



Please note that the links in the PEARL logotype above are “live” and can be used to direct your web browser to our site or to open an e-mail message window addressed to ourselves.

To view our item listings on eBay, [click here](#).

To see the feedback we have left for our customers, [click here](#).

This document has been prepared as a public service . Any and all trademarks and logotypes used herein are the property of their owners.

It is our intent to provide this document in accordance with the stipulations with respect to “fair use” as delineated in Copyrights - Chapter 1: Subject Matter and Scope of Copyright; Sec. 107. Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair Use.

Public access to copy of this document is provided on the website of Cornell Law School at <http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.html> and is here reproduced below:

Sec. 107. - Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair Use

Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 106 and 106A, the fair use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phono records or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered shall include:

- 1 - the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- 2 - the nature of the copyrighted work;
- 3 - the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- 4 - the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

The fact that a work is unpublished shall not itself bar a finding of fair use if such finding is made upon consideration of all the above factors

Primal Therapy, Spirituality and The Experience of Sudden Illumination (Satori)

by Paul Vereshack M.D

TWENTY-FIVE OR SO YEARS AGO, a series of events were to take place in my life which would change forever my sense of life and death.

I am going to describe them in detail, because I believe they are part of a potentially universal experience that can move us as a species toward higher levels of consciousness and a more spiritually uplifting life.

I'll start at the beginning.

When I finished my twelve years of training in arts, medicine and psychiatry, I was an emotional wreck. I had a beautiful office complete with a harpsichord in the most professionally acceptable section of Toronto. While I certainly felt a great sense of accomplishment, I was none the less, frightened and very depressed.

As part of my years of university training, I had been exposed to many of the major types of mainstream therapy. Additionally, I had been a client in

1 three of them but at no point had my pain even been approached much less touched or healed.

Having little interest in general psychiatry, I had failed my certification and, tired of being a child in the system I decided at age thirty two, to leave it. I opened an office of my own and limited my practice to psychotherapy. Additionally, I decided to "throw out" everything I had ever learned.

I would start from the beginning, listen with great care to my clients and try to learn, without prejudice, from the experiences I would have with them as I went along.

Serendipity, a process that I now trust with all my heart, came repeatedly to my rescue.

A teenaged baby sitter tossed a book on my dining room table and said, "Dr. V., you might like this." It was "[Gestalt Therapy](#)," by Perls, Hefferline and

Goodman. The book contained a series of psychological exercises which the reader could do alone. I set aside two hours each day at lunch time, lay on my office chesterfield and very carefully worked my way through them. Six months or so later I knew something important had changed.

It would be four more years before I would finally discover Primal Therapy, but the ball had begun rolling.

Next, a woman friend handed me the first book I would ever read which would make perfect sense to me from start to finish. It was "[Nature, Man and Woman](#)," by Alan Watts, a well known American writer in the area of consciousness raising.

In the bibliography I found "[The Way of Zen](#)," by the same writer, and that led me to "[The Supreme Doctrine](#)," by Hubert Benoit.

This I read to save my life, the same way that I read everything in those years. It was written in the European tradition of hyper intellectuality and was a very, very complicated book, but I had a strong feeling that what it said was absolutely central to the human dilemma. It is a study of those things within us which blind our minds to a full comprehension of ultimate reality.

I decided that I would not move from one para-

17 graph to another unless I fully understood each idea. Working from one to two hours every day, it took me two years to read and comprehend this short work.

Without knowing it, I was setting the stage for a truly unusual event.

20 Then the universe moved again...

Someone in my practice threatened my life, and I knew there was a very real chance this person would carry out their threat.

25 I waited for death.

During this time of waiting, I learned about fear; real fear. It is nothing like the fear we feel in a movie, nothing at all. It is in fact so far beyond what most of us ever feel in our civilized society as to be on entirely different plane. This kind of fear is what soldiers know in war.

Day after day I lived in gut wrenching terror. Often, it was work just to breathe. The weeks passed, six of them, and the fear grew worse.

35 Once again the stage was being set, and then it happened.

I was taking a walk one day at lunch time when a twig on the sidewalk caught my eye. I bent down, picked it up and without thinking about it, bent the twig between my fingers. It snapped, and in that

instant everything changed.

With the sound of the twig breaking, I was suddenly bathed in a golden light and found myself deep in outer space, gazing into the heart of the universe. In the infinite dark and cold I saw that everything was alive with energy. Absolutely everything was alive; from the most frozen rock to the warmest sun. From the deadest leaf, to the liveliest person, everything was filled with energy. More than this, everything was perfect, good and right.

