

## Chapter 9 – Self-Knowledge, Transformation and Redemption

"We are always selecting 'facts' which support our preconceptions; once we have turned off that mechanism, all that is left is beauty."

-author unknown

Rumi says, "Seek the answer inside your question."  
But we claim: Frame your question in positive, open terms,  
utterly free of assumptions, history and blame,  
and you will soon see why you could never arrive  
at a useful answer the way you were approaching it.  
If you can remember to STOP when you get to the question mark,  
you may find that the answer is right there,  
patiently waiting for you to be quiet enough to recognize it.  
Most of all, if you will do more listening than talking,  
you will likely hear everything you need to know.

- my teachers

All gains, whether material, spiritual, moral or mystical, are in answer to one's own character.\*

- Hazrat Inayat Khan

**W**E HAVE TALKED A LITTLE about where we hope to get to, so now we need to discuss the process in more detail. That process is the transformation of our *self*, even to the extent that we no longer recognize ourselves although, oddly, something in us will then recognize our 'new' self as being what we really are, or at least what we started out to be.

Then, in a way, we are like the seedling of some wonderful tree which has been overtaken by a parasitic plant until very little of the original tree is recognizable – it may have become dwarfed, hollowed out or even killed by the parasite, which is our egoic mask. With meticulous pruning and therapy, the tree can be uncovered and possibly healed, but then it will be a test of the tree's original nature and soil to see whether it will endure and grow straight and tall, with roots that will hold against adversity.

For this purpose, I have assembled twelve steps<sup>†</sup> to describe the transformational process (consider it coincidental that the alcoholic recovery program also has twelve steps<sup>2</sup> but there is, inevitably, some correspondence between the two systems). Although I describe these steps here as if they were a progression, you'll find that they really work in parallel or in stages wherein first one line will seem emphasized, and then another at a different point in your evolution.

These steps induce a gradual change in our *psychic shape* (the way that we fit with each other and with our circumstances), and also they are an *alchemic* progression, in that each prepares our neurochemical apparatus to attune to the next stage more readily (although the direction may be reversed as well). The reason I claim it as being

---

\* The key is whether you *care* about having sufficient strength of character.

† These are taken from the section of my sacred songs, *The Steps of Awakening*.

‘alchemic’ is that we can identify neurotransmitters and metabolic factors that change as we replace negative emotions with positive (which is why laughter and prayer are known to facilitate healing), and these changes become the bases for finer progressions.\*<sup>3</sup> That is to say, our work on ourselves – against our habits of negativity and complacency, and toward new patterns of fluidity, receptiveness, compassion, service and sacredness – can be taken as the real transmutation of base elements into the *gold* of self-perfection.

I have the first step as *yearning* because, as I mentioned earlier, only those who feel something missing from their lives, something they cannot live without, will have the inclination to forego the comfortable and to make sacrifices in their routines, in their relationships and, often, in their careers. A person’s yearning may not be overt, but it will show up in the kinds of choices they make, although it will usually not be possible to predict in what direction their thirst will take them.

That is one of the connections between this and the alcoholic recovery program: both start with an unquenchable thirst, and many of those who finally come to the path of awakening began as alcoholics or addicts. The corresponding step would be, “I came to recognize that I was powerless against my addictions.” Of course we must recognize that, in nature, no organism can survive without the impulses to thrive and procreate – those are its appetites. Similarly, we find ourselves with a hunger for completion or redemption, once again to be joined to the Whole with which we belong. Of course, in ordinary life, this hunger is easily perverted into greed and gluttony.

The second step I identified, *sensitizing*, can be thought of as an extension of Gurdjieff’s idea<sup>4</sup> about *influences*: *A*-influences, *B*-influences and *C*-influences. *A*-influences are the things and concepts of ordinary life: home, furniture, family, democracy, country, neighborhood, etc. – *things*, that is.<sup>†</sup> *C*-influences are lessons and materials from the *Real World* which an enlightened teacher administers directly to a disciple, in person, in the requisite state of consciousness and in the necessary context (e.g., in ritual). *B*-influences are the fragments which remain after a *C*-influence transmission has fallen into the hands of ordinary consciousness – they become things and habits. All religions of today are filled with *B*-influences and priests who (for the most part) could not tell you the difference. Much of the world’s mythologies, along with the symbols of the occult, are *B*-influences. These institutions serve as repositories of clues and evidence for seekers who are beginning to awaken.

