**THE MAKING OF A MEDIUM**

**A THERAPIST’S PERCEPTION**

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*Abstract: From a psychological perspective, this paper tracks psychic ability from Franz Mesmer’s (1724-1815) belief of Animal Magnetism, regarding the subtle fluid that permeates the universe, the planets and the central nervous systems of humans to promote through the “laying of hands” cures for physical ailments. The magnetic passes of his hands could induce trance-like conditions. After Mesmer helped us to understand altered states of consciousness, James Braid (1795-1860) brought us hypnosis which influenced Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) for a period of time. Carl Jung (1875-1961) studied Paracelsus (1493-1541), a distinguished Swiss physician, who believed that we attracted astral fluids which nourished our soul and that we could heal others through the use of these fluids.*

*From Spiritualism, a Protestant-based religion that believed in communication with spirits to Spiritism, which broke off from Spiritualism to add the concept of reincarnation, and also introduced the concept of the perispirit, which is the fluid body of the soul. It is responsible for transmission of thought from the ethereal to the material world. Thought communication bridges time and space interdependently between the physical universe where we live, the unobstructed universe where our soul goes between and after our lives and the universe of God or the universal intelligence. The biggest difference is the frequency at which energy functions in these three areas.*

*These concepts weave through a story of a dysfunctional client who came into therapy because she was a single mom, came from an alcoholic home, was having parenting and work-related problems and was also seeing negative and positive spirits under her bed in the middle of the night.*

A woman named Judy called the office oneday and said she found my name on a psychic forum website. She was a single mom, came from an alcoholic home was having parenting problems and was also seeing spirits under her bed in the middle of the night. Some of these spirits were not friendly. She said she knew I would understand because her positive spirits had told her that if I became her therapist I was going to be instrumental in developing this aspect of her life. Because of my PhD work in *Naming Spiritual Experiences*, post-PhD education that I continue to complete, and her humble attitude and honesty, I believed her.

 Almost forty years ago, I had joined the Association for Research and Enlightenment (ARE), which is the foundation started to publicize the work of Edgar Cayce (1877-1945) the well-known American psychic. Every other month since then, I have received their magazine educating me on many different types of paranormal experiences.

 Clients have told me many different stories about spirituality and/or paranormal events they have experienced. Then in 1987, I had my own spiritual experience where the Holy Spirit went through my body during a Holotropic Breathwork Experience (Grof, 1989). I eventually decided to apply for and complete a PhD in *Naming Spiritual Experiences* where I studied the work of William James, Carl Jung, Abraham Maslow and Stanislaw Grof. I completed research on approximately 130 mental health professionals who had many different types of positive personal spiritual experiences themselves and also knew of many experienced by their clients.

**Client Arrives for an Assessment Interview**

 Judy arrived a week later for her assessment appointment. My office is in the two-block “historic” section of the traditional looking suburban town of Red Bank, New Jersey. She happily noted that there would be a lot of spirits in this historic section of the town. The session began with my taking a three-generational history of her and her family of origin. I then asked her to tell me what was going on in her life.

 “I need to see you about everyday issues and there’s a component of the supernatural. This ‘stuff’ just comes in. I’ve been getting some amazing premonitions which are really cool. Spirits sometimes float around me. That’s cool too. I can’t let my family know. Everybody in my family considers me weird. I’m the outcast of the family.”

 In Chapter 2 of my book Y*ou’re Not Finished Yet*, the roles people take on in their family-of-origin are discussed. Judy was the scapegoat – the one who acts out in childhood and adolescence and shows hostility, defiance and anger for what’s going on in the family. They usually have low self-esteem due to the anger and rejection they have received from relatives and their parents. She agreed that this was her role. Most of the therapy I did with Judy regarding her alcoholic and dysfunctional home can be better understood by reading *You’re Not Finished Yet (*Herrick, 2007*)* in its totality*.*

 Feeling different from other people is another trait that comes from living in an alcoholic and dysfunctional home. Since she had exhibited this from her dysfunctional childhood, it was probably easier for her in some way to try to understand and take in why she had been chosen for this “gift” of psychic ability because for most of her life she had felt she was different.

**Negative Spirits Came In at First**

 “Yes, that was me. I was the scapegoat for sure and maybe some of the mascot which is the name for the family clown. If my family ever finds out I’m seeing spirits they’ll try to take my twelve-year old son away from me. And, some of the spirits are creepy. Their energy feels different. I start to get frightening images in my mind. They have horror on their faces.”

“I feel their resistance. Sometimes they nip at me. They make ugly faces. They are scary. With the good ones, I feel their ideas and they give me positive symbols.” Judy also stated that she was reading inspirational literature daily in order to raise her vibration to be able to contact with higher spirits.

 Judy stated to rid herself of the negative spirits that she had a coach who was a medium herself and the coach had suggested that she paint her bedroom blue. “My coach came to my house and was talking to her spirit guides and they told her to paint the bedroom a pale blue. I looked it up and the color blue emanates a calm and peaceful environment. It helps you go to sleep. In other diverse cultures, it brings peace and it is believed to keep the bad spirits away. Since I painted my bedroom, part of the craziness with the negative spirits has calmed down.”

