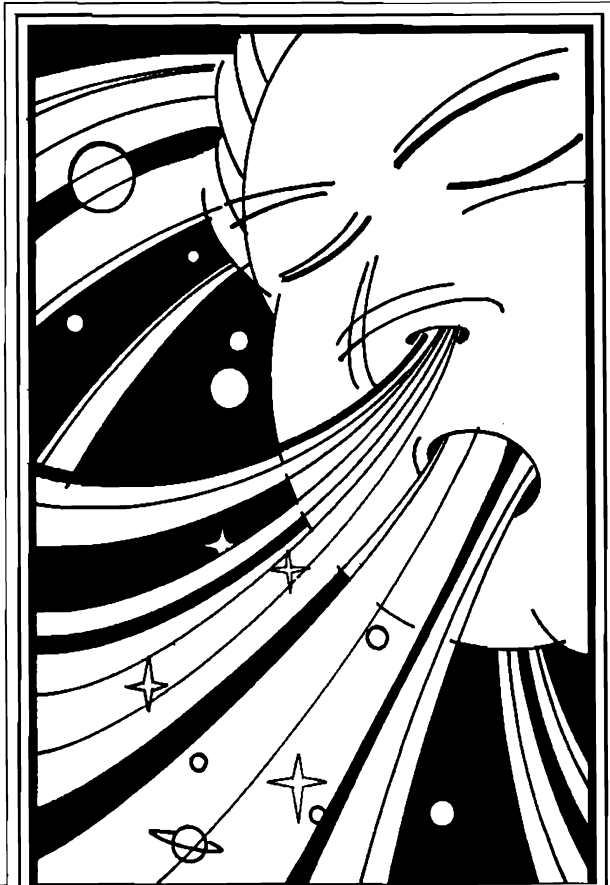


■ ROBERT CROOKALL ■



Psychic Breathing



COSMIC VITALITY FROM THE AIR

PSYCHIC BREATHING

Reveals that breathing is at the very heart of psychic experience and provides a definitive source book for all speculations on Man's super-physical nature.

By the same author

TECHNIQUES OF ASTRAL PROJECTION

PSYCHIC BREATHING

Cosmic Vitality from the Air

by

ROBERT CROOKALL

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Introduction

In 1934, Dr Nandor Fodor, referring to those mediums who produce 'physical' phenomena (table-tipping, super-normal noises, direct voices, poltergeist phenomena, telekinesis and materializations), concluded, '*Behind mediumship there is something very big*'.¹

In point of fact, 'physical' mediumship is not sharply distinct from 'mental' mediumship (with telepathy, clairvoyance, foreknowledge, etc.), and the two types of phenomena may be produced by one and the same person, as they were by the Rev. William Stainton Moses.

In 1970, C. Brookes-Smith and D.W. Hunt (*Journal of the Society of Psychological Research*, No. 45, p. 265) cited the work of K. J. Batchelder (*ibid.*, No. 43, 1966) which showed that, provided certain practical requirements are fulfilled, 'a wide range of paranormal phenomena can be comparatively easily produced experimentally without any "physical" medium.' Brookes-Smith and Hunt, having made investigations, concluded that, 'the ability to produce ["physical"] phenomena is not a mysterious capacity conferred on a few rare individuals called "mediums", but a psychological "skill" which can be acquired, through aptitude and experience, by virtually all human beings.' They first obtained table-tipping and later telekinesis, etc.

This claim — that 'virtually all human beings' are potential mediums* — is important in relation to the present study, for an intriguing relationship has long been observed between mediumship (hitherto often regarded as more or less abnormal) and the universal and perfectly normal process of breathing. It may well be that breathing involves 'something very big' (something additional, of course, to the mere intake of oxygen and emission of carbon dioxide), something which we can harness, in the search for and maintenance of physical well-being.

We shall have to refer to the total bodily constitution of man. The data are summarized in the following table.

¹ Dr Nandor Fodor, *These Mysterious People* (Occult Book Society, 1934), p. 230.

* The conclusion that psychic phenomena are normal to mankind was arrived at on quite other grounds by the present writer — see *The Interpretation of Cosmic and Mystical Experiences*, (James Clarke, 1969, pp. 46, 47, 91, 104, 110, 151.)