I perceived these things through some set of senses that I had never accessed before. The vision seemed to flood in through my abdomen and spread out through my whole body while at exactly the same moment I was seeing it with my eyes. It was as though my body, not just my mind was being suddenly saturated with a completely new consciousness.

I saw that the universe was perfect, and that within that perfection my death was perfectly alright.

I was instantly filled with a feeling of awe, and this was accompanied by a gratitude so huge that it felt like a state of worship. The feeling was that I had been given an ultimate gift because with it came a sense of peace that was so profound it reminded me of the Christian phrase, "The peace which passeth all understanding." Tension drained from my body so

1 completely that I realized that from the earliest years of my life I had never been free of it.

I was no longer fearful of anything, including my own death.

5 The feeling of joy and peacefulness lasted six weeks, then slowly began to fade. Although the memory of what had happened remained clear, daily life with its care and worries began to reclaim me. I would never again however be afraid in the same way.

10 When I had my first primal experience several years later I was immediately struck by the fact that the feeling of the primal event, along with its sudden expansion of consciousness, was almost exactly the same as the experience of Satori itself.

15 In my book "[*Help Me—I'm Tired of Feeling Bad*](#)," I have detailed the levels of the expansion of consciousness that occur within the primal experience. I call this sudden and unique expansion of awareness "Holistic Insight" and in the following excerpt from [*chapter twenty two*](#), I attempt to show how it is similar to and yet different from Sudden Illumination (Satori).

20 Holistic Insight has gradations of quality and extensiveness which can be seen to exist in six stages:

STAGE ONE HOLISTIC INSIGHT begins with the experience of inwardness which comes to us when we lie down to focus on the inner arena of our life.

We begin to sense the ground of our being, the place where we will study and merge with the previously warded-off parts of our deepest self.

Just as putting our hand in water gives us a direct sense of what water is, we start to gain a non-verbal, non-intellectual awareness of our inner environment through this process of merging. This is the beginning of the long, sweet relief of giving a harassed surface-self over to a study of our deeper processes.

This relief is increased as we allow our conscious self to fully feel the six ways in which our brain broadcasts its pain to us through specific body sensations and so on.

The relief is even further enhanced as we make our congruent expressions to fully merge with these deeper experiences. It is here where Holistic Insight truly begins, when we feel the deeper self and the surface self coming into alignment for the first time. Now a sweep

27 of honesty begins to neutralize the displaced, disguised and fruitless struggles of our life.

30 Stage One Holistic Insight then, is the direct non-linear, non-symbolized experience of an inwardness and a re-alignment between the unconscious and conscious parts of our being that is facilitated through the use of the techniques of congruence and externalization.

35 At this level no specific insight is required; no words, no images and no re-experiencings are necessary. There is nonetheless, a deep and growing sense that something within us is easing and becoming whole.

40 Because all these Stage One processes have been without specific insight and yet deepen our non-specific awareness, we can refer to them as *textural self-enhancement*.

45 STAGE TWO HOLISTIC INSIGHT is marked by the emergence into consciousness of a specific issue along with some of the meaning attached to it.

We have focused inwardly on some discomfort, allowing it to fill our awareness. As we are merge with it we may or may not start

to make our congruences. Suddenly though we realize something new about ourselves, we become completely aware of a truth concerning our existence.

For example, an argument with someone might have left us feeling very discomforted, with a tightness in our chest. We lie down, focus on the tightness, merge with it, and suddenly find ourselves saying, "Please don't hurt me." We repeat this congruence five to ten times, matching the words to the feeling. Suddenly we have the insight that we have been overwhelmingly hurt far more deeply than we realized. We have a sense that, in some way, the whole axis of our bodymind has been rocked on its foundation.

While this realization has definite form and insight, it is limited to the present and the circumscribed event. This is the hallmark of a Stage Two Holistic Insight. It is non-linear, and comes suddenly as a small wavefront of awareness. It is this instantaneous, gut-level, non-verbal, non-linear knowing that classifies it as a Holistic Experience.

It is holistic in nature because our sense of knowing and being, a fundamental expres-

1 sion of our bodymind, instantly expands with the experience. It is felt within the mind as clarity and within the body as relaxation. The enhanced knowing and the physical relief are simultaneous and immediate. We have the intriguing deeper sense that because of what we have just realized, we are suddenly more than we were. The quality of our integration, our knowledge, the organic functionality of our bodymind, expands in many directions.

5 For instance, we realize that we do hurt, and that we are hurttable. There is a shift from a false sense of strength to a sense that we are always vulnerable. And yet, through our newly reformed integration, we sense that we are also repairable. We do not have to be rigid and self-protecting. We can live more openly without being destroyed. This is an example of the kind of awareness expansion that accompanies a typical Holistic Insight.

