

CHAPTER VI

THE PURPOSE OF SLEEP¹

“SEPARATION” and “discoincidence” have been used more or less as synonymous terms, although actually there is a difference in their meaning in relation to astral phenomena. The astral entity can be discoincided from the physical, and yet not be separated from it, so that a clear space lies between the two. That is, the astral can be one inch out of coincidence, and still the bodies would, in parts, occupy the same space. Yet these parts would not coincide with each other.

I suppose you will say, “If this were true we should have known it before.” However, I tell you that every time you sleep your astral body moves slightly out of coincidence—perhaps only a fraction of an inch, perhaps more. At any rate there is discoincidence during sleep, although this discoincidence may be infinitesimal, and has little to do with one’s ability to project, even though projection is an extension of discoincidence. One can be normal, entirely “immune” to astral projection; yet his astral body always slightly discoincides during sleep.

Hereward Carrington was on the right track when he wrote :

“Various theories have been advanced in the past to explain sleep, but no satisfactory theory has ever been fully accepted. Thus we have so-called “chemical theories,” which endeavour to account for sleep by assuming that certain poisonous substances are formed in the body during waking hours and are eliminated during sleep. Others have suggested that sleep is due to peculiar conditions of the circulation of blood in the brain; still others that the action of certain glands explains sleep; others that muscular relaxation accounts for it; others that the lack of external stimuli is sufficient to induce profound slumber.

“All of these theories have been shown insufficient to explain the facts. We shall never arrive at a satisfactory theory of sleep, doubtless, until we admit the presence of a vital force and the existence of an individual human spirit, which withdraws more or less completely from the body during the hours of sleep, and derives spiritual invigoration and nourishment during its sojourn in the spiritual world.”

There is one thing about sleep we do not understand and that is

¹ Sleep is the natural restorative, though how this is brought about is unknown. . . .—*Brain and Mind*, by R. J. A. Berry, F.R.S., p. 489.—H.C.

“the process of unconsciousness.” We do not know how unconsciousness is brought about. We do not know where the conscious mind seemingly evaporates to. We *do* know, however, the purpose of sleep. You would never recuperate “nervous energy” if the astral body conformed everlastingly to the physical, and were in exact coincidence. We might term this natural disincidence, which everyone undergoes, “the zone of quietude,” for there is no activity of the bodies there, except the natural functioning. If you could see (astrally) some one asleep, you would observe the physical form, and above this (perhaps only extending a fraction of an inch beyond it) you would see an outline of the astral body. Remember I am speaking only of *natural* sleep.

Normally, the astral slides out of coincidence and into coincidence again, unnoticed by the subject going to sleep, or awakening—in a slow, quiet way. Yet it can do so with such speed that we cannot consciously comprehend this duration of time. It is usually in the hypnagogic state that this occurs, and, as I have said before, the subject is seldom aware of it, seldom feels it—although at times he does so. Let us recall what Walsh has said regarding this :

“Sleep comes on gradually, the muscles slowly relaxing and the senses becoming dulled. Many people, on going to sleep, experience the feeling of sliding down a hole, or an incline, and sometimes awaken startled. These people are of a nervous type, though fatigue or slight deviation from good health may predispose to the sensation. It is possible, by paying attention to the sensations which are psychologically present in the hypnagogic state, to note the relaxation of the muscles and the sinking or sliding sensation accompanying it.”

Now, if you could hold consciousness up to the last moment, in the hypnagogic state, you could feel this act of disincidence, as indeed nervous and fatigued people often do. And why do they? Because the astral always moves into the zone of quietude, or slightly disincides, during sleep, for the purpose of charging with universal, or cosmic, energy.¹ In the nervous person, in the fatigued,

¹ As to this theory—that the human body is recharged with energy during the hours of rest and sleep—this is one which I myself have defended at great length, purely from the physiological point of view, in my *Vitality, Fasting and Nutrition* (pp. 225-350) and elsewhere: (*Journal, A.S.P.R.*, April, 1908; *Annals of Psychical Science*, August, 1908, etc.) The theory then advanced was that the human body more nearly resembles the electric motor than it does the steam-engine; and that the ordinary theory (that chemical combustion of food supplies the vital energy of the body) is a mistake; rather, the nervous system is re-charged with vital energy during the hours of rest and sleep, and that food merely supplies broken-down tissue.

