

# Dialogue with Brugh Joy

## Part 4 of 21

Franklin Merrell-Wolff  
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Brugh: [Regarding] the process of reaching that luminosity and what carried you through your conference, it was obvious to me that you [were] not functioning on your ordinary energy; you were functioning on a vaster energy circuitry which has to do with your divine aspect—which was what carried you through the conference. The process of the luminosity or that clarity of seeing that life and death are one and the same to you at that point was available and [it appeared] to me that was consciously available to you. It wasn't an unconscious experience.

Franklin: No.

Brugh: The question is—and it's always been a question in my consciousness—whether or not you were, first of all, feeling the sense of preparation for death, and, secondly, whether or not you really have finished everything that you need to finish so that the clarity of the process can remain all the way through whatever transitional points you go through; in other words, even this phase right now, of where you are leaving the physical form and the vitality is waxing—I can see it—or waning. Actually the question is the clarity of your consciousness, for each stage carries with it a confusion. If there is confusion, then [comes] doubt and [after this] come the various activating forces of reattaching. The question is: Are you complete or do you feel the completion, or do you feel there is any last thing that possibly is holding you? I really feel that you're ready for that clarity to come through, if in your own outer mind it is ready to participate in a process of simply letting go.

Franklin: Well, I don't feel anything that seems unfinished.

Brugh: It seems to me that you've been given the grace to complete everything that you needed to complete. Particularly with the changes and [with] Gertrude preceding you in this whole process—[all of this] required a change in some other things that had to transpire in your life, including a realization while you were still incarnate, which led to that whole process that you went through, which wouldn't have been available to you had you preceded her. And I'm talking about the clarity of life-and-death, and seeing that they are one and the same process, that you could turn either way and they appear the same. The luminosity and the energy that you were working with; the withdrawal of your vital forces you are going through [during] this particular phase; and [that] there is nothing that orthodox medicine can do for you.

Franklin: That's what I felt, that's what I felt.

Brugh: They could give you intravenouses and keep your body sustained, but that's not the vital force. The vital force is changing in you and you know it and so do I. The question is really in your discussions with me beginning two years ago, [which concerned] the aspect of maintaining an awareness in the transitional states.

I brought with me [an] exceptionally good copy of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* that is a translation by Chögyam Trungpa. I don't know if you know of him.

Franklin: I know of him.

Brugh: This translation, rather than the initial one, carries with it a slightly different perspective because of the exodus of the high llamas from Tibet after 1953. More information was brought through and a greater validation from many different sources was then available that was not available to the initial translation. I thought what we could do is share—I would read to you the commentary that he has in preparation for that and perhaps we could share our thoughts together about that to see where we are in that whole process.

Franklin: Alright.

Brugh: It's only about thirty-three pages long, and it may take me tonight, and it may take me tomorrow, and so on, but we can at least sit down and feel after it and sense where we are with it.

Franklin: Alright.

Brugh: As I begin this work with you, at any point that you either become tired or that you need to go to the bathroom, or you want to lie down—you simply tell me, and then we simply will break for that period of time. And I will find a place, and come up tomorrow morning, if necessary. I have a feeling that we will probably complete [only a] part of this tonight because I think there are certain things we need to look at together.

Franklin: Alright.

Brugh: You have the wisdom of a long life, and a perspective and clarity, and I have some intuitional process that I work with. Along with the commentary, we both have something to work from. Perhaps together it [will be] a process of clarification for us both.

Franklin: Okay, fine. Is it light enough?

Brugh: Yes, it's light enough. And when it gets darker we'll change the position. Are you comfortable in that chair, Dr. Wolff, or would you like your regular chair?

Franklin: Enough to fall asleep in.

Brugh: Well as you know, the conscious mind, or the mind that I'm looking at—I am not concerned about [it] from the standpoint of whether it is awake. Hello.

Maybelle: Hello.

Franklin: Do you know Maybelle?

Brugh: Yes, I know her very well. Hello Maybelle.

Franklin: She has been handling my problems. Karen is due tomorrow or the next day. Yes, this may be terminal. We might as well face the facts.

Maybelle: Oh.

Brugh: So [here's] what I am going to be doing with [Dr. Wolff]. We're going to be exploring the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. We are going to be exploring some concepts

and ideas because it's obvious that [Dr. Wolff's condition] is not a medical situation that we're dealing with, and there [are] some things we want to look at and clarify together.

Maybelle: I thought it was more of a medical—

Brugh: No, I don't think it's medical.

Franklin: No.

Brugh: Yes. The medical could come in and sustain him, but that's not the problem.

Franklin: They could keep this going a while longer by intravenous feeding and so on.

Brugh: There is a deeper thing happening, and he knows it and so do most of the people.

Franklin: I feel I've really finished.

Brugh: There is nothing wrong with that, as you know Dr. Wolff. So often people get so guilty about that process and I've worked with people either way. To me, I've never had a feeling of sustaining somebody, I can work either on [a person] if we want to revivify, or [I'm alright] if we want to have a look at the crossing. I feel comfortable with both, and my training is with both. I have certainly been with people who have died and I have been with people who have survived. So I am neutral in our interaction. [I want] it to be a neutral interaction so that the deeper Wisdom may take place and not my wisdom or just your outer wisdom, but the deepest Wisdom.

