this in a magazine section of an old newspaper in the attic. I used to keep these outstanding phenomena from papers like the National Enquirer, only this was a big colored magazine section in the paper. And they threw this fellow in the penitentiary for practicing medicine without a license. But today the hospitals use it.

He prescribed certain colors for certain ailments, and he said that green was the healthy color. And now they find that if you want to paint the walls of a hospital room for the best effect upon your patients, paint them green. If you paint them red you'll have trouble. And in a mental institution you don't paint any walls red, that is, blood red or flaming red, or you'll have trouble.

So the poor fellow went to the penitentiary – but he was trying to tell them something. Of course, I don't know what the effect his exposing them to these colors would have been. He just put the color on the wall – say a slide of green – with a little home projector. You could put a light bulb behind it and put that slide in, and it was supposed to put them in a certain mood.

A lot of you are acquainted with the fact that people can actually die from moods; people get into moods and they die. It's not just a trifling thing of a fellow getting happy or unhappy for a few moments and it passes. No. People literally get into moods and they come to the conclusion that they're going to die, and they die.

I knew a lady about thirty-three years of age who got into an argument with her brother; he slapped one of her kids and she tried to stop him. And he said to her, "They're living in my house (she had left her husband) and they're eating my food, and I'll discipline them if they get out of line." So she said, "I can't take the food out of their mouth, but I won't eat any of your food." And she starved herself to death. She died right in his house.

Now that was a mood. There wasn't anything logical about it. There are different ways of doing it. She could have left; there were places she could have gone. But she preferred to die and put him through that. That was her machine gun, that was her retaliation. So she used the mood. That happened in Moundsville. In fact, I visited her and tried to talk her out of it, but I couldn't. I went down to the house and she was a cadaver, just a

skeleton. She was a beautiful woman; when she was younger she looked like Alice Faye, the blond-haired woman.

The relatives didn't want anybody to see her, but I went in. She said, "Can you talk to me in French?" And I said, "Yes." And we had a half-hearted conversation in French – I had a limited vocabulary. And she told me the story. I said, "You can get up out of here whenever you want to." And she said, "I know I can." And she said, "I won't. I don't intend to." She was sunk into it that deep.

And you read about this stuff all the time. I think in fact that a lot of the irreversible trends of dope and alcohol are moods; they're caused by moods. When an alcoholic person gets into an alcoholic mood, you can't touch him or her until it's over – if they get over it. It may take months. But they get into a self-destructive mood and stay with it.

Q. Do moods imply a conviction state about the nature of whether life is worth living?

R. Oh, yes. That's what I'm telling you. Like the guy who stabbed himself. For a few moments the affection of this girl was life to him, and life wasn't worth living unless he had it. And so he stayed in that mood until he hurt himself.

Q. Do you think any mood is the correct mood, or are all moods in a sense wrong?

R. None of them are correct. I don't think any of them are. I said they lead us. For instance the fear mood – delirium is insanity. Seduction is insanity. Seduction is programming, possibly for reproduction. In other words, we've got to grab something to eat, and maybe you've got to grab it from the fellow next door. So that's seduction; that isn't correct in the final analysis.

Again we get to the definition: What is real sanity? I wouldn't try to define it exactly, but I do believe it would be some condition where there wouldn't be any regret from the action that resulted from it.

And there's not too much regret from the nostalgic moods. The least amount of regret is from the nostalgic mood – because we don't harm anybody; it's one of inoffensiveness. But the nostalgic mood can put us into situations where we can harm ourselves, if you aren't wise to it. You can buy a carload of merchandise from the TV advertisement because they appeal to you in a nostalgic mood. Or you can follow a philosophy or an ism, and write a check out for half your bank account in a moody moment – and regret it two or three months later. So in that respect it isn't something we want to do, so it wouldn't be correct in the long range analysis.