 “My coach also told me of a positive mantra to say. It goes like this: ‘Surround me with white light. I will not let anything through that does not belong to me. I cast out any feelings that are not my own and I do not invite any negative thoughts into my light.” I also have been told to sprinkle salt on the arms of furniture at night and wipe or vacuum it off in the morning. The floor can be mopped with salt water or Holy Water which is just salt water that has been blessed. Salt breaks up the energy in the air in the room.”

 “Also regarding the negative spirits, I was making them stronger by being afraid. Even though we know they exist, it’s just negative images in my mind. I am learning not to pay attention to everything that comes to me. Or, if I see a negative image, I can imagine that I have swords in both hands and I’m cutting up the negative image/s (Author’s Note: Jungian psychology believes that active imagination is one of the keys to use in creating a successful life). That worked for me. The negative images/spirits went away.”

 “I was doing readings with people but those readings were just bringing the negative spirits in so I stopped. My medium coach said that I have to wait a year to actively seek readings again.” I validated that it was excellent that she had stopped doing readings for people since one of the biggest lessons to learn when you have psychic ability is how to maintain boundaries around it and about it.

**Psychic Ability Usually Is Inherited**

 I told Judy that many times psychic ability runs in families. Sometimes people don’t understand what’s happening and some of the family members think these people are “crazy” because they are not as rational as some of the other family members. The Swiss psychologist, Carl Jung believed that we inherit traits from our ancestors. He also stated that we inherit jobs from them to finish in our life because they remained finished in their lives. Judy mentioned that she believed her grandmother had the gift of seeing spirits but she had never developed it and was pleased to learn that if she decides to become a medium she could be finishing a family “job.”

**Spiritualism**

 Because of all this previous experience and because I had educated myself on the concept of the soul regarding Jungian and Transpersonal psychologies, I believe that a spirit is just a person, a soul and/or a Self without a body. Most religions believe in a soul but they do not educate people about it. I had also learned that Spiritualism was a religion, originated from Protestantism, which had added to this religion the belief in communication with spirits. Spiritualism also believes that even after death the spirit can learn and grow on different levels and spheres in the afterlife. Spiritualism followers believe in reading literature in addition to the Bible and receive much of their information from spirits. In light of my background, I believed Judy when she said she was seeing dead people under her bed at night.

 In Spiritualism, God is referred to as infinite intelligence and everything we experience in and about nature is taken as proof of this intelligence. Coming from an alcoholic home with a Catholic mother and a Protestant father, I hadn’t believed in God. Neither of my parents went to church and I *knew* that God wasn’t interested in what was going on in my home where there was constant fighting and chaos.

 But in being raised in beautiful upstate New York, even as a child, I thought that there had to be something that was responsible for nature. I would walk in the woods for hours as a young adolescent looking closely at flowers, bushes and trees. This natural world made a great deal of sense to me in its beauty and calmness. I felt a presence there.

 Some therapists due to ignorance about spiritual and paranormal events may have diagnosed Judy with mental illness even before meeting her. Maybe they would even have not taken her case.

**Spiritism**

 Spiritism is a branch of Spiritualism that was developed by Allan Kardec (1804-1869), a French teacher and educator. The basic difference between Spiritualism and Spiritism is that Spiritism believes in reincarnation, which their follower’s state is needed so our knowledge can increase with the experiences from other lives (Limoges, 2014). Since I have experienced past-life memories, I identify with this belief in reincarnation increasing the knowledge of our soul.

According to Jon Aizpurua in his book entitled *Fundamentals of Spiritism, The Soul, The Afterlife, Psychic Abilities, Mediumship and Reincarnation and How These Influence Our Lives* (2013), “There are imperfect spirits who are those who have not yet left the realm around earth. They still have their own issues or material interests which predominate over spiritual ones. Good spirits are those that practice good efforts and good works for the people they are helping. Pure spirits have reached the last level of intellectual and moral superiority. In asking for help, it would be good to call on pure spirits whenever possible. Spirits intuitively remember where they have lived, what they have learned in those lives that they lived in different cultures and they bring these remembrances to us by means of thought” (p. 195). The spirits Judy first experienced seem to be the imperfect ones.

**Client Was Unhappy at Work**

 Judy also stated that she uses her psychic gifts on her job. “This woman has been hired as my superior. She was unhappy in another position with the company and asked to return to headquarters. She’s bright but abrasive and angry. She’s been passed over for promotions she’s wanted. My reputation in the company has been a positive one. I’m good at what I do. I treat others fairly. I keep to myself with little drama. This woman loves drama!

 She’s supposed to share my supervision with Joe, my previous supervisor who is a good friend. However, now all of my work goes through her. She told me to no longer copy him on any emails but to copy her instead. Any good ideas that have come from me she takes credit for as if they are hers. She says I make her feel uncomfortable and I need to treat her as if she’s in charge because she is.”

 “The good spirits show me things like who’s coming down the hall for a surprise visit so that I’m more prepared for what others will say to me or request. They give me images of people at work showing me the different emotion on their faces. Then I’m prepared for what kind of mood they will probably be in before I see them that day. Also, when I get a ‘feeling’ to check something related to work, I do it right away. When it comes to work, the words that keep coming into my head from the spirits are ‘Protect Yourself.’”