Virtually all of the exercises I have given you, up to this point, are geared toward your *sensitization*; that is, toward your increasing awareness of the subtleties of perception, cognition and beingness. That increased awareness will be your starting point for encountering the Other, the Mystery and the supernatural Overworld (by now I hope you have a feel for what I mean by these terms). Of course you will also need *power*, lightness and tons of luck for a successful encounter, so we will get to all those in good time.

---

\* Discussions of the alchemic octaves of transformation can be found in Ouspensky’s *In Search of the Miraculous*, Nicoll’s *Commentaries* and in Regardi’s *Magica*.

† *A*-influences may also be compared to don Juan’s depiction of the *tonal* – the realm of whatever we can name. *C*-influences would then be of the *nagual*, the numinous realm.

According to Gurdjieff, a persistent yearning which does not become perverted by fixation or addiction can eventually coalesce into *Magnetic Center*, so the next step is to become *magnetized*. Obviously we are not talking about having hand tools and silverware stick to you<sup>\*</sup>; what we want sticking to you is evidence (at least to your own satisfaction) that the world is not as it appears through our filters, not as we have been taught that it is. This evidence may be odd strings of coincidences; for example, you may have a dream about someone you once knew, let's say Charlie. After you get up, you find a magazine open to a perfume named Charlie. Then, as you get a phone call from a person named Charlie about whom you'd forgotten, the announcer on the radio is also referring to a Charlie. You walk outside and see the name Charlie on a billboard, and a biplane has just sky-written "Charlie" in smoke.

Another phenomenon, almost oppositional to the previous, is when you go to a building you have visited dozens of times, but now it is on the opposite side of the street from where you distinctly remember its being, or two colleagues have mysteriously swapped names. It is just like science fiction, but these changes actually occur to people undergoing the shift of awareness (it may be more accurate to say that people making such shifts of attention become aware of these discontinuities in the fabric of the reality-dream<sup>†</sup>). *Déjà vu* experiences are also good examples of magneticization.

But real Magnetic Center is not looking for random incidents; it is a consistent deepening and strengthening of alignment with the Other, with the Divine, with Spirit and with sacredness. In don Juan's vernacular, the habitual positions of the *assemblage point* are expanding<sup>‡</sup> and becoming more connected. This comes from exposure to spiritual or supernatural influences and from consistent practices such as those I have offered here in the exercises.

The step of *healing* that I am speaking of in this chapter has nothing to do with taking prescriptions to alleviate symptoms; it is entirely about coming into a natural, harmonious balance of the organism, of the mind, of the heart and of the soul. It comes from prolonged and consistent practice of self-discipline so that thoughts have become quiet, one's attention stays on service and love rather than on neediness and self-pity, and energies are kept flowing and in balance.<sup>§</sup>

In terms of one of the central paradigms of this book, a *healed person's psychic shape* becomes uniform and luminous; nothing (temptations, fixations, regrets, etc.) sticks to such a shape, and its presence is healing to other people. Good things (even miracles) tend to happen around such a presence. This person's attention is grounded in the present, and s/he takes everything in stride, attentively but not attached to outcomes or agendas. When you are in that place, people go out of their way to do you favors, and then thank you for allowing them to do it!

The main obstacle to healing is the blind spot<sup>\*\*</sup> in each of us, about which revolves everything that imprisons us in the ego-form. This is the central characteristic in us that

---

\* Although that image was effectively portrayed in the movie *Powder*.

† This effect is nicely portrayed in the film *Dark City*.

‡ In other words, wider ranges of perceptions, experiences, thoughts and feelings are embraced in a given state of consciousness. This leads to the activation of *conscience*.

§ We will go into detail about these energies and flows when we talk about the *chakras*.

