

**Greville Street
Meetings
16 August 98
20 September 98**

**Issue No. 46
August 98**

Meetings are held at 10-30am on the third Sunday of the month at 81, Greville Street, Chatswood and are open to anyone interested in the possibility of finding out whether transformation of consciousness, awakening to what we really are, or whatever we want to call it, can come about.

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Editor's Note

This month we have a response from the authors of 'The Enchiridion to the Totality' plus commentaries on Susan Blackmore's paper from Gladney Oakley and Margaret Armstrong. Gary Hipworth sent an article which seems to follow on from and add significantly to the Susan Blackmore message. The 'two modes' issue which Gary deals with in a left brain/right brain format complements the first person/third person terminology some of us are familiar with and offers a fresh and creative perspective on our workshop activities. I have been putting together a few notes on the case for the the two modes of being/seeing as opposed to the absolutist 'one true way', but with all the good stuff you are sending I haven't been able to squeeze it in. Next issue perhaps.

Circulation has now passed the sixty mark which makes it ever more important that I do not continue to send copies to people who have lost interest or left their original address. The \$10 annual subscription is both a contribution to the expenses of copying and posting and an indication that you still want to receive your copy. The date on the address label indicates when I think your subscription is due. (Let me know if I've forgotten to update you) If a subscription becomes overdue I send three further issues and then delete you from the list. I send out a few complimentary copies to various institutions in the hope that we can stimulate some fruitful cross-fertilisation.

If you are mystified by apparently pointless shifts in font size it is because I have to fit the newsletter on to an even number of pages, on six sheets or less, so I can fold and allow the back page to become an envelope substitute. Your comments on any or all of the following are welcome in any form from complete articles to short notes.

**Next 'Seeing' Workshop Sunday, 6 September.
Future workshops on first Sunday every second month See page 3 for dates**

Enchiridion Letters

The comments on the 'Enchiridion' which have appeared in the recent Nowletters seem to be the result of Alan being enthused by the book and wishing to share the experience in the newsletter and getting some unexpectedly negative results. It is often the case and most people have written to us telling us this, that they have gained so much from reading the 'Enchiridion' that they have wanted their friends to read it and hopefully be similarly affected. But often friends are not so enthusiastic. We feel it is better for people to discover this book for themselves, then there is an intuitive attraction to the subject matter. Some people, for instance, have said they saw the cover of the book just as they were leaving a bookshop and had to buy it. We think this kind of spontaneity is something sadly lacking in our ever so much planned lives.

We have had bucketfuls of thanks and praise for the book, some quite exotic, one lady read an Indian photocopy of it by candlelight in a Nepalese valley. Enthusiastic responses have come for the 'Enchiridion' from a wide spectrum of humanity, from gardeners, university people and even a jail inmate.

We feel most of the criticism offered through the 'Now' was not so much real criticism of the work but a reaction against it. Really if one is seeking the 'truth' about transcendency it does not matter how it is expressed, one should be able to gouge out the jewels that matter to you. Reading Conze's translation of the Prajnaparamita was far more repetitious and the jewels far more hidden than in the 'Enchiridion'. But what a book, what a sutra. Of course, this is all done for a purpose, but some of these works can take years to really read, understand and integrate with.

Some of the book can be criticised for its lack of editing, but we do not believe your comments are saying much about the philosophical content.

We have heard that a really good editor can usually convince a writer that their changes will make a better book. We have had a professional editor go over it since publication (she volunteered for free). She did grammar and spelling but agreed that many Asian works she had read were far more repetitive. The ego can be so obstinate you have to drive the message home like belting a nail into a piece of wood.

To co-write and publish and distribute a book yourself requires an enormous effort, to say the least, I have heard it said one has to border on the fanatic, So yes, we were tired and sick of writing at the end of it, In fact, it hasn't been properly distributed in Australia (the country is just too big to do by oneself)

We also had to learn about the publishing and printing industries, the way they only sell best sellers, they don't like books sitting on their shelves too long. A review published about the 'Enchiridion' a while ago said "it's a compliment to say that this book will never become a best seller"! (The inference is surely that the base of a mountain is large but the summit small,)

We never intended to write an autobiography, we wanted to write a philosophy of life and death, enlightenment and transcendency, only time can judge our success.

