

## PSYCHE AND SURVIVAL

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### *Psyche and the Oracle*

When I was a boy living in Denmark my father would sometimes send me things from Chinatown in San Francisco—things you could never get in Copenhagen like boxes that only opened if you held them a certain way and other small marvels. Among the gifts were sea shells that would open when you put them in a glass of water and from which large colorful paper flowers would unfold. This is what I want to do today with the word parapsychology. Let's soak it in a glass of water and see what comes out.

"Parapsychology" is Greek not Chinese. *Psyche* enclosed by *para* and *-logy*. *Para* meaning beside, alongside, or beyond and *-logy* meaning verbal expression as in doctrine, theory, or science.

When our shell opens, between *para* and *-logy* Psyche is revealed. Psyche, the divine princess loved by Eros, rises from the waters like Venus. Today, the hermeneutics of a sea shell.

Our glass of water has become the Aegean Sea and we have found a being "so strangely and wonderfully fair that human speech [is] all too poor to describe her beauty, or even to tell of its praise," so says Lucius Apuleius (Neumann, 1956, p. 3), Psyche's biographer. Psyche is fresh and lovely but not born yesterday. Apuleius wrote about her more than 1800 years ago and she is probably a lot older. The fact that Psyche is so attractive that words cannot describe her creates a problem for people like ourselves who need to use written and spoken language on occasions such as this.

The gods were aware of the problem and devised a method whereby the inexpressible may be approximated by language. The way a deity may communicate with mortals is through an oracle—"oracle" from the Latin *orare*, to speak—such as the woman at Delphi who was a channel for the god Apollo. While she was seated on a tripod over a cleft in the rocks, from which mind-altering fumes may have emerged, Apollo would speak through her. Channels, we know, are not always clear and people who sought advice from the oracle often shook their heads and said, "That's pure Greek!" Perhaps she didn't inhale.

However, there was a group of people who always understood the oracle, or said they did. These were the priests at Delphi who would interpret the oracle for people in simple English, so to say. These priests, unfortunately, were not chosen by the gods. They were political appointees and often paid more attention to the earthly authorities than Olympian ones. That's still a problem, as we shall see. Anyhow to communicate with Psyche, we first need an oracle and then we can see about finding an interpreter.

The oracle at Delphi is down and it doesn't look as if it will be fixed soon, so we need to look for another. There are many people who seem to be intimate with the goddess, with Psyche. There are Freud and Jung; there are Watson, Maslow, Skinner, Rhine, and many others. Unfortunately, the psyches of these individuals often seem quite different from the psyches of the others. Or perhaps that is fortunate. In any case, where may we find an oracle we can all accept?

I suggest Springfield, Massachusetts, where Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary is published. True, Webster is not as exciting an oracle as Delphi, but he speaks with authority and in ways that we can comprehend. Also, he's a portable oracle.

Psyche reveals herself to Webster first, as the princess loved by Cupid—an alias for Eros. Second, Psyche reveals herself as soul, self, and mind. No wonder Eros fell in love with her. There is a large priesthood supposedly dedicated to the service of Psyche, to understanding her, to spreading her word, and to healing practices in her name. These priests we call psychologists. Psychology, Webster tells us, is the science of mind and behavior. Science, Latin *scientia*, having knowledge, is akin to *sciendere*, to cut. And indeed psychologists have cut something from psyche.

What they have cut is self, and also soul, the literal meaning of psyche. Like the statue of Venus de Milo at the Louvre, the psyche of psychology has lost her arms, and her nose is chipped too. She is still beautiful, but you can't hug her or at least she can't hug you back. We need for Psyche to become whole again.

The purpose to know the psyche as truly as possible is a purpose that engages and unites all of us. It has been my major occupation and preoccupation these many years. My efforts, some of you know, first took form in a complex theory that was the basis of my M. Litt. thesis

at Oxford in 1959, where I was a student of H.H. Price. Through the kindness of Robert Morris, it was later published (1975) as one of the volumes in the collection, "Perspectives in Psychical Research." The theory was simplified in "The Psi Field" (1964), my talk to the Parapsychological Association, when we met at Oxford, and where I explored a physical metaphor for psychic interactions. In a paper (1986) for this Foundation, I examined psi from the perspective of biological systems theory, and more recently (1990), I used the metaphor of the long body, a phenomenological perspective opened by Christopher Aanstoos (1986).

In each of these explorations the picture of psi has become increasingly simple. I now realize that what I have been exploring these many years is the ordinary, everyday human self: the everyday, extraordinary, miraculous human self.

