

FINDING GURDJIEFF

THROUGH THE

PARANORMAL

By J. Robert Bromley, Esq.

My Understanding of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky

Through Mrs. Louise Welch's Instruction

© 2006. J. Robert Bromley. All rights reserved.

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: My Most Astonishing Paranormal Event	3
Chapter 2: To Europe and Morocco	5
Chapter 3: The Double Whammy!	8
Chapter 4: Mont Saint Michel	10
Chapter 5: A Paris Subway and Mount Athos	12
Chapter 6: My mother and the Paranormal	16
Chapter 7: Beginning to Psyche Out the Extraordinary And Use It	19
Chapter 8: Anya Seton and Her Psychic Abilities	25
Chapter 9: Water Witching in Back Country Ohio	27
Chapter 10: Gabriel Grayson the Magician	30
Chapter 11: Mental Telepathy	33
Chapter 12: About Madame de Salzmann	35
Chapter 13: Rita Benson	39
Chapter 14: My Penultimate Paranormal Event- Clairvoyance	43
Chapter 15: Discovering the Ways of Key West	45
Chapter 16: Does the Paranormal Help Us?	48
Chapter 17: More About Key West	51
Chapter 18: Each of Us Must Cultivate Our Own Garden	54
Chapter 19: How Do We Do “Active Being Mentation”?	57
Chapter 20: The True Quest	60
Chapter 21: Awakening to Higher Consciousness	63

INTRODUCTION

To begin with, I'm not a psychic like Kenny on TV or Schuller at the Crystal Cathedral. I don't normally read minds like Kenny or see someone's misery or grief over long distances like Schuller. But I can't doubt these events happen when I see them happen before my own eyes on TV, AND I have had a similar experience to what I see before my eyes. Just because I may have a scientific framework and/or a religious preconception about this is no reason to dismiss these experiences out of hand. Rather, the inquiring mind should allow for the possibility of such paranormal phenomena.

But this is NOT to say that people should believe in every such experience automatically as if it were an "ism" or an article of faith. If I see the paranormal before my eyes and yet have never had the corresponding experience, I can and should doubt it. I personally have never had the experience of a past lifetime nor had an after death experience; therefore, I'm very skeptical of such phenomena as reported by other human beings. Especially as reported by actresses to make their books best sellers. But I can't close the door completely.

There is after all the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is the foundation of Christianity. If there is a God, He-She must have endowed us with reason for a purpose. Reason unaided by prejudice can lead us

through the paranormal to a more objective understanding.

Gurdjieff is paramount in this essay. I think most people with a real search, whether they have paranormal experiences or simply are trying to find truth for themselves, have run into Gurdjieff. He was a Russian mystic born in Armenia of Greek ancestry. Gurdjieff traveled through the orient and according to his second book found truth in a monastery in or near Tibet. He returned to the western world and taught in Moscow, and after the Communist Revolution, came to and taught in both Paris and New York in the 1920's. He died in France in 1949.

CHAPTER 1

My Most Astonishing Paranormal Event

The most curious paranormal experience of my life happened when I was eighteen. While walking across my college campus toward the dining hall, I had a déjà vu. I knew exactly what the fellow next to me was going to say slightly before and during his speaking. And it was all intertwined in my psyche with the trees arching overhead and the pattern of the flagstone path we were walking on. But the sensation was: “I’ve been here before but not in this lifetime”. It was as if I was destined to live again through this moment of time!

I took this experience to my college professors and other exalted personages. They all said that déjà vu is not a paranormal experience—simply split consciousness where the second moment seems to overlap the first giving the illusion of déjà vu. But it was a real experience I had and none of these erudite professors gave me any satisfaction. I continued having déjà vu and still do.

I remember a moonlit evening with my surrogate father, Ben Grant. We were sitting by his swimming pool and Ben told me to believe in what I knew to be real. He made an appointment for me to see Mrs.

Louise Welch in New York. Mrs. Welch had been with Gurdjieff when he came to New York in the 1920's and afterward with him in France.

When I met Mrs. Welch and her daughter Patty in a crowded restaurant on Lexington Ave, I was struck by her presence. She was a very real human being. Not as Gurdjieff said- a person in "quotation marks" like my college professors. She confirmed that my continual déjà vu experiences were quite real. That Gurdjieff had déjà vu, but for him the déjà vu elongated. I got the impression Gurdjieff could see before the moment and after the moment by a few seconds- possibly minutes.

To really live in the moment by seconds if not minutes both ways, would be to be alive in a different dimension of time, as well as in this time line also.

Then Mrs. Welch told me to look around the restaurant, and she said, "They're all asleep; you can see that". I saw a man and a woman at the next table verbally assaulting one another, and they were asleep saying painful things all in their dreamworld of hatred and spite.

The point is to wake up! To wake up to truth and reality. To wake up out of our usual state of reacting to others and reacting to situations. To more nearly dance to our own inner tune!

CHAPTER 2

To Europe and Morocco

After enrolling in the semi-secret Gurdjieff Work under Mrs. Welch's direction in the fall of 1959, I made many trips to Europe.

Then, I found myself in Tangier just as it was solidifying with Morocco. This was my first day in the non western world. I was captivated by the sights and sounds, the minarets and narrow lanes of the white-washed Casbah. A nice Moroccan named Mustafa invited me to his place and a curious adventure began.

I became very "high" on a drug and had the sensation of becoming "elongated". I was both way up there as if my head touched the ceiling of Mustafa's room and still seated on the couch at the same time. I really knew what being "high" meant and the reference in the Bible flashed through my mind of the Transfiguration. Jesus was "high" on a mountain in the presence of his disciples Peter, James and John. The disciples watched Jesus commune with Elijah and Moses both at that time long dead. In Mustafa's room while "high" I could see

but not with my ordinary eyes two men on the other side of a masonry wall one foot thick.

Then Mustafa led me through the serpentine alleyways of the Casbah about midnight “to meet American friend”. Mustafa said “You’ll like him”. My euphoria quickly drained away as I saw the narrow hostile eyes of the jalaba clad figures I was passing. I clutched Mustafa’s jalaba and breathlessly asked “Where are you taking me?” “peace, peace, brother”, Mustafa said. “You’ll like American friend.”

So after a few minutes of walking, we entered a cobblestone street, turned at a doorway in the wall, walked down three steps, crossed a moonlit courtyard and up a long flight of steps inside a dark building, down a hall to a door. Mustafa knocked, pushed open the door and stood with his back to the door. There in the room was a brown-bearded man sitting cross legged on the floor entirely covered by a jalaba; the angles of his shrouded face dimly apparent by candlelight. Along the far wall was an attractive blond girl lying back on a couch. As the man took a puff on his gurgling hookah, he looked at me standing in the door and said,

“Hello, Bob. I haven’t seen you in years.”

I was astonished and frightened. I did not at all recognize this man. I walked around him asking who he could be.

“A person in one of your past lifetimes”, came the amused answer.

I crouched beside him and made out more of his face, but still did not recognize him.

“Look here”, I said, “you may think this is a joke, but I’m scared to death. Please stop playing with me!”

With that he took off the hood of his jalaba and said, “Oh, Bob; it’s me, Paul Gyss. We went to school together years ago”.

Suddenly relieved, I blurted out, “Paul, what the hell are you doing here in Tangier?”

Well, then, I thought the hand of Providence had brought me here to Morocco to experience life in a deeper way than even Gurdjieff had provided- so I decided to stay.

Then three days and three nights later, I decided to leave- posthaste! “What was I doing here in this drug den of Tangier?”, I wondered. Drugs can get you high but then comes the crashing let down and despair that totally eclipse the high. If I was searching for real adventure, it must be as a rational human being becoming master of my own inner life as Gurdjieff taught, rather than a slave to drugs. I must reach a high out of inner volition for the lasting results of the paranormal to remain.

