

other words, they are born fully conscious in this aspect of local intelligence and CQ. By the age of seven months they begin to lose that capability for languages not used by others around them. So begins a socialization process that eliminates possibilities for experiencing the whole of consciousness through one important tool, language skills. Learning other languages later on, to some degree, reverses the process. The same narrowing and concentrating begins to take place in other CQ components as cultural patterns of emotional expression, thought, and action are adopted and inculcated.

Just as socialization, a necessary function of incarnation, causes the loss of ability to hear certain sounds, it may diminish use of the inner senses, the capacity to perceive much of the noumena and the energeia. While intrinsic capacities to feel and think with all senses begin as universal endowments, use of them is slowly shaped, limiting subsequent understanding. From early childhood experiences often comes a "self-limiting prophecy," and incarnated beings become less consciously aware than they are capable of being.

Can one minimize this self-limiting process? Can one deliberately develop and fine-tune the subtle senses? If local human consciousness is a scaled-down model (as "created in the image") of ultimate cosmic consciousness, can it consciously progress toward its full potential? The experience of some would indicate that we all can at least maintain and enhance to some degree our natural birthright of conscious awareness (CQ). For example, using clairvoyance, Edgar Cayce could diagnose a patient with only a name and address. Many people deliberately access a potential scene from the future using only an hour and a date as reference points. Everyone owns and can enhance these and all the other so-called paranormal capacities described in this book. Can we as a species collectively move ourselves to a new plateau of CQ? That is the question of the millennium.

Spectrum of Conscious Life

In the so-called chain of being, humans have traditionally placed themselves in a divine niche somewhere above animals

but below angels. How our actual placement came to pass remains a great puzzle. But the assertion of such a special niche is becoming increasingly untenable. Able to extensively manipulate their physical environment, human beings undoubtedly have the most highly developed symbol and communication skills among current Earth animals (How we fit into the overall kingdom of conscious beings) is another matter.

In a self-learning universe, a separate category of consciousness would exist for each level of complexity in which experience can occur. This means that the ability to produce similar offspring implies an exclusive level of self-learning, and therefore, a unique role in the total organism. All levels of beingness, including all the plant and animal kingdoms, would meet this criterion. Applying the perspective of earlier chapters, solar systems and larger elements of the universe may also have this reproductive potential. The criterion may also be met by microscopic particles that have been considered inert. Gaston Nassen, with a new type of microscope, observed heretofore unseen somatids¹⁶ reproducing themselves. This leaves us with no indisputable dead/live or unconscious/conscious dividing lines. Every aspect of nature seems to have a role in the purposefulness of the universe.

Let's look at how the truth of this assumption is dawning on our species. The conventional wisdom was that plants could not move, feel, or see. But Cleve Backster and others have now disproved that hypothesis with research showing there is biocommunication within and between species.¹⁷ Conversely, for several thousand years it was thought animals did not have the inherent patterns and energies to regenerate parts as plants do. But in the eighteenth century, Abraham Trembley started a line of scientific inquiry that proved they could. Now Robert Becker believes it is an inherent function in humans that may be expanded.¹⁸

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Conscious Self-Realization

Conventional science sees individual beings and their behavior as products of the universe's physical forces that shape all its parts. Western religions give humans little more leeway: we are products of their distant god, subject to His divine machinations. In either view there is relatively little scope for personal power and responsibility, and conscious growth is incidental. In the late twentieth century, new views of the universe emerged: it is alive and conscious, filled with memory; it is holographic and reflexive; it is a living energy that evolves. However, when one takes a metascientific view of all that we know and what we can reasonably infer, a more purposeful feature becomes apparent. The universe seems self-learning, autodidactic for a purpose: self-realization. The universe appears to be a manifestation of its own conscious intent to fully actualize its inherent potential through conscious beings.

If humans, as local consciousnesses-incarnate, reflect the image of the self-learning yin/yang force from which the universe manifests itself, then we too are self-learning and self-realizing beings. Abraham Maslow's concept of self-actualizing humans and the Greek idea of entelechy capture this essence at a human level, but the truth appears to be much more awesome. We are simultaneously responsible for both our learning and the teaching. This is what self-learning

means. Our role in the family of all beings is to become as fully self-aware as possible and to consciously shape our contributions to the universe in a manner that enhances the whole. In doing so we eventually—we're not there yet—become co-designers with all other conscious organisms (of not only the outcome, but the process.)

