

# Induction Talk: Discussion

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February 2, 1970

Our purpose tonight is to enter into some of the consequences of our night on the 24th of January. I, at that time, asked for a report of possible experiences that may have come to you as individuals. I've been reading through some really quite interesting reports. Of course, naturally, there is a variation of level, but some are quite impressive. But before we take them up, there's certain thoughts that I think need to be elaborated. I found that there was a certain resistance to the word 'trance', and there are reasons why this should be so. I have thought of a possible synonym to convey what we mean without using a word that has some unpleasant connotations. I explored the possibility of using 'ecstasy' or 'ecstasis'. But again the word has come more or less into ill repute, although in its original sense it's a noble word. 'Samadhi' is not so familiar and we can't always be sure that we reached that high. And then there is the word 'enthusiasm'. If you look into its etymology, it means God possessed. It's not a convenient word, and it also has other meanings. So it finally dawned on me we might use the term 'inverse consciousness'. Nobody would know what that is except a very few. Inversion is involved in the shift in consciousness and there would be no hangover from other uses of the term. So let us speak of an inverse consciousness. Nonetheless, from the psychological point of view, when we deal with other states of consciousness the term that is commonly used is 'trance'. It's involved in religious mysticism, but it's also involved in hypnotic states, also in states that are induced by the use of chemical substances like psychedelic drugs and alcohol, and also some states, inferior states, that may be induced by an incompetent practice of the *Tantra*.

James H. Leuba, in his book *The Psychology of Religious Mysticism* went into this question to some extent and he made the statement that is a bit pejorative in its effect, namely, that trance is trance no matter how produced, or what the motive or objective is, or the content of the state.<sup>1</sup> I have my reservations about this statement, but certainly there is something in common in all states that we call trance, otherwise we would not have one word for it. Now, here we're dealing with an important question, in fact, the very question that was the most important in Williams James' first lecture in the series that formed *Varieties of Religious Experience*. A person who has a degree of trance can be identified as being in such a state by one who is a close observer and is familiar with the state. You can see something about the eyes and about their behavior. There is no doubt that if we have the appropriate instruments we could detect a change in the rhythm of breath, probably in the heart rhythm, in the blood pressure, and more particularly we very probably would find changes in the subtle electric currents moving in the brain. This would have its interest, no doubt. The point I want to make is that there is an important difference between an existential judgment or judgment of fact, on one hand, and a judgment of meaning, a spiritual judgment, on the other. One might be in a state of trance and at the same time be experiencing hell or, at the other pole, *Nirvana*. There is a vast difference in content that may manifest outwardly to the scientist as essentially the similar state. James in his

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<sup>1</sup> James H. Leuba, *The Psychology of Religious Mysticism* (London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), 181-183.

book did deal with this question in his discussion of mystical states of consciousness. Though most of the states were of positive value, he had to acknowledge that there are negative states also. Now, this means that trance as trance is not an objective. There are lofty states of consciousness which when reached employ trance, but there are infernal states of consciousness which when reached employ trance.

I heard a description of a bad drug trip. It produced a state of confusion and a great deal of psychological pain, yet the state was a drug-induced trance. But most impressively, I think, is Jack London's description of a state reached by an advanced alcoholic in his *John Barleycorn*. He says there comes a time when there breaks forth what he called the "White Logic" where it seemed that he saw everything with crystal clarity and everything had the value of absolute desolation.<sup>2</sup> So, being in that psychological state is of itself no guarantee of being in a loftier state of consciousness. It's merely a guarantee of being in another way of consciousness, and that is all that psychology can say about it. The thing that is of most importance is outside of the range of psychology. It belongs to the heart of religion and philosophy.

Well, one item that we emphasized the other night is of premiere importance and it has a bearing upon what one would attain when he enters another way of consciousness, that is, the purification and the dedication. The trouble with items like drugs and with hypnosis for producing of other ways of consciousness, and other means such as the tyro playing with *Tantric* techniques without the preparation having a very important moral bearing, you can enter into dark passages. You can enter into infernal or perhaps "intermediate zone" states, to use a term of Aurobindo's, that are a sort of *maya* in which one might linger for an enormous time.<sup>3</sup> Some of it attractive and even for that reason more dangerous than when it is painful. At the highest, the state may be supernal; and that's all we seek to reach. We wish preeminently the avoidance of anything infernal or subconscious, where the infernal is, or anything that belongs to the intermediate zone of confusion, but only for the supernal. And that's why there is a certain austerity on the way of true yoga and why there is no shortcut save in the sense of what we call induction, which is an aid essentially. And that is, of course, what we were seeking on the night of the 24th.

Those of you who I know are familiar with the *Buddhist Bible* that was a collection of *sutras* by Goddard and Suzuki<sup>4</sup> may remember the *sutra* spoken by the Sixth Patriarch. In that he very frequently speaks of one being enlightened just during a lecture. Now, while he doesn't make this distinction, my own feeling very strongly is that this is not Enlightenment in the

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<sup>2</sup> Jack London, *John Barleycorn* (New York: The Century Co., 1913), 308:

And now comes John Barleycorn with the curse he lays upon the imaginative man who is lusty with life and desire to live. John Barleycorn sends his White Logic, the argent messenger of truth beyond truth, the antithesis of life, cruel and bleak as interstellar space, pulseless and frozen as absolute zero, dazzling with the frost of irrefragable logic and unforgettable fact. John Barleycorn will not let the dreamer dream, the liver live. He destroys birth and death, and dissipates to mist the paradox of being, until his victim cries out, as in "The City of Dreadful Night": "Our life's a cheat, our death a black abyss." And the feet of the victim of such dreadful intimacy take hold of the way of death.