Franklin: Deepest wisdom. Yes, that is right.

Brugh: Whatever is to transpire will transpire—my job is to not impinge upon what is taking place, but merely to act like a clear-mirror and a clarifier as we sort of look at some deep concepts that I think you're ready to review at this point.

Franklin: Yes.

Brugh: And if you fall asleep I'll wait for you to awaken.

Maybelle: I put him to sleep several times reading to him.

Franklin: I haven't got a great deal of strength now, outwardly at least.

Brugh: It [has] nothing to do with your outer vitality. As we have questions we can sort of just question it or you can pause and think about it, and so on.

Franklin: Yes.

Brugh: As I say, there are thirty-three pages in the Commentary, which is the beginning, and it doesn't even get to the main text. But there are some wonderful ideas I think we can share together.

Franklin: OK. Alright.

Brugh: This is the Commentary. We can tape record this so that you can listen to it.

Participant: I've got a tape running right now, Brugh, so I'll be around to check on it with you.

Brugh: Are you picking up?

Participant: Yeah, I've got it right here. I am just going to get some more tapes ready.

Brugh: So what we'll be doing is reading the commentary. [This] is a new translation with commentary by [Chögyam Trungpa and the introduction by Francesca Freemantle].

Maybelle: Do you wish me to be here, or would you prefer I would not be?

Brugh: I think I'll just work with [only] him just for the moment.

Maybelle: Okay. I'll be in the other room.

Brugh: Okay, thank you. What [Trungpa] is doing here, Dr. Wolff, is talking about the message of the book and he says:

There seems to be a fundamental problem when we refer to the subject of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. The approach of comparing it with *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* in terms of mythology and lore of the dead person seems to miss the point, which is the fundamental principle of birth and death re- occurring constantly in this life. One could refer to this book as *The Tibetan Book of Birth*. The book is not based on death as such, but on a completely different concept of death. It is a "Book of Space." Space contains birth and death; space creates the environment in which to behave, breathe and act, it is the fundamental environment which provides the inspiration for this book.

The pre-Buddhist Bön civilization of Tibet contained very accurate indications on how to treat the psychic forces left behind by a dead person, the footprints or temperature, so to speak, which is left behind when he is gone. It seems that both the Bön tradition and the Egyptian are based on that particular type of experience, how to relate with the footprints, rather than dealing with the person's consciousness. But the basic principle I am trying to put across now is that of the uncertainty of sanity and insanity, or confusion and enlightenment, and the possibilities of all sorts of visionary discoveries that happen on the way to sanity or insanity.

*Bardo* means gap; it is not only the interval of suspension after we die but also suspension in the living situation; death happens in the living situation as well.

Brugh: And that's where you are right now, I feel. Don't you?

Franklin: Could be. I wouldn't resist the idea at all. No.

Brugh: Do you sense that at all?

Franklin: Yes, I just didn't . . . I couldn't see any continuation.

Brugh: I know, I could feel it. That's why I came and brought the book, so that we could talk openly and freely without the encumbrance of any psychic pulls in trying to either hold you here, or wishing it were all over—[but] just to explore in the freedom of the moment.

Franklin: Right

Brugh reads:

Death happens in the living situation as well. The bardo experience is part of our basic psychological make-up. There are all kinds of bardo experiences happening to us all the time, experiences of paranoia and uncertainty in everyday life; it is like not being sure of our ground, not knowing quite what we have asked for, or what we are getting into. So this book is not only a message for those who are going to die and those who are already dead, but it is also a message for those who are already born; birth and death applied to everybody constantly, at this very moment.

The bardo experience can be seen in terms of the six realms of existence that we go through, the six realms of our psychological states. Then it can be seen in terms of the different deities who approach us, as they are described in the book. In the first week the peaceful deities, and in the last week the wrathful deities; there are the five . . . tathāgatas.

Franklin: "Tathāgatas"?

Brugh: Right. Tathāgatas, and the herukas.

Franklin: Tathāgatas is the way I used to pronounce [it]. We didn't have any authority; but, there was a professor of Sanskrit here: he said there were so many pronunciations that I was justified in keeping that pronunciation.

Brugh: And how do you pronounce it Dr. Wolff?

Franklin: Tathāgata.

Brugh: Tathāgata. OK. It is a long 'a'; so for their Sanskrit usually it's stressed, but tathāgata [is], of course, synonymous with Buddha.

Franklin: Right, right.

Brugh reads:

. . . and the herukas, (Brugh: the masculine energy principle in a wrathful form) and the gaurīs, who are the messengers of the five tathāgatas, presenting themselves in all sorts of terrifying and revolting fashions. The details presented here are very much what happens in our daily living situation, they are not just psychedelic experiences or visions that appear after death. These experiences can be seen purely in terms of the living situation; that is what we are going to try to work on.

In other words, the whole thing is based on another way of looking at the psychological picture of ourselves in terms of a practical meditative situation. Nobody is going to save us; everything is left purely to the

individual, the commitment to who we are. Gurus or spiritual friends might instigate that possibility, but fundamentally they have no function.