This chapter deals with the dynamics whereby human beings are both nourished and constrained by that which is external, but must inwardly design their own development and its impact on a portion of the cosmos. Conscious self-development involves all the Hermetic Principles: a mental grasp of (all) the parts and how one's intention operates through cause and effect; the harnessing of vibrational frequencies through the gender polarities of feminine receptivity and masculine expressiveness, internally and externally; the shifting of three-dimensional polarities in sync with the universe's rhythm of cycles and epicycles. In all of this, we act in the microcosm as we perceive the macrocosm to be. All conscious human beings engage in a tightrope act, requiring discovery of their freedom and making the most of their powers, balancing between self and other.

For the newly born infant, there is little sense of difference between self and other, with distinctions learned only as others fail to respond to its desires. As it experiences some delay in need satisfaction—perhaps the mother's breast is not available when hunger arises—the baby begins to comprehend the distinction between its beingness and that of others. Experiences of early childhood establish the patterns of physical and emotional separation. The profile varies from culture to culture, but by early adolescence the social boundaries are quite clear in all societies; in many, explicit rites of passage take place to mark the transitions to greater autonomy.

Adult life involves constant management of the boundaries between self and other. Extremes of isolation and co-dependence are usually meant to be momentary: sometimes we need to pull our "shell" about us, and at other times we reach out like a multiarmed octopus. The process is a continuous balancing act. In Western and particularly American

society, people are lulled into a false sense of autonomy by the myth of individualism. They have come to underappreciate the benefits and limitations of human interdependence. Paradoxically, individualism defines itself in relation to the others it shuns, and too much autonomy results in growth-depriving alienation.

Chapter 7 dealt with individual beingness as an incarnation of consciousness within local space-time from the perspective of how the individual derives from the multidimensional cosmos. This present chapter looks at the three-level process from the other polarity: the self-defining nature of the individual's developmental interaction with other multilevel beings (who also have their own unique destinies). Danah Zohar, in Quantum Self implicitly observing the Principle of Correspondence, compared the "thingness" of the particle to the self (personality) and its "wave nature" to the person's relationship to others. Using this quantum analogy, she notes that humans are therefore "waves" or "particles," depending on who is doing the observing. Employing the term "selfhood" combines these two aspects, indicating self is more than a static entity; selfhood implies the dynamic of relating to otherness. (Otherness, as used here, includes other beings and our habitat.)

Continuing with Zohar's analogy from the subatomic microcosm, from one observation point the being is a selfhood (particle) and from another it is otherness (wave). Thus, others are also selfhoods from their own perspectives. Consequently, social reality is always a function of "relatingness," that is, the outcome of reciprocal definitions along the selfhood-otherness continuum by equally powerful beings. This book recognizes that each being has at least three sources of senses and power (phenomena, energeia, and noumena) for use in this process of reciprocal definition of selves. Conceiving of the individual being in an integral, three-faceted universe recalls a lost sense of wholeness,¹ providing profound insights into broader human psychology missed by current homocentric theory.

Selfhood

To understand how beings participate in the self-learning, self-directing nature of the universe, the previous chapter started with the three-faceted model where beingness derives from dynamic interplay between ideas and material forms. The ability of "living forms" to consciously ingest ideas, as they do energy and matter, and transform them for their own use (through the cohesive forces of the energeia) makes self-development possible. Entities below the threshold of organic cells also engage in a constant interchange of matter and energy, but they lack sufficient mobility and flexibility to make the many quantum choices that are intrinsic to self-renewing life or selfhood.