<sup>3</sup> Aurobindo Ghose, *Letters on Yoga*, vol. 23 of the *Sri Aurobindo Birth Centennial Library* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, 1970), 1039-1046.

<sup>4</sup> Dwight Goddard, ed., *A Buddhist Bible* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1938), 547-552. This volume was not edited by Suzuki.

sense that is true of the Blessed One who made a search of seven years, a heroic search, and finally attained Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. This sudden way of the Sixth Patriarch—which was the Sixth Patriarch down the line founded by Bodhidharma which led to the Ch’an Buddhism in China and ultimately to the Zen Buddhism in Japan—these Enlightenments that he speaks of were sudden, apparently so easy, I would regard as simply inductions as probably of only temporary duration and not a state of permanent Enlightenment. I thought this matter should be clarified.

Now, I spoke of a lofty state where the self disappears and the object of consciousness disappears. It goes beyond what we commonly call God Realization and Self-Realization into a position that synchronizes with the teaching of the Great Buddha and becomes a guide to an understanding of the *sutras*. When the self disappears and the object of consciousness disappears and only consciousness remains you have something that’s very difficult for us to imagine; I believe we might correctly say it’s not imaginable. Jung discusses that here, and I thought I’d read a couple of pages bearing upon it. He doesn’t repudiate it at all, although he says he can’t imagine it. The closing sentence of the previous paragraph where he speaks of the difficulty of the extraverted Western mind to conceive of the self-liberating power of the introverted mind:

[It’s] because of these resistances we doubt the very thing that seems so obvious to the East, namely, *the self-liberating power of the introverted mind*.

This aspect of the mind is practically unknown to the West, though it forms the most important component of the unconscious. Many people flatly deny the existence of the unconscious, or else they say that it consists merely of instincts, or of repressed or forgotten contents that were once part of the conscious mind. It is safe to assume that what the East calls “mind” has more to do with our unconscious than with mind as we understand it, [and that point is important or we get into confusion] which is more or less identical with consciousness. To us consciousness is inconceivable without an ego; it is equated with the relation of contents to an ego. If there is no ego there is nobody to be conscious of anything. The ego is therefore indispensable to the conscious process. The Eastern mind, however, has no difficulty in conceiving of a consciousness without an ego. Consciousness is deemed capable of transcending its ego condition; indeed in its higher forms, the ego disappears altogether. Such an ego-less mental condition can only be unconscious to us, for the simple reason that there would be nobody to witness it. I do not doubt the existence of mental states transcending consciousness. But they lose their consciousness to exactly the same degree that they transcend consciousness. I cannot imagine a conscious mental state that does not refer to a subject, that is, to an ego. The ego may be depotentiated—divested, for instance, of its awareness of the body—but so long as there is awareness of something, there must be somebody who is aware. The unconscious, however, is a mental condition of which no ego is aware. It is only mediately and by indirect means that we eventually become conscious of the existence of an unconscious. We can observe the manifestation of unconscious fragments of the personality, detached from the patient’s consciousness, in insanity. But there is no evidence

that the unconscious contents are related to an unconscious centre analogous to the ego; in fact there are good reasons why such a centre is not even probable.<sup>5</sup>

In other words, what the East is calling consciousness without an ego, without a subject, or what I spoke of on the 24th, the highest point where the self dropped away and the object of consciousness dropped away and only consciousness remained, he identifies with what we call the unconscious. I mean our psychologists. Now, remember, this term of Jung's is a blanket term to cover all aspects of the psyche. I'm not now talking of merely the individual psyche, but the whole collective psyche. He's speaking of only that part as conscious which is conscious in the ordinary sense and everything else unconscious.

Now, yoga is a process by which that which is here unconscious can be rendered conscious, and so the word 'unconscious' means *other way of consciousness*, as Aurobindo himself has said.<sup>6</sup> And one who has gone some distance in yoga would therefore be in a position to unlock the unconscious to some degree—that would vary—so that it is conscious for him. But it is characteristic that when you enter this domain and realize it as consciousness there is an *inversion* in consciousness; and I described, I think, two forms of the inversion on Saturday before last, namely, the shift of the self from a point conditioned by an environment to the position where it was like an illimitable sphere that included the whole universe within itself, or again the shift to the consciousness without a self where there's another inversion and where we would say, instead of our normal position, that the self and the object of consciousness were functions of consciousness and not the other way around as we ordinarily think of it. There are two examples of inversions. Or you may have the experience of consciousness turning inside out or upside down, or something of that sort, and moving in a domain which often defeats your best effort to try to describe it in other terms. He goes on to say:

The fact that the East can dispose so easily of the ego seems to point to a mind that is not to be identified to our "mind." Certainly the ego does not play the same role in Eastern thought as it does with us. It seems as if the Eastern mind were less egocentric, as if its contents were more loosely connected with the subject, and as if greater stress were laid on mental states which include a depotentiated ego. It also seems as if Hatha yoga were chiefly useful as a means for extinguishing the ego by fettering its unruly impulses. There is no doubt that the higher forms of *yoga*, in so far as they strive to reach *samadhi*, seek a mental condition in which the ego is practically dissolved. Consciousness in our sense of the word is rated a definitely inferior condition, the state of *avidya* (ignorance), whereas what we call the "dark background of consciousness" is understood to be a "higher"

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<sup>5</sup> W. Y. Evans-Wentz, ed., *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* (London Oxford University Press, 1954), xxxviii-xxxix.