**How Did Psychic Ability Begin?**

 I asked Judy to tell me how she discovered she had psychic ability. I wanted to know why this was happening to her now. She stated, “About six months ago I was getting harassed at work, my son was failing at school and I just wanted to give up. I started to pray and ask, ‘How come everything is hard for me? God you need to help me. Please I need your help.’ I said it night after night. I also, about the same time, stopped being addicted to food. I now believe my food addiction might have been blocking my intuitive sensing. Three months later, the spirits started appearing.

 “I became physically ill the first few times I channeled the spirits. I start to feel electricity go through me when I begin to channel and the intensity of energy was really high in my body. Sometimes it felt like my arms and legs were going to be blown off. I absorb the energy of the spirits and also the energy of the person coming or calling for the reading so when I didn’t throw up in the beginning I was just exhausted. The spirits first gave me words in big block letters and then soon after they started giving me images instead.”

 “When I get authentic information it feels warm and solid. Sometimes the information feels phony and plastic and then I just don’t take it in. When there’s a spirit around who wants me to take in the information, I feel as if someone is physically there and I feel pressure around me. “

 “I went to a wake recently to support my friend and I didn’t sleep well that night. There was this new spirit from the wake who was bothering me during the night. He didn’t know ‘my rule.’ It is that spirits can’t bother me between 11:00 pm at night and 6:00 am in the morning. They have to talk to me during the day because I have a day job and I need my rest.”

**Receiving Communications**

It is important that a medium receive evidenced-based information that gives the person coming to receive the evidence that this information is from their loved one. Judy told me many stories where the people who she read for validated that this was their loved one. There were the usual examples such as:

* “There is this red dress in the closet. In the pockets of the dress, you will find money. Your father hid the money in the dress and wants you now to find it.”
* “Your mother hid money in the attic. It’s in the part of the attic floor that’s over the bathroom that has the claw-foot tub. ‘Don’t sell the house’ she says ‘until you find that money.’”
* “There’s a black chest somewhere in the house. It’s been moved around many times. Find it because there are important papers in there.”
* “A spirit tapped me on the arm one evening and asked me to take down information for my friend who was his sister. He gave me his name and I wrote down the messages he wanted me to give her and they all made sense. She was so relieved he had thought to give her these messages as he had been estranged from the family when he died and they helped to explain a lot to her.”
* “A friend asked me to look into her house and see what types of spirits were there. One of the spirits was a nun who had Jessica Lang’s face. I didn’t understand that until I learned that Jessica Lang is in a TV series and she’s one of the most sinister characters in the show. My friend had sage burned in her house and it seems to have helped remove whatever sinister spirit/s were in there.”

**Mary Queen of Scots or Anne Boleyn**

Almost all of what Judy had told me during the first few months had rung true for me. There was one story, however, that didn’t seem to be so clear. It went something like this: “A woman named Mary showed up at my house one day. She was dressed in black all ruffles down to her waist and a long flowing skirt on her dress. She told me her name but she had no face. She said that I was safe and that I am loved and she didn’t want me to let what’s going on at work ruin my day. ‘We’re’ taking care of you she said. Then she showed me she had no head. When I asked her to tell me about herself I saw this amazing mansion that was blocks long. It was a castle. She had been absolutely ridiculously wealthy whoever she was. The clothes she was wearing came from about 150 years ago.”

 150 years ago, in my estimation, would have been during the Civil War and I sensed this woman had been in an older historical period than that. There wasn’t time in that session to question Judy about this spirit so I just made note of it for the future.

 Sure enough, a spirit who was headless returned to Judy and said she was a Queen of England. “This time she told me that whatever the King wanted was granted. She said her husband had beheaded her.” So, Judy and I don’t know really if this spirit could have been Mary Queen of Scots (the lady dressed in black) or Anne Boleyn, the second wife of Henry VIII, who killed more people than any other king in history. (Author’s Note: Actually it was Anne’s daughter Elizabeth I who had Mary Queen of Scots killed since it had been proved that Mary had planned Elizabeth’s demise so she could become Queen of England).

 “After the spirit is gone I feel tired. When I’m channeling spirits, the synapses I am using in my brain are different than what I use normally to just think. This is what I know so far. I no longer vomit up but now I sometimes get a headache after the reading is over. One thing I like about the good spirits though is that they are quick (Author’s Note: See information further on about the perispirit and psychic energy, which are responsible for the thoughts we receive.). Sometimes I get bored with a lot of people because it takes them so long to get to the point but the spirits give me information in lightning speed.”

 “I had given about ten readings to a couple of my friends and then they had referred a few people because I had been right on with what their dead loved ones had told me. Some of those people continue to call and ask me questions or some of the spirits of their loved ones keep bothering me to contact the people on earth. I have kept these contacts going during the time I’ve been trying to eliminate the imperfect spirits. I just have not taken on any new clients in order to straighten out my situation so I can be more comfortable knowing the difference between the imperfect and good spirits and erase this negativity that was happening in my life.”

 “It’s interesting because I doubted my value as a parent, the good spirits were very sweet and they started giving me affirmations about my parenting. They used to put words in my head like ‘You’re a good Mom. You look really good.’ It was the sweetest thing. It made me not feel so alone and that the world was against me.” (Author’s Note: We also worked on parenting skills in our therapy).

 “That was very nice and then I started to communicate with them. They would ask me questions like when I’d get up at night to eat yogurt. They’d wanted to know what it was. They told me, too, that the drama at my job was put there to keep the people at work busy so no one would think this psychic stuff was going on. Also, they aren’t used to a lot of people in the house. I had a friend over last weekend. She happens to be black. So they asked me why I had this person in my house and showed me an old photo of blacks picking cotton in the south. I told them it’s different now. She’s my friend.”