How do we know that the things actually happen to people who are dying? Has anyone come back from the grave and told us the experiences they went through? Those impressions are so strong that someone recently born should have memories of periods between death and birth; but then as we grow we are indoctrinated by our parents and society, and we put ourselves into a different framework, so that the original deep impressions become faded except for occasional sudden glimpses. Even then we are so suspicious of such experiences, and so afraid of losing any tangible ground in terms of living in this world, that any intangible kind of experience is treated half-heartedly or dismissed altogether. To look at this process from the point of view of what happens when we die seems like the study of a myth; we need some practical experience of this continual process of bardo.

There is the conflict between body and consciousness, and there is the continual experience of death and birth. There is also the experience of the bardo of dharmāta, the luminosity, and of the bardo of becoming, of possible future parents or grounding situations. We also have the visions of the wrathful and the peaceful divinities, which are happening constantly, at this very moment. If we are open and realistic enough to look at it in this way, then the actual experience of death and the bardo state will not be either purely a myth or an extraordinary shock, because we have already worked with it and become familiar with the whole thing.

Brugh: Certainly a lot of wisdom in that isn't it?

Franklin: Yes.

Brugh: Apparently he says that he was first taught this wisdom at the age of eight, and he was asked and instructed by his teacher to visit dying patients or dying people, particularly family, at least four times a week so that he never lost track that life and death are a single process.

Brugh reads:

### **The Bardo of the Moment before Death**

The first basic bardo experience is the experience of uncertainty about whether one is actually going to die, in the sense of losing contact with the solid world, or whether one could continue to go on living. This uncertainty is not seen in terms of leaving the body, but purely in terms of losing one's ground; the possibility of stepping out from the real world into an unreal world.

Brugh: And this has been one of the things that you've raised.

Franklin: Yep, I feel that way. Yes. I am not on any solid foundation here [in the living state].

Brugh reads:

We could say that the real world is that in which we experience pleasure and pain, good and bad. There is some act of intelligence which provides the criteria of things as they are, a basic dualistic notion. But if we are completely in touch with these dualistic feelings, that absolute experience of duality is itself the experience of non-duality. Then there is no problem at all, because duality is seen from a perfectly open and clear point of view in which there is no conflict; there is a tremendous encompassing vision of oneness.

Brugh: And that's when you [had] the luminosity and the anānda of the oneness of life and death.

Franklin: Yes.

Brugh reads:

Conflict arises because duality is not seen as it is at all. It is only seen in a biased way (and this is what produces the conflict), a very clumsy way. In fact, we do not perceive anything properly, and we begin to wonder whether such things as myself and my projections really exist. So when we talk about the dualistic world as confusion, that confusion is not the complete dualistic world, but only half-hearted, and this causes tremendous dissatisfaction and uncertainty; it builds up to the point of fear of becoming insane, the point where there are possibilities of leaving the world of duality and going into a sort of wooly, fuzzy emptiness, which is the world of the dead, the graveyard that exists in the midst of fog.

The book describes the death experience in terms of the different elements of the body, going deeper and deeper. Physically you feel heavy when the earth element dissolves into the water; and when water dissolves into fire you find the circulation begins to cease functioning. When the fire dissolves into air, any feeling of warmth or growth begins to dissolve; and when air dissolves into space you lose the last feeling of contact with the physical world. Finally, when space or consciousness dissolves into the central nādī, there is a sense of internal luminosity, an inner glow, when everything has become completely introverted.

Such experiences happen constantly. The tangible, logical state dissolves, and one is not quite certain whether one is attaining enlightenment or losing one's sanity. Whenever that experience happens it can be seen in four or five different stages. First the tangible quality of physical, living logic becomes vague; in other words, you begin to lose the physical contact. Then you automatically take refuge in a more functional situation, which is the water element; you reassure yourself that your mind is still functioning. In the next stage, the mind is not quite sure whether it is functioning properly or not, something begins to cease operating in its circulation. The only way to relate is through emotions, you try to think of someone you love or hate, something very vivid, because the watery quality of the circulation does not work anymore, so the fiery temperature of love and hate becomes more important. Even that gradually dissolves

into air, and there is a faint experience of openness, so that there is a tendency to lose your grip on concentrating on love or trying to remember the person you love. The whole thing seems to be hollow inside.

The next experience is luminosity. You are willing to give in because you cannot struggle anymore, and a kind of carelessness arises in that moment. It is as though both pain and pleasure are occurring at the same time, or a powerful shower of icy cold water and boiling hot water is pouring simultaneously over your body. It is an intense experience, very powerful and whole. The experience of oneness where both pain and pleasure are the same. The dualistic struggle of trying to be something is completely confused by the two extreme forces of hoped for enlightenment and fear of becoming insane. The two extremes are so concentrated that it allows a certain relaxation; and when you do not struggle anymore the luminosity presents itself naturally.

Franklin: Now, you know the reports of Moody?

Brugh: Yes.

Franklin: We have him on cassettes—his whole book.

Brugh: *Life after Life*?