10
15
20
25 Stage Two Insight is marked by a sudden, non-linear expansion of present awareness confined to a single issue, and the insight is internal to the life of the one who experiences it. It is experienced mentally as insight and physically as relaxation.

STAGE THREE HOLISTIC INSIGHT manifests as a sudden, non-linear awareness that expands laterally in the present to include self and world. For example: after an argument with a boss, a feeling sequence on the mat can yield the realization, the Stage Two insight, that not only have we been deeply hurt but also that the boss is a deeply damaged and therefore hurtful man. We see how damage within him permeates the world around him, triggering everybody's pain. Sensing things that are intrinsic to negative authority, how it comes about and how it harms us all, we become aware that many people in authority are like this.

With our awareness still confined to the present, our work at Stage Three not only enhances our comprehension of matters internal to ourselves but our insight spreads outward to encompass the dynamics of the world around us.

STAGE FOUR HOLISTIC INSIGHT

At this level, realization spans out not only laterally but backward in time as well. We suddenly see flashes of our existence down through

27 the years as they pertain to our current discomfort. We realize that old pain within us has been activated. Once again, this is a sudden wave of comprehension that washes through us. We are not, however, actually re-living a past event, although we do feel eased in body and in mind at the moment of perception.

HOLISTIC INSIGHT, STAGE FIVE

35 At this level a shift in temporal context is activated; a sort of magic, time-carpet if you will.

Awareness of our present moment fades into the re-living of a childhood experience with the completeness and intensity of an actual hallucination. Corridors of connectedness open within our bodymind that lead from the past event to multiple, significant experiences through the course of our lives. We are suddenly illuminated as to the multiple causes of our experience with regard to importantly formative events.

40
45 As barriers within the bodymind collapse, the sensations are strange and wondrous yet, the experience seems to take just a few seconds.

The aftermath is a most profound know-

ing on the plane of one's psychobiology, one's bodymind, that leaves the body deeply relaxed and forever changed, especially in the chemical and muscular structure of its defenses. The mind comes to trust openness and vulnerability as a natural part of deeply organic function.

Forgiveness, both of self and others, naturally spins out from within the incremental disentangling of the bodymind. A non-judgmental, profoundly ethical stance begins to replace a lifetime of externally imposed teachings and the inculcation of guilt. The brain begins to experience true individuation, a sense of authentic internal power. A sense of the profound complexity and preciousness of life automatically fosters feelings compassion and morality.

Stage Five Holistic Insight is the last stage of Holistic Awareness before the great experience of Sudden Illumination or Satori itself, the goal of Zen. It shares many of the characteristics and qualities of Satori. It is both sudden and profound, it brings enormous comprehension while affording exquisite relief within one's bodymind. It is not, however, actual Satori as it is still limited to the plane of psychobiology and confines itself to

compartmentalization of the bodymind in a much more profound way. It is an attempt to render obsolete the absolute ground of symbolization as it pertains to the mind's view of all things. The stage of inquiry is far more vast, infinite in fact, encompassing the structure of mind, the structure of matter and the relationship between the two. It also includes the Prime Movement of the universe.

Our perception of all things is challenged as, all in a blinding flash, the event-process of Satori dismantles the symbolic barriers between comprehension and matter itself.

It is for this reason that the Zen Koan, or mind puzzle, is so profoundly enigmatic. The solving of a Zen puzzle ("What is the sound of one hand clapping?" for example) brings the symbolizing functions of the brain crashing down around us until we and the universe are one. A Zen monk requires years, sometimes decades, of concentrated meditation to achieve final dissolution of such intrinsic brain function.

It is extraordinarily interesting to note that the cultivation of what we shall call Purity of Intent in approaching Holistic Insight is very

1 connections and processes of a worldly nature, it is not metaphysical.

5 STAGE SIX HOLISTIC INSIGHT (Sudden Illumination or Satori)

Because I believe that the mechanisms involved in Bodymind Holistic Insight and those in Zen-oriented Satori share similar processes, I will include a few brief comments about this ultimate experience.

10 Satori itself, as I have both studied and experienced it, is a sudden and profound awakening of an altogether different kind of consciousness.

15 Psychobiological awakening (Holistic Insight) concerns itself with remaking a functional, organic whole of the "discrete compartments" within the fractured realm of our embedded unto unconsciousness internal experience. It is achieved through careful and minute attention to inner body states and the creation of the congruences that we have already described. These are mechanisms of mind and body (inquiry within the psychobiological plane) and therefore work in this area issues forth in awareness at this level.

20 Satori itself is an attempt to dissolve the

27 similar to the cultivation of Purity of Intent in the approach to Satori itself. Both require the same paradoxical process of intensity versus letting go, of extraordinary humility, patience, lack of expectation and extreme focus.