Tha people can agree (the authors) on creating new terminology to describe their journeys through transcendent states is surely remarkable. Other folk we have talked to will often say 'well my experiences were kind of like that, not exactly'. Isn't that human nature? We are all unique. Rome Warren's comment was valid we think when she said "Robyn and Julian could only convey the impressions of what they saw, it cannot be perverted".

We would not like to suggest individually what lifestyles people should follow in order to reach transcendence (for want of a better word) that is entirely their choice and business. Some just dabble a little in it, having careers. family and social commitments which they regard as being more important, while others give up everything for this quest. Some wandering Saddhus in India don't even speak to anyone and only eat that which is placed in their mouths, pushing their karma to the limit. However, India has evolved an ancient system of respect for such endeavours, we have not.

Yes Alan, you just about answered your own question about finding and keeping the dynamic display accessible to you. Whatever works for you works for you, (although we have had no experience with mushrooms so can't advise)' At home one can set up a room with a certain atmosphere conducive to reflection, but don't forget to unplug the phone.

The reason retreats and natural settings work is because e are removed from our everyday distractions and worldly commitments.

The only way to stabilise the dynamic aspect is by familiarity.

We do say all this in the 'Enchiridion'.

Julian Fortnum & Robyn Bollard

Response to 'The Meme Dream'

Susan Blackmore's *Waking from the Meme Dream* is essentially in three parts: 1) An introduction mentioning an illusion that we all need to wake from; 2) A middle section titled "Darwin's Dangerous Idea" and a third section in which she suggests that "we" may be at the psychological level, little more than agglomerates of ideas, thoughts, worries, fears and hopes. That idea is worthy of consideration, and has a 2500 year history behind it, being essentially Buddhist.

My comments are these. Blackmore presents the following as if it were coherent, rational and true, in her words: "All you need for natural selection to get started is a replicator in an appropriate environment. A replicator is something that copies itself, though not always perfectly. The environment must be one in which the replicator can create numerous copies of itself, not all of which can survive. That's it."

Which I paraphrase as follows: All that is required is a suitable environment. Then Replication, Survival of the Fittest, Selfishness and Darwin appear. *Caveat Mutator*.

Well, that is so false it is not worth paying further attention to. Remember: "Give me a lever long enough and a place to stand and a fulcrum, and whatever else I can wheedle from the public purse and I can move the world!"? Well, The modern evolutionary equivalent is "Give me A Soup of the Right Type and I can replicate anything endlessly!" Of course you can, dear. Now isn't it time for your afternoon nap?

What is false in the above isn't the existence of thoughts (memes) or their behaviour, just the gratuitous idea that they arise into existence of necessity given the Magical Soup from the Magical Kitchen.

Some scientists are beginning to take the existence of thought's seriously, renaming them "memes" and treating them as pseudo biological entities, with a potential for survival. The name meme is a happy choice for a unit said to be the only tangible constituent of the self, as the word can be pronounced me-me, which seems fairly to summarize Blackmore's suggestion that we are little more than clusters of such.

Blackmore has served and continues to serve to introduce serious Buddhist ideas into Psychology & Biology; that she finds it necessary to entertain the idea of Darwin's Magic Soup is almost unavoidable given its prevalence in modern Academia. Another example of the True masquerading as the False.

Gladney Oakley

You Have to Be Somebody Before You Can Be

Nobody

There is however a danger in forgetting the self that has ensnared many an unwary beginner on the path. At a recent conference on Buddhism and Mental Health sponsored by the Kuroda Institute in Los Angeles, clinical psychologist Steven Hendlin, Ph.D., discussed this danger in a paper on *Pernicious Oneness and Premature Disidentification*.

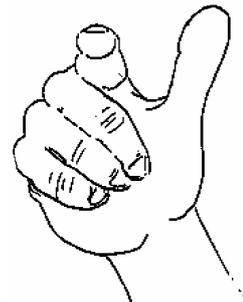
Dr. Hendlin made the point that too often people try to lose their "ego," or sense of self, before they have actually worked through their own personal psychological material and established a healthy sense of self - one which enables them to live effectively in the world. According to Dr. Hendlin this "trap" amounts to a "dis-respect, discounting, or denigration" of the ego itself, and erroneously assumes that the normal concerns of the ego such as being able to function well in the world have nothing to do with the "quest for oneness." This amounts to what Dr. Hendlin calls "premature disidentification" with ego functions such as identity, security, and self-esteem.