Arguments in support of this theory were then advanced, drawn from (a) fasting cases, and (b) daily observation—which shows us that, no matter how much food we eat, there always comes a time, nevertheless, when we must rest and sleep in order to restore this energy, and that no amount of food will take the place of sleep—thus differentiating the human body from all other machines. It was also pointed out that all the accepted facts of physiology (calorimeter experiments, etc.) could be explained just as adequately on this theory as on that commonly accepted; and further that, if such a theory were true, it would enable us to accept, and account

the "condenser" (astral body) is greatly run down; that is what nervousness really is, the astral moves out more easily, sooner, while unconsciousness follows a moment later; hence the subject experiences the astral body movement.

And just here another eccentric sensation is felt. The astral, where the mind really *is*, often gets the sensation of sinking or sliding, because the sensibility is in both bodies, and the physical seems to move downward, while, as a matter of fact, the astral moves upward. The subject, of course, thinks that he is in the physical body, while the truth is that he is a fraction of an inch disincorporated from it.

The question no doubt has presented itself in your mind: "Can the subject 'feel' this disattachment of the astral, when in the act of projection?" Naturally, the subject would have to be conscious in order to know anything as to what is taking place; and, if he is, there are certain sensations, which when once he has become familiar with their significance, he will always recognize as "signs" of the loosening of the astral body.

One does not have to experience an extensive projection in order to know what these "feelings" are like. He can experience them in the hypnagogic state, when going to sleep—if he will but concentrate his attention upon himself, and try to see what is really happening, as he enters sleep. In other words, if he will but train himself to keep the balance between consciousness and unconsciousness—while slightly favouring the former—without tension of mind—and will maintain this well into the hypnagogic state, he will feel the disincorporation, as the phantom enters the zone of quietude, usually as a falling sensation, or as if air had suddenly accumulated under the centre of his body, mostly under the stomach. A slight repercussion of body generally follows this, if conscious, because of emotion.

There is one thing more to which I would call attention. When the subconscious contemplates an extensive projection, the astral phantom is put under the spell of catalepsy. This can take place either while in exact coincidence, or in the zone of quietude. If it (the astral body) becomes cataleptic, while in exact coincidence with the physical, the physical will be cataleptic; but if it comes under this spell while the phantom is in the zone of quietude, the physical does not become cataleptic. These conditions do not develop

for, many psychical phenomena which would be quite inexplicable on the ordinary, materialistic theory.

(The reader is referred to the argument, for the detailed defence of this theory.) Mr. Muldoon's idea—that the astral body is the "condenser" or accumulator or vehicle of this energy, is an extension of this view, postulating the astral body as the *link* between the nervous system and the Cosmic Reservoir of Energy, from which the energy is drawn. Our theories dovetail together with the greatest nicety, and I cannot but feel that the teachings of orthodox physiology must ultimately be modified, somewhat along these lines, in order to include supernormal physical phenomena, and also the reality and intermediary-functioning of the astral body.—H.C.

suddenly, but creep over one almost unnoticed, and the subject must be very impressionable to catch them at all.

When you experience the falling or sliding sensation, in the hypnagogic state, and become startled (usually jumping) you may think you have been slightly conscious up to that time ; but if you will observe the psychological changes very carefully, you will find that consciousness was slowly diminishing all the time—it was slowly diminishing—almost gone—then the sliding feeling concurrent with the startled jump—and you are conscious again ! And if you think about it you will admit that, for a moment, you were not sure of being conscious. It was during that very brief moment of “unknowingness” that the subconscious Will moved the phantom.

DREAM CONTROL

Many dreams are instigated by the state of the mind at this time, and you will acquire the ability to dream a certain dream, and in that dream you will often keep the body (astral) moving on, instead of stopping in the zone of quietude. We shall see, before finishing this work, how an astral projector can be dreaming and suddenly become conscious, and find his body projected in an environment suited to the dream. I have done this several times, and will relate these instances later. Thus you can, by practice, produce a desired dream. This is called “dreaming true,” and dream-control is one method of producing projection of the astral phantom—and a pleasant way too.

Of this subject Hereward Carrington says : “ There is a practical experiment which may be conducted, by which ‘ true dreams ’ can be induced. It is very important to observe yourself in the process of ‘ falling ’ to sleep ; to observe consciousness while it is passing into the dream state.¹ If you conduct experiments of this character on yourself, you will be enabled gradually to keep conscious control of yourself up to the moment you fall asleep ; and this self-observation—the consciousness of going to sleep—is extremely interesting.