Q. If I understood you right, you said that our moods are pretty much determined by our dreams?

R. No, no. This is where they are seen more plainly; you can study them more plainly through your dreams. I brought up the dream angle because we don't pay much attention to our moods. We know we have highs and lows during the daytime, and we

just say they're highs and lows. But when you have a dream, you know that you're moved then, and you're seeing something entirely different – a new perspective on life. And I call it a state of perception – a new perceiving of life through that dream, which we don't ordinarily recognize on walking down the street.

Q. Well, since moods are so much of our life, then the critical thing is how to change them when they're not so good.

R. Right, right.

Q. How do you go about changing your moods?

R. Well, you can only change them after they happen and after you're able to understand them – to identify them, so to speak. And say, "This happened as a result of three shots of whiskey and a cigarette or a reefer." And then you say, "Well, I don't want to get into that mood again, so I'm going to stay away from booze."

So in that respect you can stop your moods. Because I believe that chemicals in the bloodstream will cause moods – a new kaleidoscope to look through. Hormones in the bloodstream will cause moods. Hormones burnt out of the bloodstream seem to change us into another mood [after sex]. So knowing these things, you watch yourself as you go through every day of your life.

And I don't believe you can alter every mood. I said this coming up here, in Cuyahoga Falls, earlier in the day – that we are not free agents. And just to find our center – not freedom, just to find a center that is somewhat un-traumatic – takes practically a lifetime of consistent effort.

If you can find that center, I think you avoid a tremendous lot of stuff that will cause real mayhem. And it's pretty hard to get this across to people. I have a son: you people shouldn't listen to me at all – he doesn't. [laughs] He gets into one mood after another. He cures himself of drinking by taking dope, and then he cures himself of dope by falling in love. And then he goes back to booze.

He's got a philosophy all of his own which you can't correct. But the thing is that he hasn't found a center. Everything he does, he thinks he's doing it. But he doesn't realize that stuff is being done to him. He doesn't realize that forces are working on him. Man is like a cow with its milk – and unless he gets wise to that, he'll never be able to jump the fence and get away from it.

Q. You were saying that everyone has dreams, as a nightly occurrence. Yet I have friends who say they never dream or only have an occasional dream. Is it that they dream and just don't remember them?

R. I think everybody dreams. I don't know the mechanism of the human brain in relation to consciousness. I wish I did. But I think that they neglect to be conscious of it, or they've trained themselves to forget, and they're glad to forget. Maybe they had a few

nightmares and just said, "That's it. None of that is going to come through to the conscious level." I don't know. But I think if they tried this, if they'd sit down to write, then they'd remember. Of course then an argument would come up: did they provoke the dream by having the pencil and paper at the side of the bed to write it down when they woke up?

Q. I think that's what Ouspensky says; that the problem of studying dreams is you get involved with it, and then it complicates itself.

R. Yes – I think that whenever you get into any bit of self-analysis you go through a phase of real complication. But then, by observing – not becoming involved in the labyrinth, but observing the labyrinth – I think it starts to level out, and you start to see a pattern then, a sensible pattern.

Q. So it's not really the dreams we're observing, but the moods, and it's only that we're looking at the dreams because it's easier to see the moods in them?

R. Yes, I'm pointing out the moods. You see the dream and you come to your friends later and say, "Boy, I had a real nightmare last night." But what I'm talking about is what you don't communicate to your friends, and what you don't record in your notebook as you come out of that dream: That you went to bed in a certain frame of mind and woke the next morning in an eerie, unreal state of mind – that the world is absolutely unreal. And what happened? What provoked it? You ate meat before you went to bed? I don't know. Something you ate might be like the opposite of fasting. Fasting might lead to some psychic disturbances too. I don't know.

Q. Moods seem to come from your environment – say the guy who works in the steel mill as opposed to the guy who works in a nursery.

R. I think you have to have the courage to change your environment. If your environment is giving you troubles, get away from it, that's all. And I think you do get into certain moods in certain environments. I know I've taken these steps. You can get into a place where you just can't live with the people, or you can't live with the circumstances. And the factors are not always human. I don't know what the factors are.