My evolving model suggests the possibility that at some level of species-consciousness, humans literally hold their body cells together with a vision of who they are. On a larger scale, it is conceivable that conscious beings collectively maintain the integrity of parts of the material universe through group mind. (Some ABs have implied to contactees that they have more ability to use group mind than humans do.) Although the power of creation is subject to certain constraints at the human level, a single person can largely determine how well his or her body will perform as an athlete or dancer, or whether it will be ill or well. And the evidence is mounting that we also have a significant impact on other organic entities and our material surroundings. (Many anecdotes describe the ways computers, automobiles, and machines respond to changes in the user's moods. Deliberate psychokinesis and teleportation are other examples of the power of self on other.)

The ability of a being to self-monitor and self-renew does not arise accidentally. It derives from the universal intention expressed at conception that joins together the three realms through the natural principles² that support life. Not yet understanding the primal origin of this initiating consciousness, we can only accept and marvel at ourselves and other beings as the offspring of the yin/yang force I sometimes call the Grand Couple.

Does only one force in the universe have a powerful enough intent to initiate new life-forms? We simply do not know how many species, if any, have the power to take a primal idea and focus subtle energy enough to synthesize new life-forms, without depending on biogenesis (the development of living organisms from other living organisms) or mechanistic genetic manipulation. If the universe is truly self-learning, it could have produced different levels of the Grand Couple, each with its own scope of operation.

According to Raimon Panikkar, "The ancient Greeks . . . had already defined life (zoe) as *chronostou einai*, the time of being. The very temporality of the universe manifests that it is alive; it has youth, maturity, old age, infirmities and even death. Zoe is set against thanatos, death. . . . Time is the very flow of being itself . . . the peculiar way in which each thing lasts."

For humans, beingness is in the here and now, in local space-time. Yet our beingness precludes neither the simultaneous existence of different beings in other dimensions nor our connections to them. In fact, the interconnectedness we experience through the subtle senses, OBE/NDE excursions, and other interdimensional communications reveals that local beingness cannot be severed from its internal, infinite source and context. In some manner, the cosmic umbilical cord is apparently never cut, even for a seemingly independent human incarnation for an Earthly lifetime.

Using Paul Tillich's concept, our local beingness derives from a preexisting ground of being. But since time is an integral part of this existence, the fourth dimension of the space-time, our sense of this self must be only temporary, limited to this incarnation. This logic notwithstanding, there is a long tradition of belief that the human self, or some part of it, is more than time and circumstance, and appears to have some degree of immortality. This would mean that selfhood should have the ability to be aware of both local time and universal time. Many reported transcendental experiences indicate it apparently does.

More concretely, scientific evidence indicates that at birth humans bring preexisting "knowingness" into this beingness.

Recent research has shown that newborns less than an hour old can recognize a human face. Within twelve hours of birth they can distinguish their mother's voice. A father holds his daughter within seconds of her birth, establishing deep, mutual eye contact. But that which the father might label a moment of bonding, may in fact be a moment of mutual recognition. However, as the new being begins to focus more on the phenomenal realm, certain pathways to knowing appear to become constricted.

Noam Chomsky, noted Massachusetts Institute of Technology linguist, believes we are biologically prewired to learn language. Humans are born with the ability to distinguish among all the speech sounds in all languages, even artificial ones, but within a year the recognition skill narrows to those of the native language. Infants can even appreciate the emotional implication of words in a language they have never heard before. While most of the content of early learning appears to come from the environment, the process of comprehension and consolidation is innate. As infants, humans even appear to intuitively grasp physics, the difference between solid and holographic objects. Consciousness-incarnate apparently learns about the externals of this incarnation with skills brought from elsewhere.

Such early demonstrations of knowledge could come only from a holistic, multisense understanding of reality intrinsic to human nature. Much of this multilevel knowledge becomes suppressed by the focus of consciousness required for life in the phenomenal world and by self-limiting cultural patterns. This brief survey of what we seem to understand leaves us with questions that require further study by frontier researchers: What do newborns know? How is taking on human form self-limiting, and must it always carry the price of diminishing awareness? How can we maintain and enhance this broader awareness?

Many children report memories of specific earlier lifetimes, while others frequently have a sense of having already experienced a place or social situation. Much of the so-called fantasy life of children is surprisingly like material from other

Alienation from the whole social organism contributes to the creation of individual violence (evident in internecine warfare of gang members and violent acts of "loners"), and only the whole can heal it. Healing of communities starts with a conscious choice by its members to expand their inner sense of relatedness. Hillary Rodham Clinton's book *It Takes a Village* is intuitively based on the understanding that true self-awareness involves full awareness of community, and self-actualization requires other-actualization.