Franklin: Yes, *Life after Life*. Now the process that he reports doesn't have all of this complexity. So a question comes into my mind. Of course, he's not dealing with cases that succeeded in dying, they started to die.

Brugh: Yes.

Franklin: That may make a difference.

Brugh: [If we take] this first part in relationship to you—the process of what you went through following Gertrude's death—was the sequence of, first of all, the physical loss; then you went into the emotional realm; then that began to leave, and you began to get into the level where (we discussed the dissolution of that into that anānda space) it didn't matter, it could be either way for you. And there was a great clarity that came into your consciousness at that point in time. It was [as] if it didn't matter.

Franklin: Yes. There was great clarity then.

Brugh: And what we looked at—there are many things that we looked at—at that point because this is not just a simplistic process. I can only share what I see, and you discern and feel after it [in] your own self; but I felt that in the work of balancing your forces in preparation for the clear light or luminosity—in your process of transformation on through death, that the process of going through, what you call the “Via Dolorosa”—was a mechanism whereby it activated your energy to stay in [this] plane long enough to open the heart level.

Franklin: That would make sense.

Brugh: You took it through—just as it is saying here—because you are losing the physical reason for being. You took it through the emotional level, the watery element, which then led you into the anānda because you went through the Via Dolorosa—the

emotions, and so on—which gave you a very physical experience, no matter how painful. It doesn't matter whether it's painful [or] blissful [on] the emotional level; and then you hit this luminous clarity, this unbelievable state, which was the anānda that you were in for thirteen hours or longer.

Franklin: Fourteen hours.

Brugh: Fourteen hours of the anānda.

Franklin: I fell asleep in it, and I ordinarily would have figured that it would stop; but, [when] I woke up, I was still in it.

Brugh: Exactly. And your heart was opening—the heart chakra was opening.

Franklin: I left the house—this was down in Phoenix—I had been sitting outside enjoying [the anānda]. I came in with Helen, had breakfast, and I said, “The journey through hell is completed.” [The process] was half-automatic, and the heart had opened—half my words, and half automatic, you might say.

Brugh: Well, as I was reading the Commentary before—I was just down in Lone Pine preparing to [come] up and see you—as I was changing my level of consciousness, so that I would be clear in working [with] you and being with you, I couldn't help but sense how appropriate the description in this book was to that particular passage you went through. Then you started operating from a different energy; a different energy was vitalizing you, it wasn't the normal physical energy. And I could tell that when you were doing your conference work here—you were being sustained by a force greater than your own physical force.

Franklin: I can believe that, too.

Brugh: And I think we are getting ready here [to read] about the realm of hell, and I think what I'll do is finish this portion here and then we can dialogue a little further. He says:

The next step is the experience of luminosity in terms of daily life.

The luminosity is neutral ground or background, a gap when the intensity slackens. Then some intelligence begins to connect it to the awakened state of mind leading to a sudden glimpse of meditative experience or buddha nature, which could also be called the dharmakaya. But if we have no means of connecting with the basic intelligence, and confused energy still dominates our process of mind, then the energy builds up blindly, and finally falls down into different levels of diluted energy, so to speak, from the absolute energy of the luminosity. Some basic tendency of grasping begins to develop in the state of luminosity, and from that the experience of the six realms of the world develops according to its intensity. But that tenseness or tightness cannot just function by itself without an activator of energy; in other words, energy is being used in order to grasp.

We can now look at the six realms of the world from the point of view of different types of instinct.

Brugh: And he talks next about the realm of hell, which I think you went through.

Franklin: I think I have already.

Brugh reads:

We can begin with the realm of hell, which is the most intense. First there is a buildup of energies, of emotions, to a crescendo, so that at some stage we find it very confusing whether the energies are controlling us or we are controlling them. Then suddenly we lose track of this whole race, and our mind is put into a blank state, which is the luminosity. From that blank state an intense temptation to fight begins to develop, and that paranoia also brings terror. Originally the paranoia and terror were supposed to fight against something, but one is not quite certain whom exactly one is fighting; and when the whole thing is developed, the terror begins to turn against oneself. When one tries to strike out instead of fighting the projections, one is striking inward. It is like the story of the hermit who saw a leg of lamb in front of him, and wanted to pick it up and cook it. His teacher told him to mark it with a cross, then later he discovered that the cross was marked on his own chest.

It is that kind of notion. You think there is something outside to attack, or fight, or win over. In most cases, hatred is like that. You are angry with something and try to destroy it, but at the same time the process itself becomes self-destructive, it turns inward and you would like to run away from it. But then it seems too late, you are the anger itself, so there is now nowhere to run away. You are haunting yourself constantly, and that is the development of hell.

Brugh: So even though he uses the example of anger, we could use the example of the emotional pain, or the loss, and it's to me an analogous pattern.

Franklin: I have felt in this period, occasions of feeling of anger, but it wasn't a dominant thing.

Brugh: Have you felt what it's discussing as far as almost reaching out and there is nothing there externally. I'm asking and posing [this] question for comment—[Trungpa] seems to imply that this is a process that turns one from the external world to [deal] with [its source of creation], which is in the internal psyche.

