

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA
A Suggestion to Spiritual Frontiers
Meredith J. Sprunger, Ph.D.

The search for the real causes of physical, mental, and spiritual phenomena is good. Humanity has made considerable progress in the understanding of our physical universe. Groups like Spiritual Frontiers should be commended in their courageous approach to mental-spiritual phenomena.

It is not the intention of this article to discourage the study of psychic phenomena but to point out the danger of falling into the same error which for centuries handicapped our ancestors in the study of physical phenomena: assigning spiritual causes to unusual things which they did not understand.

The acid test of any religious philosophy is in ascertaining whether or not it clearly distinguished material, mental, and spiritual reality while at the same time recognizes their unification in the concrete process of thought and action. Matter and Spirit are at the opposite ends of the continuum of reality. The two are linked together by the bridge of the mind. There is considerable evidence to suggest that in the over-all view of human life spirit dominates mind and mind dominates matter.

Before we can even make a beginning in the understanding of psychic phenomena we must know something about the structure of the mind. Authorities generally agree that mind functions on subconscious, conscious, and superconscious levels. It is the writer's conviction that the superconscious is a qualitatively distinct entity from the other mind levels. This is the Spark of God which makes man a unique creature - a son of God.

It is easy for man to confuse the voice of the subconscious with the voice of the superconscious. Many of the religious cults and religious fanaticism is the result of this confused, garbled, and misunderstood communication with the superconscious. It would be much better to mistake the "voice of God" ten times for your own voice than to once mistake the voice of the subconscious for the voice of God.

There is considerable evidence that the conscious and subconscious mind is conditioned by what we might call universe mind circuits. One of the source books in this field suggests seven such circuits.

1. Intuition Circuit - quick perception, reflex instincts, directional endowments, and probably the source of extra-sensory perception.
 2. Understanding Circuit - coordination and association of ideas, probably the source of the desire for meaning.
 3. Courage Circuit - sometimes referred to as the urge to survival or aggressive tendencies of the individual.
 4. Knowledge Circuit - source of curiosity, the desire to search into the unknown.
 5. Counsel Circuit - the social urge, the source of the herd instinct.
- All animal life is apparently able to tap or utilize these universe mind circuits to some degree. This ability can probably be cultivated or lost. It is suggested that only man has access to the last two universe mind circuits.
6. Worship Circuit - the religious impulse.
 7. Wisdom Circuit - the ability to coordinate help from all the circuits and shape it toward higher evolutionary advancement.

With this background serving as a theoretical understanding of the human mind, let us consider the two basic factors in psychic phenomena.

1. Psychic knowledge. This includes extra-sensory perception, spiritualism, hypnotic phenomena like Bridey Murphy, unusual personalities like Edgar Cayce, etc. Dr. William S. Sadler after much study in this field classifies all such phenomena as the automatic activity of the subconscious mind.

His evaluation is, in all probability, correct. Clairvoyant and telepathic knowledge is most likely the result of an individual's ability to utilize the universe mind circuit of intuition. This is a universe mind circuit which apparently can be used even by animals. So each of these unusual forms of psychic knowledge can be explained in terms of universe mind circuits or subconscious mind activity. The illusion of post-mortem "contact personalities" is a natural anthropomorphism of the amazingly inventive subconscious mind. Primitive people listening to a radio or seeing television for the first time naturally assume it to be the product of magic and the supernatural.

The scientific study of the sources of psychic knowledge has just begun. This is a field for science, not religion. Some day we will understand the laws and conditions of this phenomena quite as well as we now understand radio and television. The confusing thing is that the subconscious has access to the superconscious mind and therefore produces some very high quality spiritual insights and knowledge - and also muddles and garbles such information to produce, in the main, a sordid product.

2. Psychic power. This includes the fields of psychosomatic medicine, faith healing, psychokinesis, odic force, levitation, etc. There is no question about the fact of this power but our knowledge of it is very rudimentary. A large proportion of the results of prayer and faith healing which we today regard as "an act of God" we shall discover are the result of obeying mental laws and tapping mental power which, as yet, is undiscovered. This statement does not mean to suggest that prayer will become less important or that health will become less related to the spiritual relationships of man. Quite the contrary, we will increasingly purify our concepts of prayer and spirit relatedness and they will become increasingly effective in our lives. The fact that physical medicine has taken over many of the functions of the priest in primitive religion did not hinder the effectiveness of religion in our cultural life but, through refinement, has greatly strengthened it.

When will our scientists start serious, large scale, research in this field? Our answer must be by analogy. As long as primitive man lived, so to speak, "in nature" he was dominated by his physical environment. Only as he objectified himself from nature and began living "in the mind" did he overcome his fear of nature and gain the perspective to discover the laws of nature. In like manner, only when man begins living "in the Spirit" will he gain the objectivity and perspective which will enable him to discover the mental laws and sources of power in the universe.

I fully expect that man will someday discover a mental corollary to atomic power. Just as he has now apparently discovered the elemental power of the physical universe, he will in time discover the elemental power of mind in the universe.

Against this background, I should like to make two suggestions to the Spiritual Frontiers group.

1. Do all in your power to influence scientists to undertake a serious

study of psychic phenomena. This is the direction in which the important discoveries of the future will be made. In this undertaking you must realize that at present this kind of research has not been accepted as a legitimate field of scientific investigation. The individual scientist courageous enough to ignore this barrier tends to be ostracized by his fellows and regarded as having left the fold of science. This entire picture must be changed and the scientist must be freed from his self-imposed internment in the physical reservation of the universe. He must catch the vision that mind holds more significant secrets of the universe than he has found in matter. Maybe you can help give him this vision.

2. Having left the subconscious and conscious mind in the capable hands of the scientist, you must lead mankind to seek better conscious communication with the indwelling presence of God - the superconscious mind. Man's greatest adventure and most rewarding activity is found in the balanced effort to expand the borders of self-consciousness in the wholehearted attempt to achieve God-consciousness.

In this task psychic phenomena is of little value. Here you will need to use conscious mind activity at its highest level. Here you will need to listen, to weigh, to discriminate. Only the highest faculties of the conscious mind can possibly accomplish this task - for it is the greatest achievement of man!

May 12, 1958

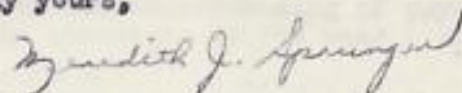
The Christian Century
407 S. Dearborn St.
Chicago 5, Illinois

Dear Sirs:

The Spiritual Frontiers Group is holding their spring Conference in Chicago today. You, no doubt, will carry some report of it. Enclosed is an article directed to this group. I am wondering if you might be interested in publishing it in article or letter form?

I think this group is to be commended for their courage in the search for truth but are confused regarding the nature of their search. This would hope to be a clarifying article.

Sincerely yours,



Meredith J. Sprunger

cc - Spiritual Frontiers
Dr. Edmond G. Dyett

*I thought you might be
interested in this
MJS*