Personal Choice

Otherness begins at the point along the selfhood-otherness spectrum where an individual's obvious control ends. The human ability to maneuver up to that point is in many respects analogous to the capabilities of a cellular telephone: our movements are practically unimpeded; we send signals simultaneously with others; any one of us can contact any other on the planet if both parties desire; but each has the choice to answer the call or not.

Communication employing the subtle senses works in the same way: at least two beings must open the channel. We send out a call and receive responses from those with whom it resonates. We receive the busy signal of those who choose not to tune in. The scope of eventual communication depends on the intent and skill of the initiator (caller) and the willingness of other beings to engage (pick up the phone). The human's ability to exercise these choices provides the potential for reciprocal access through the subtle senses to any part and, ultimately, to the whole universe, through (to change metaphors) the "cosmic Internet."

The more we want to increase our conscious awareness quotient (the CQ discussed in chapter 7), the more we must engage in such multilevel interaction with others. Conscious, positive understanding seems infinite when we open ourselves in constructive engagement with other beings. Respect, like love, is infinite: the more one gives away, the more one gets. There is evidence that psi abilities like remote viewing increase as we open ourselves to different levels of otherness.

(This may be why some intuitives and remote viewers frequently become more active in social issues.)

The key to self-learning and individual growth is finding an appropriate level of openness between selfhood and otherness. Defining and realizing that balance is a daily goal of conscious beings. To be truly harmonious, we do not give up individuality, but enhance it with the help of others. Living according to our core needs and allowing others to do the same recognizes that the individual's desires are only one factor in the algebra of cosmic consciousness; as any student knows, both sides have to balance for the equation to work. The following four sections discuss contributions to healthy inter-being relationships.

Support Others

We have seen how otherness is essential for developing selfhood. But the best assistance others can offer the developing self is the opportunity for self-learning. The newborn may be mentally awakened by the more conscious beings around it. We adults can draw its attention with playfulness and soothe it with nurturing, but ultimately we help the new being learn how to balance between reception and expression, between venturing out and drawing into itself. Wise elders offer both stimulation and repose, but allow the infant to learn how to select between them at will. The child's early experiences either reinforce innate tendencies to experimentation or negate them, shaping a being's lifelong approach to self-learning. (As with IQ and EQ, early experiences influence one's CQ score.)

Insights derived from the three-faceted model have implications for our current theories about social behavior, particularly so-called antisocial behavior. Humans literally do not think or do anything alone: no thought or action occurs in isolation from other beings and our planetary habitat. Consequently, our fate is to function like members of an improvisational jazz ensemble, playing the instruments we have in concert with other members, agreeing in advance to a set of chord changes, then making up parts in relation to each

other in progression through the set. When the rhythms and harmonies "work," the outcome is music; when any element is off, the result is discordant sound. Therefore, any accurate analysis of one's discordant behavior involves both the self, as one "musician," and its multifaceted relationship with the whole group.

Any interaction between beings involves some form of energy. Even mental or verbal exchanges focus subtle energy (energeia) that in turn affects another's performance. If we unthinkingly project our shadows (the negative parts of ourselves that we ignore) on others, we project an energetic burden onto their role-playing. Public leaders are, to a large degree, either weighed down or uplifted by the subtle energies focused upon them by others. We can support more positive behavior in leaders by projecting constructive energy fields in their direction. The place to start political reform lies in the subtle force fields of our most intimate relations, whence it will ripple out in larger circles.

Individuals tend to perceive reality through their own constructs of selfhood, interpreting otherness through projecting them on it. To make our sense of reality more than a subjective attribution, there has to be confirmation from another being. Since the reality of otherness is a collaborative projection of respective selfhoods, so-called objective reality can only be a function of intersubjective agreement between selfhoods. Recognizing such a subjective and changing interpretation of external reality, useful science and effective politics involve continuous testing, modifications of assumptions, and repeated validations of what we think we know. The same principle of continual mutual validation supports self-learning interpersonal relationships.