### *The Meanings of Psyche*

Let us return to the oracle. Psyche, Webster tells us, is self, mind, and soul. Let's begin with self, psychology as the study of the self; the self exploring the self. As Socrates had a daimon, each of us has our psyche. This makes psychology, or parapsychology, stand out from any other discipline. The final judge of any expression about the psyche is you, me, each man and woman, our experience of who we are, and what we can be. Psychology, the logos of the psyche, must not only match objective facts, it must also match subjective facts. If it does not, few will listen and fewer will learn. It is refreshing to see psi researchers like William Braud (1993), Keith Harary (1992), and Russell Targ (1993) relate their own psi experiences to their empirical research.

The self is the same as the I, and the I the same as the Latin and Greek, *ego*. This self, I, is the central perceiver, the eye in my lived world and the actor also. Give the actor a mask, a Latin *persona*, and you have personality.

The self is awareness, consciousness, experience. Sometimes awareness is altered or absent and we may then say that the self is altered, absent, unaware, or unconscious.

The eye and actor, seer and seen, has substance, heft, body. When I talk about myself, when I say I saw the news on TV and then went for a walk in the woods with my wife, I'm talking about an embodied self. This embodied self is always somewhere, some place; in my house in front of the TV, in the woods with my wife. The self is emplaced. It also endures. The body and its places last for a while. The embodied, emplaced, and enduring self unfolds in mind, the second meaning of psyche. Mind comes from the Latin (*mens, monere*) and Greek (*menos, mnasthai, mimneskesthai*) words for remind and remember and also the words for warn and spirit. Warn becomes aware, consciousness. More about spirit later.

Through memory, mind brings the past into the present and projects itself into the future. Mind and memory become meaning, an enfoldment of mind in things within and around me, the things of my world. This world is the ground for a figure, my figure. Things and people make up my ground and I make up part of theirs. The figure is embedded in the ground and the ground defines the figure. I am embedded in my surroundings and these surroundings say who I am. They are my transpersonal side. Mind is personal and at the same time transpersonal.

I am who I am because of my memory, my history. This memory is relational, connective. Memory implies an "of," my memory of father and of mother, of home and of school, of friends and of enemies, of pleasures and of pains. It weaves my mind, my self, my figure into a ground, a transpersonal matrix. My transpersonal horizon is as near or as far as the reach of my memory.

### *The Psyche as Psychic*

We can now make another observation about the psyche. It is a truism but still needs to be said: The psyche is psychic. To say that the sun is sunny or that water is wet is a waste of good words. But to say that the psyche is psychic is to say something people need to hear. Let's go a step further and regard this statement as an axiom. An axiom is a proposition describing a self-evident truth, but a truism with

spunk. Axiom from *axioma*, to honor, and *agein*, drive. An axiom is accepted as is, with no call to reduce it to something more basic.

An axiom can be a seed of a paradigm. *Para* meaning beside or above and *-digm* meaning diction, expression; paradigm is an expression that gives an overview. A new paradigm can be revolutionary as when Copernicus rolled the flat earth into a ball circled by the sun and when Galileo stilled the sun and set the earth circling.

A paradigm that includes psi experiences could be equally momentous. To assert that the psyche is psychic is to assert that the self is connected to others in direct, unmediated ways. This means that what each of us knows and does at once affects what others know and do, and what happens in the physical environment. Values and behavior change: What you do to others, you do to yourself, so watch out!

Psychic experiences flow from the three connections of the self we have described. One, that the self incorporates others; two, that the self is embodied; and three, that the self is emplaced. (The endurance of the self follows from its embodiment and emplacement.)

One, the self enfolds or incorporates people and things I am close to. This enfoldment is an invisible link that connects people and things across space and time and that may result in what we call extrasensory perception and psychokinesis. From this perspective, ESP and PK take place within the psyche, not outside or beyond. Psi phenomena are only extra or *para* in relation to the picture of the self and body as separate from other selves and other bodies. This picture is a construct of old preconceptions, not of actual experience.

Two, the self is embodied. It breathes; it has a body with a brain. When I become aware of my connectedness with others in ESP or act on things in PK, my body and brain is engaged. In ESP my parasympathetic nervous system may be engaged; in PK the sympathetic system. Because my mind, my self, incorporates others, my mind incorporates other bodies. When these others are aroused by injury and trauma, my mind and body may be aroused. When they die, a part of me dies. Experiences of the crises of others, if these others are distant from me in space or time, we call crisis ESP, or telepathy, distance suffering.

Three, the self-mind-body is emplaced. I am now seated by the dining room table in my house. When I remember my past or plan my future I also see places, people, things; these make up the ground against which I am the figure. The figure and ground, my self and surroundings, in the past, present, and future is who I am. The places I walked and the things I hold are a part of myself. As the present becomes past this connection continues as memory. The places I have been remain part of my present and I of theirs.