CHAPTER 3

The Double Whammy!

After leaving Paul Gyss and Mustafa in Tangier, I eventually made my way home to the U.S. I took up lawyering as a profession and became a good middle class citizen of Stamford, Connecticut- even got into politics.

My return to the States was in June 1963. The following New Years day, January 1, 1964, I was invited to a party at my beloved Mary Gilbert's apartment on Eighth Street in the heart of Greenwich Village, New York. Among the guests was Stella Biddleston an English actress. The party started about 6 PM and it was at first difficult to keep a party banter going on. Most were hung over from the night before. My attempts to talk to Stella led nowhere; her English sangfroid was inhibiting. Around 11PM the party had picked up, and I was surprised to see Stella sitting next to me.

We started immediately talking about paranormal events, and I started explaining my story in Tangier. When I got to the part where the hooded figure bared his head and said his name, I paused for a moment thinking, “why say his name- the name is irrelevant”. Stella interrupted me with: “He said his name was Paul Gyss”. Stella settled back on the sofa with a mysterious smile leaving me astonished.

“How did you know I was about to say Paul Gyss” I blurted out. “Are you reading my mind?”

Stella resumed her utter sangfroid and didn't speak another word to me the rest of the party.

The following summer of 1964 I was at Mary's beautiful home on Greenaway Island in Stamford, and Stella was there. I cornered Stella and suggested we walk along the shore. I asked her to reveal how on earth she had known I was about to say “Paul Gyss” a few months before, and Stella simply replied as a matter of fact,

“Really, Bob; you haven't figured that out yet? I met Paul in Mallorca and went back with him to Tangier and lived with him a few months. You described the place so accurately, it couldn't have been anyone else but Paul.”

English cold water dashed on the paranormal is a sobering event!

Stella continued: “Paul's back in New York driving a taxi; I can give you his phone and address, if you want.”

Later that year I was visiting a friend back at college who was a statistician. I told him the story, and he began calculating how often such a double-whammy

coincidence could occur. Finally, he pointed out the window at the starry heavens and said:

“I give up. Maybe the chance of those two coincidences occurring would be one in all those number of stars you see above”.

But I’ve never thought of those two events in my life as being mere coincidences. I realize then as now that keeping an open mind to the paranormal is an obligation of a rational, sentient being.

CHAPTER 4

Mont Saint Michel

Then I was in Europe first at Chartres viewing the cathedral and concentrating on the spire that reached toward Heaven. After Chartres I went to Mont Saint Michel. I had been brought up on stories and pictures of the water rushing in and making this small mountain with its monastery an island. It was a hot summer day, and I had difficulty climbing the steps and walking up the steep paths of the monastery to the top. But with heat and difficulty a sort of lull took me over and then at a parapet overlooking what seemed like the island below and the sea out aways, I had a deep déjà vu . I was so startled; I sat down on the parapet. It was like the pattern of stones of the wall and at my feet came alive with a life of their own.

It flashed across my mind suddenly Jesus saying,
“What father among you, if his son ask for bread would give him a stone?”

The lowest spiritual level according to Gurdjieff is stone. Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter, meaning a stone, and "upon this stone will I build my Church," he said. But even stone can become alive, as happened to me, but only on its own level in the consciousness of the observer.

The intermediate level of spirituality is water like the water of the sea that I could see surrounding Mont Saint Michel. Jesus said to Nicodemus "You must be born of the water and the spirit before you can see the Kingdom of God."

The highest level of spirituality is wine, and Jesus both turned the water in stone jars into wine at the marriage Feast of Cana, as well as the wine at the Last Supper into his own blood at the miracle of transubstantiation.

"How does one see these things", I wondered sitting on the stone parapet of Mont Saint Michel, "except as a flash of insight". Of course, it takes an interest in the Gospels to remember these miracles, but it takes the catalyst of Mont Saint Michel to turn them into understanding.

CHAPTER 5

A Paris Subway and Mount Athos

During my term at the Sorbonne in Paris I was two or three times a week at Gurdjieff's old apartment on the rue Colonel Renard. The pictures hanging on the walls attracted my attention during the talks and interchanges between the students in my group. Dr. Michel de Salzmann was our leader.

Gurdjieff's systems of ideas is based on what he called the Law of Three and the Law of Seven. The whole material universe was created by his Endlessness according to Gurdjieff's "Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson" by extension and alteration of the Law of Seven or the octave. In music the intervals and notes of the octave, seven in number and eight when joined with the "do" of a higher octave, correspond to certain vibrations heard by our senses. As most of Gurdjieff's ideas are difficult to understand, one can nevertheless intuit what they mean without being able to put them into words.

But one day in a Paris metro station as I was climbing the steps, I stopped and heard inwardly the harmonic vibrations of the octave and the overtones higher into

another octave. Suddenly the meaning of what Gurdjieff taught became almost palpable in my inner experience.

Then, toward the end of my “year around the world” before I turned into a middle class lawyer, I was at Mount Athos in Greece. Mount Athos is a series of monasteries on a narrow wedge of land jutting into the Aegean sea. One had to take a boat to get there.

I read that sacred Christian truths had been kept alive at Mount Athos; so I was eager to experience the paranormal there. It happened that I was there among a group of pilgrims just at the coming of Easter, the last three days of Lent. We had to walk from one monastery to another and could not sleep two nights in a row at the same monastery. Our diet consisted of bread and water just as the monks did at Lent. Both daily exhaustion and the strict diet together with our daily interchanges with the monks, seemed to both lift the spirits as well as sharpen our perceptions.

I remember talking with a monk inside the courtyard of one of the monasteries. He was chopping wood- a vigorous man who had a commanding presence. He told me he had been a businessman and had been married in the world outside of Athos.

“Why did you abandon the world?” I asked.

He replied that God had called him to do “the inner Work at this monastery”.

He told me that chopping wood gave his inner life the chance to witness his manifestations and lead him on the way to peace.

I was so struck by the spirituality and presence of this monk. His choosing the life of a monk in answer to God’s call gave me pause as I was about to plunge into

the world of lawyering and politics. But I realized his way was different from my way.

Then at midnight on Easter morn we were awakened and taken into what seemed like the inner sanctum of the monastery's chapel. Incense filled the air and sharpened the senses as we stood in our stalls and looked up into the vaulted dome with the copper and brass and silver shimmering in the candlelight. The monks made their procession around and around the chapel as if to the stations of the Cross, but their faces became radiant as they passed me, and I realized that I was witnessing the miracle in their consciousness of the risen Lord!

During "break" "fast", one of the best tasting meals, after three days of fasting, I ever had, I witnessed the growing joy of the monks. It was as if the body, not the physical, but some intermediate body arose from the tomb. Jesus was alive again in the joy of the monks.

And the monks knew well that it was not the physical body of Jesus that arose from the dead, but some intermediate body between physical and spiritual that Mary Magdalan had seen and did not at first recognize. That doubting Thomas saw and touched the wounds and believed.

After the fasting of Lent, as our physical bodies filled with food and a new energy came, we could sense this quite new body in us that was represented by the risen Lord.

CHAPTER 6

My Mother And The Paranormal

I remember as a child during the World War II Battle of the Bulge when the Germans overran the Allied lines and threatened to abort the invasion of Europe from Normandy, my mother had a dream. She dreamt that her cousin Charles Ballou was seriously wounded. My usually stoic mother came down the stairs next morning inconsolable and weeping- so much so that my non-believing, rational father wrote her state that morning into his diary.

Many months later the War Department notified my family that Charles Ballou, on the very day mother had had that dream was found unconscious in the wreckage of a house at the Battle of the Bulge. Half burned to death with a hole in his skull, he later recovered and became a lead attorney at Ohio Bell Telephone after the War.

My mother had similar recurring experiences like this and never doubted her “intuition” as she called it.