<sup>6</sup> Aurobindo Ghose, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, vol. 20 of the *Sri Aurobindo Birth Centennial Library* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, 1970), 370:

What we call unconsciousness is simply other-consciousness; it is the going in of this surface wave of our mental awareness of outer objects into our subliminal self-awareness and into our awareness too of other planes of existence. We are really no more unconscious when we are asleep or stunned or drugged or "dead" or in any other state, than when we are plunged in inner thought oblivious of our physical selves and our surroundings.

consciousness. Thus our concept of the “collective unconscious” would be the European equivalent of *buddhi*, the enlightened mind.<sup>7</sup>

Well, now, let that do for the present. If the concept of a consciousness without a self and without an object seemed very strange to you when I introduced it, and it certainly seemed strange to me when I experienced it, this brings out the point it's not unique. It's not my experience only. I didn't get off on to some strange bypath. It is fundamental in the Eastern yoga too. And that whether we can imagine it or not, to say that consciousness *is* before objects *became* is entirely valid.

Now I want to take up your reports from the other night. And I have some interesting ones here. Now, let's read beginning with this:

To me it was a beautiful experience and I feel I am not able to place any judgment on it yet as to the depth or magnitude of the experience, at least not at this time, except that there is a calmness and a serenity within me. Also, it is quite apparent to me that I have no desire to speak as often as formerly. When I do, however, I have a sense of uneasiness. It seems that I have wasted energy that might be used for another purpose. The very perversity of things, it appears, I am asked to speak more than ever before, so I realize I must be very cautious what I say and do now.

That's all to the good. Now, here's one that impressed me:

My Realization of the evening is that I am the “I am” in you and in everyone. The same that is the witness in me is the same as is the witness in everyone. This Realization came about as I was intently peering into the eyes of Dr. Wolff, and suddenly I recognized that I am in him as the “I am” in me. I realized that the small I in me cannot be taught to recognize the “I am” but that the That is the witness and that it is not separate but is All as the witness in Dr. Wolff is All. It penetrates everything and is even that which it witnesses. That is like a circle with no boundaries; hence it encompasses the *Nirvana* and *Sangsara*. This was typed immediately upon returning home.

I'm much impressed with that.

Shortly after the beginning of the meeting I felt a strong pressure in the center of my head. Then it felt as though a rod running down my spine from that center so that I wanted to remain in a fixed position. There was a feeling of being close to the members of the group and of real participation in the event even though many miles away. The feeling on the center of the head remained the rest of the evening and almost constantly the next few days, dropping off somewhat but still occurring to this date. During the first hour there was a pulsating image of a dark blue ring [I think it is.] with a violet center. There was once a feeling as though

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<sup>7</sup> Evans-Wentz, *Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, xxxix-xl.

there was about to be a disintegration, a field seemed trying to break apart that went on no further.

I'm not identifying these. You'll recognize your own.

At the time of last week's meditation I entered without reservation into the casting out of hostilities. I noticed nothing at the time, but now I find I'm unable even to recall, remember, or re-imagine certain negative feelings I previously had towards others that were present. I can remember the reasons I had for certain disliking, but I'm unable to find anything in those reasons that seems to warrant hostility. For me this is highly unusual and I'm grateful for the experience. I am left with a feeling that the task itself has been changed for me, hard as this may be to understand.

Well it isn't too hard to understand. We're dealing with real magic you know.

I felt the effects of the "Current" primarily in the area of the heart, and the Current apparently reached such high intensity that the heart or chest area literally began to hurt. The psychic heat was also felt and during the last forty-five minutes of the lecture my chest and shoulders kept sagging towards my knees and I wasn't able to maintain a straight posture. I personally did not think I was in any type of a trance until Franklin ceased to speak, at which time I knew I wasn't normal. I had a sort of an indifferent attitude towards things, that is, my emotions did not appear to be affected such as having great love for mankind and so forth. At no time did I black out or lose my awareness of things in the room; however, I could not observe what was really happening to me since I could not obtain anything concrete to analyze. I was in a state of bliss. I could notice the flywheel effect as soon as Franklin ceased to speak, that is, I seemed to approach my normal state of consciousness slowly but surely, and I could easily tell the inductive source had been withdrawn. I noticed at a much lower state of trance that I seemed to be able to prolong it at will or induce it at will if I did not think about the everyday objects.

Now, one point we made the other night was that nobody should drive home while they were still in a state of trance because it is known that unless a person is well-experienced in this it's not good for the handling of machinery; nonetheless, I'm going to say this, that doesn't mean it isn't possible to attain mastery. It's not something for the amateur or the beginner to attempt to do. I envisage the ideal of being in this depth consciousness and in outer consciousness at the same time and maintained permanently. But that takes discipline and training, and there's a reason back of that and that is the effort to bridge between levels of consciousness. See, I'm in one sense proselytizing, namely, to get as many as possible who have not already decided on this step in this or previous lives to become part of the host of redeemers. It's a task that takes lifetimes to qualify oneself. Perhaps everyone here has made that choice in some past life, but it's important that it should be reaffirmed in each current life. Those who take the Kwan-Yin vow become a special company. The reason for this is not your own enjoyment, but it is for the end that the humanity of which we are a part may be saved from a condition that could be

something like a psychical death. It is said that those who take this course become stones in a wall that protect humanity from a condition that could be far worse than what we have in this world today, bad as it is.

Well, we do not go to the trouble of making these inductions for any idle purpose or merely for the enjoyment of the individual, but rather to afford some glimpse of this that we talk about and this that you're studying about. Because, after all, when you study *The Secret Doctrine* and the other related literature, the first objective is to produce a favorable condition for the Awakening. It is something of this other consciousness must be won before you can really understand *The Secret Doctrine*. The point is that by the effort to understand you tend to induce something of this other consciousness; but otherwise you're dealing with words that have no referents, many of them. But the hope is that by dealing with those words an awakening to those referents may come—referents that lie outside of our ordinary range of consciousness. Now, the force of a glimpse is that you can know here is something; where you can say, I know, but not merely, I have heard there is something. That's why it's worth more than a million words.