When the place a person has occupied is then occupied by someone else, the second person may experience the figure of the first. This figure, without its familiar physical body, may appear as an apparition, a ghost. As in crises ESP, traumatic events, like sudden death or accident, may leave more enduring memories in places than neutral occurrences.

To repeat, the past is contained in the present. I know no other past than the present past, the past I can now recall. Like the foods I have eaten, it is the living sedimentation of my body-mind. This body-mind-place is not mine alone; it has a transpersonal dimension insofar as I exist for others and in others and insofar as they exist for me and in me. I may recall sitting in my dining room one year ago on a special occasion, a familiar form of remembering. I may also recall another person—as an apparition—who occupied this place before I came and whom I have only met through our shared space. This memory too is likely to be of a special occasion in that person's life, usually a painful one.

The latter form of remembering, as natural as the first, may not fit our preconceptions about memory and place and so we speak about haunting instead of about remembering. Haunting is a transpersonal form of memory, a remembering of someone I may never have met. Haunt and home are derivations of the same word. You might say that memories are like homing pigeons; they stay around the places they were hatched. All homes may be haunted though it is only the persistent and insistent place memory we call a haunting.

Similarly our objects and belongings may carry our imprint and reveal us to others. A person may then be discerned through an object from that person's place. The practice of obtaining information about people by means of their objects we call psychometry, not in the sense

of psychological tests, but in the sense of psychic imprints on physical objects. Psyche as mind; meter as measurement; hence, psychometry is mind in matter. Regrettably psychometry has gone from the laboratory scene. But it is used regularly by psychic detectives and other psi practitioners. If the intention is to affect someone's mental or physical health by means of a personal belonging, this may result in psychic healing or harm, practices known to anthropologists as contagious magic.

Since place and person are interwoven, a change in the person may lead to a change in the place. We call this psychokinesis, the effect of intention on the physical environment. When my body-mind is disturbed, my place too may be disturbed. Under some conditions, which are not yet fully understood, these place disturbances sometimes take the form of recurrent spontaneous PK or poltergeist.

Thus, the self-body-mind endures. I have a past, a memory, a history. As I look ahead, I discern and try to form a future for my individual self. This possible future, like my past, is transpersonal, and interwoven with intentions and tendencies beyond my individual aspirations; and so it is uncertain. But sometimes the many streams come together in one vision, a precognitive dream, or impression. It is still subject to change, and when it pictures injury to those who are part of our psyche, it may enable us to avert the danger.

What we have done so far is simply to show that to have a mind is to be psychic; to be a person is to be transpersonal. My experience of myself tells me this, and the words I use to describe myself, drawn from a familiar list, tell me that others' experiences of themselves are like mine. Finally, psychic phenomena validate that the self, the psyche, is indeed psychic. Our minds-bodies are connected not only within the range of the familiar sense organs but also beyond.

The things that are connected have all kinds of colors, values, properties, feelings, directions: light, dark; good, bad; pleasurable, painful; attractive, repulsive. We are connected as closely to our worst enemy as to our best friend. Both dwell in us, and make us who we are. The attractive and repulsive sides of the psyche are reflected in positive and negative ESP, psi hitting or psi missing, in psychically meeting or avoiding people and things.

This body of connections can be approached from many directions. Merleau-Ponty (1962) found the opening in perception. "When I turn towards perception and pass from direct perception to thinking about that perception, I re-enact it, and find at work in my organs of perception a thought older than myself of which those organs are merely the trace" (pp. 351-352). David Levin (1982-1983) equates "the thought older than myself" with Jung's "collective unconscious" or, as he prefers, the "primordial body" (p. 223).

Psychic experiences reveal the flesh of this primordial body, of Jung's collective unconscious, as that of the living Earth with all her beauties and blemishes. For psychic experiences show that memories and meanings inhabit the world of people, places, and things. Experiences of memories in matter, of hauntings, point homeward, not to unearthly spirits. This too is what the term tells us for haunt means home.

### *The Body of Psyche and Eros*

The awakening of this primordial body into light and consciousness is our awakening, our seeing, and its evolution or dissolution is our doing. These two sides of our being, the seer and doer, we sometimes call our feminine and masculine sides. The feminine, receptive, attractive; the masculine, active, attracted. These opposing and connected aspects of our self are reflected in ESP and PK. ESP as passive, receiver; PK as active, transmitter.

