

## Science & Esoteric Wisdom

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### Extract:

The human mind is the most powerful and influential instrument which exists on the planet Earth. It is the source of everything we know, feel and do. From its creative and inventive depths have come forth great civilisations, all manner of art, music and architecture, all the branches of science, technology and engineering, and all the great literature and philosophy of the ages. By means of the analytic, synthetic and driving powers of the mind, human beings have drastically changed the face of the earth, have seriously interfered with natural ecological cycles and have initiated space exploration. In thousands of ways people use their minds to solve problems, beautify their homes and gardens, pursue topics of study, interact with others and conduct the affairs of life. Without the mind it would be impossible to do any of these things, and there would be no experience of being alive.

The dark or unconscious side of the mind is the breeding ground for many of the troubles of mankind. In the unobserved phases of the psyche lie the seeds of animosity, jealousy, hatred, spite, crime, murder and antisocial behaviour that may cause injury to others or damage to property. When the incident has passed such persons may declare "I do not know why I did those things" or "I seemed to be in the grip of a power which overwhelmed me." Because most people have no familiarity with their own unconscious processes they do not see the stirrings of troublesome or dangerous forces within themselves. Even people who are usually calm and quiet can display vituperative speech and aggressive behaviour at times. Inevitably they blame other people for provoking them, and refuse to acknowledge that the bad behaviour came from themselves.

The unconscious is the unseen, unknown aspect of life which is present in every individual. It is unknown because it has never been examined, explained, or

illuminated by the light of consciousness. It contains all that is negative, detrimental and useless, but it also is abundantly supplied with unrecognised potentials which can be developed and brought into useful application. Furthermore, the unconscious is not a static and inert psychological system: it is a seething mass of energies, drives, yearnings, cravings and even aspirations. A restlessness pervades the buried side of human nature. From the unconscious proceeds a stream of influence which insinuates itself into waking life. It is not noticed until we make special efforts to observe and understand its activity. This flux of energy from the unconscious is incessant and never rests. It is an automatic process. In a sense it is like a safety-valve which provides some relief from the psychic pressure of the unconscious. The endless stream of energy from within taps the memory and activities - making images, impressions, visual pictures and ideas. It mobilises these things and weaves them into new patterns of imagery which fascinate the waking mind. This imagery, which is sometimes quite bizarre, is what we loosely call *imagination*. It is always taking place whether we are awake or asleep; we call its manifestations dreams, or daydreams, and fantasies.

Psychotherapists frequently employ a patient's dreams to gain access to the hidden things of the unconscious. Images in dreams may symbolically portray some of the strivings of unconscious factors to gain recognition and resolution. The analytic study of dream symbolism can lead to important insights into the nature of a person's life. Daydreams can be analysed in the same manner. Here is an example. An adolescent boy who suffered from nocturnal enuresis or bed-wetting, was sent to a psychotherapist. In the first few sessions the boy refused to cooperate and would not talk. Then, on a cold winter's day, the therapist noticed how the boy was staring at a radiator in a state of fascination. The therapist asked "What are you thinking about at this moment?" The boy replied "I was thinking that if the radiator were to be knocked over it would burn a hole in the floor. The radiator would then land in the apartment below and start a fire." The therapist said "What would you do?" and the boy replied, "I would pour water on it."

This simple daydream provided all the clues which the therapist needed. The boy and the therapist examined each component of the daydream and the boy produced a long series of associations. He saw that the hot radiator represented his growing sexual passions, and the floor upon which the radiator rested was a barrier which limited those passions. But if the barrier broke down the radiator would set fire to the whole building. The boy saw that the building represented his own being. The barrier, symbolised by the floor, signified his own moral rejection of the incestuous desires he had for his own mother. In childhood he had been excessively molly-coddled and fondled by his devoted mother, and had developed strong emotional bonds with her. Inwardly he recognised the danger of the situation and tried to put out the fire of desire. The act of bed-wetting was the act of trying to extinguish his unhealthy passions. The bed-wetting ceased when the boy grasped the psychological dynamics which ruled his mind, and learned to re-educate his sex desires.

Daydreams, like many nocturnal dreams, have a structure. Their contents are meaningful symbolic expressions of psychological things and states, and the whole

daydream plot is a dramatisation of processes that require attention. Daydreams may contain the germs of useful ideas that can be developed and applied, or they may indicate a tendency of the mind to withdraw from reality and enter the world of make-believe. Fantasy is different from daydream. Fantasy deals with impossible situations as though they were real, and escapes from the problems, difficulties and set-backs which always arise in the real world. This easy substitute for what is genuine and true is an established way of life for many people. In fantasy some people imagine that they possess higher knowledge and are filled with awesome cosmic powers. Others believe themselves to be heroes, adventurers, powerful magicians or messengers of the gods. Such a retreat from reality can be quite dangerous for it may indicate states that resemble schizophrenia. Fantasy is always irrational and childish; those who are in the grip of fantasy very often react to real life situations in a child-like and illogical manner. In fantasy a mere wish or thought becomes a reality, for the person concerned. To become immersed in fantasy is to escape from the factual world.