Ignore Surface Differences

All species have their unique energy patterns in each of the three facets. Qualities of beingness include differing profiles of frequencies, amplitudes, and wavelengths on any spectrum. Such differing combinations would account for the existence of beings quite unlike us in outward appearance. For example,

when people use the term "beings of light" to describe contacts in NDE or subtle-sense perceptions, they are obviously referring to more amorphous forms of beingness. The range of feasible combinations may be almost infinite, including familiar ones like ghosts, aliens, and angels. Humanity should not be surprised at the varieties of form (costumes) exhibited by the cosmic siblings to be encountered by coming generations.

Before we as a species can be ready to engage with advanced species from elsewhere in the universe, we must learn the lessons of commonality on one planet. If we cannot be mature at home, there is little reason to believe we will behave better elsewhere. Following are the implications of some "real" differences among humans and some "real" implications of differences that are only a matter of social convention.

Problems arise when individuals and groups alienate themselves from others by mentally and emotionally interpreting different "costumes" as the polarity of "outsiders/insiders." These judgments may involve polarizing distinctions in race, language, religion, sex, politics, economic status, dialect, life style, eating habits, or any one of scores of other categories. Every one of these costumes has, at some time and place, led to hostile behavior against the group perceived as "outsiders."

A poignant example is the brutality of the "ethnic cleansing" perpetrated by Serbs against Slavic Muslims and by Serbs and Croats against each other in the former Yugoslavia, where centuries of mutual hostilities-in-consciousness underlie the abuses of the 1990s. In that region, where there are few discernible physical and behavioral differences between neighbors, the religious costume alone is used as a pretext to commit atrocities of pillage, rape, and murder. This behavior, and examples like it in all parts of the world, can be explained in terms of energetics among conscious beings.

Violence against "outsiders" is the result of a two-step process. The first step labels others as sufficiently different to cause mental alienation. This deliberate act of conscious classification results in distortions of both the matenergy and subtle energy flows in the direction of the "outsiders." Within

- those doing the judging, the experience bottles up constructive energy that needs to be expressed to balance the output of negative energy. (Remember that the Principle of Rhythm requires periods of near equilibrium.) The recipients experience the distortions in subtle-energy flows as invasive, subliminal turbulence. This two-way stress occurs on the energetic and noumenal levels, even if the physical manifestations are not immediately obvious.

In the second step, the "insider" decides to take action against the "outsider" in order to relieve the internal energetic stress and return to equilibrium. In reaching this conclusion, one gives oneself "permission" to rampage. Attacks, looting, rape, murder, and other forms of mayhem, whether verbal or economic, result in a temporary dissipation of the clogged energy flows. There is an orgiastic release at one or more levels, returning the violators temporarily to a sense of ease and harmony.

But since the fundamental problem—the conscious denial of mutually beneficial interconnectedness—keeps the subtle-energy channels dysfunctional, the pressure soon rebuilds and the same illusory remedy is tried again. Ironically, this kind of "senseless" violence occurs only among conscious beings with minds capable of assigning labels or calling names. (The *Course in Miracles* very appropriately teaches that "only a stranger can evoke fear; call him brother and he comes into your heart.")

This model of the origins of violent behavior does not support the thesis that such negative outbursts are caused by genetic and chemical imbalances, or environmental pressures and social disadvantage or misfortune, although these factors can influence the degree of dysfunction. Thus, violence from within the homes of the "best in society" should not surprise us. This is the reason it happens every day in modern society.

Only by honoring the common bonds of consciousness, through an open acceptance of the reciprocal mental, energetic, and physical exchanges, can conscious beings avoid the explosion of internecine violence. Effective solutions may include conscious reopenings of the flows between beings by

removal of the divisive label or by involvement in friendly games (some as simple as midnight basketball) and rituals that dislodge the thwarted energetic exchanges. Increasing external pressure or controls will only exaggerate the imbalance. So-called wars on behaviors that deviate from group norms have an opposite effect from that desired. Why have social and political leaders not recognized this? Could it be due to their vested interests in perpetuation of discord?