Q. When you find yourself in moods that are very volatile or destructive, you'd have to change your environment?

R. What was it Christ said? If you get unhappy in a certain town, you dust your shoes off and leave.²⁵ Don't hang around and try to change their minds. And I think this advice goes for almost anything. Don't try to sell refrigerators at the North Pole. Like a marriage of certain people – it's like trying to sell a party a refrigerator and they're not interested in refrigerators. Or you're trying to sell them a way of living which is sheer agony for them. So you just have to split, that's all. You have to separate.

²⁵ Matthew 10:14.

Q. A doctor I heard a while back claimed he could get a large percentage of people out of mental institutions by putting their blood in balance, cleaning their blood. And this would clean out the institutions.

R. Well, I think the mental institutions are a product of our psychiatrists. I don't believe that the psychiatrists are cleaning out the institutions; I believe the psychiatrists are causing them. I believe that the advice given to children today will fill the nuthouses of tomorrow. And I don't carry enough weight to emphasize it too much, so I don't say much about it. But that's my opinion. My opinion is that one of the cures for the increasing insanity in the public today is an increase in morality. I believe you have to conserve your energy. I don't believe you can be exhausting your energy in five, six, or ten different directions and not have an effect upon the mind. There's a confusion. We have become such an immoral nation that the confusion is driving the wits out of ourselves. And of course, this is old-fashioned. So what.

Q. I was taking notice of the effect of a lifestyle on your dream states; this is when I was smoking a lot of pot. I wasn't having any nightmares, but rather they were occurring while I was awake.

R. [laughs] Right. Well, the computer's going to get the message through to you some time or another.

Q. So I walked around in the fear state all day.

R. Yes, this is what I used to wonder about. I used to have people approach me and say, "Hey, man, we've got to get back to nature and we've got to learn to love each other." And they were the most hateful and the most turbulent creatures you'd ever run into – and often dangerous to be around. But they had this drug conception. I've often thought they were painting a case; what they were trying to say was, "Don't hurt me while I'm weak." That's the only thing I could figure.

Q. Did you ever have any personal benefits, or hear of anyone having benefits from limiting their sleep? I just read a book by a guy who went into this really fantastic experience, and one of the factors was that he was deprived of sleep. He wasn't trying to be deprived of it, but it just kept happening. And I've heard about an exercise where that's possible.

R. Well, I've heard of them using this, and I wonder how good it would be for everybody. I think different people react differently. I think for some people, if you deprive them of enough sleep they get violent. I used to get violent when I didn't get enough sleep.
[laughs]

During the war I went to work on a midnight job, and I couldn't sleep for approximately a week. And I became dangerous, very dangerous. They wouldn't put me on another job. I went to work in the middle of the hot summer and I went home and just couldn't sleep. I'd go to bed in the sun, and get up, and I'd was like a chicken – I couldn't break that habit. But I got so that my mind got locked some way. I had a limited perspective – like

being in a stunned condition all the time. But in that stunned condition I was defensive. I realized I wasn't able to protect myself, so I'd strike out at anybody who'd give me any trouble. So eventually I had to get off the job and quit it.

So I just wonder whether the same thing is good for everybody. Some things work, and I think the best thing is to go for the study of the dreams, and if you feel like you don't want to sleep, then don't sleep. If you like sleeping ten hours a day, maybe you need it.

Q. If a person is studying himself, studying moods and observing states of mind – isn't that person apt to dream less?

R. I wouldn't say. I don't know. I always dreamed, and I've been studying myself for years. And I've had some dreams that would shake my philosophy in the night. [laughs] I'd wake up with an entirely new philosophy.

More Q & A

Q. I was wondering about the power of suggestion on moods. This week a friend read an article about an ingredient in Chinese food that about thirty percent of people are allergic to, and this will cause depression. We went to a Chinese restaurant, and the next day she said she was so depressed that if somebody handed her a gun that morning she would have shot herself. But I ate the food too and I wasn't depressed. I just wonder whether the fact that she read that article affected her mood.