Nearly two months after my mother's death in June 1982 which left me incredibly bereft, I had a dream on the eve of her birthday August 9th. Before I went to sleep, I was deeply troubled that mother wouldn't be there next day for our usual celebration of her birthday. I believe this situation set the psychic boundaries for the dream to come. But let me say that as I remember it my dream had no visitation of my dead mother, contrary to what my good friend Jeff Slade believes, and he knew her well. But about 4 am I woke from the dream and jotted down on a beside pad of paper 7 stocks in mother's portfolio to sell and 5 stocks to buy. The proceeds of the sale of "old lady stocks" or \$50,000 would be invested in five "new investment stocks" which I knew well and had followed for a long time.

In the morning I stumbled by the writing pad and with difficulty remembered having written down the stocks during the night. At first I did nothing and for about two hours lay there on the bed occasionally thinking about the stocks. Then I called up my broker Mark Brown, who was handling my mother's estate and told him to raise and reinvest the \$50,000 exactly as I had committed the dream to paper. The broker paused and said "Bob, I'm sure you have your reasons, but everyone on 'Wall Street' thinks stocks will sink much lower; so selling is one thing but buying stocks may not be wise."

I replied, "Let's do it anyway, Mark. Let's just say I had a dream about it." I was too shy to tell him it really was a dream during the night; paranormal events seldom have currency in the marketplace.

On August 9th or August 10th, 1982, depending on how you view the chart, the great Reagan Bull Market started

that in two years turned the \$50,000 into \$250,000! And afterward when I charted the 7 stocks I sold, I realized most of them had only moved up in the same time period perhaps 30% to 40% on average. The difference between \$70,000 and \$250,000 was to me incredible.

Two years later I had lunch with Mark, my broker, and confessed that it really was an actual dream during the night. He laughed and said I should leave lawyering and go on TV with psychic predictions on the stock market. Another friend suggested I write a book entitled, “Bromley’s Ouija Board Approach to Financial Security.”

Of course, skeptics would argue that the start of the Bull Market was merely coincidence, and my practical education in stocks revealed itself consciously in my dream and guided my mind accordingly.

When one of my friends laughed at my recital of what to him was mere coincidence, I gently replied, “Don’t worry, I’ve already laughed with the profits all the way to the bank!”

Perhaps dreams that turn into reality are mere coincidences. Perhaps not too much should be made of them. But when paranormal events like these continue to happen to a person as they have to me, these events point towards a mysterious world that really rules our sleepwalking lives as Gurdjieff indicates.

CHAPTER 7

Beginning to Psyche Out the Extraordinary and Use It

So I was appointed Corporation Counsel or Chief Lawyer of the City of Stamford, probably the summit of my legal career. I joined this elite group: Commissioner of Finance, Public Works and me, which sat at the feet of our Mayor Julius Wilensky every morning at 9am. I enjoyed this illusion of power and the artful dodging of politics. At first the Mayor and I had trouble getting along, but I was continually astonished at the brilliance and creativity of the man.

My biggest task to reform local government, as my innocent idealism suggested, was to create a new post of Deputy Corporation Counsel who would provide continuity in Stamford's Law Department no matter that political administrations rose and fell. My three predecessor Corporation Counsels had tried to create the position but had failed. My friends were skeptical that I could do it, but my idealism pushed me forward. With the Mayor's help the position was created; then I faced

the Board of Finance for the funding request. The press and radio were there at the Board of Finance, and midway through my presentation, a political friend who had one of the five seats on the Board entered late, slammed his briefcase down on the table and yelled, “Whatever Bromley’s for; I’m against. He’s been the worst Corporation Counsel in Stamford’s history. He’s lost more cases than any Corporation Counsel---”etc.

I was stunned and humiliated! But I realized that if I did my Gurdjieff work right at that moment, i.e. active being mentation, I had the chance to more clearly see my actual personal situation and not be overwhelmed. Of course the sting of public humiliation at first knocked me off my equilibrium, but then as I settled in and stopped talking, it became apparent that something was at work in the situation. The Chairman, who was also my close personal friend, Ralph Murray, banged the gavel repeatedly and called Leonard out of order. Then the perception began infiltrating my mind that this S.O.B., Leonard, was going to get me my funding for a Deputy Corporation Counsel! So I no longer had to do a thing or say anything- but just stop and let it go. The vote that followed was four in favor and one, Leonard, against. So the funding was in place.

After the Personnel Board certified the two names to me: Al Jachimczyk and Barry Boodman the political games began in earnest.

I entered the Mayor’s office for the usual 9am cabinet meeting and received His Honor’s “Mayor of Stamford” card with stiletto-like words on the back: “Appoint Al”.

When the others had left, the Mayor looked up at me curiously and said,

“You still here?”

“Yes,” I replied, “I’m not going to appoint Al. You and I and the legal fraternity in Stamford know he’s a crook. You pride yourself and rightfully so on running an honest, efficient administration. Al has no place at City Hall.”

“Now Bob,” the Mayor said almost sadly, “Al is Polish and so am I; Al is a Polish Roman Catholic and I’m a Polish Jew. Al gets me the Grand Marshall position at the head of the Polish Day Parade each year and that translates into votes in Stamford. Perhaps he’s not as honest as you, but give him a chance. Anyway I’ve arranged a meeting tomorrow morning. Go and discuss it with the ‘Boys’.”

I knew the “Boys” ran the Republican Party and together with the Democrat “Boys” ran Stamford from behind the scenes. I had managed, so far, never to be interviewed by the “Boys”, nor ever wanted to be. But the next day, Saturday, I saw the “Boys” in a local Law Office.

I walked into the room and recognized every man there; most were friends. I was surprised, however, to see a certain Judge was the apparent presiding officer of the “Boys”- but realized this judge was a relative of Al, “the crook”.

“All right” the judge said, his jowels shaking, “We all know why we’re here. Bob’s going to promise he’ll appoint Al as Deputy Corporation Counsel.”

I remained silent and indignant- but I knew I had to tread a thin line.

“Well, are you going to promise?” the Judge asked.

“I haven’t made up my mind yet,” I countered.

“Well, just do it”, thundered the Judge.

“Judge (I refused to address him as ‘your honor’) Al is a Democrat and Mayor Wilensky is a Republican.”

“How naïve can anyone be!” the Judge thundered. “We all know Republicans and Democrats make no difference; Stamford is run by a different set of people and interests.”

I couldn’t say what everyone in the room knew, that Al was a crook. That would be actionable slander. Anyhow, honesty and integrity were not at the forefront of normal political concerns.

“Will you appoint Al?” the Judge malevolently thundered again.

I replied that I would study the issue and make up my mind.

“That’s no answer,” the judge snorted and then leaning his hulking body over the table toward me said, “What you going to do if you don’t get your way?”

At that I played my trump card. With Wilensky’s re-election just a few months ahead, I pulled out my resignation letter as Corporation Counsel, unfolded it and carefully put it in the center of the table for all to see.

The Judge sneered at me:

“Little Bobby, when the going gets rough, he picks up his marbles and goes home!”

I was beyond humiliation – those kind of psychic “sticks and stones” no longer made any impact on me. Over coffee after the meeting the man who had gotten me the job as Corporation Counsel opined that “I better bite the bullet on this one. There are forces at work in

the Party and in Stamford that no one can handle” he said.

I traveled up to Vermont after the meeting with the “Boys” and sat in front of Bromley Mountain, named for my ancestors, and thought, “This will be the end of my political career (and it turned out to be so), but my integrity means more than political expediency”.

I returned Monday morning to the Mayor’s office, and after about 10 minutes the other guys cleared out leaving the Mayor and me.

“Are you going to appoint Barry?” the Mayor asked.

“It depends”, I replied.

“Didn’t the meeting with the “boys” clear it up?”

“That meeting was a disaster,” I replied.