\*\* Gurdjieff calls this blind spot our *chief feature*.

defines us for other people, that often ruins our relationships and opportunities, that causes us to make the same mistakes over and over. We usually project this weakness onto other people, blaming and accusing them for what they clearly see is in us, although they, in turn, will be projecting their own central feature onto us, making it difficult to isolate our own faults.

The other thing that makes it difficult to isolate this feature is the fact that our ego-form, even though detesting the ill treatment that it gets for its habitual behaviors, it is actually made up of the attitudes behind all those behaviors, most prominently the central attitude by which it justifies whatever it feels compelled to do, thus ‘shaping’ and deforming the psychic shape of the personality in the way that even complete strangers must conform to. In this way, we justify cutting ourselves off from family, friends and support systems; we justify stealing and lying to people who trusted us; we even justify violence, murder and mayhem through this mechanism. It is principally this central blindness that keeps us asleep under the “law of accident,” even though we are ‘functioning’ and even “being creative or spiritual.”

I am certain that, at this point, you will want to know what the remedy is against our slavery to this disaster-producing blind spot, and I have to tell you that it is, for all intents and purposes, permanent and fatal – that is, within its sphere of control, which is virtually all that most people ever know about. That is precisely why we must make use of one of the ways *outside* of the personality, about which it pretends to know, and even upon which to be a priest or an expert.

But, fortunately, it knows nothing about these ways, and *can* know nothing, and that is because illumination and awakening are the antitheses of its existence. Then we can say that the remedy for sleep is awakening, and that for suffering in darkness is illumination, just as the remedy for pain is compassion, and that for hopelessness is service and devotion. And, as we have been saying, this is an evolutionary process of meticulous steps.

I have made some notes which may be helpful with this step of healing:

First of all, manipulative, lying or destructive thoughts and intentions are always *secondaries* – that is, they are supported by, and come after, decisions which we made *consciously* at one time (ever preverbally), but which are now buried underneath. These decisions are brought back into the light, and dissolved gradually, through self-study.

Next, our *discriminant* memory is filled with assumptions and approximations, most of which we have forgotten to recheck or correct – so we are always making decisions based on error. This is why we keep “pushing each other’s buttons” – we stay hooked into our ‘history.’

We are always “unconsciously” previewing our encounters and making decisions about what we will permit ourselves to do when they come up – in this way we justify violence and betrayal. The inner conversation may be, “Next time he says that, I’m going to murder him!” or “If she gets in my way one more time, I’m just going to step on her!” or “Why shouldn’t I? They get to ... <some perceived privilege>”

The process of getting our lives in order, becoming clear and decisive about our priorities and principles, letting go of unnecessary baggage and eliminating obligations, both from and toward other people, is the step that I term *consolidation*. This step partially corresponds to *making amends* in the alcoholics program, and it involves resolving buried

issues and dissolving guilt, shame, regret and dread. Gurdjieff calls someone who has made such consolidation a *good householder*<sup>5</sup> (обыкател). Don Juan says that they have a good *tonal*.

Some people are apparently born with the ability to organize themselves as a good householder but, generally, this condition evolves over the years from arranging our lives around our practices, particularly *dreaming* and *recapitulation*, but also the *not-doing* and the self-awareness exercises contribute a lot to this goal. Some of the signs of good householder are reliability, consistency, believing in deeds rather than in words, and living up to one's principles.\*

Progress in the previous steps brings us to a place in ourselves where everything seems to be crashing in on us –floods of memory, remorse, sensory novelties, thoughts and impressions that we don't know how to sort out. Then the next step must be *purification*, the process of detaching from all those pulls and influences, of letting it all go past us and through us, but without losing our edge of passion, awareness, compassion, zeal and devotion.

It is common for people (or at least it used to be) to go into seclusion for this transition but, even if we seem to have released ourselves from the grasp of temptation and fixation while in our ashram, cave or treetop, the proof of it lies only in the efforts we make when we return to the context of ordinary life,<sup>†6</sup> when suddenly we are forced to compete for survival, forced to deal with money, bills, regulations, property, jobs, bosses, family crises, *ad nauseum*. Then we find that our seeming self-mastery was only a thin patina, and that we really have little control over what happens in our world, or even in ourselves. This part corresponds to the recovery step of “I came to realize that I was powerless to change.”