R. I wouldn't doubt that some people are this way. Incidentally, one of my chief directions in life is Zen and a Zen-ish type of discipline, and as I said, there's such a thing as a koan. Now you can give a suggestion to a person indirectly – and you've got to be careful. Some people can take a lot of attack – by attack I mean simply that I can say, "Who do you think you are?" And, "What is the meaning of the universe? What's your relation to the universe? What's your importance to the universe?" And keep asking a person questions of that sort. It may provoke you to do two or three hours of thinking after the lecture's over. But another person may want to go home and shoot themselves. Because the hint comes through, "Maybe I am insignificant."

So I disapprove of a lot of the current Zen systems. I disapprove of a lot of the so-called spiritual systems which have a ruthless attack upon the human mind. Because some minds are on the fence, and you've got to be very careful. I live down in West Virginia, and we hadn't had a person hang themselves in jail for about forty years. But in the last three months or so we've had five young people hang themselves in these small-town jails.

Now this I think is a consequence of suggestion. The jails have become dives, so to speak; cesspools for degenerates – they have just taken over the penitentiaries and jails. A kid goes in on a drug charge and he wakes up in a dive, and somebody's raping him or trying to attack him. And he just hangs himself and checks out of it. Maybe

because of fear. Maybe he could have escaped from it by using his wits; he could have fenced it off. But I think that in these cases where people take extreme action, there has to be a certain amount of suggestion, of the hopelessness of the situation, or they wouldn't do it.

And I think there are a lot of things that can be learned from this – rather than to say, “Oh well, we're better off without him,” where the person's nervous system or mental system wasn't too well balanced. But some of them are darn good people. I believe this. We labor under suggestion to a point where you enter a state of mind; and it takes a state of mind to kill yourself. So a state of mind becomes an enemy then.

Q. Do you think there's like a pattern of universal let's say “keyholes” that can trigger these peculiar states of mind that are particularly powerful or self-destructive? Do you find a pattern, in humanity? Like the guy when the woman left him?

R. Oh, sure, sure. There are a lot of key things – sex causes states of mind. And we almost leap into them. We're eager to get into this state of mind, hoping it will be productive, as we call it. Then drugs – even cigarettes. Cigarettes seem to be harmless, but cigarettes will put you in a state of mind. Almost any chemical can cause some type of change, if not a profound one. But I know cigarettes can cause a profound change in your state of mind.

Now – I believe, as I said before, that everybody is searching for this mean or average or common denominator of human behavior, or the thing that's acceptable to most everybody in the world. And we do read this through television commercials. They're continually presenting the fact that the sane people, the well-balanced people, buy Super Suds. Except that the men now are getting to be like Dagwood Bumstead; the men are always stupid and the women are wising them up. If you're sane, you'll act like this when you buy the Super Suds.

So I think you can get into a bad state of mind from that, from this false portrayal. Because the majority of people are like animals in the jungle – you've got to watch them. They're not all sweet people trying to show you that one bleach makes your clothes whiter than the other bleach.

Q. It seems hard to get away from that. It's almost overwhelming. If you watch TV a lot, there's not much you can do about getting sucked in.

R. I was watching TV last night – on the news they had a story about a guy by the name of Reverend Ike; I don't know how many of you saw it. He's got homes for boys and girls down in Texas; they're runaway kids and stuff. So the State of Texas is trying to put him out of business because he's mistreating these kids, supposedly; he claims he isn't. He claims he's beating the devil out of them. The devil is evil, and according to the Bible he's doing the world a service.

But anyhow, the thing I noticed about it was that they had the camera on all of these girls in this home. He would say, “Chapter 21 verse so-and-so.” And they would say, “Amen.”

And the girls all spoke in the same tone; the amens were all in the same tone. And occasionally one of them would pop up and say something very pertinent to his legal case. They were going to put him in jail if he didn't close down his places.