“So you’re going to appoint Barry”, the Mayor said resignedly.

“If I appoint Barry, I may read in tomorrow’s newspaper: “Mayor charges Corporation Counsel with making the worst appointment in Stamford’s history.” The Mayor had made such statements about other City Officials in the past.

His Honor put his arm around my shoulders and walking beside me into the reception room said, “We’ll announce your decision to appoint Barry as a joint decision. I heard about Saturday’s meeting, and I do want an honest administration with no crooks in it. The press is waiting for us.”

Now you can see why I loved Mayor Julius Wilensky, an honest, good Mayor.

About three years later, poor Al, with whom I had always maintained a relationship, was disbarred,

indicted and convicted and served jail time for stealing money out of his clients' accounts.

CHAPTER 8

Anya Seton and her Psychic Abilities

I was a good lawyer in Stamford, but I never settled into the conventional mode. I enjoyed meeting “way out” people and was delighted to meet and form a friendship with the internationally known author Anya Seton.

I invited her to my 200 year old home for a dinner party. My Mary was there and another friend, Kent Wells, who had brought Anya to my house. Rob Schrull cooked and served the dinner.

After dinner we moved into my living room and settled in front of my ancient, large fireplace. To the rear of where Anya was seated there had been a small room where babies were born, called appropriately a borning room. I knew this because I had just done a title search on the house to try to establish its antiquity. In connection with the title search a former owner told me he had removed partitions around the borning room to include the space in the living room.

We talked about this and that but mostly about Anya's novels all of which dealt with the paranormal and even the supernatural.

After awhile Anya became silent and seemed to drift into a trance. She interrupted one of us and said,

“There are three more people in this room”, waving her hand toward where the burning room had been. “They have not quite made their appearance, yet. There is such sadness, such grief. There is a young woman just a girl. So much sadness. And a baby, maybe stillborn, I can't make out. The young girl's name is Aba – I think, Abigail, comes to me”.

Anya fell silent.

I asked excitedly, “Yes, Anya; what does Abigail say?” I knew from my title search that Abigail Lockwood had inherited the house and presumably lived there for a year or so at the end of the seventeen hundreds near the year 1800.

Anya replied, “It's all gone from me now. It's over,” and brightening up asked for another drink.

The effect on the party was electric! Mary, who dabbled in spiritualism, never doubted Anya's psychic vision. I couldn't doubt it because of the title search and the burning room. Kent, a stolid, Anglo-Saxon type almost scoffed openly and Rob Schrull a 20 year old reborn Christian was convinced Anya was a witch.

For me this psychic episode was one more on my list of mysterious and unexplained phenomena. As a rational, sentient being I simply must keep an open mind.

CHAPTER 9

Water Witching in Back Country Ohio

Then there was the time I visited my dear adopted niece Mindy and her husband Donnie Cottrell, who had recently moved their house trailer onto my 230 acre farm in Ohio. It was a hot summer day, and we were “shooting the breeze” in the living room of the trailer with a fearsome looking dude, John Wyatt. John had just drilled a water well in Donnie and Mindy’s front yard which served their trailer. I had to carry water to my little house nearby on the farm and was very interested in finding a water source for my cabin as well as for other houses I wanted to build there also.

I asked John Wyatt, “How did you know where to drill the water well?”

“Ah dowsed!” he answered.

Water witching had never loomed large in my experience so without having experienced it, I doubted it was possible.

“You don’t believe?” John whined like a back country preacher. “You city folk don’t know much about what goes on here in the country. Come on outside and I’ll show ya!”

John fashioned two dowsing rods out of metal coat hangers and asked me where I wanted him to dows for water. I pointed to a gently sloping piece of dry land just below a steep hill. The piece of land turned marshy down the hill and emptied into a brook coming from the other direction.

John wore a funny looking country hat and made quite a sight prancing back and forth in concentrated dowsing – his rods stretched out straight in front of him. After a while the rods turned inward and crossed in front of him near his abdomen. He walked away and then came back to the same spot and the dowsing rods again crossed each other over his body.

“Right here’s where the waters at”. John declared, and Donnie fetched a stake and drove it into the ground at the spot John indicated.

“Now you try it, Mr. Big City Lawyer.” And John put the rods in my hands and told me to hold them loosely so they could turn as they had in his hands.

I immediately started walking toward the stake to end this absurd charade, but John shoved me around and pointed me away from the stake and down the hill. I felt like a fool walking down the slope with the dowsing rods out stretched before me. At some distance John yelled,

“Found any water yet?” he laughed derisively.

I was not taking his joke well so he waved me back to walk over the stake. As I passed over the stake, the rods inexplicably turned in my hands. I was dumbfounded.

I walked away and came back a second time and again as I walked over the stake the rods turned again crossing each other over my body.

John said gleefully, “Now ya beleeve? You saw them rods turn in your own hands. How can you not beleeve there’s water down there under the stake!”

“I’ll believe when you bring a trackhoe out here tomorrow and go eight feet down under the stake and strike water.” I said flat out.

John got a real knowing look on his face and marched off to his car.

The next morning out came the trackhoe and down eight feet under the stake John delved. At first nothing happened, and I smiled at John dismissively.

“Oh you just wait”, John said, “The water’s fixing on coming out”. After about five minutes a small rivulet of water trickled out of the firm clay wall of the trench, and only in one place right under the stake. By the next day the water completely filled the trench up to the brim. For the last few years the natural spring John Wyatt unearthed has supplied five houses with ample, clean water.

I’ve consulted hydraulic engineers who have scoffed and others who simply say there is no known scientific explanation for water dowsing, other than it works. But John Wyatt enrolled me in the brotherhood of the “beleever”, because I couldn’t contradict the mysterious turning of the dowsing rods in my own hands and the fact of finding the water exactly below where the stake had been put.

CHAPTER 10

Gabriel Grayson the Magician

Anya Seton introduced Mary and I to a magician named Gabriel Grayson at a party in her home in Old Greenwich, Connecticut. I felt Anya's friendship with me was based both on our mutual interest in the paranormal but also on Gurdjieff. Anya told me her mother had known Gurdjieff either in France or the U.S. in the 1920's; though Anya herself seemed dismissive about Gurdjieff – "he's not in Who's Who, afterall", she sniffed at me once.

But Gabriel Grayson was another matter. At Anya's party Gabriel asked us to take out our keys and select a key we didn't need to use immediately. Most of us at the party were scoffers at key bending by the power of the mind -telekinesis- as it is called.

I took my front door key out, and Gabriel cautioned me to select another key.

"You won't be able to get in your house tonight if I bend that key", he said. Reluctantly I selected another

stout key that opened a padlock on my tool shed. I had another copy in reserve.

Gabriel never touched the key. He asked me to fold my hand over the key and hold it. I complied.

He seemed to concentrate his attention on my folded hand standing about two yards away. After a while he said,

“Now, you feel the key growing hot. Drop it if you need to”.

As he said this, the key in my folded hand grew so hot I had to drop it on the floor. I looked at the key on the floor and it was bent!

Just like the dowsing in Ohio, though my rational mind and scientific outlook had difficulty admitting the phenomenon, my five senses couldn't deny what had just occurred.

I plied Gabriel with questions –but he retained his sphinx-like silence only admonishing me that a magician cannot give up his secrets.

I went home and compared the bent key to the spare key and realized that they were the same, so no substitution had occurred as if by slight of hand.

On a paddlewheel boat plying the Mississippi River 25 years later that Mary Gilbert had hired for her 60th Birthday party, I asked Gabriel again how he had bent the key in my hand.

Gabriel knew of Gurdjieff and considered him one of the “brotherhood” of magicians, but again refused to reveal how he had bent the key.

Gabriel did say, however, “It's not so much me and the power of my mind as it is the energy in you that causes the key to bend.”

