

## The Conclusion

For very practical reasons, no one is able to write the conclusion to their autobiography and, so long as they live, they can never say they have written their final word on what is most people's favorite topic, themselves.

For myself, I can only hope that the processes of moving towards wholeness instituted fifty plus years ago will continue until the close of this incarnation and stand me in good stead at the outset of my next life. My focus has always been the path as the thing-in-itself. As Dean Moriarty and Sal Paradise, for me the journey itself has been the thing of import, not conjuncture over what or where the ultimate destination might be. As is well known to all those who have seriously trodden a spiritual path – as opposed to new age idiocy or its counterparts of yesteryear – once a definite commitment to evolutionary growth is made and acted upon, life becomes as difficult as possible and that for one's own good, for a journey without pain would hold no worth at all, would have no cause for celebration and meaning beyond the workaday activities and petty achievements that litter most persons' lives and which they sadly think of as milestones, little realizing what treasures life really keeps in trust for them.

It is my personal belief that the life of Myron Dyal possesses a meaning, for me, much greater than anything I might have thought in my earlier years. As you have taken this journey with me, you will understand when I acknowledge how hard these years have been. Indeed, there were times when I was seriously courted by death and the invitation was tempting and, if I had not knowingly been working my way through the process of change and healing, there is no doubt that I would put an end to this life long ago.

Thankfully, I never reached a point of no return; always my allies were there to interpose themselves between death and myself. Granted, there were times, perhaps too many, when they had no recourse but to compel me into action, but that was the result of my choices, not theirs. Never have they coerced me or forced me to do anything against my will, though I freely admit to times when, exercising my own will, I have led myself into calamity. As for Charon and my other spiritual helpers, their assistance is invariably kindly, infinitely patient, their words reassuring, their agenda always positive. And I have always been aware that they have never asked of me anything they knew was beyond my ability to achieve.

Naturally, I have often pondered the unrealized possibilities of life without epilepsy, without my childhood coma and whatever effects they wrought within me. Although there have never been firmly established any links between epilepsy and my visionary experiences, I have absolutely no doubt of their connection and, hence, I have presented these visions, dozens among many hundreds, as the source of my art.

During my seizures, information usually lying safely behind psychic barriers is loosed and made available to my objective consciousness and this has been the catalyst for my evolution.

I've not discussed dreams as an avenue of personal development because when my unconscious is active, my dream life is reduced virtually to nothing. I have spent time studying the mountains of research literature concerning dreaming and deeper layers of consciousness but have not touched upon it here because it would require inordinate amounts of space to treat with thoroughly and, of course, I am not an expert in the field. I am, by virtue of hard personal experience, an authority on epilepsy and its effects on the human psyche.

I will say that dreams have played a vital part in my own story and I have worked with the dream state to achieve certain states of consciousness. Of course, the basic definition of dreams is the depiction of sensory images, based upon thoughts and emotions, occurring during particular levels of sleep. My visions are waking dreams, far removed from the typical daydreams which are little more than reveries occupying a partial space of the attention span, and which have been defined as states of mind marked by abstraction or release from reality. Closely allied to this is the somnambulistic state of the sleepwalker. The theory has been advanced that mystical states are actually somnambulant in nature, guided and directed by the unconscious mind.

Again, my visions are dreams experienced while fully awake, and the reader will have noted many similarities to their own dream experiences, such as the instantaneous mutability of objects and rapid changes of scene, as well as the recurrence of certain motifs and symbols. For me, the visions supersede dreams as the primary vehicle of output of material from the deeper mind. It was only during periods when my visions were relatively dormant that regular dreaming took center stage in the realm of communication between the inner and outer selves.

There has also been an intermediate type of experience, what I call night seizures, when the visions and dreams would fuse and render me incapable of determining whether I was awake or asleep. I have also dreamt of having a seizure only to awaken and find myself in the midst of one. Conversely, I have had seizures and believed it was only a dream. I could be wide awake, at home, at the office, anywhere, and suddenly find myself in a dream state, as real as any other circumstance of daily life, sometimes more vivid in terms of impact, which I would not only witness but participate in, as is the nature of dreams.