Overtly destructive behaviors differ from more subtle conflicts of ideas and emotions only in degree. Society pays too little attention to the milder end of the behavior-emotion-idea spectrum because of the lack of understanding of the physical impact of conflicts in the subtle realm. Since the dynamics of the subtle soon become manifest in the physical, we need to get as concerned about how people relate on the inner realms as we do about the way we engage on a physical level. Given the similarly patterned nature of the two, we can begin to cope with the overt problems of conflict by experimenting with how we relate to others on a verbal and feeling basis. The way to "civilize" undesirable behaviors is not to ban or suppress them, but to help channel the negative subtle energy involved into constructive forms. A simple exercise can prove the point.

The next time you encounter a minor frustration with anyone, try perceiving that person as a cosmic being like yourself. Recognize, through your inner eye, that she or he has the same essential attributes and powers you have. Think of his or her glowing selfhood, shaped by consciousness and infused with the same cosmic energy that courses through your chakras. Sense the pulsations of that energy channeled by his or her unique costume of incarnation, derived from the same reservoir of potentialities whence your differing qualities, skills, and aspirations. Express the rising pulse of energy as a compliment or encouragement for some specific trait in the other. Then sense the shift taking place in your internal energy balance and overt behaviors. As you see the other's behavior shift, reflect on the reasons for it. (Apply the same principle to stressed cells in your body and see what happens to the pain.)

extraterrestrial Annunaki twelve-part zodiac and Sumerian astronomy. The name for King Arthur may have derived from Arcturus, the Great Bear of the Big Dipper and the brightest northern star.

Uncannily similar to the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve tribes of Delphi, Glastonbury was divided into twelve Hides (1,440 acres each), which recall the twelve houses of the zodiac. Ancient Delphi and Glastonbury, both sited on springs with magic waters, were considered communications links to advanced beings. Some interpret the Glastonbury myths in spiritual or etheric energy terms, but they are equally plausible as accounts of AB-type activity.⁷

In the original Celtic language, *Iniswitrin* (now Glastonbury) meant "the isle of crystal." It was known as the location of a crystal palace (possibly a spaceship) in a fairy fort. In fact, all the area was known as the land of the fairies (nonhuman beings). Glastonbury was reportedly ruled by Gwynn ap Nudd, a being who came from deep underground. As the story goes, Saint Collen confronted Gwynn in the fairy fort and then later disappeared for a time in his palace cum space vehicle. In a parallel English legend, Guinevere, like Persephone of Greek legend, was abducted to another world. These stories are not unlike some told by modern-era abductees, but we have no easy way to confirm differing interpretations.

Whoever the ABs were, humans co-existing with them in many locales, saw these beings as natural members of their cosmic family. In a period of suppression of such views, popular movie classics like *Star Trek* and *ET*, television programs on angels, and modern science fiction help keep alive these ideas of an expanded cosmic family. Until a new public consensus develops, we are left with isolated and disparate individual and small-group reports of communications with other members of our cosmic family. Without a generally accepted theory to explain these experiences, society is subjected to much misinformation and distortion of meaning in these interdimensional contacts. Some of the books on AB contacts and communications referenced here help to place

such individual experiences into a larger family context.⁸ Humans currently engaged in various forms of communication with other realms should keep in mind that such beings are shaped by the intellectual and cultural histories of whatever galaxy or dimension in which they exist. Therefore, the reception of a message from one of those beings via channeling, direct contact, or other media does not mean the human recipient has been given the cosmic truth; it is only talk within the family.