30 The driving force at the bodymind level is pain. The method is the forging of a link, between present experience and past experience, through the use of congruent feelings. The ultra-high level of congruence between a present feeling and a past feeling activates the psychobiologically immaculate process of non-linear Holistic Insight. Holistic Insight is the sudden overwhelming expansion of consciousness within the psychobiological field of enquiry.

35 The driving force toward the Satori-level experience is profound existential dissatisfaction coupled with extraordinarily intense meditational techniques extending over time and employing puzzles that have no solution at the level of the mind's symbolizing processes.

40 Both processes share a sudden, profound expansion of consciousness. Holistic Insight is still confined however, within its bodymind's field of examination. Satori shatters

growth that is necessary to neutralize this paradox.

I believe that whenever the mind creates a delusion, with the necessary level of denial to maintain it, this distortion of reality produces tension (existential tension). Since almost all our sense of what is, is in fact false, the central nervous system is always under serious tension and consequently far removed from Reality.

This nullification of Reality, the subsequent maintenance of our delusion and the massive denial that must, of necessity, accompany all this displaces us away from the ground of the Universe. At the level of our belief systems we are absolutely incongruent with It while at once within It; a paradox.

This completes our separation from Reality, a separation that began with the formation of the original images and symbols spoken of earlier.

Now we can begin to see what Satori might be about.

When the tensions of our falsely engineered belief systems regarding our own existence rise beyond a certain point, which they can do under a wide variety of circumstances such as an impossibly painful life event or a near death experience, they can precipitate a cascading failure of the symbolizing processes of the mind. When this happens and sym-

bolizing collapses, we suddenly “see” the Universe without our false lens and as it is in Reality. In this moment there is no lie to separate us from it.

Now without our symbols, we and the ground of the Universe share identical structures. We are One. Delusion dissolves, the “Lie” ends and Satori occurs. Tension naturally drops to zero in a manner somewhat similar to that experienced on the psychobiological plane during Holistic Insight. With Satori however this reduction of tension far, far greater.

Interestingly, we will still struggle to symbolize even this experience. The christian sees Christ, the life-long science fiction fan finds himself in outer space, the botanist might see the Wonder in a leaf. Some might experience just the Wonder of no thing at all. Just the Wonder and awe.

The key thing here is not our imposed modulations—all our symbolic representations—but the carrier wave itself, the integrated oneness that is the ground of all things.

An aspect of the natural order has created human beings as creatures of delusion, forever cut off from the ground of existence. *We can not set ourselves free until we understand this.*

Primal therapy’s Holistic Insight experiences liberate us from psychological delusion.

Satori liberates us from the delusions beyond psychology; the delusions both inside and seemingly outside of ourselves that separate us from the natural world.

We can now see that in fact, these two great phenomena of insight share similar brain mechanisms. Because of this, complete enlightenment, which was thought to be beyond comprehension, swims into view as something understandable and available for study, and even attainable through carefully understood kinds of personal work.

The door to a new level of integration between mind and matter begins to swing open . . .

Question: What do you think about rapidly attained Satori (Sudden Illuminations)?

Very interesting. If there were a simple way to get to a “Godhead” experience, it would certainly put a shortcut in the world’s growth work.

It would be a wonderful thing, but it gives me pause as I am sure it does you.

Sudden illumination after years of disciplined effort, tends to teach discipline and a healthy respect

for gradual evolution toward expanded consciousness.

A shortcut solution tends to create religious zeal and cultism.

Now in all fairness, I must say that if the “Satori” experience is a real one—whatever that might mean, given the delusional capacities of the human mind—the speed of attainment would be irrelevant. Real awakening banishes delusion of any sort, creates genuine humility and instills profound wisdom and compassion. Not a bad combination for the human race to inject into itself. Quite species-saving I would say.

The terrible truth is however that I am not sure we can count on the mind’s objective integrity.

Touch certain parts of the brain with an electrode and you can stimulate centers that produce profound feelings, from rage to joy. Couple these with ideational content, and presto, *certainty* about things might emerge.

I do believe after my experiences that the Universe is “good,” that is to say: it makes complete sense. I do believe that if we could see it through infinitely expanded “eyes” we would see that all things are, in fact, perfect, and that there is absolutely nothing to fear in any final way. This expanded

view, of course, when experienced through the physical mechanisms of our heretofore vulnerable and frightened bodies, could not fail to produce ecstatic joy. After all, given the problems of human suffering and death, who wouldn't be relieved to know that everything is really and finally OK.

I just think we have to be cautious about how we embrace these awarenesses. I think however that we should study them with all our heart and balanced good will.

10

15

20

25

27

30

35

40

45