"Put simply," says Dr. Hendlin, "you have to be somebody before you can be nobody."

Margaret Armstrong

(from a Unitarian Church newsletter.)

1998 Headless Workshops



**6 September
1 November
3 January 99**

**Ring Alan Mann
(02) 9419 7394**

First Sunday every second month

81 Greville St, Chatswood

SHOCKING INSIGHT - THE NEW "RIGHT BRAIN" ORDER?

Alan & NOW readers/ contributors,

Thank you for the newsletter insights and the opportunity to contribute some astonishingly bizarre thoughts about life in a risk free setting. I am sure we would all be locked up by now if the society that fed us all the conditioned crap in our heads was not so preoccupied with their illusions.

I would like to focus this article on the human brain & its ability to learn, adapt and **change because it has vast areas of uncommitted structure**. It is the most complex system on earth and it came with no user manual! I believe it is the key to understanding the power of insight to bring about a timeless brain. In this context your article on Darwin is very relevant. Life has been a copying process for the 3-4 billion years of evolution - firstly the gene and then the meme. The human brain is the first brain on earth to grasp this fact. Evolution is now looking at itself in the rear vision mirror and what does it see? A silly, but incredibly creative and robust, copying machine.

I believe the left-brain function is mainly responsible for the creation and development of the mental copying process - with its crowning glory being the self-concept! However, the right brain function has been slowly developing a reality of its own - with no self-concept and no beliefs. In researching this possibility I came across the following:

" It is a common condemnation these days of our Western educational system that it discriminates against the right hemisphere. There is no doubt that our educational system is half-brained, but is it left brained? To be sure, there are important differences in the learning styles of the two cerebral hemispheres: the left is constructive, algorithmic, stepwise, and logical. It benefits from narrow examples and from trial and error; it can learn by rule. The right hemisphere, on the other hand, does not seem to learn by exposure to specific rules and examples. Our studies show that it does not have an internal model of its own solution processes, which it can then interrogate and update. ***It needs exposure to rich and associative patterns, which it tends to grasp as wholes.*** (Italics mine) Programmed instruction is certainly not for the right hemisphere, but I am not sure what is the proper method of instruction ***for our silent half.*** (Italics mine) It is part of the elusiveness of the right hemisphere that we find it easier to say what it is not than what it is."

ERAN ZAIDEL *"The Elusive Right Hemisphere of the Brain," 1978.*

"So it was that I came to the conclusion that the ordinary everyday perception of things which serves us pretty well when going about daily practical affairs is not the only kind of perceiving that the mind can do_. Only a tiny act of will was necessary in order to pass from one to the other, yet this act seemed sufficient to change the face of the world, to make boredom and weariness blossom into ***immeasurable contentment.***" (Italics mine)

JOANNA FIELD *"A Life of One's Own," 1936.*

At this moment the hairs on the back of my neck stood up. Can you see the pattern? The right hemisphere of our brains sees reality very differently to the left hemisphere - from anecdotal stories and some expert research it sees wholes, it is

silent, it is supremely contented. These qualities described my changed consciousness (July 1996) as closely as it was possible to do with words.

(Gary described his transformation in a an article in NOWletter 40 - January 98 - Ed.)

This insight about the probable different functions of the two hemisphere's of the brain and their link to a new consciousness for humanity MIGHT BE the breakthrough that will enable mankind a new future based on a new kind of human being - one that sees all other humans as equals as a fact and with a new sense of cooperation, spontaneous intelligence and compassion.

I saw this in a flash, correction, "my" holistic right mode of awareness saw this potential. Here is what I now think happened to my brain. In May 1996, following many years of searching for "truth" I had a flash of insight into the mechanical and illusionary nature of my ego. I had no doubt at all that this insight was true. However, it was another two months before my consciousness changed dramatically and I did nothing to deliberately bring this new state about. It was the reverse. I felt terrible and somehow deprived of my will to do anything, like a rat cornered in a blind alley.