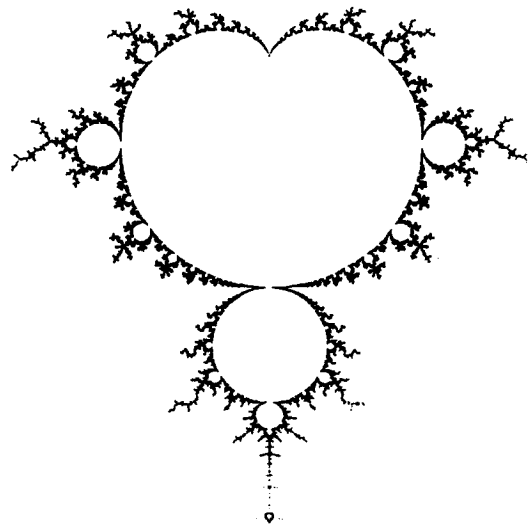
Communications with other realms should be taken for what they are: expressions of individual beings or groups sharing their idiosyncratic views with their human cousins. Reading, hearing, or being a channel for such communications sets no one apart: we are all channels, exchanging data continuously with beings and dimensions with whom we share a fundamental reality. The cosmic ordinariness of all this (the multidimensionality of conscious beingness, the multiplicity of messages and channels, and the inescapable links of any being with all others) should make it easy to avoid overly dramatizing any particular message or interpretation.

Polls in the new century reveal that over 50 percent (an increase of several percentage points over five years ago) of Americans believe UFOs are real, and about one-third think official contact has already been made with aliens. Although increasing numbers of humans now acknowledge their membership in a cosmic family, for many to take such a step would be a threatening experience. Even so, many members of our Earth family may have already made it.

In the early 1990s, the Roper Organization published a report entitled *Unusual Personal Experiences*.⁹ It came to the incredible conclusion that, based on its sampling techniques, perhaps 2 percent of the American population—more than 5 million people—have had experiences consistent with a UFO abduction history. (Note that the term "abductees" excludes contactees—those who have had an encounter but have not been taken aboard a craft for physical and mental examinations.) Roper used as criteria for assuming abduction the subjective impressions given in response to survey questions.¹⁰



the potential that focused human consciousness has for creative interventions in nature. Both the process (human concern possibly manifested through plants) and the content (the inherent order in apparent chaos) deserve further research.



A Crop Circle as Mandelbrot Set

As of this writing, crop circle researchers have not been able to develop foolproof criteria to distinguish an authentic crop formation from a hoaxed one. But ignoring all of them due to some known hoaxes loses a precious opportunity for insight into our living planet. Many formations are associated with lights and shapes in the sky usually identified with ABs, but the UFOs may simply have been attracted to the phenomenon and not been creators of it.

In the summer of 1992, in an attempt to test the hypothesis that we can interact with the crops through the medium of consciousness, I designed an experiment to determine if we could influence the formation of particular shapes in the grain fields of a selected area in England.¹³ Around midnight, a group of colleagues and I meditated at length on the same image (a bow tie, known only to us) on top of Silbury Hill. Some days later, a formation appeared in the field where we

had focused our vision, with a bow tie included among the several designs composing the formation. Even though hoaxers made unproven claims to the formation, our experience was not unlike the sequence involving a letter Martyn Hughes sent to the *New Scientist* in August 1991. In it Hughes asked, "How long before we see a Mandelbrot Set (in a crop formation)?"—and a design like that shown above appeared a few days later.

A connection between human consciousness and the so-called crop circles may be only illustrative of the many possible interactions between individuals or groups and the vibrant nature of our cosmic habitat. Industrial society has forgotten the tradition of such human interaction as manifested in Native American rain dances, spring fertility rites, harvest festivals, hunting prayers, and so on. If the human mind can influence the pattern of falls by plastic balls in a cold mechanical cabinet—such are Robert Jahn and Brenda Dunne's findings in the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) Laboratory at Princeton University¹⁴—what is the potential for a powerful exchange of influence between us and other living systems? If we can engage particles in a dance into and out of form, is it possible to consciously obtain responses from weather patterns and other aspects of our habitat? Wilhelm Reich reported success at producing rainfall with his deliberate focus of orgone (energeia). Ted Owens's psychic intent was reportedly associated with several dramatic weather events.¹⁵

Self-Learning Requires Testing

In the discussion of selfhood in relation to otherness in a self-learning universe composed of multiple conscious beings, two assumptions are implicit: (1) No single source of all knowledge can be controlled by any one being, and no beings have totally exclusive knowledge. (2) Any being has potential access to all knowledge through one's individual or group experience. But each being has the responsibility to distinguish between uniquely personal interpretations of that experience and what others would consider a valid interpretation. The following paragraphs illustrate my thinking about these two assumptions.