I'll take these pretty well at random now.

Having been familiar with what Dr. Wolff calls the "Current" for several years, I had difficulty recognizing it that evening. I felt it in the room previous to the meeting in varying degrees, not so much at the beginning, but more again as the evening wore on. It is rather like the gentle buffeting of water when in swimming. Toward the end I had the feeling of having a light cap over the back of my head and began to feel what must have been a very light state of trance. Perhaps the feeling was akin to being pleasantly drunk—a feeling of peace and little concern about the things around me, though I did not by any means lose my awareness of them. Nothing much could bother me. The feeling did not last too long. This is the nearest I had yet come to trance state. The following day as we listened to part of the recording, I deliberately tried to reenter the state and succeeded somewhat. But the following day, while finishing the recording, I sat with some little routine work keeping my hands busy and not intending to drink of it at that time, but I felt myself slip in involuntarily and remained in it for several hours. Since while in the presence of Dr. Wolff or while on the subject I have several times felt myself slip in. [And so on.]

We were sitting quietly, and shortly before Dr. Wolff entered the room I felt a great fire come into the body. Something seemed to rise and circle around inside the top of my head, then move from side to side. I then seemed to go upward and inward. I did not seem to have any other feeling or awareness. Then it seemed like a cup or bowl was tipped and something poured out and downward from within my head and emptying out. There was no other awareness one way or another that I can recall. Then near the end, the top of my head seemed to open up like a bowl and a force or substance poured down into it and flowed into the upper part of the body. It seemed that if it came all the way down that the body would disappear. When I tried coming out from this inner state there was something gave a strong pull inward again. I just sat and did not want to externalize. The next morning while lying awake, I suddenly realized that there

was nothing to be attained, for anything I can conceive of I already am. Then these words came: transcend time, space, and causality. And as the last word was repeated, it seemed that the guru spoke.

Well, now some statements that might identify a person, I'll leave out.

There was throughout the room and house a very strong force, an energy. As Franklin began speaking the room seemed to fill with a soft golden light. I seemed to withdraw from objectivity. There was a drawing in or up, both words seem applicable. I was not conscious of other persons, other bodies, any objects. There just seemed to be space and the words of the speaker seemed to fill space; however, though I heard words, do not think I was conscious objectively of the concepts of the words—seemed to get them in another manner. There seemed to descend a silence, a silence that is heard, then a peace. There was a feeling that I suppose might be called “bliss”, but I did not think of it as bliss. In fact, I thought of no qualities especially, not even peace. It was only after returning to outer consciousness a little more, that I thought of any qualities that might apply. There was just space and light. Then there seemed to be a sort of twilight—neither light nor darkness. Then I became aware that there was darkness, quite a deep darkness and I was in that. It was a very peaceful darkness, a friendly darkness. Do not know how long this darkness stayed, but I felt no desire to leave this state nor to enter further into the darkness. It just was. At one time during the evening I opened my eyes and looked at the speaker and there seemed to be a beam of light of shining . . . , a broad beam that came straight from the speakers eyes to my eyes, and it seemed almost as if I were drawn along that beam of light. After the lecture was over, had very deep feeling of peace and silence throughout the room and one was reluctant to leave such a state and return to ordinary consciousness; however, there was a part of me that said . . . [And so forth. Now, that would give away who it was, so I won't read it.]

And one thing about the, you might say, about a quality of consciousness that can be superimposed upon this and do things if you're subtle enough you can detect: a quality of depth, a sense that time is replaced by duration, a quality of silence which is not affected by noises that belong to the field of the ordinary consciousness. This consciousness may be experienced along with the ordinary consciousness and I . . .<sup>8</sup> There was some metabolism and they had to feed him. That we don't want. But I recommend this being able to balance yourself between these two

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<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, there is a gap in this audio recording. Wolff evidently is referring to the dangers involved in going into a blackout *samadhi* trance. A reference to this can be found his audio recording “Meaning of Death” (Part 2 of 3):

The literature gives the impression that in order to obtain these lucid states it is necessary to go into a state of *samadhi* which involves definite trance—trance in the form that involves a discontinuance of the awareness of relative consciousness. But in the literature there is indication that one entering this state may have difficulty returning from it. For instance, in the biography of Ramakrishna it is stated that he once was locked in a state of trance for six months and was, at least apparently, unable to withdraw from it. It was not so complete as to involve the complete cessation of our organic processes in the body, and it is said that his disciples managed to give him some food.



states of consciousness; and, ideally, I look forward to the time of living continuously in it, functioning in it. When we said that you shouldn't drive a car, I don't mean that it won't be possible sometime to drive a car. Actually, when I went to Tucson, without my knowing it I found I had been in light trance for the whole week. I was in it when I was driving, and I had to concentrate more than usually heavily. It was a very persistent state, exceptionally persistent, and I was not wholly out of it when I arrived in Tucson and then immediately went back in it. I did the driving; we had no accidents, but I knew what I was dealing with. If you don't know what you're dealing with, you better not try it.

A new one:

I seemed to remain entirely extraverted throughout last Saturday's session and so have little to report in the way of actual experience. There have, however, been some changes in the *sadhana* which might indicate a change in the inner being. Mental silence seems to come more easily. Most important though, a certain impurity with which I have been struggling fruitlessly for years is beginning to be overcome.