Fortunately, it turns out that we ourselves are not the ones who do the heavy lifting; all we are really asked to do is to show up and make the effort. This realization correlates to the recovery step of “I came to trust in a Higher Power, in whatever way I may conceptualize it.” Our only difference with that is that we are suspending the conceptualization and putting our trust in the process itself. We are not telling you *not* to believe in God or the Buddha or Jesus – oh, never mind, that *is* what we are telling you, at least until you have dropped all your preconceptions and fixations about religion and faith.

The next step is *forgiveness and contrition*. There is no way that “the camel can pass through the Eye of the Needle”<sup>‡</sup> if it is carrying the clumsy baggage of blame, self-pity or grudge. Contrition and remorse are the prerequisites for forgiveness, because it is only when we understand our own complicity in each “wrong” against us that we can begin to see the other person's perspective.<sup>§</sup>

---

\* Basically the same qualities as found in a *Nagual* man or woman (the kernel of a party of sorcerers), according to don Juan.

† Several of Hermann Hesse's stories relate to this conundrum.

‡ In olden times, according to my sources, the city of Jerusalem had twelve gates, eleven of which were staffed by customs agents who would charge tariffs on the cargo being brought in. The twelfth gate, being just large enough for an unladen camel, was duty-free, and was called The Eye of the Needle.

§ Please remember that, in this book, such a “wrong” is merely the way the people and events fit together.

When it comes right down to it, once we have assembled enough perspective\* we find that forgiveness is not even necessary, because *nobody could possibly have done anything wrong*.† If you or they were conscious, then you made the best decision you could have, based on what you knew at the time. But mostly we were all sleeping behind our masks, and just automatically “fit together” in whatever way we could, by default.‡

So then, in studying ourselves carefully, we will find that we have entrapped everybody around us into treating us the way we have it programmed internally, according to the shape of our self-image, and it takes quite a few dark nights of the soul to change that.§ Forgiving everyone, especially ourselves, is the first step toward freedom from suffering and, for our purposes, that must really mean releasing ourselves from any guilt, blame, anger, fear or grudge. This does not mean numbing ourselves or suppressing our feelings. Quite the contrary – it means feeling everything, but with no judgment or *identification*.\*\*

I hope, by now, that we have demonstrated to your satisfaction that, if we hope to get anywhere at all, meticulous and relentless self-study, for years and even decades, is indispensable. But there is quite a nice “consolation prize” (even before very long) for making all those efforts, however – for one thing, eventually we may begin to show signs of *self-awareness*.†† Amusingly, this is one of the myths of the Western culture: “Man is *automatically* self-aware, and that’s what distinguished him from the animals.”

What we find is that a person *can* be self-aware, but some animals also can become self-aware, given the proper circumstances. For the most part, we are almost *never* self-aware, and most of us go to our graves without even an inkling that we could have been. Mostly we allow the myths to assure us that we were self-aware by virtue of being *human*, and immortal by virtue of having a *soul*. That is as far as it goes, for those who can be satisfied with myths and assurances.

Now I had better describe what it is that I am talking about. Self-awareness is not just “knowing that I am a person and am therefore aware of myself” or “Of course I am aware of myself – I am a conscious individual with Free Will‡‡”; it is an entirely special

---

\* Remember, this is one of the definitions of *power*.

† When we get more into the core paradigms, we’ll see that the way we are *dreaming* our life is just exactly what we need to teach ourself the particular lessons we need to learn, such as what we are projecting onto other people and how to have the courage and humility to release *identifications*.

‡ In Gurdjieff’s paradigm, such sleeping people (men #1, 2 and 3) are under the *law of accident*, ruled by the moon. When a man has come into balance (man #4), says G., he is then under the *law of fate*, ruled by the planets (and described by astrology). Those who have become awakened, illuminated and self-mastered (man #5, 6 and 7) fall under higher, finer laws which are ruled by the sun and the stars.

