

THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

realms or dimensions. You will recall from your own astral travels while asleep, that the astral body is no less real than the physical body is thought to be.

"Now let us examine some of the functions which the various aspects of the astral body serve while one is physically incarnated. First, let us look at the subconscious. The subconscious is the mechanism which performs those vital functions that produce automatic actions and reactions on the physical level. Examples of this would be breathing, beating of the heart, blinking of the eyelids, eating, digesting, etc. All learned responses are also triggered from the subconscious. It is the subconscious which permits the formation of habits. It is the subconscious which must be re-programmed in order to break habits.

"The subconscious, in addition to being a part of the astral body, is also a component of the mind or mental body. This can cause great confusion in understanding the functions of the various bodies. That is why I have told you to study this discourse well. As a component of the mental body, the subconscious has the ability and the capacity to record all sensual, mental, emotional and spiritual experiences, and to 'play back' this information upon request. In this respect, it functions like a tape recorder. Although the subconscious is a level of the mental body, it does not have the capacity for rational thought that the conscious or superconscious levels of mind have.

"The subconscious is, to the astral body and the mental body, what the brain is to the physical body, except of course that the subconscious is permanent. The physical brain is the storehouse or computer memory bank of the mortal self while physically incarnated. During one's physical incarnation, everything that one experiences is recorded in the brain. Likewise, everything that is recorded in the brain is also recorded in the subconscious.

"The subconscious does not have the capacity to discern what is true or false, good or bad or to differentiate between other extremes. It functions as a storehouse of information, and a trigger for learned responses. Hence the importance of learning to properly program the subconscious with truth and to purge it of all erroneous knowledge and bad habits. Hence the pain and difficulty of unlearning! Hence the absolute necessity of under-

Joseph Whitfield: "THE TREASURE OF EL DORADO".
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standing that the subconscious contains total memory information from all previous lives and experiences. 1

"With this understanding, one can recognize the effect of previous life experiences on one's present life and one's total well-being. When you begin to realize the massive amount of misinformation that can be, and usually is, stored in the subconscious, then you become aware of the urgent need to begin the unlearning process.

"At this point, I must make you aware of a subtle truth concerning the relationship of the conscious to the subconscious. I have told you that the subconscious is not capable of rational thinking and that it is a storehouse of information and a trigger for learned responses. If an individual's conscious mind does not exercise its prerogative for thinking, planning and executing instructions, then, the subconscious will take over this function through its own triggering mechanism. In other words, the subconscious will in effect rule the conscious because the conscious fails to fulfill its responsibility to rule.

"You can see countless examples of this happening in the daily lives of those around you. Take, for instance, an individual raised in an atmosphere of bigotry where he was taught to hate all members of another race or religion. The individual has developed a very entrenched learned response that causes him to speak out in hatred, and contempt of those groups whom he has been taught to hate. This is the subconscious dominating the conscious. If the conscious were dominant, then the bigoted individual would think through the distorted reasons for his hate response and would realize the error of his subconscious prejudices.

"The subconscious has another singularly elusive but vitally significant function that you must comprehend—that is its ability to act as a conduit between the conscious and the superconscious. The superconscious is always seeking to contact the conscious. In order to reach the conscious, the superconscious must travel through the subconscious.

"We might compare the conscious to a light bulb, the subconscious to the electric wire and the superconscious to the energy source. The energy has to reach the light bulb before the light will shine. If the electric wire is

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very fineness of our composition leads us, when we are one, to be remote from you. You possibly will not believe me when I tell you that each star has its own personality. It is one and yet it is many. In the same way you, even when in the body, are, in the same material sense, one yet many. There are myriads of little entities within you but there is only one mind or one channel for the mind. The interesting feature of my state here is that I am within a larger mind which is not a collective one but is rounded off from many others. Many of my affinities are contained in it. All those phases in my earth life are represented by these various centres.