 We discussed that spirits have no concept of time and depending on when they died, they would see their world from that vantage point and/or culture. It is our responsibility to teach them what time period and culture they are working with now when they come into our world. (Author’s Note: It’s interesting that the good spirits were like new friends getting to know Judy and trying to understand her world.)

**Animal Magnetism, Hypnosis and Psychological Healing**

We feel the force of gravity if we hold two magnets in our hands but we do not see the force itself. Spirits are part of the natural law in humanity. They are everywhere just like gravity. This is how natural law works. Wm. James was known to have said that there is an unseen world all around us. It is important to really *know* this.

 Franz Mesmer (1724-1815) believed that a subtle fluid permeated the universe and that all planets influenced the central nervous system in our human bodies through a universally distributed and continuous fluid that ebbed and flowed between the heavenly bodies, earth and everything on earth (Kazdin (2000)).

 He thought diseases were caused by an imbalance in this fluid. When he applied magnetic passes to a person’s body of “laying on of hands” cures of all types of physical and mental illnesses were seen. Many cultures, along with Jesus Christ, practiced this type of healing (Aizpurua (2013)).

Mesmer applied magnet pieces to various parts of a sick person’s body as they were laying on a bed and by magnetic passes of his hands he could induce particular trance-like conditions. Sometimes these magnetic influences resulted in cures of such things as blindness, convulsions, paralyses or congestions. He also discovered that the fluid did not work the same on all bodies. His theories were the first step towards the development of hypnotism, psychoanalysis, healing touch and the energizing of water to be used as medicine for the spirit and body (Kazdin (2000)).

**Energizing of Water**

An example of putting thought energy into water is shown in Masaru Emoto’s first book, *The Hidden Messages in Water* (2004), which shows photographs of each pattern of crystals that are formed when water crystallized and recorded the essence of the water in a Petri dish. Some dishes of water were spoken to, some were prayed over, some had music played to them, etc. The photographs of these different crystallizations are fascinating (Photos begin on p. 7).

 One of Emoto’s main points of this book was that as babies we are made of over 90% of water and now as older adults at least 70% water is contained in our bodies. So, if the water is affected by words or pictures shown to it, we are also affected by words, images and thoughts because of the water inside of us.

 Another point he stresses is if the “frequency” is wrong in your life or with the water you can correct that frequency by sending love to the water or the person. He stated, “Words have their individual and unique vibrational frequencies” (Emoto, 2004, p. 142). One of the themes of his book is the power of intention and the power of affirmation/s. And, “No matter what your intentions, announcing them is an important step” (Emoto, 2004, p. 141).

**The Universal Cosmic Fluid (or Psychic Energy) –**

**The Primitive Element in Matter**

As stated above, the universal cosmic fluid (see *perispirit* below) is a basic and primitive element in matter. The results of this fluid are found in nature. “Etherization and imponderability (the normal primitive state)” (Kardec, (2009), p. 354) are the two states of this fluid. The dictionary states that etherization is the act of administering ether and the person then comes under its influence. The dictionary also states that imponderability is something that cannot be weighed or measured. This word imponderability was used formerly to designate heat, light, electricity and magnetism and then was a term applied to ether or to spiritual or mental phenomena.

 Heat, light, electricity and magnetism are terms which come under the jurisdiction of science and the material world. It has been said that the job of science is to learn and understand natural laws. Spiritual phenomena come under the jurisdiction of the unseen world that William James speaks about. The fluid spiritual element of the *perispirit* cannot be perceived by our scientific

 A client of mine who is an engineer simply stated the following facts one evening upon leaving my office. “Physics has always been looking for unifying theories and one of the things they’ve come up with and have started to demonstrate is something called ‘dark matter’. They believe that this is the sort of thing that holds things together (Author’s Note: Like Mesmer’s magnetism or the Spiritist *perispirit* (see explanation below) or the concept of psychic energy.*)*

 Magnetism and electricity are related to one another. This may also be a way we could channel into one another as in telepathy. It’s called induction which is an entrance or an initiation. For instance, in speaking of electricity, the flow of movement of electrons is what induces a magnetic flow. The metal that’s in the magnet has a structure that allows the electrons to flow in a freer way than it does in other elements.

The electrons in the magnet or in an electrical wire hit a resonance, which in physics is the reinforced vibration of a body exposed to the vibration at about the same frequency.” And, the medium in receiving this magnetic charge from the spirits acts as an induction bridge which is a form of balance that measures the value of electric resistances.

Judy states that her vibration has gotten higher since she first felt the negative spirits in her house. One thing she does to raise her vibrational level is to read spiritual literature. She has also gotten used to the good spirits who give her information. At one time she would vomit after receiving information from them. Now she sometimes just gets a headache. So her vibration over all has become higher, also, because she now understands the process of mediumship and the natural laws that govern it.

Now, if a spirit shows itself in front of her, she can decide, “Is this a good or a bad spirit?” She may send a thought “Where are you from?” If they don’t answer her, she ignores them. If they have more positive energy, they will at least say hello or introduce themselves. She is helping them to come in and/or acting as an induction bridge.