Franklin: Sure, sure, it would be. Well, there is one thing about the Mongoloid people—and the Tibetans are Mongoloids—I don't have a natural cross-understanding of them. I understand the East Indian—he talks to me; particularly the “Shankara-type,” talks very clearly to me. But there is something in the psyche of the Mongoloid peoples [of] which I get a glimpse now and then, through Brother Reid. That's so strange; it doesn't make sense at all.

Brugh: Can you begin to sense where it breaks in its rationale?

Franklin: I haven't gone into it enough.

Brugh: I am just sitting here, sensing that it recognizes the conceptual world as a scaffolding on which we attempt . . .

Franklin: Oh, yeah! It's that—it's only scaffolding. Whereas, to a man like Shankara, to the pure mathematicians—all pure mathematicians—it has a very different meaning,

Brugh: Exactly. And I think this is . . .

Franklin: I think that's where the trouble lies, for they don't fail to talk to me. Are you familiar with Northrup's book *The Meeting of East and West*?

Brugh: No, only through you have I heard about it.

Franklin: I think it's a very good work. It says the keynote of the East—and here he tends to include East Indian, I think there he stands some correction; otherwise, [for] the Mongoloid East, I think he hits it right—that their orientation is through the aesthetic component in things (not using the word in the sense of beauty). And the West is oriented to the theoretic component in things. Now the East Indian occupies, more or less, I think, an intermediate position. You get one side of them [where] the aesthetic is very strongly developed, but you also have the very strong development of the rational, as in Shankara.

Brugh: Yes, and you represented the blending of the two, but particularly your externalization was Shankara.

Franklin: Definitely, definitely so. That means that you have here this Tibetan element, which is a mixture of the Mongoloid with influence from Indian sages.

Brugh: That's right. Well, the beauty of taping this is that we have an opportunity to take *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* and bring [to it the] wisdom and clarity of the Western mind—or the theoretical mind, the mathematical mind. I can move into and I can carry both sides, and therefore a portion of me can follow you—somewhat to a degree—on your theoretical side or on your rational side. I also carry the ability to move with the Mongoloid thought. So to me, the process of your clarity of articulation and your clarity of formulation, and your clarity of continuity in your work, I think—as we go through this—would help to clarify [it]. There is some dimension that can be added to the other side by, I think, just simply exchanging. And when we get to a point that it doesn't really make that much sense to you, maybe I can reach in and bring through what I'm sensing. And then that ignites you into your side and somehow, between the dialogue, we come up with something that, perhaps, gives us a glimpse of what both sides are trying to work towards.

Franklin: It may well be.

Brugh: I don't know, we can see.

Franklin: Well, it's exploration.

Brugh: It says here: "Very vivid descriptions of hell are found in Gampopa's *Jewel Ornament of Liberation*." Are you familiar with that?

Franklin: No I'm not.

Brugh: I'm not either.

Brugh reads: "And symbolically each intense torture is a psychological portrait of one's self."

Brugh: Isn't that a magnificent way of putting it? We so often think that something else has created our torture or our torment, and it's indeed our self—it's a portrait of our self.

Brugh reads: "In the hell realm, you are not exactly punished, but overwhelmed by the environment of terror, which is described as fields and mountains of red-hot iron and space filled with sparks of fire."

Brugh: Here he is going into the description within the text; but, we know if [we] translate that down, we can discuss it in terms of the intense pain that one feels in the body when one is [at] that point where you are discussing the torment of whether you could even go on another moment because Gertrude had left—[this] was a deep verbal statement of what he's discussing here.

Franklin: I see—it's a matter of language.

Brugh: Exactly.

Franklin: We make the mistake of taking them literally.

Brugh: Exactly, and I think the beauty of working with this, right now, is [that] the experience is so close to you that you can easily make the translation.

Franklin: I was actually going through a dying process when you were last here, and gave that long interpretation—three hours, at least, long. I may have started on it then.

Brugh: I think you have been working on the death process ever since I've known you.

Franklin: These Tibetans seem to have some positive knowledge here. It implies that there are those who have made a research of this belief, and that you can pass through the death experience consciously and, perhaps, even just as a research operation without actually dying.

Brugh: Don't you think that that is what you are doing?

Franklin: It might be, might be.

Brugh: Not that I don't think that physical death might not ensure [it]; but my feeling is that you have been working on the death process for [the] three or four years that I've known you, but that it's "crescendoing"—it's reaching a peak—and each phase has been a different phase of the death process. And you actually began your process of leaving several years ago, but the real process has almost been accelerated in the past three months.

Franklin: Yes. Well now, I want to make a report out before actually going in finally. But I [thought that I] would have recovered greater strength than I feel right now.

Brugh: But maybe that's the process, Dr. Wolff.

Franklin: Maybe it is. Maybe it is happening, because today I did notice a bit of improvement. At any rate, the bad taste in the mouth is not as bad.

Participant: You've been off medication for two days.