I have spoken to you of attention in a physiological sense. I have described it as a stream of nervous energy, being directed towards certain cells or a certain cell in the brain, these being connected with certain images. Very well. As we are now constituted we have no material brain, but we possess a certain psychic web. This web is not exactly on the plan of the brain. It does not contain millions of tiny neurons or compartments, but it contains several centres which can draw or attract a stream of psychic energy from the Unifying Principle. If a great effort is made there can be attention in more than one direction, but not always. It is possible when we are communicating with the world that we can only supply one centre or focus at a time with this active stream or motive force. This is quite easy to understand, for a considerable effort of concentration is required when we manipulate another deeper mind. Sometimes we succeed in communicating with two people at once, but it is exceedingly difficult. The interesting point for you in connection with these centres or half-way houses is that the memory of what we have communicated is lodged therein, or rather it is in touch with that centre and no other centre with that focus, and also with the Unifying Principle, which, as you know, contains many in one.



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↓ THE SUBLIMINAL SELF ↓

I PROMISED to speak to you about the inner content of mind. I think, perhaps, I had better commence by speaking of man as a living organism. That seems a curious idea to me now, but I must use your terms as you understand them. To begin with, scientists have not in the least realised how very detached consciousness—or the soul—is from the body. The latter is the inheritance received from many past generations. It is in itself an empire, polyzoic and even polypsychic. It is, in fact, infinitely more complicated, with three degrees of nerves, those of the higher centres, those of the middle and lower. These nerves are the keys upon which our consciousness plays. Now, I want you to understand that we, in our etheric condition, to a certain degree correspond with the physical organism. Have you ever pondered over that mysterious phrase, "in the beginning the image was made flesh"? I may quote incorrectly, but that phrase, or one that is similar to it, which you will find in the Bible,¹ contains a vast truth. The living organism is, to a certain degree, a reflection of what is in the Unseen. There is a Unifying Principle of which I have already told you. There are also minor consciousnesses which I have already spoken of as centres, or as the focus. When I communicate with the earth, one of these minor consciousnesses, or psychic entities, takes possession of the medium, supplanting one of the psychic entities which she possesses. We never supplant what I call the Unifying Principle in her; if we did, she would go mad. It is a very difficult feat, and is only attempted by certain

¹ John i. 1 and i. 14.

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message from the inner mind directing the nerve-memory. The fluid shape does not act as a medium, and there is in consequence no blurred interpretation. Added to this, of course, must be a considerable store of knowledge, or images, all connected with the brain-cells by those invisible threads of which I have already spoken. You must realise that the act of creation, then, is collaboration. The stream of energy from the inner mind moulds the work of art, partly out of these associations, these memories, but also partly out of the harvest of floating thoughts, from which it can draw more directly when the fluid shape is not the actual medium. In the case of the normal consciousness the fluid shape plays an important part and is largely the "ego." It will very frequently draw from the psychic entities, the minor consciousnesses; but these usually are directly bound up with the Unifying Principle, they are merely its tributaries. When there is a disintegration of personality it is sometimes due to one of these entities losing touch with the Unifying Principle, owing to the possible misbehaviour of the fluid shape or nerve-memory, which sends out a too powerful appeal to this psychic entity. The central consciousness, however, is usually, if directly evoked, able to obtain control again. I want you, in the light of my remarks, to consider and study the evolution of man. The larger mind has been there, in a state at times unformed, from the dark ages, from the beginning if there ever was a beginning, which I doubt. At first this mind found it could only at times send faint reflections to primitive people, whom it had gradually evolved, created as a sculptor creates. But in time the form of man developed, and was the more easily able to receive the image. The Word was made flesh with greater and greater facility.

The Word

You may ask, in connection with mind, why it thus sought to express itself? It desired individuality; it, too, desired form; and form and individuality were, to a certain

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degree, achieved through this constant interchange between mind and matter. But, mark you, it is still the essence of matter—the nerves and nerve-memory—that dominates and controls the actions of the human being. So seek for the normal ego, when you are a living woman, in the nerve-soul, in the construction of the brain and body, and in the image sent by the Unifying Principle. The Word was made flesh. In that phrase you may find the whole mystery of man's nature, the sum total of his being.