Magnetism and electricity are related to one another, which is another reason that spirits or ghosts “come in” on phone wires, computer screens, televisions, electrical lights, etc. If they try to show themselves to us, we feel the force of them maybe because the electrical lights in the room have just gone on and off. Since it’s an unseen force we need to understand how psychic energy or the *perispirit* works.

You may want to put two magnets of equal size four to six inches apart from each other on your kitchen counter and push them closer and closer together. Soon they will BANG together. You didn’t see the unseen force of magnetism but you saw the result. They are now attached to each other.

Psychic phenomenon works this way in attracting spiritual direction or information to all of us that our guiding spirits, angels and/or positive ancestors think we need at the moment. One problem in our receiving of this information is that we often are not paying attention to information from the unseen world.

**Spiritists’ Philosophy**

Spiritists’ philosophy has named this fluid body of the soul the *perispirit* (Kardec (2009), p. 47). They believe it is inseparable from the soul and is one of the forming elements in the making of a human being. Most importantly, it is the means by which thought is transmitted. The perispirit is responsible for all psychic phenomena , which rest on the natural laws of the universe (Aizpurua (2013), p. 95). The nature of the perispirit is affected by the degree of morality of the spirit.

During our physical life, the perispirit is the connection between spirit and matter and it is connected to our physiological and psychological make-up. Since the perispirit is the way in which thought is transmitted, it is responsible for connecting spirit and our material world, which then makes it responsible for all paranormal and spiritual phenomena (Kardec (2009) p. 47).

**Thought Communication Bridges Time and Space**

 This fluid condenses around the focal point of intelligence or the soul and, as stated above, it is the means of how thought is transmitted. This thought communication is what bridges time and space. It is the natural aspect of how we exist. Perhaps the most important point from a Spiritists’ perspective is that nature is all around us. God has created nature and its forces act mechanically. We know this because nature keeps happening over and over again.

The Spiritists state that when we see nature, we need to know that there is a God who created it. According to their theory, nature is our proof that there is a God. All of nature is immersed in the *perispirit* and we are part of nature. This forming element that creates human beings acts like ether and we come under its influence. Just as we understand nature, we need to understand that *perispirit*, which like magnetism and electricity is a force that is also unseen. “It is revealed to us in intentional, premeditated and calculated acts which is an exclusive attribute of the soul” (Kardec (2009) p. 101). Our soul is normally invisible to us; however, it is the highest center of wisdom and perspective. The acts of the soul, which are aided by spirits are everywhere; but, like gravity, magnetism and electricity, we cannot see the force of the soul itself. We become awakened to God and spirits through happenings in our lives and we become awakened to our soul when we die.

**Types of Universes**

 According to Barham & Greene (1986) in their book *The Silver Cord Lifeline to the Unobstructed,* there are three universes that affect us constantly. One if the physical universe that we live in, the other is the unobstructed universe where our soul goes between and after our lives (Author’s Note: Imperfect spirits live here.) and lastly is the universe of God or the universal intelligence.

The biggest difference is the frequency at which energy functions in these three areas. (Author’s Note: Remember that Judy was reading inspirational literature in order to raise her frequency.) Barham and Greene stress that these three energies are always functioning interdependently and that psychic energy permeates all three universes and is used as a communication link between them. This book also states that there is a silver cord that connects our soul to our body which is not broken until we die. (Author’s Note: Psychic energy would include the Spiritists *perispirit*.)

A spirit’s normal life is one of freedom which is why we fly away at night when we sleep (Author’s Note: And the silver cord keeps us attached to our body so we can return to it after our journeying at night when we dream or whenever we leave our bodies). It is also why our soul really becomes alive when we die so we can return to the universe of God. It is the soul that takes on the ethereal body and becomes a ghost.

The Spiritists believe that our *perispirit* (like the silver cord) holds your spirit to your body. It is broken only at the time of death. Your soul may leave your body but it will come back when its presence is needed. Remember that your spiritual guides give you intuitions that suggest new ideas and thoughts to you justifying what Freud and Jung called the unconscious.

When Freud defended the idea of the unconscious during his PhD dissertation, he told his committee that people wrote down questions before they went to bed and then were given answers while they slept. He said the answers came from their unconscious. It seems he only had one-half of the formula.

 If he had listened to Carl Jung, he would have understood that the bottom layer of our unconscious contains our soul and from this spiritual element of our unconscious come our answers in life. Mostly this must be because we come into this life with a plan and our soul knows what that plan is before we enter our mother’s womb.

 The trance-like states that Mesmer brought forth were regarded as altered states of consciousness which led to the understanding sixty years later of hypnosis (James Braid, 1795-1860). Mesmer’s teaching of induced trances helped people to begin to make contact with spirits.

After Mesmer, Sigmund Freud was exposed to hypnosis through the work of Jean-Martin Charcot (1825-1893) and he used it for a period of time. Paracelsus (1493-1541), a distinguished Swiss physician who Carl Jung (1875-1961) studied, believed that we attracted astral fluids which nourished our soul and that we could also heal others through the use of these fluids. Carl Jung believed we needed to get to know our soul before we could live life fully. Jung mentions in “The Symbolic Life” (Vol. 18 of his *Collected Works* (para. 797)) that the art of “Mesmerism” accomplished much good. He stated that Mesmer imitated many miraculous cures of priests and of those found by people on a pilgrimage to religious places.