The conscious development of our feminine and masculine sides, or rather the possibility for this development, is the theme of Apuleius' story of Psyche and Eros and of two recent recollections of the same story, one by Erich Neumann (1973), the other by David Michael Levin (1982-1983). Eros, Levin suggests, is the name for "The felt sense of wholeness constitutive of body-in-movement ... Eros is a metaphor for movement," (p. 213) and, we can add, a metaphor for psychokinesis, mind-movement. But psychokinesis, though intentional is not necessarily conscious. Movement, kinesis is transformed by Eros as is his sexuality. "Eros," according to Levin, "is not just a figure of sexual embodiment...it bears within itself the divine madness of the



urge to realize a more spiritual nature, more attractive to Psyche's dream...the reaching out of great compassion" (p. 233). Going to Merleau-Ponty (1964) Levin finds the embrace of Eros and Psyche in "...the total continuum made up of all the lived relations with others and the world..." (pp. 140-141).

In the terminology of Jung (1956), the psyche is collective and "access to the collective psyche means a renewal of life for the individual" (p. 260). The collective psyche, we need to add, is also corporeal and emplaced. If we approach her in a lively and loving way, Psyche's body, the world, will be enlivened and renewed. Each day will be Earth Day.

Until now we have sketched a picture of psyche as self and mind and we have shown that psychic phenomena are part of that picture. We have naturalized and normalized the paranormal and thereby also shown that the psyche can be explored empirically as well as experientially. In other words, we have placed the psyche at the center of psychology and psychic phenomena at the center of the psyche.

### *Psyche and Science*

The psyche is both personal and transpersonal and both sides must be addressed in our experiments and investigations, if these are to succeed. All too often the psyche we attempt to engage is like the Venus at the Louvre, she has no arms, and does not perform well. The living psyche embraces people and places. If we take account in our research of the transpersonal dimensions of our subjects and ourselves, our findings will be more meaningful to everyone concerned and probably more significant, in both senses of the word.

### *Soul and Breath*

We come now to the third and final meaning of psyche Webster presents us with, to soul. Soul is akin to spirit, and spirit is the same as *spiritus*, Latin for breath. Like mind, soul has a personal and a transpersonal dimension. Webster calls soul "an immaterial essence, or

animating principle, or actualizing cause for an individual life." In its transpersonal form, soul "reflects a spiritual principle embodied in human beings or the universe as a whole." Since my mind and body include the minds and bodies of others, their breath, body, and spirit are mine also. In this way I have lived before and will live again.

### *Psi and Survival*

The body is a living thing and it is a dying thing. It is composed of cells with a life and with a death. In the body, living entails dying and death brings renewal; without dying there can be no living. This too is true of the psyche as we have pictured it. The psyche is embodied, and bodies die, but because the psyche consists of many bodies, it persists after the death of the individual body.

What about the individual mind? Will you or I survive? We will and we won't, according to the present image. If the psyche is not restricted to an individual body but incorporates other people and things then we would expect to survive within that larger life. Small consciousness would be absorbed in a larger consciousness.

This is not the theory that has guided most survival research. In studies of mediumship, post-mortem apparitions, and rebirth memories, the researcher has usually looked for the continuation of a small mind that identifies itself with a small body. The work has not been successful; attempts by survival researchers to communicate with the deceased is rarely met by a reciprocal interest from the other side. It is not difficult to see why. The small mind does not exist before death and therefore cannot be expected to emerge afterwards. Sometimes images of the dead and shorter or longer strings of memories are evoked but usually only among their places and people, that is, where place memories may be retrieved.

Our view of the psyche and of life after death has been too narrow, and we are confused about life and death. Death has been placed outside life, as the end of life and therefore to be avoided, while death is actually part of life. Look around, life continues, and it continues because of dying, not in spite of it. Then imagine no-death either in the

form of continuations of individual bodies or of interferences from spirit entities in our affairs. Hell on earth would have a new meaning.

We have postulated the existence of an interpersonal, embodied, and emplaced psyche. Since the psyche is not identified with an individual body, we have also postulated its continuation after death. Is this continuation conscious? The theory says so but what do the facts say? The living members of the psyche are clearly conscious, at least some of them, some of the time. What about the dead ones, people whose individual lives have come to an end?

How to say if someone or something is conscious? This is impossible on empirical grounds, that is, by observation. There is another way of knowing, participation, experiencing the process of dying. This is how each of us shall ultimately know whether consciousness continues—or not know.

Some people, a large number, are convinced that they have participated in their own dying. Near-death experiences have been attributed to disturbed brain processes, but these presumably could not account for veridical out-of-body experiences associated with NDEs nor for the increased psychic awareness reported at the time, and also when the person has recovered.