Franklin: Yes, I made the experiment of getting off medication to see if I could make some progress in taking nourishment. And apparently the nourishment situation is improved, although [it's] not yet good. [The] medication may be to blame. Now, I had a certain program of medication given by Dr. Stein, and I brought a communication from him up to Dr. Christenson, and he doubled the medication at once. Well, I think that is what precipitated the trouble. See, I lived a life of no medication—homeopathic [remedies only]—from infancy. Whenever I could get the homeopathic medicine—that was it. And, otherwise, when I have had to use other medicines, it has been infrequent. So I have a background of low use of chemical medicines. Christenson probably figures [for] the average individual; and it may [be] right for the average individual, but not for me.

Brugh: Very much so. But the interesting part is not so much the [level of] the dosage within you; I'm more fascinated because I see things in relationship to deeper psychological patterns or deeper desires. And I find it very interesting that you were placed in some process that would actually be more lethal for you than more beneficial. In other words, the increasing of medication really goes along with a deeper subconscious desire for death. And what is happening is [that] there is an oscillation between life and death. In other words, there is no need to project out, or even state, that the man made an error. That's not what is at issue here, at the deepest level. The deepest level is: Are you routing yourself into certain circumstances that would enhance the possibility of death, subconsciously, [while] at the same time another portion of your consciousness [is] battling the side that wishes to still remain alive? In other words, there is that portion there . . .

Franklin: Yes, I know it.

Brugh: or you wouldn't have stopped the medication. You see. A portion of you is still functioning and still desirous of the physical form. [Another] portion of you is still fighting and desirous of the formless state. And here we are once again [facing] the battle between the form and the formless.

Franklin: Now you say "formless state." Are you suggesting a passage that skips the area that Gertrude went through, for instance, because there was something of form there?

Brugh: Yes. I feel, Dr. Wolff, that you have once again [seen] the presentation of several different pathways. One of course, is [that] of the ordinary man, which will hold onto a certain vivification at a subtler level, [while] still remaining within form and not absorbed in the monadic, or the monad—still with personality, still with a subtle level of structure and form. Then there is the potential of being absorbed into the monad, which bypasses any further differentiation at the level of the physical human. It really—in my consciousness—isn't a question of one greater than the other; it's a choice I feel.

Franklin: Yes.

Brugh: Just as you made your choice, we looked at and shared the various choices following Gertrude's death, and you weighed each; you sought counsel from various people, and then you came to your own conclusion within that particular aspect. Well, I think there's some corollary there in the choice of the relationship. You chose the middle path. You chose not the path of withdrawing your vital energy, or a subtle level of

suicide; you didn't choose that path. You didn't choose the path of going without the feminine, and reaching in to develop that within yourself and going into a solitary path. You chose the middle path; the one where you could still be sustained by the feminine energy, external to your own beingness, where it was being shared openly and volitionally. And you gave her choice on that. It wasn't as if you demanded it, [it] was a choice, and she offered that. And that offered you the middle path, which was to continue your life as it had been, [with] the sustenance of a female while you continued the process of the male representation. Did I state that clearly? That was the impression I have from the conference when you stated that Koot Hoomi [had] made the arrangement.

Franklin: Yes, he made the arrangement; but there was a weakness we ran into.

Brugh: Right, and that was the sleeping situation.

Franklin: I sleep deeper down than Gertrude could go. And there are many times that I seemed to be able to repair the damage, but finally I seemed to lose it entirely.

Brugh: But the question that comes [to] my mind, Dr. Wolff, is: Are you preparing to maintain an existence at the level that Gertrude is maintaining? [This] means that you must seek that common path and pass through that level. Or, are you preparing to release both Gertrude into her path and [at the same] time preparing yourself for absorption into that light?

Franklin: Thartchen. See, that seems to me to be his real name; "Koot Hoomi" is a nom de plume.

Brugh: Right.

Franklin: Other path? Now obviously he didn't disapprove of it; he said the other course would mean my death in a short time. Now, I think it's not a matter necessarily of leading the less advanced entity along.

Brugh: No, because the advanced entity contains the less advanced, just as the less advanced contains the greater advanced.

Franklin: Yes.

Brugh: So in the ultimate sense, or in a more holistic ideation, there is never a loss of connection.

Franklin: I think a certain side of the relationship is eternal; that is, [that] a certain part of myself and of Gertrude—neither one overlapped the whole of the other—

Brugh: Exactly.

Franklin: but there is something which does overlap, and that part remains eternal.

Brugh: Yes. But it still raises the fundamental issue of whether or not—in the clarity of your passage through death—the temptation to go into the central physical level or whether or not you're identifying with the eternal level (the divine aspect), for I sense a duality within your consciousness. I sense [that] the emotional, loyal area feels a commitment, and a love and honoring of that being, but [this] also, potentially, will hold you fixated at just the very level that you know at another level of your consciousness precludes another step.

Franklin: I wonder if it does prelude.

Brugh: Well, it's something to feel after.

Franklin: I don't think Thartchen would have done that. He would have precluded something more important; and, there may be an orientation to what is now feasible—perhaps in the future, something else may help.

Brugh: Yes, which is what you've been working on.

Franklin: The androgyne is such an advanced . . .