And I was amazed, that all these girls down to the last one – the reporters couldn't get any of them to criticize him. The reporter says, "How about you?" And this little sixteen year old girl says, "Well, I was a prostitute and this man saved me." They don't charge them anything – he takes them in and they don't pay him. But they do get into a state of mind, and they do attach it to Jesus; they attach it to the Bible. Well, so what? If that saves them, maybe it's good. But what I'm saying is that there's a state of mind there.

They interviewed two girls who had left, they had run off. And the one girl said, "Well, we didn't like it there. It was like a penitentiary." She said, "Some of those girls were runaways – we weren't. We just went there for religion, and we didn't like the idea of being locked up to do it, so we left." But she said, "You'll get in there, and when you do, you'll get to smiling like they smile – they all smile."

If you watch some of the people in the various cults you'll get this, the same superior type of condescension: "We have found the Lord, and you little devils are out." So they're functioning from a state of mind you can't compete with. You can't talk to it. And in this respect, they're out in left field until something brings them around.

Q. We're taught to be programmed beings from birth, from our grandparents to our mother to where we go to school. There's a certain program and this program has to be fulfilled, and you just have to fit in – otherwise you're a bad kid. It just keeps going on, into college and marriage.

R. Yes, yes. Well it's a thing they want to fall into; there are people who want to fall into it. I've seen people I know who have joined the police force, and before that they were fairly compassionate human beings. But then they've decided that they were the wrath of God, and they had to strike down all these corrupt, dirty people who didn't register their license plates on time. That these were arch criminals – this fellow drove across the yellow line and we've got to stop him, get him right away. In the name of God they work, not in the name of the law; they're almost divine. And these were just ordinary Joes, but they've been exalted by what they think the public wants. They're convinced that they're the voice of the public, the zeitgeist. And they become a disaster, a one-man wave of trouble.

But I don't think it's all programming from our grandparents. Go down to the barnyard and you'll find that the chickens and the goats all operate the same way. They have a common behavioral pattern, and when one of them gets out of line they jump on him. They have the kingpin – one cow is the kingpin; she fights her way to the top – and the rest follow her when she travels. So this is a biological trend, more or less, of adaptation.

They ran a film one time on the Wild Dogs of Africa, like a documentary. And I was really amazed. Incidentally, the females always rule. Something happened in the human race

– I don't know what it was – where logic superseded intuition. [laughs] But in the animal kingdom most of the females lead the herd. And they showed this one dog that had killed the pups of another dog, and then this other female followed her. It was very obedient; you could see it was cowed – it followed her crouching and that sort of thing.

I could see that the pack became a society, and it was very similar to the human society. They were all trying to find the proper way to please the other animal. Somebody wrote a book on that about people, *The Naked Ape*.²⁶ It had that same theme – that we're just apes with clothes on, so to speak, functioning pretty much that same way. Except that we've got a big vocabulary that fills the Webster's dictionary with excuses – for our so-called animal behavior. I don't think it has to be that way, but I think that's a factor. If you're analyzing yourself, you've got to take that into consideration. You can't bypass it.

I don't believe we're animals. I believe that the human being is divine. By divine I mean he has the potential. He also has the potential to be an animal. But I don't think you can become less of an animal just by ignoring the fact that you're an animal, or trying to be like an animal. A lot of people today are trying to be animals. They think that's the only way to go.

I believe that there's a vector. Civilization is a vector, and the vector is good. It's pretense; civilization is a pretense, but it's a good vector. Who knows? – we may hatch something out of it.

Q. It would seem that if somebody tried to develop their sensitivity, they would constantly be at the mercy of moods.

R. That's what I said earlier today. You can overcome your major moods; you can overcome the things that dominate you, on a major scale. But after you conquer that and get clear of that, you're still going to see everything you're doing as being the result of some factor you can't control. Not that it will matter as much, because you will have some clarity and some sanity.

But this is something I shouldn't emphasize too much, because I don't want to discourage people from fighting. I believe that this is important – because even if you lose, you're a fighter. It's important to fight, because then you're a fighter. If you don't fight, you're a slug. You're just like a snail without a shell, or a snail in a shell, something that basically exists.