You see many things. My experience back in '36 was that it brings an improvement of health, a steady improvement of health, that illness has less power; and perhaps it may be that it makes longevity better possible. I'm beginning to suspect it does. In other words, reach the point where you don't want to stay here and then you can stay a long time.

So far as I'm aware I experienced no deeper awareness of being than before, though the heat in the room rose to an uncomfortable point and the heat continued after the train of thought was diverted to getting coats and going home. I noticed my limbs were heavier than during my regular times of quiet contemplation and were an effort to move. Concentrated thinking was easier and steadier than usual. It occurred to me, as a thought though, not as an experience, that the reflected sun in a dewdrop would not even be as such if there were no onlooker to observe it, that is, the light deflection moves to the observer. Its localized point a deception since, in fact, the light it receives is evenly diffused. If the onlooker is the ego sustaining a sense of separateness while watching the reflected sun, and if the ego could be coerced into a focusing attention on the real sun, the reflection would cease. The flood of sunlight everywhere would be the experience of both dewdrop and ego.

Later that night I dreamed that I had a stuffed hobbyhorse with furry covering I was removing. Before I woke up, I found myself interpreting that this meant I must change the coat of my ambitions and attractions, transform my attachment for horses to attention to and striving for the Divine. It was mentioned during the meeting that even the lower vital energies, even lusts, can be transformed if they are harnessed and directed.

Notice everybody gets something unique and individual? There's no one pattern. A single pattern would suggest suggestion, which is not a true demonstration. We're getting pretty well down on these now.

To convey the feelings I had while in meditation the Saturday evening Dr. Wolff opened the door, it may be best to describe the sensations I had prior to that door being opened. For some time I felt the climbing up of a dynamic force within myself. It manifested itself physically as a great deal of tension at the base of the neck. I couldn't pin down what the force was, but felt when a release did come a very positive result would be effected upon my life. As I sat meditating after Dr. Wolff's talk, a deep peace began to pervade my body. All tensions were dispelled. I had expected them to culminate in an explosion of [I can't get the word.] but just the opposite happened. They faded away into a stillness of my inner being. Any kind of movement was an effort. It reached the point later on in the evening when I was alone that even taking breath demanded some concentrated effort. After I left Mr. and Mrs. Briggs' home and sat quietly in my car for a few moments, the realization came over me that anything I was anxious about didn't matter. My happiness isn't ultimately dependent on my relationship with anyone or to anything.

If there are any comments as we go along, any observations and questions, I wish you'd feel free to make them. This is one I haven't had a chance to read completely yet.

That there exists more than the usual and ordinary state of consciousness is empirically demonstrable, namely, states of deep sleep, dream, and waking trance can be monitored on electroencephalograms and are easily recognizable by ordinary vision. But the *value* of experiencing different levels of consciousness can be only known by the person undergoing the experience. [The word 'value' is underscored here.] Silence, serenity, calmness, blessedness, compassion, peace, and freedom are values or qualities of consciousness which cannot be even expressed without detracting from or misrepresenting the nature of the experience except by supreme artists, let alone monitored or observed on the surface of things. I cannot speak of these things, but I can speak of a certain experience of detachment from sense perception and objectification of thought and feeling. The phenomenological notion of intentionality best describes the experience I had at our meeting on Saturday night. I felt and experienced a suspension of the natural standpoint and was able to view the world about me as a work of art of which I was both in and above—in because I could create within the bounds of certain limitations, and above because I could contemplate and witness the creations of myself and others at what seemed an aesthetic distance. Things seemed no longer out there, but were felt and even perceived as modifications of consciousness, a consciousness which was at times mine and at times rather neutral or unrelated to me. I find it difficult to maintain such a consciousness out of your presence or the presence of others of your depth, although I know that such a consciousness is available at all times to us all.

The feeling at the last session was of supreme peace and benevolence towards all life. First I saw huge masses of white clouds which thinned outward. Then I saw the deep blue space with thousands of stars and planets like golden bees. I was going to fly through space, but then suddenly I was climbing a mountain covered

with pure white snow. I climbed swiftly and eagerly to the top and then planned to jump from one mountain peak to another.

But beware. Mortals cannot cross over by the rainbow bridge. In other words, when you are on one mountain and you want to go to a higher one the safe way is to climb down first. And at the bottom between the two mountains there's a valley, in the valley is a stream, and in the stream are creatures. The stream represents the unconscious and the creatures the experiencing of that unconscious—possibly not too pleasant. But that must be crossed before you can climb the higher mountain beyond. That was Jung that pointed that out—that only the gods can cross on the rainbow bridge from one mountain to another. Humans, if they try it, are apt to fall.

Writing now what transpired Saturday night, January 25, 1970, is somewhat difficult, for I find my feelings and thoughts so very subtle that as I reach for them they slip away, or as we so often hear, the words won't say what I wish them to say. There is also a tendency to overlook the subtler refined experience due to the habit of the mind, to grasp only what can be seen or heard. Sometime earlier that day while on an errand, I was driving east on one of the streets, the thought came to me, why the whole valley is filled with Buddha. My meaning would be clearer if I say Buddha essence or Buddha-ness.