NDEs seem to illustrate three selves, and the transformation of one to the other: an OBE self, a psychic self, and a universal self. The journey often begins with an out-of-body experience, a sense of occupying a body, or point of view, distinct from the physical body. The OBE perspective is usually narrow and visual, like the body's, and the state of consciousness is similar to the state of the familiar bodily self. The OBE self may feel drawn through a tunnel or other metaphor for transformation to a place of lightness and psychic connections. Here the encapsulated OBE self expands into psychic union with loved ones, dead and living. There may be a life review where past events are experienced simultaneously. Hurts that the person caused others may be experienced as the others experienced the hurts. On this level, the distinction between self and others dissolves, Eros is united with Psyche.

If the NDE is not cut short, a further transformation may occur. The transpersonal self may be drawn to a place or being of overpowering love and light. Before this too there often is a transformation, perhaps

pictured as a river that must be crossed. When this happens there can be no return to the body, the psyche would dissolve and all identity would be lost; that is, the person would die a death that is felt as total life. At this stage the journey is often aborted. The NDEer returns to bodily life, unafraid of death, more loving, and with a more developed psychic sense (Ring, 1984). The union of Eros and Psyche has become lived reality.

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*DISCUSSION*

BRAUDE: Bill, by the way, I like the idea of a small mind. That's something I had previously associated only with game show hosts! I have two questions. First, I don't understand why veridical OBEs can't be accounted for in terms of ESP and creative visualization. And if I understand, you are offering a kind of reincarnationist view that there is a finite number of psyches, presumably, but they are associated with different small minds at different times. Is that right?

ROLL: I look at reincarnation as a kind of haunting, remembering place memories.

BRAUDE: I don't mean this as a fatal objection or anything of the sort. I just never understood this.

ROLL: I don't object to fatality. I accept death.

BRAUDE: I understand. If I understand this view, then there are going to be fewer psyches than there are small minds with which they are associated. So as the human population seems to have grown extensively over the centuries, I don't understand the relationship between the original stock of psyches, such as it might be, and the number of small minds that seem to proliferate.

ROLL: From the perspective of this theory, a small mind is an illusion. It is probably a necessary illusion. In other words, it is the idea of these bodies possessing individual minds which I regard as a biologically necessary illusion.

BRAUDE: But the number of persons and personalities is not illusory.

ROLL: Oh, yes. In other words, the reality I regard as the embodied, emplaced psyche, partly because it is embodied, shows a number of characteristics of bodies. It expands. It multiplies. It extends. But the idea of separate distinct individual minds, I reject. I don't think it's the case.

BRAUDE: So, you and I don't have genuinely distinct centers of self-awareness, for example?

ROLL: Your sense of self-awareness is mistaken, Stephen. I've often told you that. But he never, ever listens!

BRAUDE: It's a living.

EDGE: It's so small!

BRAUDE: I don't want to belabor this, but there are a number of distinct personalities. This room is filled with a number of distinct personalities and presumably a number of distinct centers of self-awareness.

ROLL: No. We are distinct and indistinct. From one perspective, from the point of view of biological life, we experience ourselves as separate. We have to. We couldn't cross the street if we didn't experience ourselves as biological beings. But on another level, on the psychic level, we overlap. We are connected, and these distinctions fall away.

BRAUDE: Well, what is the "we" when you say "we experience ourselves as distinct"?

ROLL: Well, now you see our language, our terms, reflect our Western philosophy which is Cartesian in two respects. First of all, the mind-matter distinction; and secondly, that the world consists of entities. It's a Cartesian/Newtonian construct. And it's mistaken.

BRAUDE: Wait. I will belabor this.

ROLL: No, you shouldn't.

BRAUDE: I know of a Zen nun who was trying to cultivate the impression that she had no self, so she would never use the personal pronoun "I". There are several things I've never understood about this. For example, how would she explain her experience of hunger and the fact that feeding her body would make a particular hunger sensation, whether she wanted to call it hers, disappear; whereas feeding someone else's body didn't?

ROLL: No.

BRAUDE: I mean, it seems to me there is that kind of center of self-awareness that still needs to be accounted for.

ROLL: It's difficult because language is built for one level of experience. What we are dealing with are other levels. One way that has been helpful for me is to regard the self, the small self and the big self, as a sort of complementary relation. Both are real. But they are never real at the same time. For instance, right now I experience myself as an entity in conversation with you, and you experience yourself as an entity. From that point of view it is true. But from another point of view, it is incorrect. When we shift to the other perspective, the connectedness, the psychic perspective, you cannot

make this distinction. It is false. It is parallel to the particle and the wave. Yes, it's true here; no, it's not true there. That is the way I think in my own mind so that I can conceptualize this. Steve has spoken enough now, don't you think?