Brugh: But it's coming into the awareness of the collective consciousness. In a way, it's becoming manifested. It's been in the collective, and now it is beginning to emerge as a manifestation—a potential initially, and now [is becoming] a greater and greater potential. Somehow the androgynous, to me, reflects the balance point that brings in the luminosity—it is the equipoise between life-death or any pairs of opposites, or any duality. Somehow or another, the androgyne represents that balance.

Franklin: Of course it is a balance. Of course, it's in the literature, and it's ideal. Maybe your error would be in terms of timing. But I don't reject it as an ideal.

Brugh: Yes, I understand. Because you reflect, I feel, a movement that is so penetrating. And, in all honesty, I don't feel that it is yet available, and yet we are acting as [if] it's like a person so far [removed]—maybe it doesn't reach the ideal, but [we have] carried it one step further than it's ever been carried before. Therefore, the potential for its eventual manifestation becomes one step closer, even though it's an increment of evolution.

Franklin: It becomes enhanced; yes I [go] along with that.

Brugh: So the careful distinction in conversation [is] not getting lost in the ideal, but looking very honestly at the realistic process.

Franklin: Yes, [that] is now possible. I think that's what Thartchen had in mind: no criticism of the ideal, against any of that, but what is feasible.

Brugh: If we were to begin the exploration of the relationship of the path that you choose, and [it] was brought to your awareness through the channeling, and as we go further [into the] Commentary [I feel your choices] will become a little clearer. But I'm somehow reminded of a conversation where you were discussing somehow holding a luminosity in consciousness—a clarity. I think [we have to carefully dissect] the words light, clarity, [and] luminosity or agree that they are, perhaps, talking about the same thing. And that's the space of maintaining clear awareness of a process.

Franklin: Yes, highly desirable, of course. By the way, Karen may arrive tomorrow or the next day. I'm scheduled for an operation on the eye on the fourth or fifth of October. Of course I might go in before that.

Brugh: Might.

Franklin: It would help though, if I could see clearly, even for a little while, instead of being in this twilight.

Brugh: What would you do with it, Dr. Wolff, if the vision were clarified?

Franklin: Well, I'd see the world around me, and it'd be more comfortable; and, I [would be] much more [independent]. And, hopefully, I might be able to read and study what you're reading to me. The key to meaning is different with different people—that's known psychologically. There are visual types who get the key to meaning from just seeing a word.

Brugh: Which is what you usually do?

Franklin: Not I, no.

Brugh: It isn't? When you hear it?

Franklin: No. Not hearing either. [I'm] motor-verbal. [In] pseudo-pronunciation you [must] see the word before you pronounce it. But I have eliminated the pseudo-pronunciation and looked at the word and it gave no meaning at all—or very limited meaning. So there are peculiarities about that type: it's a slow assimilating type. The visual type is very fast: a strong visual type can look at a page without reading, close the book and then read it all. John Reid apparently knew the whole *Secret Doctrine* that way. You couldn't argue with him; he would say, "on page so-and-so, in a footnote at the bottom, you will find this," and he would speak it off right then and there. And those arguing with him said, "Darn him!"

Brugh: The question on that level though, (as I have always found with [this type]) is [that] they have voluminous information, but there is a question of the depth [of] their experience of that information.

Franklin: Well, of course, he was a very unusual man. In point of fact, [he was] a man that could have been the type who was [in] the business world if he hadn't given his main interest to theosophy. I mean, he was a big business man even as it was, but not compared to what he could have been.

Well now, there is a certain advantage in the motor-verbal type; his favorite is abstract thought. The visual image depends on a certain scribe or mark. Bishop Berkeley was a visual type, and he said that you could not imagine or think of an abstract triangle—it has to be concrete—that was characteristic of his type. Now, the motor-verbal type has no trouble with that at all. The triangle—that's an abstraction involving threeness—it doesn't have to be a specific one, whereas the visualizer would make it specific. So I think motor-verbal favors abstract thought.

Brugh: Didn't Korvinsky, the semanticist; he was a semanticist was he not?

Franklin: Is he the one that wrote *The Meaning of Meaning*?

Brugh: Yes.

Franklin: Yes, I think he was type-bound in his thinking there—that the meaning is always a sensuous object. [But] it doesn't have to be that way; it isn't that way with everything.

Brugh: Exactly, I agree, totally. Let's see. Were you preparing some food for Dr. Wolff?

Participant: And for you, if you are interested in it, but keep your feel, however you want.

Brugh: Well, we are almost through with this last section here, and what I could do is . . .

Franklin: We can carry that out, yes.

Brugh: We'll carry it out to the hungry ghost realm. [This section] discusses the animal realm, the human realm, the realm of the jealous gods, and so on, but why don't we finish it out to the hungry ghost?

Franklin: Okay.

Brugh reads:

Very vivid descriptions of hell are found in *Gampopa's Jewel Ornament of Liberation*, and symbolically each intense torture is a psychological portrait of one's self. In the hell realm you are not exactly punished, but overwhelmed by the environment of terror, which is described as fields and mountains of red-hot irons and space filled with sparks of fire. Even if you decide to run away you have to walk over this burning metal, and if you decide not to run away you are turned into charcoal yourself. There was intense claustrophobia, heat coming from all directions; the whole earth is turned into hot metal, whole rivers are turned into melted iron, and the whole sky is permeated with fire.