It was as if Gabriel was simply facilitating an almost natural phenomenon. I stopped asking him questions; I had learned enough to be satisfied. The power was in me in some inscrutable way.

Gabriel and I talked about Gurdjieff and his ideas. Gabriel told me about times where he had seen himself performing on the stage as if his self-observer was out in the audience –almost out of his body looking at himself on the stage.

I felt after that conversation that Gabriel Grayson had crossed psychic boundaries into areas that even he couldn't explain to himself.

CHAPTER 11

Mental Telepathy

A man I have always felt deeply about, Jim Slocum, and I have shared many moments of thinking the same thought at the same time. Jim had a real problem with locking the door of the apartment in Paris that he and I were sharing. He had once been nearly murdered in this apartment by a crazy Corsican named Charlie, so that Jim's very real fear of an unlocked door went deeply into his core being. One night we had settled into bed and were nodding off to sleep when I suddenly thought, "Oh my God, neither of us has locked the door". At exactly the same moment as I thought this, Jim got up, moved toward the door, and said: "You're right; neither of us locked the door."

This was clearly thought transference. Whether my thought communicated to Jim's mind or his thought to my mind, is beside the point.

I have a wonderful Peruvian Cousin named Dora Bromley. She may well be part Inca, besides being

Anglo-Saxon and Hispanic. At times this very normal executive at IBM Corporation exhibits incredible mental transference.

One day when I had brought her cousin, as well as my cousin, Ana Maria Bromley, the Chief Judge in the most influential court in Peru to my home in Stamford, Connecticut, the phone rang. As both Ana Maria and I entered the door, I quickly reached for the phone and was flabbergasted to hear Dora Bromley's voice on the phone calling me from her home in Chicago, Illinois. Ana Maria had, just a few days before, flown from Peru to the U.S. and Dora did not know this. Indeed, I had not talked to Dora on the phone in perhaps two years.

"You can't guess who just walked in with me, Dora" I said into the phone.

"Who?" Dora asked.

"Your cousin Ana Maria from Peru."

"Really" Dora said not unduly surprised.

After Ana Maria's visit to my place was over a few days later, Dora sent Ana Maria tickets and flew her for a visit out to Chicago. They had not seen each other in many years.

I asked Dora later,

"How did you know to call me at just that moment I brought Ana Maria into my house?"

And all Dora has ever answered to this or any other similar event of thought transference is:

"I just know. I can't explain it. It just comes to me that now is the right moment."

CHAPTER 12

About Madame de Salzmänn

Déjà vu, water dowsing, bending keys with the mind, spiritual visitations, using humiliation to reach a higher goal, financial clairvoyance, spiritual ecstasy at Mount Athos and Mont Saint Michel, unexplainable coincidences as in Tangier linked to a meeting in New York. What do all these have in common? What do they say about the human condition and world beyond? While institutionalized religions claim knowledge of the world beyond, their sectarian ideologies and blood letting wars give me pause. If you're a good practicing Christian, will your body fly up to heaven when you die? The Church teaches this. But who really knows what happens after death? Some Churches combine social morality with afterlife results: for instance, that homosexuals can't go to Heaven after death because of their anti-Christ lifestyles while alive, and this nonsense only tends to undermine the Faith. The sale of indulgences by the Roman Catholic Church to shorten one's time after death in Purgatory is another example of

sectarian ideology. But this example caused the Protestant revolt against Catholicism and all the horrible religious wars and killing of heretics that followed. Once the so-called “truth” is institutionalized, the floodgates of untruths seem to open. Is this really necessary to whip the Church Faithful into line, and to keep the coffers of the institution full?

If there is any link to paranormal phenomena, it must be through the 6th sense. One of my teachers, Thich Nhat Hanh, talks about our six senses: hearing, tasting, touching, seeing and smell as conduits through which pass into us a limited amount of data. But the sixth sense is located somewhere in the conscious mind. All modern science is based on data of the five senses. I believe this causes a rift between science and religion. True religion in a spiritual sense is concerned with what goes on inside each of us. Buddhism such as that of Thich Nhat Hahn needs no belief in God for the meditator to reach Enlightenment and ultimately Nirvana. And Buddhism has not yet caused wars and human violence on the scale of Christianity, Islam or the Jewish Old Testament.

Gurdjieff has been for me the true prophet of the 20th Century. He has gone beyond the Churches and Religion to the source of spirituality which is within each of us human beings. But Gurdjieff’s system of ideas is esoteric in principle. It is understood only by a few.

I used to be Madame de Salzman’s driver in New York City. It was to her that Gurdjieff entrusted his Work on his deathbed in 1949 in the presence of Dr. and Mrs. Welch. Madame’s first effort was to bring the

Ouspensky Groups and Gurdjieff Groups together after the death of their leaders. Ouspensky had been Gurdjieff's prime disciple until their open rupture. Ouspensky had written "In Search of the Miraculous" which set out Gurdjieff's ideas in very readable form. Especially readable by westerners who like diagrams and equations. It was this book that my Gurdjieff instructor Ben Grant had given me which led me into the Gurdjieff Work.

Madame de Salzman was an incredible and grand lady. She and her husband had fled the Communist Revolution out of Russia with Gurdjieff. Being her driver was like sitting next to God in human form, if one can imagine such a thing.

I remember a "sitting" she conducted, similar to a Buddhist Meditation sitting on cushions. It was in New York City when she was in her late 80's. She asked us that, if we were able, to hold our arms straight out to the sides for as long as we could while doing the meditation exercise. We all had our eyes closed. After about six or seven minutes I dropped my arms and stole a look around the room. One by one the most energetic of men dropped their arms. I'll never forget opening my eyes before the sitting had ended and seeing no one with arms still extended, except Madame de Salzman who was nearly 90 years old! She had a completely calm look on her face –no sign of strain.

My highest moment came during an open discussion with Madame. Dr. and Mrs. Welch had prepped us in advance to pose only our deepest personal question to Madame. I spent a week preparing what I thought was my deepest question, and when I repeated it to Madame

she looked dismissively at me and nodded for Mrs. Welch to answer me. Later, Madame “zapped” me with her eyes and seemed to delve deep inside me with those eyes and see my innermost being. It was as if a dark shadow moved aside in myself, and I saw the answer to my question at the same time she said out loud: “That’s better; now you see”. I’ve been so thankful for that revelation she gave me of something like the reality of my true self.

CHAPTER 13

Rita Benson

Then, there was my nemesis in the Gurdjieff Work, Rita Benson. She was one of the “dragonladies” who surrounded Gurdjieff and some have said acted the most like him of all his devotees. She was an accomplished stage actress in her own time. She seemed to delight, as had Gurdjieff, in seeking out the most tender corns on the feet, especially of young men, and mercilessly stepping on them.

I was amongst a group of men and women in their 20’s at Mendham, New Jersey at the mansion of Peter Ouspensky. It was a 14 day Gurdjieff-style period and Madame Ouspensky was living somewhere upstairs in the large home. In fact, not long after that, I attended Madame Ouspensky’s funeral at the Russian Orthodox Church in the East Village on Manhattan.

Gurdjieff wrote and talked about each human being having a “chief feature” or “chief fault”. It was as if the strands of our personalities extended down from the chief feature and intertwined to make our sleepwalking life bearable. But Gurdjieff admonished that if someone tells you directly about your chief feature you’ll want to murder that person. Chief feature has to do with the idealized self we carry about in our minds and the nullities we actually are in reality.

All of us at the 14 day retreat were sleep deprived but well fed. Rita Benson cornered me and in front of 10 or 12 others reduced me in a few words to a sobbing hulk. She wasn’t malevolent, just deeply penetrating. She revealed my chief feature to me with a few words and I wanted to murder her!

A few years later I brought this up at a Welch Group in New York, and despite my best intentions broke down in tears. Mrs. Welch wouldn’t let up on me; she said sternly,

“You must thank Rita Benson for showing you something about your deepest self that otherwise you would never have seen.”