§ In recent times, I’ve seen quite a few workshops promising to deliver transformation *instantly, just by paying your money and showing up*. Aside from such a possibility’s being annoying to those of us who have devoted our lives to inner discipline, there are real reasons that *the way of the wise man* is described as “evolution” and “gradual transformation” rather than as “instant gratification.” Neurologically, every new habit that we add or delete, every new way of perception or cognition that we form, and every new set of connections that we make to our latent possibilities, entails an enormously intricate rewiring of our neural pathways; this can be done only during extended periods of quiescence – that is, during sleep or meditation, over extended periods of time.

\*\* ... or *internal considering*. These are the terms Gurdjieff uses to mean fixations on what someone else must think of me, or wrongly placed commitments and beliefs that perpetuate suffering, violence or cruelty.

†† Gurdjieff calls this state *Self-Remembering*.

‡‡ Yet another of our myths – how could free will be an attribute of sleeping automatons?

state of consciousness, as different from what we call our waking state as that is from sleep.

Some people describe it as standing outside of yourself, looking at yourself playing your roles, as if on television. Others liken it to awakening from sleep, as if everything we had ever done was merely a dream. Often it may feel like popping or ripping through a kind of fabric, and then finding yourself in a breath-takingly new world, albeit where everything is finally recognized for what it really is. But none of these depictions does it any justice, because it is for you to discover for yourself, and then it belongs to you from now on. Its presence changes your life, your priorities, your principles and your perspective.

The biggest danger associated with the state of self-awareness is *clarity*, the impression that “now I know the real Truth.” Improperly prepared people have formed suicide cults and done horrendous antisocial acts because of such ‘clarity.’ I know we have already discussed this point at least once, but it is crucially important that, once you have entered the various states of awakening, you take their gifts and messages very humbly and for yourself to transform, not to impose your ‘vision’ on other people.

After a while you will come to see that the revelations deepen and broaden, and what you had previously regarded as “obvious fact” is now revealed as a naïve and evidently mistaken impression, just as the process of growing up from childhood replaces juvenile viewpoints with adult perspectives. As you study yourself in your practices and disciplines, I promise that you will find many examples of childhood myths still shaping and coloring your adult “truths.”

This is not to say that this range of states cannot be described in some form; but, whatever the form, the attempt will prove useless unless both the sender and the receiver have attained the requisite self-realization and illumination (and are able to hold the alignments at the time). Then it will be understood and attested to no matter how it is communicated.

Some of the other “consolation” prizes are the possibilities of permanence (immortality) and power (control over reality). I guess we shouldn’t forget about the restoration of (or reunion with) our divine nature. We’ll be discussing these much more in later chapters.

The ninth step of this program is *balancing*. Everything we do towards transformation must be balanced. We just now spoke about the need for taking visions and revelations in balance, and those who have studied *chakra* energies know that these must all be balanced in order to have a proper flow. Gurdjieff speaks of the need to balance the intellection, emotional and moving centers with each other, and for each center to be doing its rightful work. He also speaks of *balanced man* (“man number four”) as the predecessor to permanence, power, knowledge and *will* (properties of “man number five, six and seven”).\*

With the proper emotional, mental and physical balance, we may endure the onslaught of supernatural power and of the Awareness of the Whole, the Other, the

---

\* “Man number one” is based on physical action, “man number two” is centered on emotions, feelings and intuition, and “man number three” is oriented toward intellect and reason, according to Gurdjieff. Each being biased in those ways, they cannot know the whole truth. “Man number four” (balanced man) is found only as the result of an esoteric school, and is prepared in various ways for metamorphosis.

Unknowable.\* The path to enlightenment is often described as an *edge* we must walk and upon which we must balance.† One of the most significant manifestations of the edge is when, instead of reacting to some strong emotional impact (with anger or self-pity,‡ for example), we “catch” it in the gap between responses, and then ‘ride’ its edge of tension across the abyss between the human form and the Unknown (this is an important topic of this book, so we will be going into much more detail on it later on.)