Brugh: To me, that's the depth and intensity of whatever the pain is.

Brugh reads:

The other type of hell is the reverse, the experience of intense cold and snow, an icy world in which everything is completely frozen. This is another type of aggression, the aggression which refuses to communicate at all. It is a kind of indignation which usually comes from intense pride, and the pride turns into an ice-cold environment which reinforced by self-satisfaction begins to get into the system. It does not allow us to dance or smile or hear the music.

Brugh: So he is talking, apparently, about two different areas of hell, both self-imposed, both created out of a portion of the psychological area.

Franklin: That material seems to be different from the material in Evans-Wentz's book.

Brugh: Yes, he makes comment in the Foreword why this was [a] different translation. Even though he's of the Nyingma School, he felt that the Evans-Wentz translation somehow was not complete; there were misinterpretations because there was only one source of the material. Whereas he states in his Foreword [that] this is drawn from several different sources, and therefore it's an assimilation of various thought in Tibet. So it wasn't just a skewed version, or one particular school's thought, but more of integration. It is also important to his mind that one understands that it is dealing with the process of the moment by moment existence/non-existence, which everyone is involved with, and not just someone who is "approaching termination in the physical level." [This] is very different from anything I've ever come across in either *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* or *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Usually the implication is that this is only for a

person in transition whereas [in this Commentary] he's making the implication that we are always in transition.

Franklin: Oh, I see.

Brugh: And that this has application to anyone at any moment as long as one is dealing with the problem of a misinterpretation of duality, pain, [and] suffering—the attachments. So he's broadening the scope of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*; he's taking it out of just the literal process of the liberation through [the] hearing in the dying person that is to be repeated to the person as they transpire, or cross, or go in, as you call it—[that is], while the body is still there. He is stating that is a function, but of only a facet of the totality of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, in his consciousness, has application in one's daily life.

Franklin: Oh, I see, it's a different approach altogether.

Brugh: It's a much more, I think, sweeping scope; less specific in its nature. Therefore it gives one the option at all times of not just committing to a death process, but understanding deeply, perhaps, the on/off nature of one's beingness regardless of the physical form. And when I am making that statement, I'm really talking about when Mael Melvin was here: Dr. Melvin was discussing that one of the quantum theories is that we are both here and not here at the same time—physical matter is and is not at the same time. It is a very hard concept for the linear mind to comprehend, and yet there is no other conclusion in quantum mechanics.

Franklin: Well, no. It could be at the same time but in a different sense.

Brugh: Yes.

Franklin: You see, you don't have a contradiction unless it's "A cannot be both A and not-A at the same time in the same sense." But here they are saying it is and is not at the same time, but they're evidently speaking in different senses.

Brugh: Exactly. So then we are speaking of different levels simultaneously and that's where the linear mind gets caught. Of course, your mind understood that and has understood it; most people's minds cannot, as you know. They get caught and say "I can't go any further, that's a paradox that I can't resolve." Whereas your mind easily resolves it—it sees it as simply different facets of the same thing.

Franklin: Yes, and it's no problem.

Brugh: Would you like a bite to eat, because we can break for a moment.

Franklin: Well, I expect the certain time has come.

Participant: It will be just a few more minutes, it's getting prepared.

Brugh: Let's see what he said in the Introduction, because maybe that would help you to understand why I picked this particular rendition of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. I felt the original *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* was terribly rigid—that it was not written for the Western mind. It was almost incomprehensible to the Western mind. This was the first [translation] that I felt had come from more of a predominantly Eastern mind that was approachable and understandable by the Western mind. But I have a feeling that your comments, your understanding, your probing, somehow—I remember writing a letter and

discussing this—[was] somehow [indicative] of your ability to describe, out of your own experience; [that] which I feel you are undergoing. [This] is the gift you have. You have the gift of articulating your experience. Therefore, it would seem to me that, as we review a few of the fundamental principles of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, we would have an opportunity, in clear articulation, to see where the breakdown occurs. And I think one [thing that] we've already defined is [that] the Mongolian mind is more aesthetic. That's true. It tends to be incomplete; it leads up to a point and stops and expects the person to follow through in a nonverbal way. Whereas your consciousness, the consciousness of Shankara, the consciousness of the mathematician, expects a full rendition of the equation all the way out to completion.

Franklin: Right.

Brugh: And the process, I think, [is] not mutually exclusive. I think there are, once again, two facets [in play] at the same time: the Western mind is moving somehow towards center; and because of [the] rich resource deep within your “soulic” entity, the Eastern [mind] as well. For after all, you are only a Westerner in the sense of this incarnation . . .

Franklin: Yes, right.

Brugh: Your deeper aspect—the one far more familiar to you, in the deeper levels and regions of your own consciousness—is the Eastern. You have spent and had ninety-one years articulating Western thought. Somehow, through a process here, [you have turned] it so that it doesn't maintain a duality, so that it can be seen as complementary. Otherwise we do nothing but set up the dance once again between the two, rather than showing the unification of them in some way or another. How that is to evolve, I have no idea.

Franklin: Yes, of course, that's the right approach.