I believe that man has a fact status, and you're eternally that fact status. And I maintain that this nostalgia is the voice of the soul, which points to eternity. It points toward it by virtue of all this emphasis and direction that is on it. It points and says, "There is an eternal man." Whatever you make it to be, you'll be eternal. If you're going to be a murderer, you'll be an eternal murderer. If you're going to be a person with a vector, you'll be an eternal vector.

²⁶ Desmond Morris, 1967.

And this is the language I think we read from this study of the nostalgic mood. That somewhere inside, the intuition behind the computer – or the Oversoul or whatever you want to call it – gets this reading very clearly, and acts on it. Or tries to act on it.

I can remember, when I was a kid I used to go to a show – and finally had to quit going to shows. They used to put out what I considered some good movies – they would really stir you up. They stirred *me* up – I don't know how many other people they did, but I think some of you have had this experience. Where you go into a show and you'd come out – you'd been thrown into a mood by everything that's in there, the sound, the music, the pictures, the setting and everything. I ran through some of them the other day: *How Green Was My Valley*²⁷ – certain ones that showed the tremendous social injustice, that would stir you up. I would come out and I would decide that I was going to go join the army and become a general and stop all this junk. And I would be completely carried away for two or three hours. And Lord knows what would have happened if somebody had run into me, in the wrong mood themselves at that time.

The idea was that my life up until that time was doing nothing. I realize I'm sitting in the show, itching to get out and get some action going. I'm sitting and doing nothing and I want out of there, because I want to start that vector. I want to start that man who is going to be for all time. And I think this is the message. I think this we know, down inside – we know that there is something that is eternal.

Walk around the block

Q. Can a person effectively generate the vector, so it is stronger than the moods?

R. You can't just invent one. But whatever step you take, moves you. And then your potential for higher steps evolves – only after you've taken *some* steps. But the first step should be the planning of how to take the second, third, and tenth step if necessary. Not just to make a move and then stop. The first step should be planning.

We talk about making a move in esoteric philosophy or Zen – and I found out that the majority of people can't get out of the rut. They've got to be at class or at work at eight o'clock in the morning, and they've got certain responsibilities right up to six o'clock at night, and after that they're too damned tired to do anything. So they go to bed, or they get a shot of whiskey and blank themselves out, and that's it.

And I say yeah, but you still have fifteen minutes or a half hour that you can lay claim to, that's yours. It doesn't belong to the corporation you work for, and it doesn't belong to your future, it belongs right now to your present. And in that half hour you can do something, repeatedly, of your own. No matter how asinine it is, do it. I used to say, if you can't do anything, if you can't think of anything to start with, walk two blocks down,

²⁷ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_Green_Was_My_Valley_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_Green_Was_My_Valley_(film))

two blocks over and two blocks back, every evening at eight o'clock. Can you do it? That's the beginning of a spiritual life.

It isn't necessary to chant mantras. Chanting mantras can get to be silliness; it can be absurd to you after awhile. But do this to set yourself and put yourself under control. And then after you do this, you might be able to do something else – like instead of smoking ten cigarettes a day, smoke ten cigarettes a week – by putting out the same force. When you realize that you're able to put in two solid months of walking two blocks that way, two blocks that way, and two blocks back – even though all the time it seems to be asinine, and especially if it's asinine – do it anyhow, just to show that you can do it. And you want to quit smoking? Get a piece of chalk and smoke it – it's asinine, but force yourself to smoke a piece of chalk.

And pretty soon you get control of your situation, and you'll go on to bigger things. But don't try to start right away with curing yourself of a massive alcoholic habit or a massive drug habit. Start with some little thing, and the rest will come.

Q. You said that nostalgia in some way points to the eternal within us. I find that my nostalgia keeps changing its form, over the years, which contradicts what you said, that it points to the eternal.

R. The nostalgia may change form, from dream to dream – but I maintain that the point behind nostalgia is the same thing, to perpetuate whatever that is you're dreaming of. It's the perpetuation of it.

[tape ends]