LAWRENCE: I would like to make some comments with reference to near-death experiences. One of the issues I think that has come up is: How are the near-death experiences going to fit into the realm of parapsychological research? In some ways people have talked to that, specifically medical and health care professionals who have now dealt with these people. It seems to be somewhat tangential to parapsychological research and even called "business as usual," or the response of a dying brain. I guess I would take a position that it is not. There is something that is going on and I think it would behoove all of us to work together based on the different paradigms that we have, if you are talking about the need for new paradigms, to integrate this. For example, the issues raised by Susan Blackmore on if it's a hallucination or oxygen deprivation, etc. We have had some cases where as far as we're concerned that patient had died. There was no question in our minds that there was no pulse, no blood pressure. It was not a dying brain; it was a dead brain. These patients came back. That is under research at this point in time, but it certainly is something to think about. I think the large numbers of patients who have had this experience are saying that this is real to them. This is not a hallucination. We don't understand that. I think it needs to be somehow looked at and looked at in terms of what the phenomenon is—what those patients experience. And then: How does it fit, or not fit? But I think it's seen as tangential at this point.

ROLL: This was what I was attempting to do, to fit near-death experiences into the picture of the psyche. As far as I can make out, in near-death experiences you have an actual experience of the psyche. You have an actual experience of the transition from being an individual to being a multiple; that is, in the near-death experience there are two deaths. The first death is a death of the little mind, or not the death but the transformation into a larger connected telepathic mind. In other words, a particularly vivid example to me is the past-life review where you may experience everything simultaneously. That's a very transpersonal and a very psychic vision. The judgment or the

evaluation which is made has no stigma attached to it. There is no guilt. But you experience what you have done to the other people, your hurt to others. Now you are the other people in these near-death experiences. You experience the hurt that you caused yourself, as it were. The near-death experience is the most vivid experiential expression of the psyche.

LAWRENCE: Except I think that the life review is just one component of it and a relatively rare component. The other comment that you made about the feeling of peace and love, that is usually not something that happens later in the experience; that is usually something that happens immediately into the experience. So, they have this feeling of connectedness and yet they are still visually seeing what we would consider to be normal reality. So, I think there is a lot more work that needs to be done to look at what those stages are. What are the tighter definitions to distinguish near-death experiences from plain old regular out-of-body experiences, if there is such a thing? And what do those different components mean?

ROLL: These out-of-body experiences during the NDE are very, very interesting. I remember one lady who had a very, very rich near-death experience. She described to me how out in the hallway she saw her daughter and her husband and she was disturbed because the daughter was wearing mismatched clothes. The husband had rushed from the home, just picked what was on top of the laundry basket, and the daughter had mismatched clothes. The mother was very disturbed about that in the near-death out-of-body experience. To me, that is precisely the point of view anybody would have in the ordinary state of consciousness. Since my teens, I have experienced out-of-body experiences. This is really one of the major things that got me into this field. Aside from being out of the body, what stood out most about these experiences was that the self I was, the self I experienced, was more or less indistinguishable from my everyday, ordinary self. It had very little noetic quality. It was my separate, ordinary self. What excites me about the near-death experiences or the full near-death experiences is the transformation of this self into something wider and richer. You could not imagine after the tunnel experience and this paradisiacal landscape, that people would be worried that a spirit is wearing the wrong kind of dress. Issues like this have become



meaningless in the face of being intimately and telepathically connected with the other.

GROSSO: I just want a little more clarity on the difference between the small and the large self. First of all, I'm wondering, how you distinguish between the two? Is the large self an expanded version of the small self? Is there continuity between the two selves? Is the larger self a more inclusive version of the small self? And what bearing does this have on the question of "what survives"? I keep coming back to this critical question. What survives? Does the small self? Does it disappear? You seem to imply in your remarks that the small self vanishes into the larger self. I'm not quite sure what you mean by that. What is it that might survive?

ROLL: Let's take it step by step. The small self is defined as the two selves, the three selves, or the four selves that are now engaging each other in this room. At the time of death or in other enlightenment experiences (it doesn't have to be the near-death experience), this is changed to a more inclusive self. It can be gradual enlightenment or sudden enlightenment. The whole thing changes when you are included in that self, you are not included with your limits. In other words, it's like a cell in the body suddenly realizing that there is a whole body. "It's not just me, a little blood cell. I'm part of a big thing."

GROSSO: But there is still an "I" there. There is that nuclear sense of "I" that retains its identity through this experience.

ROLL: No. It doesn't.

GROSSO: It doesn't?

ROLL: No. It achieves a new identity, Michael. It achieves identity of the psyche of a larger thing.

GROSSO: Well, is it eclipsed, annihilated, lost, disintegrated forever, or what? That's the point I don't get.

