

DREAM EMERGENCE

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Dream: To consider possible; *in existence or effect*, to keep a dream alive.

Animism: Belief that a spirit or force residing in every animate and inanimate object, every dream and idea, gives individuality to each . . . the spirit in all things is responsible for the good and evil in the universe.

Dream: Mental activity associated with the rapid-eye-movement (REM) period of sleep. . . . Research suggests that REM sleep is a way for the brain to integrate information taken in during the day, consolidating new knowledge into memory.

—Corel A to Z Electronic Reference, 1997.

To me this season was like one long dream. It was like a storybook, but we only looked at three-fourths of it. Now it's like a soap opera to be continued.

—Cleveland third baseman Jim Thome

This issue of the journal presents offerings that seem on the surface quite different elements or chapters of a storybook, yet each contributes to defining emergent understandings of subtle energies and energy medicine. Again and again we are reminded that despite diverse appearances of elements of our field of interest, at bottom there appears to be a core of similarity that depends as much upon content, a willingness to open ourselves to diverse and sometimes improbable phenomena, and to consider what we find there in an honest and honorable way. Phenomena, facts are not suppressed *ad hominem*. Evaluation is applied *after* registration of the observation, not before.

In *Consciousness and Cognition in Alternative Healers: An Interim Report on Research into the Relationship of Belief, Healing, and Purported Subtle Energies*, M. Allan Cooperstein treats us to a comprehensive exploration of commonalities in process and dynamics of various different methods of healing through laying-on of hands, intention, prayer and subtle-energetic transfer. Through this work, including survey of published materials, detailed content analysis, and development of an inventory of healing experience, Cooperstein constructed a system of analysis of healing experience that can now be applied to study similarities among, and differences between, a variety of different healing methods and processes. Such an approach provides a powerful tool to help us unwind what is essential and similar across a variety of healing methods as well as to recognize and study contributions of unique processes. Cooperstein consolidates a set of “essential ingredients” of integrative healing situations that help us recognize that despite the apparent differences between approaches, there is much that is shared, and in so doing, he provides a firmer base for future investigation of healing.

Bernard R. Grad is a long-time student of the work of Wilhelm Reich, and in *Some Heat Experiments Implicating the Existence of a Subtle Energy* he reminds us that much of Reich’s work is subject to experimental study, and that when it is examined in this way the results can be not only refreshingly contemporary, but also quite stimulating with regard to our understanding of the possible nature(s) of subtle energies. The equipment for these studies is within grasp for almost everyone, and the procedures reasonably simple, yet the results, if confirmed independently, would seem to present opportunity to challenge conventional understanding of the functioning of this simple system, and therefore open recognition of the possibility that *something more* is going on that requires new models of physical understanding. Empirical validation of Reich’s ideas contrasts sharply with the highly politicized response that Reich encountered only a few decades ago, and could help to redress antagonistic treatment of some, perhaps before-their-time, observations. We will follow with interest emerging work in this area.

In the last issue of our journal, Philip Nicholson presented an exemplary investigation of visual-system phenomena with important neural implications entitled *Phosphene Images of Thalamic Sleep Rhythms Induced by Self-Hypnosis*. This issue follows up on some neural, clinical and philosophical implications of this work

through commentaries and response from the author who, in the end treats us to a stunning practical conclusion of the “don’t try this at home” sort. There is much to think about here, including not only the specific issues presented by the content of the article and the dialogue, but also the spirit of inquiry, the integrity of the author’s detailed self-observations and his consolidation of others’ observations of neural and behavioral activity in visual brain processing of information. Mary Jo Peebles-Kleiger brings her clinical experience to bear in raising important questions about what Philip Nicholson’s work reveals or confirms about hypnotic and dissociative mechanisms, awareness under surgery and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). The editor (in the guise of Commentator) raises certain philosophical issues to which Nicholson provides robust response. The overall impression is that this dialogue extends what can be learned from the original seminal contribution, and as Editor, I wish to express a genuine appreciation to dialogue participants as well as a desire for continuing such endeavors in future issues.

Finally, the cover for this issue by artist Meinrad Craighead, *She Who Gives the Dream*, returns us to a sense of vital, animate nature of shared dream construction that is revealing itself behind our lids. Information pours in as we conduct our daily rounds, only to be sampled, filtered, prioritized, revitalized through pattern recognition and symbolic transformation and then allowed to ripple to the surface of consciousness again, to release its living spirit in emergent new form ready for communication with others, an outward sharing that mirrors a deep coherence that crosses personal boundaries within. How may we guard this process, preserve its integrity against challenge, listen to its messages, free its spirit and build and externalize the dream that is emerging? How can we access that razor-sharp line of perceptiveness, hammer it on the forge of our experiences and process it with discernment and refinement? To what extent is it possible to be fully-present authentic observers of our own moments of numinous emergence and in that process join a community of those who are Givers of the Dream? How can we best continue to write and to read the Dream storybook, to stimulate the story to continue emerging as it frames and reveals the best, most useful versions of truth that we can comprehend, both without and within?

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