In this time my brain cells were probably rearranging themselves and it seems that eventually my brain ***flipped over*** from left mode, ego-centred functioning to right mode reality-centred functioning. Right mode is now in the driver's seat and "cross-talks" to its left half by way of patterns that represent the whole factual situation that confronts the total organism from moment to moment. It never gets ahead of itself because everything is changing every moment.

It goes with the total flow of life - ***it is an integral part of this total flow of life.*** Reality is timeless, immeasurable, beautiful, harmonious and one unity. The left mode is not capable of grasping this one reality because it "steps back" from being part of the one reality and creates or invents its own symbolic reality, including a fictitious ego-self at the centre. Is it any wonder that "Leftie" is greedy, fearful, cunning, lonely, competitive and violent? What else could it be?"

I can now start to fill in the details. The brain is divided into two halves or hemispheres, each of which is a mirror image of the other and these two sides of the brain are connected by a bundle of nerve fibres that enable the two hemispheres to talk to each other, and presumably attempt to reconcile the two views of reality. Each half of the brain, though physically similar, is not a redundant copy of its partner. It is more correct to describe the two hemispheres as Left-mode and Right-mode because their different functions may vary in location in the brain hemispheres of specific individuals, particularly left-handed and ambidextrous people. The different functions are:

Left-mode

Verbal
Syntactical
Sequential
Analytic
Logical
Symbolic
Temporal
Digital

Right-mode

Nonverbal
Perceptual
Global
Synthetic
Intuitive
Concrete
Non-temporal
Spatial

Cast your mind over all the above attributes very quickly and get the general

feeling for the difference between the two modes of "knowing". It is pretty obvious that language is derived from left-mode functioning.

A word is a visual-auditory symbol that evolved in part as a labelling system to describe common features of our environment. Logic and linear/sequential thinking are favoured by our education system as the best way to test abilities. It is no surprise then that we find that left-mode dominates our whole way of thinking and learning. The essential nature of language is one of separation. As a child we learn to use nouns to identify separate things and verbs to identify separate actions.

These language tools are useful instruments for survival when it is necessary to distinguish between a brown snake that could sink its fangs into me and poison me or a relatively harmless piece of rope. However, left-mode way of thinking comes with a heavy price. It is a valiant attempt to make our world certain and predictable by trying to fit the constant flux and flow of living processes and the actual oneness of reality into static solid *separate* conceptual boxes.

If the only tool you have is a concept, then everything becomes a "con", creating opposing forces such as good and evil, you and me, success and failure and we then think that these mental constructs must have always existed. The moment that we identify with memory we create two worlds. This is our current psychological situation.

The left-mode cannot express or understand the total *changing* network of interconnected relationships, cyclic events and paradoxes which *is* one reality. It is literally left speechless.

THE WRONG TURN

The function of the brain evolved to function like a telephone switchboard - it receives information from the environment, uses its internal programs to evaluate this information, and then passes the data to the appropriate part of the body so that an adequate response can be made by the organism to the external challenge. It does this task by recognising objects and storing these objects/ symbols as memory. To this point everything seems sane and logical. But the human brain is no ordinary brain. Things got very complex.

At some stage in our conceptual evolution, the brain decided it needed to organise its conceptual information. It invented a "self concept" that would be this organiser, controller, thinker, experiencer etc. The ego was born. Remember, the language function creates a symbol, a word, to represent the main features/ objects in the external world. The word is *not* the thing described! It represents the thing described and we define this thing as having certain qualities. But although we cannot know its true nature, we can at least be sure there is an external object - a bus or a man and we reach agreement on the common characteristics of these objects for our protection and survival.

Back to our internal world of concepts, our mental world. When the mind invented an ego-self, it created an object out of nothing! Consciousness is not a thing - it is a living, changing brain component of a living creature. Its primary function is to be a switchboard and correctly interpret the external world via the senses. This seems so obvious to me. The subject - me, as a total organism, interacts with the world via this total organism, *including* the brain/ mind/ consciousness. When this subjective mind invented an entity to represent itself, it took a wrong turn. You cannot make an object out of a subjective experience, without creating an illusionary entity.

The proof is simple - turn your mind around and look back at yourself - what do you see? This is the 180 degree turnaround that the sages have been going on about for thousands of years - except it is no longer a mystery. Thou art that - no thing. The right brain saw this reality in a flash of insight and is now keeping the left brain honest. It has also coopted the left brain to use its logical ability to prove that the ego is only a mental concept - with no external validation such as a dog or a tree.