**Your Soul Is Developed From Your Life Story**

 Your soul begins to become visible during your life when you sometimes realize you have extrasensory or synchronistic experiences. Spirits send images and flashes of inspiration to you through your soul. Your will also deepen with the crises of everyday life when you are looking for answers to what is happening to you. One starts to realize that there is a spirit part that *knows*. These “Ah Ha” moments let us have a glimpse of our soul even if we don’t realize it at the time.

**When We “Die” Our Soul Comes “Alive”**

 We usually connect to our soul when we are so-called “dead” (Stead (1910), p. 16). The soul leaves your body out of the top of your head. Your body then looks wispy and contains your mind and soul. Leaving your body is like shedding your skin or peeling a banana. Your body is simply the vehicle, like a car, that aides in your soul’s growth here on earth.

 There is a plan for your life only it isn’t necessarily the one you have mapped out in your mind. A Higher Power is guiding you to meet the angels who have been sent to you as friends, relatives, meaningful relationships, etc. You need faith and belief in this process as you remember that one-half of life is just showing up.

**Client’s Life - Dysfunctional and Difficult (Normal is that 95% of our**

 **Population is Dysfunctional)**

 Judy told me many things about her childhood and family-of-origin. In one session she stated: “I don’t speak to my family members anymore. They like to insult me. They think I’m the stupid, dumb one. Everybody has to be the same in my family. It’s mediocrity that they really want. My father is always talking about how bright he is. I want to say to him ‘Dude you’ve been arrested and in jail several times. What’s so brilliant about that?’”

 “My brother Jimmy is so smart that he’s 40 years old and living with my mother. And, my mother was “gas lighting” me all the time (Author’s Note: See *Gaslight* (1944 Movie). My mother is very passive and she says things very sweetly most of the time. She would constantly say to me, ‘Oh, honey, is that what you thought. You must have misinterpreted what I said to you.’ And, she was the one who didn’t drink!

She would spread vicious rumors about me so the other relatives would stay away from me. Her sweetness was so she didn’t have to admit the cruelty that was happening in our home. Our father was drunk and beating up my brothers. She wouldn’t look at what was happening because if she did she’d have to get a divorce and a job. She didn’t want to have to leave the house. This hell was what she chose for all of us as a result.”

 “No wonder I drank and did drugs when I left home. It was so chaotic there. My grandmother’s spirit has come in recently and told me that my father incested my brothers. I always knew that there was this ‘stuff’ going on that I just couldn’t put together. I felt ‘crazy’ there a lot and it was always my fault because I must be misunderstanding something.”

 “I know now that the angry one in the family knows there’s some kind of sham going on in their family and they say so. Then because they are stating the truth, they become the angry one – the problem child – the difficult one. They the problem child becomes a threat to the family so the family then wants to discredit this child.”

 Whether you are the hero, the scapegoat, the quiet one, or the mascot of your family, your soul comes to life to learn and is developed from your life story. Your soul contains your possibilities, your talents and your unrealized potential. It also contains your personality, your imagination and your intelligence along with your past, present and future. In describing her journey into her psychic ability, we can see how her unrealized potential was hidden from her.

 Judy’s soul contained a great deal of intelligence but like many people it took her years to develop this knowledge and then when it seemed as if she couldn’t take it a minute longer she started to pray for help. How confusing it must have seemed when that help was sometimes good information from good spirits but the negative ones kept interfering.

**The Internet Saves the Day**

 “When I was seeing all these negative spirits, I got on the Internet so fast and started just plugging in words that were happening to me. I was lead to all these articles and You Tube videos which eventually got me to my medium coach and then to you. Once I wrote down your name my good guides told me that you were going to be instrumental in developing this aspect of my life. They said that you are respected and that you have helped a lot of people.”

 After Judy had seen me for a few sessions she stated: “I wish someone had told me about William James and Carl Jung when these first things had started to happen to me. One thing I don’t understand if seeing spirits whether they are imperfect or good is supposed to be a spiritual experience what is so spiritual about it, if I feel crazy? “I told her what she had felt was a spiritual emergency (Grof, 1989). “Yes that’s what mine was! An emergency! I wish more people knew about this psychology of yours. A lot of people would feel less ‘crazy’”,

 “Before my twelve-step programs, I was not a happy person. I had these thought patterns that were placed in me by my negative mother. I had to cut out those negative thoughts just like a cancer. I also believed I had to suffer and that life had to be difficult. I know now that’s not true. It doesn’t mean there’s not effort involved or consistency. There is. However, we all need to listen to what gives us the most joy and do those things too.”

 It’s very important for a therapist to acknowledge the work a client has already done whether in other therapies or in self-help programs. I did this with Judy and stressed that her work in our sessions and the homework involved outside of the sessions that would be the most helpful for her. For those of you who are not familiar with twelve-step programs, there will be a list of a few of them on the bibliography that may be helpful to you.

 People who are working a twelve-step recovery program believe in giving back. Once they achieve quality sobriety they will pick people up to drive them to and from meetings, run meetings on either the twelve steps of their program or on certain themes such as anger, shame, relationships, codependency, etc. In this service work, they display the gratitude for those who have helped them and are able to give back to others.

 Below are the original twelve-steps as published by Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A. World Services, Inc. (Ed.), (2001)). The spiritual aspects of the program can be seen from the steps which are:

* “Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
* Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
* Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
* Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings (Author’s Note: So prayer is important).
* Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
* Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs (A.A. (2001) Chapter 5).