The group had gathered early so as to be on time. I was struck with the observation that a spontaneous quiet fell upon the group about ten minutes before Franklin entered the room. When Franklin gracefully and powerfully walked into the room, I immediately fell into a feeling of rapport. And as is usual when Franklin begins to speak from a deeper realm, I slowly fell into a very, very quiet state of mind. There were still the surface thoughts slipping into awareness here and there. I tried to keep them from interrupting my deeper awareness, but I did not fight them. There are particular points of Franklin's talk that stand out in my memory. When he spoke of throwing at his feet all feelings of hostility, I did so, and added another area of feeling I also felt that needed to be purified. [Now, that was perfectly all right. You had your opportunity to do anything you wanted. They all burn well.] I immediately felt my face and upper body burn—not merely hot, but burn. The rest of my body was uncomfortably warm. As Franklin spoke of the becoming like a child, I felt very open and child-like. This was of course rather easy for me, for I have such deep trust I tend to become open rather spontaneously. As Franklin continued to speak, I felt as though I understood everything he said, and that I could actually follow him along this journey even though my mind doubted my ability. As he looked more and more often at me, my eyes felt as though they would turn back into my head. I would close my eyes now and then in order to relieve this. The quietness felt by my every pore, almost as though I had discovered a whole new awareness between the cells.

I've always enjoyed the companionship along the way, so it was natural for me to cast my attention on one or two in the gathering. I was aware of one holding on to some of his own thoughts of which Franklin was more or less speaking against. I then felt as though this person had suddenly let go, as though a cork had popped, and I thought, well hello, for I was glad to share with this person something that meant so very much to me. I noticed a girl friend with a particularly deep look. I

felt that Lois was masculine. I felt Bruce was in deeply . . . [I was very curious about what that was, aren't you?]

As Franklin continued to speak of this deep consciousness, I lost thought other than that required to follow his words and I felt a deep satisfaction. I did not particularly feel bliss and my mind only now and then would leap along a line of thought of its own accord. I now felt a fulfillment, not dependent upon a desire to share with others, but knowing I would. This, now, was so subtle that it was almost imperceptible. As Franklin spoke of being in *Nirvana* and looking upon the people still in need, I felt as though I were standing on top of the world and looking down somewhat to the right and I was aware of people there. It seemed as though I sensed the consciousness that precedes all form. After the meeting I felt very withdrawn.

When I came home I immediately went to bed and to sleep. I awoke later feeling that the night was half over and I felt that I had still been in this state of consciousness, although there had been purposeful activity. I went back to sleep and I was aware of smoking marijuana; however, at first it was the sticks of incense that I was smoking, and there was a state of euphoria still somewhat like I had felt during Franklin's talk. Soon I noticed a cigarette, and I pulled in on it and noticed a corresponding euphoria but it was short-lived, thus unsatisfactory. I knew I must try again and this time pulled in long and slow. I did so and the feeling of euphoria increased but became much more sensual and very enticing. There was none else in my dream but a few—I bet there was four—who I could not see but who were providing this experience and protecting me. It was one of these who then took away the incense sticks, for I would not voluntarily give them up. They overlooked one stick and I immediately hid it. The feeling of this dream was fulfilling in itself needing no object other than the senses. It was no longer subtle but very sensual. The feeling of the dream carried on all through the day. I honestly felt as though I had actually smoked marijuana. There was a mild depression and strangely enough a slight guilt. I was nauseated the whole day. The next night I was high in the mountains with Franklin and we were making a dangerous but necessary and sure to be successful journey.

Now, I think that was to show the contrast between the effects of marijuana and the real thing—that it's sensual. That finishes those that we have received. The meeting is open to everyone who wants to speak. Erma, what's your general impression of it?

Erma: Of these that I have heard?

Wolff: Mm-hmm.

Erma: I detect in some a real note of sincerity. I detect in some a desire to write something they think you want to hear. I detect in some a delusion, but the sincerity that I feel is not. I don't think it is all really sincere.

Wolff: Mm-hmm.

Erma: But I detect enough sincerity that that's good. I'm wondering a little bit as to just what it is that a person—or rather why it is that a person, if he will report, will not report

really accurately. Because I do seem to feel that in some instances there has not been a full report accurately.

Wolff: Mm-hmm.

Erma: But I'm not surprised at this.

Wolff: No. No, no. There is a tendency to edit.

Erma: And I don't mean to sound so condemning either.

Wolff: Hmm?

Erma: I don't mean to sound so condemning about it either, because I'm no better. But it's interesting. Very interesting.

Wolff: At any rate, something happened.

Erma: Oh, yes. And as I say, the sincerity felt—

Wolff: Mm-hmm.

Erma: —makes it very worthwhile. Definitely. That's my feeling about what you asked me.

Wolff: Mm-hmm. At least we wanted sincerity, of course. Sincerity is the only thing that can be effective.

Erma: Mm-hmm.

Wolff: That's why the purification and dedication is so fundamentally important—

Erma: Mm-hmm.

Wolff: —as preliminary. Otherwise you can get into something not so good.

Erma: Mm-hmm.

Wolff: It would be a trance consciousness all right, but remember that the "White Logic" of Jack London produced a state of desolation.

Erma: Mm-hmm.

Wolff: And that came from alcohol. The book was written, you know, and became one of the great books of the prohibitionists. He was in favor of prohibition. He knew what it did to people.

Erma: Mm-hmm.

Wolff: He ultimately committed suicide because he was an alcoholic. The worse thing you could do. You go into the realm of the "White Logic" without the resources of any resistance to it. That's the worse way he could go.

Erma: You know, Franklin—

Wolff: You have to fight it out in the body. Hmm?

Erma: —the thing that struck me most about the meeting—and I do mean most, because I was deliberately somewhat detached because we had talked in that vein beforehand—the thing that struck me most of all was that this that you were doing, or attempting to do, was done with pure love. And I felt from you a deep, deep love for people and a desire to emanate, not just

radiate, but to emanate that love and to offer something of your own experience. And, now, how the reactions occurred, to me were really not of any great significance. The thing that was really significant that evening was that here was a man who had worked mentally and emotionally and otherwise to prepare something to offer others in genuine love. That was the greatest thing of the evening as far as I was concerned.

Wolff: What I'm interested in is bringing about results.