“ When you have learned to do that, then construct before yourself, mentally, a definite scene, which you must hold firmly in mind. Then, as you are falling to sleep, hold this scene before you, and at the very last moment—before you fall asleep—consciously transfer yourself into the scene—in other words, step into the picture ; and, if you have developed yourself to the requisite point, you will be enabled to carry over an unbroken consciousness into the dream state ; and in this way you have a perfect continuity of thought ; there is no break in the consciousness ; you step into the dream picture and go on dreaming consciously. That is the process of

¹ Was it coincidence that put the term “ falling to sleep ” into use, I wonder, or was this brought into being because of the falling sensation ?—S.M.

dreaming true, and after this dream is fully enacted, then you should remember perfectly all that has transpired during the sleep period."

I wonder if Mr. Carrington knows how almost perfectly in harmony his instructions for "dreaming true" are with the method of dream control used to induce the astral body out into space—to enact a part in that dream? One step beyond what Mr. Carrington has here given is the accomplishment of moving out the astral body to a *locale* which the subconscious hitches up with the dream formulated by the conscious. Later, when you learn the method of promoting projection, and learn how to induce factors which are positive, or favourable to projection, you will be able to cause the astral actually to step out into the dream, and will either remember all that has transpired, on awaking, or will become wide awake during the act of the dream. In that case the dream vanishes and you are there—projected.

This, you will recall, was the formula followed by Dr. Van Eedan, which brought him such successful results. Care must be taken, however, in constructing the dream, and the dream must be fully thought out by the conscious mind, and repeatedly constructed, before the subconscious can reproduce it accordingly. Now, the nature of the dream to be produced is important, and should be built upon lines of action which correspond to the actions which the astral phantom naturally follows on exteriorizing, so that the sensation in the dream will agree with the sensation produced by the action of the phantom, should that phantom awaken.

The nature of the dream must necessarily be that of plausibility, so that the sensation of the dream is enjoyed by the dreamer, and is also in harmony with the sensation of exteriorization; then, if separation be induced, the sensations and emotions will be pleasant—should the phantom begin to regain consciousness. A dream which agrees in action and sensation with the same actions and sensations produced by exteriorization will tend to pull the phantom out.

Action, of course, means action of Self in the dream. One must have movement of self outstanding in the dream—must always be participating in the dream—not merely standing back and looking on. Still stronger promotive factors (to projection) will be induced if the dream be of this nature, and centred around a desire or suppressed desire. Later, I shall give specific directions for producing astral projection by "dream control."

A word of warning! If you are neurotic, easily influenced, lack "will," and are fearful; if you have any reason to believe yourself susceptible to obsession; if you live in an atmosphere of discord—do not try to practise astral body projection. If you are this type, *never* "think within yourself" and *never* "watch yourself in the process of falling to sleep"; turn toward *physical* culture rather than *psychical* culture.

said before that, in most instances, consciousness only comes after one is already projected. And this is the most desirable way of having consciousness intervene, too, for consciousness from the very beginning permits the subject to experience certain undesirable activities which take place within cord-activity range.

However, I have produced such a projection (conscious from the very beginning) several times, and have experienced unintentional projections of this type on several other occasions. You will remember that my very first projection was conscious from the outset.

Whenever a projection of this type took place, I always noticed it did so after I had been sleeping for several hours. I would awaken between one and four o'clock in the morning, usually, and the astral body would begin to "rise," as I entered sleep again; but, on other occasions (as in the first experience quoted), the projection would begin in the hypnagogic state when emerging from sleep.

I will tell you what takes place in each of these states—(1) the hypnagogic state, emerging from sleep, and (2) the hypnagogic state when going to sleep—respectively.

The first experience quoted is an example of what takes place when a conscious projection occurs in the hypnagogic state following sleep. One begins to awaken slowly, unable to understand where he exists, but conscious that he *does* exist somewhere. Close your eyes and seal your ears and you will have some idea of the condition which one is in just before the "take-off" in a projection.

Consciousness grows slightly stronger, and one understands that he is lying upon the bed, before he can see or hear; and there will be a very noticeable pulsation in the back of the head. This is the heart-beat. Often this is the very first thing one does notice, even before he can understand that he is lying upon the bed.

Presently the subject will realize that he cannot move; and if he wishes to produce the projection he must have no desire to move physically, but must think of rising into the air. But he cannot try to move up into the air by trying to use effort; for this would interfere with the power which actually moves the body. At this time one merely lies quiet, without emotion, and thinks of moving upward.

The subject will feel as if he weighed a ton, as if he were glued down to the bed. Eventually, he will feel as if this "glue," holding him down, has lost its adhesiveness, and that he is like a balloon, when the anchor is disconnected; he begins to move upward. Then the floating sensation is present, because the astral body *really is* floating. The subject must lie perfectly calm, enjoying the sensation of floating, and thinking only of moving upward and outward.