Over the years since, every time I think of Rita Benson at first my usual self reacts with a negative thought, but then almost as if Mrs. Welch were still present saying to thank Rita Benson, I feel the weight of negativity lifting and something in me transcending and being much more objective about Mrs. Benson.

The most illuminating teaching I received from Rita Benson was not aimed at me nor had any relation to me. It was after a showing in a Times Square Movie Theater of one of the last films Madame de Salzmänn did of

Gurdjieff's sacred movements, I found myself walking right behind Rita Benson. We were passing through a narrow corridor with a row of glass doors to our right where one could see the people lining up outside for the regular film showing. An abrasive usher, a young man in his twenties, was ushering the people down toward the red exit sign and yelling out,

“Right this way folks- don't even think of going out the glass doors- just keep on out under the red exit sign”.

Knowing Rita Benson's contrary psychology, I cringed inwardly, “what is that lady about to do now?” I thought.

Exactly at the moment I thought this, she did it! She turned right, in front of the usher, and lunged toward the forbidden glass doors.

The young usher forcibly took hold of Mrs. Benson's arm and bodily turned her toward the red exit sign, erupting with,

“Lady, I told ya to go down to the exit! What ya think ya doin?”

Rita Benson pulled herself up stolidly in front of the usher and blared back at him, with a menacing face,

“Young, man; do you Know Who I AM?”

The usher relented slightly and only said, “Even so Lady the exit is that way.”

Then as if turning on a dime inside herself, Rita Benson smiled and said to the offending usher in her sweetest tone, “Thank you, young man, you're so very helpful” and she proceeded toward the exit sign.

The usher was somewhat taken a back but quickly resumed his life's work of herding the crowd toward the red exit sign.

Rita Benson didn't use her ego like an ax on the young man to teach him anything, nor on me just behind her to teach me anything. She simply did a Rita Benson act for her own inner purposes. But for me the revelation was that Rita Benson danced only to her own inner tune! She did not follow the Pied Piper of suggestibility to do only what is socially proper and pleasing to others.

Bless my nemesis, Rita Benson; I learned so much from her!

CHAPTER 14

My Penultimate Paranormal Event- Clairvoyance

When I mostly retired from my law firm to spend my winters in Key West, Florida, I had a strange dream in January 1992. I dreamt that Benjamin D. Gilbert, my Mary's father, was trying to walk through his Darien, Connecticut home and was continually losing his balance. There was such foreboding in the dream, that when I awoke I felt I had a premonition of Mr. Gilbert's death.

My relationship with Mr. Gilbert did not start out too well. When I was a young man preparing for Law School, I met Mary, his daughter, and Mary and I were drawn to each other. I'm sure Mr. Gilbert had high hopes for his daughter to wed into one of the large fortunes commensurate with his own. I'm sure I was regarded as a country lawyer type who would soon be practicing in Stamford, Connecticut and not in New York or Boston where all the "action" is.

But over the years "Bingo", his nickname by which he asked me to call him, and I had grown quite fond of

each other. So I felt a real tie to him and was very saddened by this dream I had about him.

After initially hesitating, I called his daughter Mary in New York from Florida and asked about her Dad.

“Dad’s doing fairly well for an 85 year old. He just got out of the hospital, and I thought looked better than ever”, was her reply.

I called Mary on a Monday morning.

After telling her my dream, I said, “Please give your father my love when you see him next”, and I hung up the phone.

Four days later on Friday morning Mary called me and said briefly: “You were right. Dad died in his sleep last night.”

Both Mary and I knew what had happened to me. Clearly I had had a paranormal vision of Mr. Gilbert’s impending death. I have never wasted any time or energy discounting this vision or believing it was simply coincidence.

I know what I know is real – whether paranormal or natural.

CHAPTER 15

Discovering the Ways of Key West

So now my life rushes onward out of the tidy and dull civilization of middle class Stamford, Connecticut into my winter retirement home of Key West, Florida.

When I first came to Key West to spend my entire winter in the Fall of 1991, I decided to put down roots in the community. I missed the Gurdjieff Foundation in New York and the group I had started with Ben and Irene Grant and others in Stamford, but I realized my path was different. So in Key West I joined the Unity Church then under the guidance of Rev Evelyn Casper the founding minister. She led a discussion group on the Old Testament as a metaphorical journey of the human soul. Her emphasis on God as the “I am” echoed the best of Gurdjieff.

I invited Evelyn out to lunch in December 1991, and we talked about why she became a minister of Unity, and why I was a follower of Gurdjieff. Instead of calling me a heretic as two of my hometown ministers had done, she said,

“I tried to read Gurdjieff, but I couldn’t understand anything he wrote”.

To my surprise Rev Evelyn asked me to start a Gurdjieff study group under the auspices of the Unity Church.

There were about twelve who showed up at the prepublicized talk I gave about Gurdjieff at Unity Church in 1992. After the talk a lady who has turned out to be my closest Key West friend, Sandy McKinney, came at me with:

“You seem to know something about Gurdjieff. I was raised an Episcopalian and believe in “apostolic succession”. How do you come to speak about Gurdjieff’s ideas?”

I replied that I had been involved through the Welches at the Gurdjieff Foundation in New York. She informed me that I had met her standards of “apostolic succession” since she had been in the Work as long as I had through Mr. Nyland’s group.

So we met the next day at the Rooftop Restaurant and formed the first Key West Gurdjieff Group.

Through the years of meeting with Capt Sandy, I have come to realize that the paranormal events that so fascinate me are not really where it’s at. They are important, perhaps, as showing us that another world comes into our life at certain moments; a world we cannot see or contact through our ordinary five senses. But otherwise paranormal events are not that important. And if we try to cultivate the paranormal such as going on TV, like Kenny the Psychic, we may fall into the trap of Ego. Gurdjieff’s final words in “Beelzebub” have to do with Ego and its sublimation.

It's not the Ego that is bad per se, but rather whether the Ego is running our own lives, or is the "real I" in us using the Ego for its own evolution. Rita Benson used her ego like a hammer on the head of a young usher in the movie theater, but she was doing it for her own inner purposes. She was not reacting in anger to the usher, although the usher's own aggressive Ego assertions could well provoke anger in others. She was being Rita Benson dancing to her own inner tune!

In Key West through the evolution and change in Groups and people, I have come to see that we each tread on our own individual path of discovery. The original Gurdjieff Group changed into the Seekers Forum, founded by my dear friends, Manohara, a follower of Rajneesh, Richie Ryan, a Zen Buddhist, and Roy Stone, a Jungian with Gurdjieff credentials, who is currently proud to be husband of the internationally acclaimed "Chicken Lady" of Key West, Katha Sheehan. Dr Ray McKnight joined early on and Ray and Roy brought a raft of Unitarian-Universalists so that Seekers Forum eventually left Unity Church and currently meets at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

CHAPTER 16

Does the Paranormal Help Us?

So if the paranormal is not really relevant to basic change in us; what is?

The twelve step program that has brought miracles about in people's lives has done so much good in the world. Is the twelve step program the answer? Yes, if you want to quit alcohol and narcotics abuse, you can learn to substitute a better habit for the one that is injurious. Yes, if you want to get "whole" and not be a slave to addiction.

But no real spiritual Work like Gurdjieff's, mystical Christianity or Buddhism is about substituting good habits for bad. A real inner change can only come about by seeing the "real I" inside ourselves. If our goal is to bring into being the "real I", then our Work day by day should be "active being mentation". To empty our Ego driven personalities and allow the "real I" to evolve in us.