This cultivation of our edge is the step of *intensifying and focusing* (Step 10). It can be done only by those who have assembled a foundation of silence and mindfulness within themselves, and who have studied themselves enough to know intimately what triggers them (all of our knee-jerk reactions). It is these triggers which are the key to this step, which might be compared to setting a fire with a magnifying lens using the rays of the sun.

What this is saying is that all energy is *good* energy, that the quality of the energies we conduct depends only upon how we direct their flow. Therefore, one of the ways that our methods depart from standard psychological and self-help models is that we do not (except for a while at the beginning, until we have developed the trust and power required) attempt to emolliate or dissipate strong emotions and compulsions, especially the negative ones, but instead learn to channel their power toward the accomplishment of our goals, which, of course, implies having enough unification and self-knowledge to *have* goals of beingness.

Then, once we have such a sense of purpose, we begin to experience an astonishing sense of gratitude and appreciation for all of the nose-tweakings, affronts, betrayals, injustices and problems that life and our fellows can throw at us. It all still hurts and discomforts just as much (possibly even more), but now these are all fuel for our own personal “Mr. Fusion™”§ by which we can accelerate to the next dimension.

The 11<sup>th</sup> step, “realizing holiness,” has long been a point of contention between the camps of ‘reason’ and spirituality. The reason for the quotation marks is that Reason itself has no problem with the extra dimensions of passion, power, devotion and beauty that sacredness imbues on objects of attention; it is, rather, mechanistic materialism that insists on everything’s being inanimate, separate, meaningless and accidental. That perspective seems to be somehow comforting to its adherents.

Perhaps ‘holiness’ has developed an unfortunate reputation due to its connection with organized religion, which is blamed for suppressing free thinking and novel theories. Be that as it may, the sense of the sacred proves indispensable for becoming aware of the oneness and connectedness of everything one experiences. After all, what would there be to awaken to if everything just reduces to randomness?

---

\* Castaneda’s don Juan says that man can encounter the Unknown (at least with help), but that a meeting with the Unknowable would be fatal. As I see it, the issue is that the Unknowable is outside of the luminosity of Man, so therefore one must first transform beyond the Form of Man. At any rate, whether or not this can ever be done is outside the scope of this particular book.

† Castaneda’s don Juan says that only a person whose *luminous egg* has no ‘holes’ in it can have such an edge, and that these holes are formed from strong attachments such as having children. The disciplines that we have been working with include ways of healing those holes, which may be *seen* as dark patches.

‡ More precisely, the primitive feelings to which we attach the labels “anger”, “self-pity” or whatever.

§ As in *Back to the Future*.



But I did promise you that I was not going to pitch for any particular side, so I must now offer you a completely practical reason for adopting such a reverential way of life. The most obvious reason that comes to mind is that it coaxes the mind – and our *psychic shape* along with it – into the direction of *union* with all we encounter, just as encountering with the sense of union fosters reverence for the living intelligence that is then found in all ‘things.’ This sense of union is a prerequisite for awakening, and is a key to harmony, both within ourselves and with nature and everything around us.

A second reason is that reverence inculcates in us the humility necessary for a clean awakening. Humility is another word that has come under suspicion, but (at least for our purposes here) it actually means “removing primary control from the personality-ego and replacing it with discipline, awe and wonder.” That, in turn, allows our latent resources to become active, giving us the sensibilities and powers which fall under the control of the awakened heart-mind.

The final step of this program is *Divine Awakening*, the legendary treasure of myth and scripture, and man’s highest possible attainment. It is the last stage of a whole series of awakenings and is associated with cosmic consciousness, sainthood, self-mastery, wholeness and perfect Goodness. In terms of psychic shape, one’s whole aspect is round, smooth and uniformly shining. The being has all possible senses active, and his consciousness crosses all dimensions.

There are several stages preceding full awakening. The first comes with the realization that things are not as they seem, which I trust you have attained to at least some degree by coming with me this far and trying the exercises. At this stage, one feels at least a bit alien, like the fabled stranger in a strange land, often as if everyone around him were some sort of puppet or robot acting out artificial roles.