He will be cataleptic, as a rule, until after the power has moved him outside cord-activity range, but he becomes free from catalepsy—sometimes (after the body has uprighted) when within cord-

activity range. But he never becomes free from catalepsy while the body is in the horizontal position—he could not and remain horizontal.

All the time, within cord-activity range, the subject can feel the heart's pulsations, in the back of his head, and there will almost always be present, in some form or other, the eccentricities which you have studied and which will manifest within the range. Once outside the range of cord-activity, the phantom is free, and is possessed of the most indescribable agility and exhilaration.

This is where most people, who have experienced a conscious projection, first gain consciousness. Most of the accounts begin like this: "Once more I found myself outside my body, possessed of a freedom which I could never describe." Is not this the most desirable place to become conscious? It certainly is! There is nothing undesirable in astral projection, when one can awaken with such an enlivened feeling, and be perfectly free.

Notice that, when a conscious projection begins during the second hypnagogic state (emerging from sleep), the subject will feel the disconnection of the two bodies. But when the projection occurs during the first hypnagogic state (entering sleep) the astral body rises up so easily that the subject scarcely knows that he has moved upward until suddenly he sees this to be the case. When the sense of hearing first begins to manifest, the sounds seem far away. When the eyes first begin to see, everything seems blurred and whitish. Just as the sounds become more distinct, so does the sense of sight become clearer and clearer. There is a spot, just out of coincidence, in which, as the phantom passes upward through it, the consciousness seems to fade out to some extent; then radiate back to normal again.

I have noticed this every time. Just as the astral body leaves the physical, the consciousness grows dim for an instant; then comes back again—like an electric bulb growing dim for an interval, then again becoming bright. This spot is the place where it is most difficult to hold consciousness; and, remember, it is very close to coincidence; it is in the zone of quietude.

Producing an entirely conscious projection of the astral body is a very delicate and difficult feat, and usually one's attempt will be unsuccessful, unless his physical body is in the most profound state of "incapacity," and his emotions are absolutely calm.

No subconscious "stress" is necessary, in such a case, as the subconscious Will takes the suggestion of moving upward directly from the conscious mind. The reason why completely conscious projections only occur, as a rule, after the subject has been sleeping for several hours, is because the physical body has become "incapacitated" to a greater extent.

It is not unusual for people to awaken early, in a condition of so-called "nocturnal paralysis," which is really a cataleptic condition

of the astral body, and this is the opportune time to try to project the astral body, which then becomes merely a matter of proper suggestion and emotional calm.

I had noticed that completely conscious astral projections practically always occurred after I had been sleeping for several hours, sometimes even after I had slept the entire night, often making their appearance at six and seven o'clock in the morning. As a rule, I would suddenly become wide awake, almost always at the same hour, every morning, for six or eight mornings regularly, and then would come an awakening, at that identical time, when I would experience the projection of the astral body.

For about six mornings, at two o'clock, I would suddenly awaken, and, lying awake for about fifteen minutes, would go back to sleep again. Then would come a morning when I would awaken at two o'clock, and would have an astral projection—sometimes when emerging from sleep, and sometimes on going to sleep again.

THE PASSIVE WILL

Have you ever had an intense desire to acquire or do something, and found that you awakened regularly, in the dead of night, with this desire upon your mind, and that you could think of nothing else? And have you ever noticed that, after you had experienced this for some time, that what you desired you oftentimes acquired? When you stop to think about this, did it not seem that some influence within you awakened you, just for the purpose of allowing you to desire that which you wished?

It has always appeared so to me; and I have, on three different occasions, acquired things which I very much wanted, and which in my hours of daily consciousness, seemed absolutely beyond my reach. You will find, if you analyze this, that you will be able to conceive of doing or acquiring some of the most seemingly impossible things, when you awaken in the dead of night and think about them; things which you could never think of doing during your hours of daily thought. Take the following by way of example:

Brown desires a rise in wages. He has had this desire for some time, but hesitates to ask his employer for more money. In the dead of night, Brown awakens with his mind upon "more money." Perfectly conscious, he lies there and tells himself he will go to the boss and tell him "what's what." He will do this and he will do that. But when the next day comes, where has this strong Will, this determination, disappeared?

When Brown thinks of the resolutions he made, when drowsy, but conscious, during the night before, he wonders how he possibly could have thought of doing such ridiculous things. Next night Brown awakens again, thinking of the same thing—more money. And while he lies there—conscious, but quiet and drowsy—he again