Man, the microcosm				THE UNIVERSE or MACROCOSM
Hierarchy of Bodies.	Hierarchy of 'Selves,' (Beings).	Hierarchy of Levels of Consciousness.	Hierarchy of Spheres.	Hierarchy of Provinces.
Spiritual Body (a transcendent formless radiation from a centre).	Greater, Inner, Higher, External 'Self' Over-Soul, 'Christ-in-You', A 'Branch' of 'The True Vine'.	Spiritual, Mystical Consciousness. Mystical Experiences.	The True 'Heavens' (beyond form, time, space).	Love, Truth, Beauty, Selfless service.
Soul Body (ovoid — 'super-physical').	'Soul', The 'Lower Soul' of Plotinus.	'Super-physical' level of consciousness (with tele- pathy, clairvoyance, foreknowledge). —Conscious out-of-the-body experiences.	'Paradise', 'Garden of Eden', 'Elysium', 'Third heaven' of St Paul (2 Cor. 12:2)	The 'mental' phenomena of psychical research — telepathy, clairvoyance, foreknowledge.
Vital body, vehicle of vitality etheric double, (human form — 'semi-physical').	Sub-conscious self.	Sub-normal (dream) consciousness. Fantasies, hallucinations, unconscious out-of-the-body experiences.	'Hades', 'Sheol', 'Limbo', 'Bardo'.	The 'physical' phenomena of psychical research — super-normal noises, poltergeists, direct voice, telekinesis, material- izations, traditional ghosts.
Physical body	Personality, lesser, outer, temporary, everyday self.	Normal consciousness (with instinct, reason, etc.).	Physical world.	Physical Sciences — physics, chemistry, astronomy, biology, etc.

1

Statements by Psychics Concerning Breathing

MORTALS IN-BREATHE 'SEMI-PHYSICAL' VITAL FORCES

In 1829, Dr J. Kerner, chief physician at Weinsberg, published a work in German under the title *Die Seherin von Prevorst*. It was an account of the life of Frau Frederica Hauffe who, arriving in Weinsberg in 1828, became his patient. He attended her until she died, aged twenty-eight. Dr Kerner was held in high repute. He received a pension from the King of Bavaria (1848) and another from the King of Wurtemberg (1858). William IV of Prussia presented him with the gold medal of Art and Science. King Ludwig made him the first Knight of the Maximilian Order of Science and Art. Kerner's account of what he observed with Frau Hauffe was translated into English by Mrs. Catherine Crowe.¹

In his Preface, Kerner described Frau Hauffe as 'more than half dead' for some time before she actually died (i.e., with more than half of her vehicle of vitality released from her body). In this condition — with the 'blinkers-like' effect of the physical body on the Soul Body reduced by more than half — she had some clairvoyance. She was uneducated and her statements were not 'borrowed', either consciously or sub-consciously, from others: Kerner realized that they were not 'portions of a system of philosophy constructed by an enlightened mind' but her own first-hand observations. We shall show (Appendix II) that they are very similar to 'communications' received by people who can never have heard of her.

At one period, Frau Hauffe's vitality was maintained 'only through the emanations [ectoplasm released by?] of others'. Dr Kerner observed:² 'It became necessary that someone should hold her hand; if the person was weak it increased her debility. She needed the "nervous energy" of others.' Apart from this vicarious

¹ Mrs Catherine Crowe, *The Seeress of Prevorst* (J. C. Moore, 1845).

² *ibid.*, p. 45.

and temporary source of vitality, Frau Hauffe maintained that she drew her life 'wholly from the air.' Even in cold weather her windows had to be open.

Dr Kerner considered what happens at death: like many 'communicators',³ he held that the 'spirit' (in the Soul Body, which is accompanied by the vehicle of vitality) 'partially leaves the physical body before it has wholly shaken it off.' He continued, 'Could we thus maintain anyone for years in the condition of a dying person, we should have the exact representation of Frau Hauffe's condition... It appeared as if her nerve spirit [= vehicle of vitality] was so loosely connected with her nerves that, on the slightest movement [of her body] it set itself free; whence she saw herself ['double' = 'nerve spirit' plus Soul Body] out of her body.' (Note that many people who write poetry, compose music, etc., find that they are aided by brisk movement such as walking, cycling, etc.) Frau Hauffe herself said, 'It often appears to me that I am out of my body and then I [= Soul Body plus much of 'nerve spirit' or vehicle of vitality] hover over it and recognize it.' This experience today would be called an astral projection or an out-of-the-body experience.