What is the nature of the "real I"

I personally, have never witnessed the "real I". But I continually see my personality as I manifest when I'm trying the inner exercises. And sometimes I see the

personality even when I'm not trying the inner Work. What are the hallmarks of the personality? If I see the "me, me, me" in my declaratory statements as if I want everybody to pay attention to me- then I can see the personality and that's not where it's at. When I assert my political opinions as God's truth, I can immediately see these are only my opinions built on what others have told me, not based on God's truth at all.

Indications of the "real I" are conscience breaking through the personality and the emergence of my integrity. Through these, what I feel to be truths, I have an indirect view of the "real I". But as Monsieur Tracoll advised me once- a real insight can immediately turn into a "peacock's feather" and the insight is spoiled by Ego.

Quickly passing though it is, the indications of "real I" can give us the Faith to attempt the inner Work more often, each and every day. Gurdjieff has indicated that there is a residue left from each attempt at the inner Work. And the residue left from each attempt at being here and now in the present moment builds up and causes the inner evolution to proceed.

But the contrary or "involution" is also true. If we leave off frequent attempts at Work and get lulled back into the temptation of doing it tomorrow- then the residue gets lost in our ordinary lives.

For me, personally, it's like the "real I" forms something like a magnate within. When I am attempting serious inner Work in meditation, for instance, the attention wanders. The attention is the cutting edge of consciousness. Normally when the attention wanders, we lose our direction. But if we

make serious attempts, followed by more serious attempts, the attention can be drawn back into our inner lives as if by the magnetic quality of the “real I”. The more we experience it happening, the more we wish it to happen.

Gurdjieff asserted that the “real I” as it evolves into the “intermediate” or “astral” body within, that this body does not die at the same time as the physical body. But if in this “astral” body, the “real I” has formed into a “higher being body” then this “higher being body” has the possibilities of going onto a higher level of life-similar to the Christian Heaven or Buddhist Nirvana.

Of course, Fundamentalist types of Christians, who have never been interested in doing the real spiritual Work, say we are destined to go to Heaven after we die, if we’ve done God’s work as taught either by the Church or the Bible. Some of the worst are willing to murder a few heretics to show that their Ego driven view is right-but so it goes!

CHAPTER 17

More About Key West

Meanwhile, in Key West the Gurdjieff Group had its ups and downs. Seekers Forum seemed to be stable and ongoing. It was a pooling of views on questions selected at the end of the previous meeting such as “Is there a God?” and “Is Man a Cosmic Joke?”

Whereas the Seekers Forum tended to be intellectual, the Gurdjieff Work is different. To wake up from our sleepwalking everyday state is the effort of the Gurdjieff Work.

But over the years the Gurdjieff Groups waxed and waned. One Group would increase in numbers then fall apart; another group would continue small but steady.

This past season saw the arrival of a most curious Gurdjieffian: Capt Nutrino as he was introduced to me. Nutrino has Gurdjieff credentials from California, although perhaps not strictly adhering to Capt Sandy’s idea of “apostolic succession”. Nutrino had sailed across the Atlantic Ocean on a raft powered by an outboard motor- so he fit very well into the Gurdjieffian circles of Key West. After all, Capt Sandy had retired as a magazine editor age 65 to pass her test and become a

captain of a boat that plied the bounding main. Roy Stone's claim to fame was being husband to the "chicken lady". I was perhaps the dullest in the company of Gurdjieffian stars, although the sometime leader of the Group.

But being a follower of the Gurdjieff ideas is not about fame, but rather consistently doing the inner Work.

Nutrino and I had a "leveling out" hour at a local coffee house, and I came to "bear" his company if not at times enjoy it at a Gurdjieffian meeting. But his effect on Capt Sandy and Roy was widely divergent. Sandy could not stand him in her presence. She said something about life being too short to spend with poisonous individuals. But Roy saw the better side of Nutrino, and how Nutrino had helped people rise above their problems. And Roy became Capt Nutrino's staunchest supporter.

I was still under the illusion that a Gurdjieff Group should be one unified whole. And I persuaded Sandy to attend a meeting where at first Nutrino bided his time and then unleashed some offensive names toward Sandy and called yours truly a "blabber mouth" and "control freak". I recognized this in myself- what further could Nutrino say to hurt me. Been there; done that!

Lady Jane Worth, the loveliest Gurdjieffian in our Key West Group had inadvertently detonated the "Nutrino bomb". But everyone there used the event for their own inner Work.

Having already started to meet three times a week with Capt Sandy for our Gurdjieff "inner circle", I realized it was pointless to maintain the illusion of a Gurdjieffian unified whole. And the next week when

Roy, Sandy, brother Al Brenner and I met at Bahama Moma's (with the Key West chickens running around our feet) another bomb went off and Roy and Sandy were at each other's jugular. That second bomb completely shattered my "illusion of unity" and also caused me considerable unease. It was painful to see my closest Key West Gurdjieffian friends go at each other. But from the standpoint of my own inner Work-very instructive. In the throes of apparent chaos, I realized that I didn't have to take sides. I could simply just let go and allow the inner self to reflect the calm like they eye in the midst of the storm. It's not necessary to dance to the chaotic tune of others when you can inwardly dance to your own quiet tune.

CHAPTER 18

Each of Us Must Cultivate Our Own Garden

If the whole point of the Gurdjieff Work is to wake up, to allow the forces within to fashion an intermediate body, so that a “real I” can emerge- then we must use every occasion to Work. Groups of Gurdjieffians or Zen Buddhists or mystical Christians only exist to help the individual evolve. And only then can the evolving individual become part of the collective whole which nurtures this spiritual growth.

But it’s inside each of us where spiritual growth starts. And humans, as Gurdjieff asserts, seem to grow up seeing reality upside down and become increasingly Ego driven. If one becomes interested in waking up to reality, that is to say a son who hates his father, or a daughter who hates her mother, or a daughter-in-law who hates her mother-in-law, then Jesus’ teaching becomes relevant: “Think not that I came to bring peace, but rather a sword--- for the members of a man’s household are his enemies”. Jesus is saying the real enemies are within: a son’s illusionary dream of a tyrannical father, the daughter’s illusory dream of a dominating mother, the daughter-in-law in her hatred of

her mother-in-law. These are all illusions inside the human, like seeing reality upside down, and Jesus brought the sword of “gnosis” to cut out these illusions allowing the son, daughter and daughter-in-law to rise above them to a true peace.

Voltaire’s *Candide* realized toward the end of his life that the tirade of history that Prof. Pangloss recited availed nothing. It was all in Pangloss’s mind that history led to progress. The only event that could lead to wholeness was that each person cultivate his own garden. For me this is the essence of the Gurdjieff Work: to cultivate my own inner garden.

I attend either a Gurdjieff meeting or a Zen Meditation or a Christian Meeting every day of the week. I also meditate 20 minutes each day on a cushion, and try to wake up out of my sleepwalking state many times during the day by active being mentation. This continual inner Work has really changed my life. And coupled with life-threatening disease- the meaning of Gurdjieff’s teaching to see one’s own inevitable death as well as the death of everyone around me becomes clear. Only such a sight can destroy the Egoism built up in me during the process of my life that is the cause of all my suffering.

So the point is not to dwell on death, but to wake up to life and live it to the fullest which includes active being mentation and consciously helping others.

Pangloss’s recital of history leads nowhere; neither does my recital of unexplainable paranormal experiences. The only possible direction that would make any sense is toward the appreciation of the inner potential. And to work toward this potential in life.

Many Christians think that they will fly to Heaven after they die without ever doing the inner preparation for such a miracle to occur. They may indeed think that spiritual Work is out there in the community and getting together to love one another. But how can a musician do a great performance without preparation and intense study and practice?

Each of us, if we feel the calling, must take seriously cultivating our own garden. If we do the inner Work no matter what calamities happen outside us, no matter what tries to distract our attention from our inner Work, we can become changed! A miracle can really happen perhaps “in the twinkling of an eye”.