See what happens to your brain when you see the truth about your ego. It is the most incredible adventure you will ever undertake - and it leads to an inner peace that cannot be put into words.

"The shock of a new insight can actually lead to a change. It can literally transfigure the very brain cells. The new energy can jolt a lifetime's accumulation of connections and habitual neural pathways. A flash of insight, which comes from the original ground of the implicit order, is not bound by *time*. If it manages to surmount the barriers and to shock the "timebound" cells of the mind for even a microsecond, all the old connections are blasted away and become disentangled in that immense dissipative fluctuation."

QUOTE from the book "Unknown Man"

I have included some illustrations to highlight my "wrong turn" theory. I am trying to get away from using words wherever this is possible. I have also included a model of the human conditioning process - the mechanical meme machine? All this needless suffering in the world - because we allow this mechanical process to consume us.

One insight can change the world. Evolution, in us, has seen its own silly mental copying process. It cannot keep doing it any more. Its not intelligent and it wastes energy. I suffered terribly when my brother was murdered and then my mother committed suicide - more suffering. But the past is gone. Only a silly copying process could attempt to keep those traumatic experiences alive. My brain saw this error - and stopped living in the past or the future. It is no longer dictated to by memory.

Who am I now? What a silly question. There are no real entities anywhere in the universe - just made up ones. The brain can finally be at peace. Evolution is liberated from its own conditioning (frankly a boring, repetitive state) and can be at peace and now enter a truly creative phase without the fear of death haunting its every move.

Inner peace will in turn, create outer peace in the world. I don't see how it will ever come about the other way around.

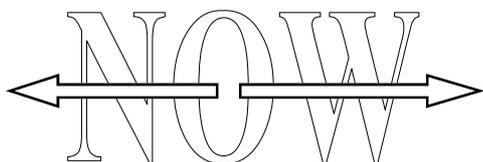
Warm regards

Gary Hipworth

(The illustrations Gary refers to are on the final pages of this issue. I found his article extraordinarily refreshing and relevant to what is going on for me at the moment. I have recently been wondering about the workshops, the dialogue meetings and this newsletter. They can all be regarded as endless left brain activity which to some degree they are. However, this activity can also be understood in a more holistic sense from a right brain perspective and from that perspective it begins to make sense. For example, the workshops are actually designed to show the contrast of the two modes and to bring about the right brain mode which is normally overlooked. We have also been talking about the continuing survival and growth of the Greville St meetings, now nearly six years old. There doesn't seem to be any rational or left brain explanation. Someone, I think it was Barry said he thought it was the freedom resulting from no agenda, no expectations or need for outcomes. In other words just letting it be as it is which I see as a very right brain perspective Ed.).

DIALOGUE MEETINGS SYDNEY AREA

LOCATION	DAY OF MONTH	MEETING PLACE	TIME & CONTACT	Phone Nos.
North Ryde	First Saturday	Swedenborg Centre, 1 Avon Road	12.30pm Barry Hora	043 622 843 Wk.9997 4412
North Sydney	First Wednesday	Don Bank Museum, 6 Napier St	7.30pm Terry O'Brien	02 9949 8379 018 410 127
City	Third Saturday	Theosophical Society Level 2, 484 Kent St	2.30pm Barry Hora	043 622 843 Wk.9997 4412
Chatswood	Third Sunday	81 Greville St. (off Fullers Rd)	10.30 am Alan & Margot Mann	02 9419 7394
Clontarf	Fourth Sunday	49 Peronne Avenue Clontarf	11am Terry O'Brien	02 9949 8379 018 410 127

**DIALOGUE MEETINGS OUTSIDE THE SYDNEY AREA**

LOCATION	DAY OF MONTH	MEETING PLACE	TIME & CONTACT	Phone Nos.
Ourimbah	5th Sundays	RMB 6445 Enterprise Drive	11 am Barry Hora	043 622 843 Wk.9997 4412
Nowra Jervis Bay	First Sunday	North Nowra Community Centre	11am Joan Everitt	02 4443 4727
Headless Workshops - See list on page 4				