Erma: Well, I'm not so sure you are. I think you're interested in setting up causes.

Wolff: Hmm?

Erma: I think you're interested in setting up new causes. You'll let the results take their course. There was a tremendous love coming from you in your desire to help others and to me that was the greatest thing of the whole evening.

Wolff: I think of this group as preparing to become, knowingly or unknowingly, preparing to play a part in the larger problem of the world—

Erma: Mm-hmm.

Wolff: —or they wouldn't be circling around in this activity.

Erma: Mm-hmm.

Wolff: Any comment from anybody else?

Participant: You started your talk tonight Dr. by mentioning that some people have an aversion to the word 'trance'.

Wolff: Mm-hmm.

Participant: I would be interested in hearing what your comment might be, um, as I understand it trance, that is either induced or I shouldn't use the word attained, but something that happens inadvertently probably what some call the undesirable state of it. Would it not be that maybe you're trying to say that the type of ecstasy or feeling of the Current or the induction, the result of it, the positive effect and benefit of it, would be something that should be acquired consciously? I mean so that you—the individual has control of his own self in attaining this rather than letting go and becoming negative?

Wolff: Oh yes, definitely.

Participant: So, what—

Wolff: Excuse me. It's the cooperation between the two consciousnesses—

Participant: Yes.

Wolff:—working together as two legs of the . . . But not an indulgent, self-abandonment to something delightful.

Participant: Right.

Wolff: There's a certain austerity involved.

Participant: Now, wouldn't you say that the general well there are so many different concepts here that we would need clarification on. I would like to know if you feel that the, uh. No, I would like to say that the type of trance that one would, say, fall into and lose control of

their own self, whether ego is involved or not, but your self being in control, that would be the type of trance that would be undesirable, would it not? And the type of trance that where you did retain your own control of your own consciousness, your own self, your own being, would not really be trance then and would not be a negative state?

Wolff: It's not a negative state. It involves something of trance consciousness combined with the ordinary consciousness and it can be controlled. You can—it's possible to reach a point where you can turn it on and turn it off.

Participant: But you, I think, were trying to differentiate between that type of trance where another entity might take over a person's—

Wolff: Oh, well that would be very serious.

Participant: Yes. That's the—that would be the negative. So wouldn't it be—I sort of agree with you in trying to seek a better name for it.

Wolff: Yes, but I understood that you—suggested the word to you, an inverse consciousness.

Participant: Inverse consciousness? Yes. You used a few other words there. When you said trance, you said an ecstasy. Did you say "*ecstasia*"?

Wolff: *Ecstasis*.

Participant: *Ecstasis*?

Wolff: Well, that's the Greek form of the word from which 'ecstasy' is derived.

Participant: You also mentioned the word '*samadhi*'?

Wolff: Yes, that's the Sanskrit term for a spiritual trance.

Participant: I see. So actually then this type of inverse consciousness that you're speaking of really has no relation to trance as . . .

Wolff: Yes, it has. Well, um, as I tried to explain, approaching the subject purely psychologically as a psychological phenomenon, it would have certain characteristics regardless of its content, which might reach from an infernal state, on one side, to a supernal, on the other. But disregarding content, merely what can be witnessed by the scientist, trance has certain characteristics you can define. But from that you don't know what's happening inside, which could be the worst possible or could be the best possible.

Participant: Can I have a copy of the tape?

Briggs: That would be up to Dr. Wolff.

Participant: Well I could use a copy of this. I would like to meditate on it.

Wolff: Well, that's all right so far as I'm concerned. I don't—I'm not restricting anything. Anybody wants anything that I say or write is welcome to it. I have no objection to it. As long as you . . .

Participant: Actually, if you . . .

Wolff: If you could get him to make it. Or, if you would bring your machine.

Participant: Oh, I'll bring a machine, sure.

Briggs: Well, the thing is you're leaving in the morning.

Wolff: Yeah . . .

Briggs: Are you going to leave the tape or take it with you.

Wolff: Well.

Briggs: I assumed you'd take it with you.

Wolff: Yes, well now that depends. If there is sufficient reason for it to stay here until you've been able to make a copy. Could you make a copy in the morning before we leave?

Briggs: It depends on what time you leave.

Wolff: Well, so what am I to say. I had hoped to get away by 9:00 o'clock.

Briggs: Well, I think it's possible we could do it.

Wolff: If you get up earlier you could do it.

Participant: In fact—

Briggs: Or if you left later.

Participant: He might make it and deliver it in person to you.

Briggs: Or I could save it till you came back again.

Wolff: Well, yes. That's all right. That's one idea, you better . . . In any case, whether you can make it before I leave or not, why, we will make it. When we leave I'd like to take it; if not, all right, I'll pick it up next time.

Gertrude: Or we could make one at home and send it.

Participant: We could easily do it, so let's just have one plan and do that.

Briggs: Yeah. Let's don't complicate it any more.

Wolff: Now, the technique here for making a copy is well worked out. We have some problems between the two machines. The jacks are different on them.

Wolff: Anyone else?

Participant: Yes. Can you draw a line between the true trance and the pseudo-trance? I mean, if there is still awareness of the things about you, would you call that a trance?

Wolff: Yes, and Dr. Graves spoke of someone, I forget his name, who differentiated fifty-eight stages of trance. At the very least, someone says to a friend, let's go and get a drink, and without thinking the friend goes along. There's a slight touch of trance in that because no discrimination went into the act. At the other extreme is the full catatonic trance where the breath stops, the heart stops, and the body is indistinguishable from a dead body by ordinary methods, only the body will not decay and persists in that state, according to the records, for years. That is complete blackout so far as this plane is concerned. In fact, before you get to that there's blackout. But you can have intermediate states where there is a combination of the relative consciousness aware of the external world combined with this depth consciousness.