ROLL: Yes, it is. I'm sorry. All of us have been digging through this material for decades. The evidence for individual continuation from mediumship or from apparitions provides no real evidence for the continuation of an autonomous entity. When you look at our level of connectedness, you see that on that level, we want to have the cake and eat it too. We think we are so wonderful as individual entities, that surely there must be some place in the world for the continuation of these egos. Now, our traces continue. For better or worse, we continue

to affect others. But the ego is lost. That means there is no judgment anymore. It's just the way it is.

GROSSO: I'm still not comfortable with that. It sounds to me that you are describing a connectedness in which individuals disappear. So, what is connected after the individual has disappeared?

ROLL: Well, what's connected in your blood, in your body, Michael?

GROSSO: In my body my cells retain their function, their identity, their elaborate distinctiveness even though they are part of a more inclusive reality. The total body is an expansion of the cell's identity. But the cell's identity is retained in the context of that larger reality.

ROLL: But, Michael, your cells die. You are dying right now.

GROSSO: So my body is going to die. I'm trying to find out what is going to happen to me after. You see, that's what the whole discussion is all about.

ROLL: No, no, Michael. You are doing very well, though you are dying all the time. Your cells are continuously dying. But you are doing very well. You are drinking; you are eating; you are making new cells.

TAYLOR: I would like to speak to something that Madelaine Lawrence brought up a minute ago, which is also related to this other question. It has to do with my critique of what I consider to be outmoded methodologies and conceptual frameworks in psychical research. I think that most of the problems of personality are not going to be solved from a psychological or a parapsychological standpoint until we begin to take cognizance of this whole process, as you were indicating, of anabolism and catabolism, the fact that we are constantly making cells and cells are constantly being broken down. It seems to me that when the breaking down process overtakes the building up one that death really takes place. Even if there is no activity in the body, the brain, or the heart, the fact remains that as long as the building up process is still going on in the body, the life force is still active in the biological organism.

Another aspect of personality that needs to be addressed is our ability, as normal individually functioning organisms to biologically separate self from not-self in the antigen antibody response. It is very clear that there is a biological mechanism for identifying who we are

versus who we are not as far as health and biological survival is concerned. That leads to the other even more intriguing question of how the body identifies that which used to be itself but is now no longer itself,—how the body knows when dead tissue needs to be sloughed off. There is some biological mechanism of personality discrimination going on in there as well. So, however misguided our conceptualizations of materialistic biology may be, the fact is that these are processes which we know play some role in the philosophical issues that we are raising here.

As for the philosophical issues, I would like to return to the problem of representation to clarify a point we started to bring up before. We live in a material and rational world that presupposes that there is a world of objects independent of the senses and that there are laws independent of the mind. Whenever anyone speaks about the field of parapsychology, it seems to me that there are two different epistemological frames of reference that get thrown into the same verbal stream of understanding. That is, when you want to be scientific and find evidence, you adopt the attitude that this world of objects is independent of the senses but then you try to use the methodology of the physical, natural, and social sciences to get at these more ephemeral and extended experiences. I seriously question the possibility that there is a reality independent of the mind. Not that the mind solely creates it, but that in the history of human consciousness there has got to be some relation between consciousness and science and mathematics. From a scientific standpoint, we have, therefore, created a kind of narrow band of control over material reality and then redefined the world as if that narrow band was really always there. So just to bring this diatribe to a conclusion, I believe we are going backwards trying to make the present kind of science explain unusual facts. There needs to be a radical new look that must overtake science and its methods, in order to be able to approach the types of phenomena that we are talking about.

ROLL: Let's just hold it there, because I think you are absolutely right. I also think that biology has a very interesting conceptual framework, particularly systems theory. If you add the mental perspective, the mental dimension, the psychic perspective or dimension to systems theory, then on different levels there would be

different states of consciousness and different experiences of space and time.

TAYLOR: I am thinking about an idea expressed by William James in his *The Principles of Psychology*. There James raises this issue about the role of consciousness in the evolutionary process. He challenges the idea that what we are trying to do in a material sense is to search for where consciousness appeared along the evolutionary spectrum in the biological evolution of the organism. He said that it equally could be possible that consciousness was there from the very beginning. Consciousness did not arise *out of inert matter*, but in fact may have co-arisen with it. Only by the process of objectification have we separated the two and denied the reality of one of them.

ROLL: I think that's another very good point. If there is no sharp distinction between mind and matter, mind was there to begin with, interwoven with matter. If physical scientists miss this point, they cannot fully understand the universe. According to some physicists, for example Hal Puthoff, who's also a parapsychologist, empty space is filled with energy. If we deny the Cartesian distinction, it is at the same time filled with mind. The more you expand into matter, the more you expand into mind, into consciousness, into yourself.