I have gone through periods where my grip on reality was tenuous to say the least, when I was unable to ascertain what was real and what was illusion. As you have read, my childhood fantasy world was much more real to me than the world of actualities, which for me included so much that was unpleasant. I despised the so-called real world and found comfort only in the presence of imaginary friends, even monsters such as Frankenstein's, whom, I later discovered, Mary Shelley had invested with more humanity and compassion than his sniveling equivocator of a creator. My night terrors would invoke the aid of non-human friends; what had its origins in a frightened child seeking comfort matured along with him into an entire cosmos of creative imagination producing an endless stream of magical effects.

The entire world became an anthropomorphism with deeply buried imagery making itself forcibly present in my waking hours.

Time and experience have been the foundations of my overall development but neither can of themselves bring about the insights I have gained. Hard work is also required as is an unswerving dedication to positive, progressive transformation. There must be a willingness to go all the way and complete the work and permit nothing to act as a detour.

That sounds tritely obvious, but if it is trite it is not so because so many countless souls have done it successfully. Just the opposite: so many have departed and failed to get anywhere but the step before the first roadblock. To accomplish the work of self-transformation, really to stick to it day in and day out, during the long stretches of drudgery when nothing “exciting” happens, to pass through the dark days and darker nights, is so demanding that only a hardly soul can stand up to it over the course of a lifetime. And it makes me think that, if I had been a “normal” person, i.e., not an epileptic, perhaps I would not have been able to make it. Maybe the seizures and all their attendant difficulties were the cat o’ nine tails that, like the Marquis’ *Justine*, kept me clinging to what I perceived to be the highest virtue.

There are always myriad reasons (both real and imagined) for failure, for ignoring, deferring, or even conveniently forgetting that life is an unfolding process, a continual work in progress. It can be so much easier not to acknowledge that life is to be lived.

The *raison d’etre* behind this book has been to discuss my personal experiences as a lifelong “outsider” whose artwork has been deeply influenced by my visionary episodes. I have been as honest as possible in my presentation and I hope my insights into what are admittedly very complex psychological processes have been of more value to the lay reader than the no doubt useful but extremely dry scientific approaches of the properly credentialed psychobabblers.

Every dated entry is a uniquely individual portrayal of an interior experience whose goal has been my attainment of wholeness. As varied as these episodes are, they are links in one chain, one that is still being forged and no doubt will continue to be until my last breath as Myron Dyal. Irrespective of the actual details on any particular vision, those very complicated and others of a shorter nature, those extremely graphic and others of a tamer expression, the central theme has been and undoubtedly always be, that of healing.

Interspersed throughout these chapters are examples of cleansing, of spiritual and psychic purification, a process where the inner being is purged of destructive elements and renewed in a state of cleanliness. What is not addressed during one episode will be dealt with in another, until the entire being is revitalized. The writer of the Book of Acts made clear that, even though the apostles were baptized with the Holy Ghost on Pentecost, they still received fresh infillings of the Spirit of God. Whether he was discussing events spiritual, psychic, or even symbolic, the message is clear: it cannot be done all at once, and there has probably never lived the man or woman for whom even one lifetime was sufficient to accomplish all that needs to be done.

I have always taken upon myself the responsibility for needing these cleansings, receiving them in an attitude of acceptance, and then going forward from them, living within the enlarged space of wholeness as it had been achieved up to that point. As painful as it may sometimes be to face the darker, destructive elements within one's own make-up, it has to be done, and done with courage and the will to action. The normal human tendency to pay lip service to repentance, fling a meaningless gesture toward the notion of transmuting and integrating these components into the larger psyche then swiftly abandoning the process to depression and alienation must be overcome.