If our interest is attaining “eternal life”, then we must nourish the seed of “eternal life” within. If our interest is discovering reality, then cultivate the seed which eventually will show us reality. If our interest is world peace, then pay particular attention to the seed of peace within that as it grows can reflect peace into the world.

CHAPTER 19

How Do We Do “Active Being Mentation”?

If each of us must, to use the metaphor, cultivate our own garden, what, where and how do we do it? My own deepest wish in cultivating my own garden is to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven and Eternal Life as promised by Jesus Christ. Another Gurdjieff friend of mine, Capt. Sandy, is not so much interested in future rewards but rather really being grounded here and now and seeing reality as it is, and not “topsy-turvy”. Another good friend at the UU Fellowship, is interested in world peace and organizes peace marches, and I’m sure does the inner Work toward this end.

I, personally, feel that these goals: “eternal life”, “reality as it is” and “world peace” are laudable goals-but only goals. They may or may not be attainable-goals seldom are.

But to do the inner Work, “active being mentation” is practical and can be done here and now and in any situation. I feel that Christian churches in general have gone terribly astray from teaching this sacred inner Work. Roman Catholicism has become too dogmatic and heavy handed to teach the mystical truth that lies at

its heart. Protestant Churches have become too head oriented and scientific. They have become too dismissive of the miraculous. And fundamentalist Protestant Churches have become much too literal in their understanding of miracles. For them it's got to be seen, touched and smelled just as it is written in the Bible to be valid. Yet there are mystical believers in all Christian Churches who are much clearer about the inner practice, just as Zen Buddhists are quite clear and do it in their meditations.

So how is "active being mentation" done? I can only speak about my own personal practice which I have followed for 45 years. In my first Gurdjieff Group Mrs. Welch would give us a task each week to report back the following week. One week we would be "super conscious" of walking down a street; what did we see exactly in the moment? After the following weeks' reports I understood that what took our attention away from ourselves and how could we bring it back, was more important than a recital of facts during the walk on the street. Another week we would try to be aware of ourselves answering a phone call or walking through a door. Then, later, we tried to wake up from our normal "sleepwalking state" in life at specific times such as 12 noon, 4pm and 9pm.

So in the early days in the Gurdjieff Work we made attempts to "wake up" whether we were immobile on a cushion or whether we were walking down a street or even in our chaotic offices. We tried to "wake up" to who really inhabited our body and mind. And this varied not only from day to day but moment to moment. At my law office I was aware either when doing the

effort or by “grace” of clearly seeing that the “me” who responds hurtfully to a client I didn’t like was quite different from the “me” who fawned at another client whose wealthy business I wanted to retain. It was as if the small “me” that continued to pop up in my sleepwalking state really controlled for a time this apparatus that I call “I”.

CHAPTER 20

The True Quest

So the true quest became for me and continues to be, how to find the “real I”. The “real I” that knows where it wants to go, the goal, and how to get there. Let the Ego-driven partial “me”s do their thing, but make way by “active being mentation” for the “real I” to appear and take control and make the small “me”s obedient to it.

When I meditate, I find it useful to preselect a time or a place in which to “wake up”. Also, meditating with others on a cushion is helpful.

I draw my attention inward, either in movement or sitting still and sense my body as if from the inside out. I move my attention around my body from limb to limb including the head and from front to back. I try at the same time to be aware of my breathing, and further, if possible, the heartbeat, circulation of the blood and nervous system around the body. If I don’t allow my attention to be distracted, either by thoughts, negative emotions or pains, then I can and usually do go into an altered state where the “real I” seems to be in control; where I’m moving to my own “inner tune”. And the

sense inwardly is of letting go, releasing the tensions in my body.

Gurdjieff talks of the three centers of activity in each of us. And I can see these three centers at work in me, especially in this altered state. My mind contains images and these images and thoughts can move my attention away quickly from myself. Now I'm here and the next moment in my mind's eye I'm sitting on the Great Wall of China. The emotions have an energy of their own. A negative thought about someone, a past hurt that someone did to me can evaporate the attention and tie up the stomach in tensions. The third center of the three is the body itself- mainly its actions and reactions. If I touch a hot stove unawares the body reacts with a speed faster than either negative emotions or images in the mind. The three centers of activity can each in turn take dominant control when we manifest, but almost all the time interact with each other. "Active being mentation" has to do with the mind moving our attention inside our bodies by sensing each part and even the whole of the body at the same time.

So how to be aware of ourselves as we really are, not as we imagine ourselves to be, is what we are really after. Repeatedly during each and every day by doing "active being mentation" can we move toward what our deepest wish is. Being aware of our manifestations from the inside out can help us in the kaleidoscope of our daily sleepwalking lives.

Gurdjieff also talks about the "intermediate body" that we can create in ourselves. That is where my interest in Christianity leads me to think of my goal as "Eternal life". If this intermediate body or "astral Body"

becomes formed in me by the process of active being mentation, then it does not die as does the physical body, at least not at the same time. Jesus proved this at the “resurrection”.

Can I see or sense my “intermediate body”? Only indirectly. By becoming aware of the energies in my body and how they can of their own volition extend outside the body as in telekinesis, or by clear sight “clairvoyance” into a future event. Or any event where I know the “real I” is in control by inwardly sensing and seeing this, am I aware of this intermediate or astral body.

CHAPTER 21

Awakening to Higher Consciousness

Will this intermediate or astral body float up to Heaven when the physical body dies?

Who knows? Certainly not I.

I have made a life-long study of what I can actually know, in the sense of being conscious. And for me there are boundaries. Birth is one boundary and death another. My consciousness exists only between these boundaries. But by faith in the existence of a level of higher being or consciousness, my hope is that eternal life as Jesus promised can be attained. It may be that Jesus and other great Masters have been conscious of the moments of our earthly time both here and now and also in another dimension. As if the moment elongated vertically into this other or eternal dimension. This is to say that time for us is an illusion- that the apparent procession of moments of time is illusory. If we had the power to see through this illusion, we would see everything that has and will exist as existing right here and now in this eternal moment. But we humans, as we are, cannot “process” this on our level of time and space.

From this viewpoint there is no time and space “in reality” then Jesus and other masters can be both dead and alive in any and every moment of time and space. But this gets too attenuated for me. It is like trying to understand quantum mechanics and “schrodinger’s cat”. I prefer to think of Jesus as the risen Lord who can touch me here and now, although he’s been dead almost 2,000 years.

I asked Mrs. Welch once if I would ever attain a deep wish I had, and she replied, “It may take many lifetimes, but it is possible.” She wasn’t talking about lifetimes as out of body experiences, either as past lifetimes before birth or future lifetimes after death, but rather she was referring to this one lifetime here and now that I am conscious of. So if eternal recurrence has validity, I must live this same lifetime over and over: make the same mistakes, have the same awesome joys over and over again. The experience of déjà vu shows me that these moments are also moments in another dimension of time and that at such moments I can awake to higher consciousness.

But I believe that it takes a movement of faith and hope in the transcendental, to awake out of my worldly existence into another level of consciousness. And yet this awakening must be tied to this moment of my consciousness here and now while I’m conscious of the passing of my life.

The best metaphor I’ve heard for this awakening into and maintenance in this higher level of consciousness is the last stanza of the hymn “Amazing Grace”:

“When we’ve been dead 10,000 years
bright shining as the sun,

we've no less days to sing God's praise,
than when we first begun"

When my physical body is dead, nevertheless in that region of earthly time between my birth and my death, this astral body lives eternally. And depending on my conscious efforts to wake up to a higher level of being, will this astral body, seen as a "mustard seed" in the Scriptures, change and grow into the tree where the birds of Heaven nest in its branches. It may take 10,000 years of earthly time to become "bright, shining as the sun", that is to become a true "higher being body". And the key to all this, I believe, is our gratitude to a higher being that both created us and sustains us during this, our one and only conscious life in this world.