TAYLOR: I believe that also applies as far as the body is concerned. I do not think that consciousness resides in the brain. I think it resides in every cell of the body. Scientific explanations which simply go back to brain processes do not suffice to begin to describe the nature of our experience. Epistemologically I'm struck by the fact that the subject matter of experimental psychology, once it has jettisoned everything that it did not think was legitimate science, became primarily vision and hearing. It seems to me that the experimentalist attitude has created a psychology based upon what is at the forefront of its methods. Consequently, methodology has been allowed to define the subject matter of psychology. In that sense, psychology has become not much more than a colossal elaboration of ego.

ROLL: Well, that's true. Precisely the same is happening in parapsychology. The experimental methodology of parapsychology is behaviorism. And behaviorism is another word for Newtonianism.

TAYLOR: The scientific epistemology of psychophysics still prevails. That is one of the reasons why parapsychologists cannot address the question that Madelaine is raising; the experimental model is still derived from psychophysics based on laboratory experiments and the 19th-century German ideal of pure science.

ROLL: We have to have a new methodology to match our subject matter.

EDGE: The moderator has a chance to come in here. Was I correct in interpreting what you said about precognition is that it is essentially induction?

ROLL: Yes. Probably plus PK, but still basically induction. In other words, to me precognition is prediction with a wider database.

EDGE: That has been achieved through this field?

ROLL: Yes.

EDGE: Going out?

ROLL: Yes.

EDGE: Throughout ourselves.

ALMEDER: Bill, I know you only had 30 minutes and it's hard to tell a big story and give all the arguments, but I'm concerned about some of the reasons you might have for some of the conclusions you assert. Starting at the beginning, I want to know whether I will survive my death. You say that the person is an embodied self, but does the pronoun "I" refer to the self embodied or the embodied self?

ROLL: Well, again, it depends on which level we are talking. But when we are talking here, usually the "I" refers to...

ALMEDER: The self.

ROLL: Yes.

ALMEDER: In the body. So, the question is whether the self survives. I have heard you saying different things. You were telling Stephen that it is an illusion to think you have a self. Then I heard you say, "Well, whether the self survives or not is a question of whether it's connected with a larger self." Let's come back to Michael Grosso's point. You are definitely convinced of the idea that the individual self does not survive, but what I need to know is why would you say that? What's the reason?

Secondly, how in heaven's name do I know whether I am connected in such a way as to be one of the bigger selves or part of the bigger

self? I mean, I have trouble understanding that. At the end of the treatment *On the Soul*, Aristotle raises the question of what the "I" refers to. He knew that his mind survived; thinking survives. But he didn't know if his body was going to. Do you define the self in terms of the person, in terms of something that had a body and a mind?

But then the question was "Well, what happens to me?" I think Aristotle's point had to be "me", the thing that has both a body and a soul, a body and a self, that is no longer. What happens is consciousness survives. But if you are somewhat Platonic, like I am (and I think some other people in this room are) there is this question of individual consciousness and the self. If you say it doesn't survive as an individual, it has to have all these other things going and I would like to know what the reason is.

ROLL: I don't want to lose you, because I'm getting confused here. Let me just try to answer you before you add something else. Your point is very, very good and very, very important. What I would like to suggest is that you, as you sit here, are really transpersonal. You are an extended being, an extended structure because of your connections to others, because of what you have ingested, and because of your relationships. You are a psyche. You have incorporated others. You have incorporated your parents, teachers, friends, and so forth. These beings are living presences within you. When they talk to you, it is a kind of telepathy. But really they are within you. Most of the time, however, we experience ourselves as an encapsulated entity. It is a matter of two types of survival: the survival of consciousness and the survival of some sort of entity. What I'm suggesting is that at death your experience of being an entity cut off from others is transformed, and you then become aware of your psyche. You become aware of your relationships, of your web of relationships. You recognize that your consciousness is changed, transformed, expanded. You recognize that as your "true" self. Within this larger self you have laid down traces in your relationships, there are traces from you all over the place. These continue, too. These traces are experienced also as part of the larger relationship. But there has been an expansion, a sort of explosion of consciousness. You are no longer the person you were before. In my opinion, you do not return. If you did, we would have evidence for it in these 100 years of survival research. There is no

evidence. The evidence is so extremely poor. What there seems to be are trains of memories, apparitional experiences, and so forth. But in terms of an autonomous distinct individuality as you are now, interacting in distinct ways with other people, there's no evidence for it whatsoever.

EDGE: My small self now calls for a break.