Oh, I might say something further about what I found in their interrelationship. The depth consciousness is not a consciousness of phenomena, and it's very difficult to say anything about



it. But its impact upon the relative consciousness is or can be like an impregnating force so that the relative mind can bring to birth a body of thought that was impossible before. It's like an impregnation. And the thrill of finding that fact led me to have some understanding of why we use the word 'conception' in the two senses—you see, mental and physiological—that there was a real reason for this. Now, the impact of depth consciousness on the surface consciousness can lead to an enormous, rich ideation in the surface consciousness, and yet if you just analyze the pure depth consciousness, there's very little you can say about it. It has this quality of depth, as I say. It has the quality of stillness, the quality of duration instead of time, the feeling that nothing is lost in duration, whereas all of the past is lost in the field of time. In duration, all is preserved. One could bring out other things by very subtle analysis. There's so little you can say directly, but its impact can be enormously rich. It can bring to birth books, and lectures, and all of that sort of thing. It's an impact on the relative conscious mind and the relative mind elaborates, gives body, and so forth. But this was like a germ that comes in.

Participant: I've experienced that quite a few times around certain inductive fields, and ideas would come that I know I didn't know, they just came; and one evening a state of supreme joy was induced. I'm sure just by landing on my field of consciousness, made me feel the consciousness. And I've been aware of that for some time. That's a method of teaching, isn't it?

Briggs: It would be a great method.

Participant: A great method.

Participant: The greatest.

Briggs: On the trance, are there any rule of thumb outlines which could be put out; in other words, there are, as I gather it, certain trances certainly should be resisted—

Wolff: Oh, yes.

Briggs: —and others should be accepted. Are there any guidelines or is it just purely a matter of individual discrimination?

Wolff: Well, discrimination has got to come into the picture. Of course, if you're oriented to Enlightenment, and if that is not an affectation but a real thing, that gives you your direction and the direction the trance consciousness would take. Now, if you're only oriented to kicks, then you better avoid it, because you can get a pretty rough kick.

Briggs: Well, let me put it this way. For beginners, there are some people that are very persuasive and would seem to be driving towards Enlightenment which you might be tempted to follow, up to a certain point, and get into trouble.

Wolff: Yeah. Yeah. I know. I know that the devil is dangerous not because of his falsities but because of his truths mixed with falsities. And a clever devil, you know, could make it sound like the real thing. An element of discrimination has to come into that. Well there are usually signs. Sometimes you have to be subtle about it. If it's made to sound very easy, beware. If you don't have to work, beware. It's a work of lifetimes. After all, you may begin with the thought, this I desire, but before you can get it, that has to disappear.

Participant: And yet when it happens, it's just the easiest thing in the world isn't it? It just happens.

Wolff: Yes. You're taken up in it. They are such states of consciousness so subtle, and you see them at the outer edge like a little bird—that is you dare not reach your hand out, or it flies away. When it comes toward you, if instead of reaching toward it, you let it take you over, and the very great subtlety may become the foundation stone on which you build. That difference there is . . . Even the slightest desire for something that's extremely valuable tends to drive it away. With your consciousness so plastic and unmoved by the slightest craving, even for the most wonderful thing; let it take you over. Those are some of the experiences you can have. It's very, very, very delicate play. You give yourself to it, instead of "I" taking. In other words, I, which is now egoistic I, desiring I, the higher I does not . . . The supreme I does not desire. So long as there is even the craving or desiring for it, even a subtle shade of it, it drives the consciousness away from you. You've got to be able to surrender and even be content not to realize it. There in that perfect balance without any flutter, the greatest thing in the world can happen. You see, you don't even have to put forth an effort to dispose of the ashes. [Jim places an ashtray under the ashes that were about to fall from Franklin's cigarette.]

Erma: The *dharma* of the fire is to burn. The *dharma* of Jim is to collect the ashes. There's one thing I've noticed about a genuine trance state that distinguishes it from a non-genuine trance state, or distinguishes the trance state from a display of emotion, which is not trance. The trance state has with it a certain stillness, very definitely so, and if there is not this stillness, then one may be approaching towards it somehow but is not yet there. The body tends to want to be very quiet rather than to become movable or noisy. And if for physical signs you want to look, the pupils of the eye always dilate, whereas in an emotional state, the pupils in the eye will dilate and contract.

Wolff: Mm-hmm.

Erma: They don't stay. But . . .

Wolff: You know that steadiness of consciousness superficially might seem like coldness.

Erma: Yes, superficially it can.

Wolff: So cold, and it really isn't that.

Erma: Mm-hmm.

Wolff: But to the vital, emotional nature it might give that impression.

Erma: Mm-hmm.

Participant: I hate to interject here. I know that I had that feeling from you when you walked into the room, and I was thinking when Bruce showed slides of Aurobindo and his Mother I had the same feeling as when I thought about it I realized that what it really was that appealed to me in one sense as coldness, but it's not . . .

Wolff: No, it isn't coldness. It's only to the emotional, the stormy emotional nature with its heavy agitation that it seems cold. It is very, very steady—very steady consciousness. There's no feeling of mine and thine, as it were. The more that could participate in the value, then the happier you are, so far as that goes, but there's no emotion about it. It's an emotionless happiness.

Participant: Mm-hmm.

Wolff: Well, I think this is enough for this evening. Now, I want to see you, or I think you wanted to see me, so I want to see you therefore.

Erma: I think I'll go into trance and see about that. Yes, I do Franklin. If you'll excuse.

Participant: The rest of us can stay.