Most other twelve-step recovery meetings are patterned after the A.A. model. There are different types of groups such as: Debtors Anonymous, Incest Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, etc. There is usually a table with pamphlets and reading material at every meeting that are either free or sold at a minimal cost. If you are curious about these meetings anyone can attend an Open (O) meeting.

Other types of meetings are Speaker (S) meetings, BB (Big Book) meetings, Step (S) meetings, Discussion (D) meetings and Beginners (B) meetings. A list of meetings in your area can be obtained from the Internet. Meetings are now held all over the world. When you attend meetings don't be shy about asking questions about what you don’t understand. However, remember Bill Wilson’s adage about meetings which is also a good rule for life. He is known to have said, “Take what you need and leave the rest.” In other words be discerning and try to be with the people there who have some of the same values as you have.

 Our job on earth is to develop trust and intuition. These meetings consistently helped Judy to be with honest people who were working to improve their lives just as she was. Confusion usually means you are working through something and new opportunities are awaiting you. Be curious during your confusion.

Judy has certainly been able to persist through her confusion, which is a positive trait that comes when a person is raised in confusion in the first place. Another job on your journey called life is to go beyond your ego. Your ego is everything you would say after “I am….” You ego says we have no spiritual guides and there is no unseen world. Your ego doesn’t know everything. Thanks to the Internet and reading material Judy educated her ego.

 Another purpose of your soul is to make you human. As you address and overcome pain and frustration you will connect to who you really are. Pain opens you to other dimensions. Hurt people mistreat other people in order to get even. They create their own karma and learn their lessons in this way. Remember along with learning our own lessons we come to earth to play a part in the drama of others’ lessons as well.

 Drama people are the type who are complaining and mentioning what happened twenty years ago and trying to punish people for that. They are not usually satisfied with their life and would be considered by many to be “high maintenance.” Drama has identity. They need this drama because they don’t know who they are yet so they haven’t fully matured and maybe never will. They feel persecuted in life and the persecutor position has the power of being “right.” They sometimes have many degrees of anger because of feeling righteous or martyred, which eventually leads to hateful feelings. Perpetrators of harm to others will do penance by setting themselves up as victims of this harm in their next life.

 Because Judy attended almost ten years of different types of twelve-step meetings her anger was greatly reduced, her self-esteem had improved, she was learning how to have real friends who she cared for and they cared for her. She had a better body image and was sincerely working on lowering her weight even more than she had; and mostly, she just felt safer in the world as a result of her work in the recovery rooms.

**Being in crisis sometimes leads to a Spiritual Experience or Emergency**

 It’s interesting to note that both Judy and Bill Wilson, a founder of A.A., had been on their knees in crisis asking God for help, which created their spiritual awakenings. Bill Wilson did not believe there was a God but he prayed in a hospital room one night “If there is a God, please take away my desire to drink.” His spiritual experience was light that filled the room and his desire to drink was gone.

His story can be read in *Alcoholics Anonymous,* (2001), a book that is known as the “Blue Book,” because of its color. The Blue Book, published in 1939, contains stories of approximately one-hundred first-time members of A.A. and is very inspirational for alcoholics and their family members to read. (Author’s Note: For family member’s education, please attend Alanon meetings to better understand how you can help and stop enabling the alcoholic. (See Bibliography for Internet address.)

 Spirituality is the experience of the spirit and both Bill and Judy received it in different ways in order to fit into their lives. Bill Wilson’s spiritual experience had some characteristics of a typical experience such as a transient, extraordinary experience marked by feelings of unity, harmonious relationship to the divine and everything in existence as well as euphoric feelings and the sense of lacking control over the event (Herrick, (2008)).

 Judy’s, too, includes a sense of union with the positive spirits and it is giving her a great sense of meaning and purpose in her life. This is what William James said happened with a spiritual experience, which began with a need for help and ended with a sense that the person had been helped. Once a person eventually understands and incorporates their spiritual experience into their life they have an increased appreciation for life and live with more spiritual values toward all. Eyes are the windows to the soul. This physical attribute has more impact when soul mates meet here on earth than any other. There is a familiarity when you meet a soul mate – a *knowing*. You are supposed to mature based on overcoming your many difficult body assignments during your task-oriented life or lives.

All souls are held accountable for their conduct in the bodies they occupy. Sometimes meeting a soul mate if one is already married causes a difficult assignment on earth because one has to choose using the values they’ve received from their family-of-origin or their culture but feeling the pull of a *knowing* that very few people around them can understand s sometimes unbearable.

Carl Jung, during a crisis-oriented time in his life spoke to his soul. “My soul where are you? Do you hear me? I speak. I call you – are you there? I have returned. I am here again…One thing you must *know*; the one thing I have learned is that one must live this life (Shamdasani, 2009, p. 232). Sometimes living this life can cause one to have to make very difficult choices. Since Judy has discovered her psychic abilities, spirits now help her make better decisions.

**Getting Information from Spirits**

 Judy explains what it’s like to live with her good and pure spirits. “Regarding psychic information, I ask for specific things and then I don’t get any response. Other times I do. I could just be thinking in my mind about something (Author’s Note: This is how spirits communicate with us all. They give us certain thoughts using the *perispirit* and/or psychic energy.) It isn’t up to me which responses I get. I can’t control which information comes to me. I can ask for it but it doesn’t mean I get the specific thing I want.”