The second stage of awakening comes when you truly see yourself as others see you, which is excruciatingly horrifying.\* This turns out to be the best reason for working on our *humility* first, because an unpurified ego will likely turn around and project all his own horrors on the people around him, blaming them and justifying himself. This stage may come piecemeal or it could come as a sudden shock. In a supportive context, people who pass through this stage often develop various kinds of psychic abilities due to the removal of the egoic blocks.

A third stage occurs only to someone who has made very serious covenants – unbreakable contracts – about their work on themselves and on their aim (singular here because, for everyone at this stage, there is only one aim). In the hands of a true master, such an acolyte can be “nailed to the wall” – put into the position upon which there is no place for the ego to stand.† In this state of consciousness, you see everything in an entirely new perspective, even though the objects are just as they were (non-hallucinatory).

You are not numb (quite the opposite) but emotionless compared to any usual perspective. Everything that would normally be felt (or thought) as an emotion is now sensed as pure vibrational energy. In such a state, it is possible to do things that would be quite impossible for the personality – with no impeding thoughts or attitudes, all of the resources of your beingness are at your call, and pain or discomfort are taken simply as

---

\* Remember our earlier discussion about the central blind spot.

† Don Juan calls this state the “place of no-pity.”

‘flavors’ of energy. Such phenomena are actually well documented about people in disasters or war zones – they themselves could not tell you how they performed their acts of heroism. It’s just that, in our case, the state is induced intentionally.

A fourth stage would be what don Juan calls *heightened awareness* and what Gurdjieff refers to as *self-remembering*, and occurs, as far as I know, only in the presence of an enlightened master, under special circumstances which must be carefully set up. This state differs from the *place of no-pity* in the following respects:

- Its *inventory* is increased, beyond holding a different perspective – there is more here than is noticed in the ordinary world;
- There is an emotionality to this state, typically more so than in ordinary consciousness, although of a noticeably different character: you may seem more passionate and zealous, more easily aroused or upset (at least until finding a balance), and quite often more determined in your aims;
- Objects and events take on a numinous, magical quality – everything seems alive and intelligent;
- It is much easier to remember long-forgotten events, and to perceive connections that had previously eluded you. These insights are forgotten when the borrowed energy has dissipated and you return to default states.

Time spent in *heightened awareness* is typically experienced as a whole separate life, like a parallel dimension where many of the objects and people are the same as before, but with a very different aspect, and in which magical ‘new’ people and events occur (quotation marks because the ‘new’ ones may seem exquisitely familiar).

The next stage is harder to name and identify,\* because it is so generally misunderstood (if even acknowledged). It is often thought of as psychedelic madness when it is encountered by unprepared explorers, but it resolves into a whole, consistent set of worlds when you have enough of your own power and knowledge to be able to apprehend it. This realm has its own laws, and each world within it has its own requirements and its own special treasures.

People who have glimpsed these worlds may come back stupefied or blathering, or they may retreat into caves or forests, or become invisible in the midst of civilization. Many imaginative books have been written about such ‘returnees.’<sup>7</sup> We will be examining alternate views of these phenomena and experiences in later chapters.

---

\* This is, pretty much, the *Second Attention* to which don Juan refers.

## *Exercises for Chapter Nine*

1. Continue the exercises from Chapter Eight.
2. Watch for deeper messages in your dreams; watch for these same messages in your waking life.
3. In your interactions with people, become aware of how you force them into the mould of your own history and assumptions.

## *References for Chapter Nine*

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://paibeiramar.org/Hymns/steps.htm>

<sup>2</sup> ..., *The Big Blue Book of Alcoholics Anonymous*, ...

<sup>3</sup> Ouspensky, P. D., *In Search of the Miraculous*, Harcourt, Brace ...

<sup>4</sup> Ouspensky, P. D., *op. cit.*,  
Nicoll, Maurice, *Commentaries*, ...  
Regardi, Israel, *Magica*, ...

<sup>5</sup> Ouspensky, P. D., *op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> Hesse, Hermann, *Siddhartha, Journey to the East*, ...  
Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Man and Superman*, ...

<sup>7</sup> Gurdjieff, G.I., *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, ...  
Hilton, Joseph, *Lost Horizon*, ...