Cosmic Vitality

When Kerner repeated her assertion that she 'extracted a vivifying principle [cosmic vitality?] from the air', he added her other statement that 'there is some substance in the air which spirits use to make themselves audible and visible to mortals.' Frau Hauffe observed, 'I feel the nerve-soul in the nerves... It accompanies the Soul [Body] after death... By its means the Soul constructs an airy form around the spirit [= Soul Body]. By its means, the spirits who are yet in the mid-region [= 'earthbound' spirits in 'Hades' conditions because still retaining the vehicle of vitality] are brought into connection with a "material in the air" which enables them to make themselves felt and heard by men and move heavy articles.' She continued (exactly as is said by numerous 'communicators'), 'When a person dies in a perfectly pure state, which is rarely the case, he does not take the nerve-spirit [= vehicle of vitality] with him [with the Soul Body]. It is a remnant of the physical body and, after death, surrounds the Soul [Body] with an aerial form [forms part of a 'double' which is composite]'.

³ Robert Crookall, *The Supreme Adventure* (James Clarke, 1961), pp. 20, 59, 100.

Frau Hauffe also stated: 'Blessed [= spiritually-minded] spirits to whom the nerve-spirit is no longer attached [= who have shed the 'semi-physical' vehicle of vitality and are in the 'super-physical' Soul Body] cannot make themselves heard or felt by mortals — they appear no more. During life, it formed the bond that united the Soul [Body] with the [physical] body. After death [until it is shed at the second 'death'] the Soul is in the mid-region [= midway between earth and 'Paradise', i.e., in 'Hades' — just as the vehicle of vitality is midway between the physical body and the Soul Body].'⁴

'Ghosts'

Frau Hauffe, with her vehicle of vitality more than half released, was in an extremely rare bodily condition, one in which she could see (and could be seen by) those discarnate souls who were in a similar bodily condition, i.e., who still retained their vehicle of vitality. She saw 'earthbound' souls — traditional 'ghosts', and she did not like them. Among her noteworthy observations⁵ were (1) that 'the darker a ghost be, the stronger is his voice and the more power of making noises'; (2) 'The sounds they produce are by means of the air and the nerve-spirit [= vehicle of vitality], which is still with them'; (3) She was 'not in a condition' to converse with 'blessed spirits' (in the unenveiled Soul Body and in 'Paradise' conditions).

Frau Hauffe realized, 'These relations will appear to many incredible and absurd... but I answer that... these ['earthbound'] spirits [in 'Hades'] can more easily approach man, with whom they are in a sort of nervous relation [because both they and men possess a vehicle of vitality] than heavenly [= 'Paradise'] spirits [who had shed the enveiling vehicle of vitality at the second 'death']... Whilst we are alive... by the force of the nerve-spirit an insignificant muscle can move a great weight. Let us take away the body, as at death; the 'semi-physical' power, i.e., the nerve-spirit, remains and is the Soul's instrument after death. Hence this power may imitate various sounds by means of the air, and, by its own pressure, remove weights. The nerve-spirit, to exhibit itself, needs no instrument but the air.' (Compare the 'communicators' of Cora L. V. Tappan, cited in Appendix II.)

Frau Hauffe maintained that, although mortals cannot see the 'nerve-spirit', 'If not physical, it is at least organic. Our muscles

⁴ Crowe, *op. cit.* (above, note 1), p. 58.

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 59.

were dead without it. From it we derive all our energy. It is the will of the nerve-spirit, flowing through our fibres, that causes muscular contraction. As long as we are in objective relation through our bodies, the nerve-spirit can only exhibit itself by the body; but when freed from this, it can produce sensible effects [being seen or heard] in the world of mind and matter by means of a substance it extracts from the air.' She concluded, 'Thus is the question answered, "How can a spirit produce sounds?"'

The Evidence of Mrs Garrett

All the above-mentioned highly concordant observations, made by an uneducated German woman, were, as already said, published in 1829. An equally admirable woman, and in this case a highly educated one, has made and published her own observations in Great Britain and America. This is Mrs Eileen J. Garrett, once a famous trance medium, and later the President of the Parapsychology Foundation Inc. in New York. Mrs Garrett⁶ gave a significant account of certain early experiences in childhood that led to trance mediumship in later life.

She said, 'I could extend the nebulous, cobwebby part of me [= the vehicle of vitality]... Breathing beyond my fingers and above my head, I hugged myself with happiness... I could use this process [in which the vehicle of vitality was partially projected or dissociated from the physical body] to shut out the voice of my aunt [i.e., the vehicle of vitality was a necessary bridge or link between physical body and Soul Body]... This then must have been the beginnings of that separation of personality which later led to the state known as trance [i.e., to the almost complete dissociation of the vehicle of vitality from the physical body].' When lying quite still, this girl could 'reach out' (using pseudopods or 'ectoplasmic threads') and 'touch' a flower, 'sense' a distant tree, etc.