The necessity is always to continue the work in the face of all seeming setbacks, despite the costs, and even when all appears hopeless and overwhelming. Attention to detail is essential in this work, helping to focus in during periods of stress and turmoil. I have been through countless times when I was certain I would never emerge from the other side of the underworld or be able to engage, much less defeat, the demons that haunted my inner sanctums. It was the nuts and bolts of the daily work that allowed me to focus on the process even when I was convinced all was lost and that the big picture was falling to pieces. The nocturnal journeys on the mountaintop, the art and music, the visions were all anchors that kept me from freely drifting, aimlessly, through a sea of darkness and isolation.

There are also times when, even after all efforts have been toward growth, there is no discernible evidence of progress and one can only conclude that failure has been the final result of all the effort expended. Of course, these are the times when a major breakthrough is imminent. In the achievement of wholeness, the watchword is diligence. Not nearly as sexy or metaphysical as the purveyors of much of the new age literary slop would have you believe, but neither would you believe how many of those authors and self-proclaimed authorities are now entering their second, third, or even fourth decade of psychoanalysis.

How many were the times I found that by patiently waiting just one more hour, day, or week, I would arrive at the next plateau! Simply hanging in there a little while longer can, and usually does, make all the difference between success and failure. If waiting is required, then you must be patient and wait; the only alternative is to be busily about the work of undoing all the good you have achieved and sowing the wind only to reap the whirlwind. As everyone else, I was impatient, as far too I often undertook my own brilliant ideas to speed up the process, only to wind up ingloriously on my face, upbraiding myself for my foolishness as I had so many other times in the past.

Needless to say, my timetable rarely, if ever, was in synch with that of my energy. Fortunately, I learned that I required the space to take my first baby steps along the path, then travel at a proper pace, not trying to force events and not shrinking from them when they seemed forced upon me. On those occasions when the goal seemed obscured, I would wait and allow my energy to clear up the confusion and prompt me to continue forward when the time was right. It was during these times of supposed stand still when the most unexpected breakthroughs in understanding would occur. What else can be expected when one demonstrates the courage to give up control to the inner wisdom and allow oneself to be guided by an infallible source?

I have seen of late the emergence of a pattern that had been formed during all the years of struggling towards wholeness. It is a highly individualistic cosmology that surrounds my life. Pieces of the puzzle began to assemble into a coherent picture within the framework of a personal cosmological experience. Within that edifice all of the contents of my being, conscious and unconscious, interacted in a world unto itself. My intuition confirmed that achievement of wholeness would be a result of personal cosmology and none others. No one else's system of thought, be it philosophical, religious, or anything else, could possibly assist me to attain my wholeness. If they worked for their creators, God bless them, if not, they were phony to begin with. Only the discipline of following my own path, accepting the guidance of my own inner voice, allowing it to speak its own maxims and write its own scriptures, could bring me where I needed to go. Of course, this did not preclude finding valuable things in others' systems, but I could not be as so many billions before me and base my own salvation on the lives and ideas of others.

When all had been presented to me in whatever fashion, I then had to take it and mold it into usable instruments. The fragments of the cosmology had to be worked into the whole, as every small detail of a painting has to be inserted with the proper perspective and relation to all other parts of the painting according to the desires of the artist. The pieces, as they were revealed, had to be properly fit into the wider matrix of the overall design, not vice-versa. If one is to achieve their bliss, cosmological integrity is essential.

My journey has been solitary. For most people, the collective spirit and strength of some sort of support structure is needed if they are to maintain their commitment to a process of self-betterment. For them, it is entirely proper. But for those called to tread a more solitary path the introverted process is the best way to go.

As for me, the beat goes on and the path to complete wholeness reaches forth into a tomorrow I have finally learned to trust. My commitment to the journey grows and expands and I remain faithfully optimistic that this cosmological matrix of which I speak, which had its genesis fifty years ago will lead on to new and even more wonderful adventures in both the inner and outer worlds.

My greatest wish is that, in some small way, what I have related about my life and experience will be of help to others and encourage them to take that first step on their own road to wholeness and that they, perhaps you, will also be able to see all the way home.

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