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You desire to know what is ordinary consciousness. The actual constructive force is, in its essence, the nerve-soul; but ordinary consciousness is a sum in arithmetic. The needs of the body, the cravings of the mechanisms, are all influencing the nerve-soul in its decisions. What you call the subconscious is the reflection, the light from above. Sometimes it is feeble because the summons is weak. It also plays a part in the decision. Time, of course, is a factor that puzzles you in this connection, but the whole organisation is through centuries of evolution, so subtilised that it can make its decision rapidly. In the days of primitive man, the I, the constructive force—the "ego"—was principally the body; the nerves—the fluid shape even—were subordinate. I want you to understand that there are not, save in very rare cases, two wills making decisions at the same time consciously. There is only one, because there is only one channel; but the subliminal self, which is outside the larger mind—if you prefer that term—is exceedingly active, and, when messages in daytime are sent to it through the channel, that is to say, via the nerve-soul, then this mind works upon the message and sends it during sleep, in a new guise, back to the nerve-soul, which it can easily do, because the soul is apart from the body, quite still, and yet able to reflect the desired image which it craved for in waking hours. This is, on waking, attached

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malevolent entities on this side. Now, can you imagine a country, take England for example, dotted over with towns all self-contained, yet looking to that vast city London for general directions and for a certain essential stimulus? Such is the condition of the discarnate being. He is a kingdom, bounded by what would seem to have the appearance of a veil. It has a curious elasticity. I mean, we differ from the kingdom to which I have alluded in that we can alter at will the shape of this very subtle material or fluid. We differ in many other respects. Our surroundings are of a metetheric character. You may ask me to define this. It is exceedingly difficult. But I think I may say that it contains atoms of the very finest kind. They pass through your coarser matter. They belong to another state altogether.

You may then ask: "How does your world or state differ from our earth?" It differs very considerably, for the reason that this fluid is quite unformed. After death, if we are sufficiently developed, we enter into our subliminal self. When we were alive we believed that there were two forms of consciousness: one the inner mind, the other the supraliminal, the latter was above the threshold and controlled our ordinary business, appearing to direct operations generally. We looked on the subliminal as being that which was below the threshold, the inner mind, the inspired part of our nature, the creative source. Very well then, since I have passed over I have come to realise that actually, in the sense of pure mind, there is no supraliminal part. There is in its stead an infinitely complicated machine which has become more and more subtilised through the centuries, so that now it responds to the slightest of vibrations, sent out by the subliminal, or what you may perhaps call the subconscious, mind. Of what, then, does the supraliminal or ordinary consciousness consist? Of a very wonderful nerve-memory; of all the physical desires of the body, to a large

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extent controlled by that nerve-memory; and lastly, and most important, of the reflection of the subliminal part of you. Usually, the subliminal sends its reflection, which, to a faint or a powerful degree, is received by the fluid shape which I call the nerve-memory. This, in its turn, transmits the reflection in vibrations to the brain. Normal consciousness is to a certain degree threefold. It consists in the main of the image interpreted by the nerve-memory, and of the material part, the brain, which is responsive to the image sent by this inner mind. But that is not by any means all. The brain and body, as a rule, must set the desire for the image in motion before the latter can be despatched and made perceptible. In short, the body must be receptive, or, rather, the nerves and brain must receive and register. These two alter and elaborate, or they simplify and give colour to, the contribution that has come from the higher portion of man's nature. There is also a reverse process: the assimilation of impressions of the material world by the brain which are transferred to the higher centres and returned in due course. There is, in short, a constant trafficking during the individual's waking hours between these various parts of his being.

Many points still require elucidation. You probably desire to know where is that positive, and very frequently objectionable, entity the "ego." It is a sum in arithmetic, a figure worthy of the attention of mathematicians. It is really the sum total of the physical needs of man, and the accretions through many generations of inherited memories, added to his innate capacity for corresponding with the inner mind and for receiving its image. Now there are times of creative activity which scholars have been kind enough to allocate to the inner mind. Then great works are produced, and you cannot understand the mystery of their creation. They are produced through a certain singular aptitude on the part of the brain, which responds to the