 This little voice in our head sometimes comes from spirits and at another time could come from our unconscious hangover from childhood which could be negative and about to create some type of drama. We, as Judy did, need to be discerning about what we listen to and take action on.

Judy now states: “The psychic information just comes as an idea. The closest human concept I can give you is that the energy changes. It doesn’t affect me at all now. A thought in my head doesn’t exhaust me. Spirit guides don’t take any energy exchange. They initiate a lot of stuff. They put ideas into my head. ‘Go pay this bill. You forgot to fill out that form.’ Or they will warn me about thing. For instance someone at work was saying something to me the other day and a picture of a snake came into my head. The snake would repeat the hissing while this woman was talking. I knew not to trust what she was telling me.

“I also, in my mind, shot light from my eyes and hands. The light would come out at 100 pixels which I would direct toward the negative spirits. The negative image would leave completely. The more I was able to dismiss them or cut them up, the stronger I felt. Now I don’t think about them that much anymore.”

 “I also imagined there were angels around my doors and window. They were trying to tell me they were protecting me. The image of them trying to protect me made me feel safe. So, in my mind, I now think that I am safe and I am being protected. If people feel like they are victims they become victims because what they think they create. We are all creating our own reality.”

 When I asked Judy why did she believe the spirits had chosen her she stated: “Because I’m honest, I’ve suffered a lot, done some recovery work and they know I’m not about trying to manipulate anyone or force an outcome? They trust that I won’t use this energy for devious purposes. They just keep showing a silhouette of me and I’m clear. They say that I’m humble and I don’t brag about this ‘gift’ that I’ve received.” (Author’s Note: This is one difference between a spiritual experience and mental illness – that the spiritual experience makes one humble while a hallucination causes the person to act in a grandiose manner. The mentally ill person also cannot tell you the same story over and over again as the spiritual person can. For more information on the differences between mental illness and spiritual experiences, please see ASCS (2014) pgs. 213-214.

 “They say people are going to trust me and that people need someone to trust. They can also get to me and have sometimes when I’ve said I don’t want to do this. They know that I’m interested in helping people who are still alive to ease their pain. That really gets to me and they know it because I know what it’s like to be in pain. I’m in a transition now. I feel as if I’m in a hallway and I want to get to this new life quickly. Sometimes this middle ground just feels like it’s too much.” We both agreed that the waiting time in life sometimes seems as if it takes too long. However, the spirit world has been known to say that this waiting time helps us really understand what it is each individual is supposed to learn.

 “What I’m only starting to become aware of is that you can choose your own destiny to some extent. I can now see why I was so different from my family. I do want to help others. Because I’ve been in twelve-step programs, just being exposed to people who are genuinely nice to me has affected me. It’s validating to me that there was something wrong in my family and I knew it. My family can’t stop good things from happening to me anymore. The worse is over and there’s a reason my pain had to be so deep. I hope I can teach people that one of the problems in their lives is their belief system. You have to believe you are entitled to good things and then you will receive them.”

 Another thing both Judy and I know is that we need all of you to spread the word – to help develop a consensus that there are spiritual guides for us all who are helping us. It’s important to tell your spiritual experience that you’ve kept to yourself for fear of being labeled crazy to some other people you can trust. The spirits will probably clap when you do that as Judy told me one day during a session “The guides are all clapping because we said we *know* they are there helping us all.”

**The Soul after So-Called Death**

 “When the soul leaves the body it remains exactly the same as when it was in the body; the soul, which is the only real self, and which uses the mind and the body as its instruments, no longer has the use or the need of the body. But it retains the mind, knowledge, experience, the habits of thought, the inclinations; they remain exactly as they were…the real self is liberated by death” (Stead (1910), p. 21).

 If one watches television in the United States, it is filled with what is known as the “supernatural” (Author’s Note: From reading this paper I hope you now know that spirits are natural.). Some of the shows are entitled “Salem,” “The Walking Dead,” “American Horror Story, “Penny Dreadful”, etc. These shows all bring to us the belief that fear of the dark, the unknown and fear of spirits is normal. At least equal time could be given to the work of the good spirits who want to help people and who do just that.

 Judy mentioned that her family was really not interested in change – that they wanted to stay mediocre. She reminded me of something I remember that Abraham Maslow (1963) wrote: “The greatest cause of our alienation from our real selves is our neurotic involvements with other people, the historical hangovers from childhood, and the irrational transferences, in which past and present are confused. And in which the adult acts like a child” (p. 7). Scotton, Chinen & Battista (1996) continued with…From this perspective, culture can be seen…as a shared conspiracy against self-knowledge and psychological growth in which people collude to protect one another’s defenses and illusions” (p. 400).

 I hope Judy and I have helped you understand that spirits are just people who have discarded their bodies. Just like there are negative people, there are negative spirits and they can be sent away. For the most part, what Judy’s story has shown me is how helpful and kind they can be and how hard they work so people will not stay mediocre or stuck in their hangovers from childhood. As we help to develop a consensus that spirit phenomena can and does happen, we also need to realize that most spirits just want to guide us for our soul development using the natural laws that were given to them by infinite intelligence.

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**ASCSI Conference Afterlife Communication, July 11, 2014**

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