Mrs Garrett⁷ recorded the fact that she saw 'the floating surround [= vehicle of vitality] of all living organisms... as though it were a breathing outer lung.' She continued, 'I knew then that these surrounds were sustained and held in shape not by the breathing of oxygen but of carbonic acid gas [compare Elsa Barker's 'communicator' cited in Appendix II]... These surrounds of all living matter consisted mainly of carbonic acid gas...'

⁶ Mrs Eileen J. Garrett, *My Life as a Search for the Meaning of Mediumship* (Rider, 1939), p. 4.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 91.

Later in the book,⁸ Mrs Garrett enlarged on this matter, describing how she observed the 'surrounds' or 'auras' [= vehicles of vitality] of all plants, animals and men contract and expand 'as though [they were] breathing with an outer lung.' Still later,⁹ she claimed that the term 'magnetic field' was more appropriate than 'aura' or 'surrounds' and that it is a kind of 'mist' around the physical body, one which 'seems to breathe at a higher vibration than the body to which it belongs.' The carbonic acid gas (etc.) given off from the body, on contact with the air, forms 'a closely-woven, though fragile and cobweb-like stuff' and this always surrounds the body. It 'plays the role of condenser of all experience that enters the physical body' — supernormal impressions as well as normal sensory impacts.

The Breath of Life

In *Adventures in the Supernormal*,¹⁰ Mrs Garrett referred in greater detail to what is variously called 'the Breath of Life', 'vitality', 'Prana', 'nervous energy', 'od', etc. She became aware of 'the vitality inherent in all light, colour and space', perceived 'globules of light' that moved and wove in patterns. As a child she could send out 'cobwebby threads' (= ectoplasm from the vehicle of vitality). She said, 'I gathered vitality from the atmosphere, and drew strength to myself by breathing with my whole body.' She added 'Of course, I did eat, but I remember better the sustaining "vitality" I absorbed from the earth.' She observed that plants drew nourishment from 'the dancing spherical bodies of light that filled all space.' She stated¹¹ that she knew since childhood that the 'surround' (= vehicle of vitality) was 'a receiver and transmitter of life-substance' and later realized that it was also 'a protective and magnetic field.' She saw 'the breath and blood' carry 'the vitality of the universe.'

The following is abbreviated from *Three Famous Occultists*, by G. M. Hort, etc.:¹² 'Thomas Lake Harris taught the redemption of the [physical] body as well as of the soul [with its Soul Body]. One of the first steps to this end is "Internal Respiration". This means the breathing of the atmosphere of heaven, not only into the spiritual,

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 196.

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 209.

¹⁰ Mrs Eileen J. Garrett, *Adventures in the Supernormal*, (Garrett Publications, 1949), pp. 21, 22.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 158.

¹² G. M. Hort, B. B. Ince, W. P. Swainson, *Three Famous Occultists* (Rider), p. 172.

but also into the natural lung. It is the gift of the Holy Spirit to those who are sufficiently regenerated to receive it...'

'The culmination will be reached when mankind attains... arch-natural immortality. This does not mean the *perpetuation*, but the *regeneration* of our physical form, transmuting our "body of humiliation" into the likeness of "Christ's Body of Glory". Our bodies will be ethereal, though substantial, being composed, not of flesh that dieth, but of pure, perfect flesh. Our departure to higher states will not be "by the disintegrating process of physical disease, but by the evolutionary process of physical *transubstantiation and ascension*.' These ideas are very similar to those of Dr Rudolf Steiner (and to those of certain 'communicators' — see Appendix II).

EXPANDED CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH BREATH CHANGES

Two centuries ago in Sweden, Swedenborg¹³ observed that his psychic abilities were correlated with this breathing. (The fact that he could temporarily cease breathing doubtless indicates entrancement — he observed that when he communicated with discarnate souls he scarcely breathed for half an hour at a time.) Swedenborg said: 'If we carefully attend to profound thoughts we shall find that when we draw breath a host of ideas rush from beneath, as through an open door, into the sphere of thought: whereas when we hold the breath and slowly let it out we doubly keep it the while in the tenor of our thought and communicate, as it were, with the higher faculty of the Soul... Holding back the breath is equivalent to having intercourse with the Soul; drawing it amounts to intercourse with the body.

'I was first accustomed to breathe in this way in infancy when praying... then at times afterwards, when I was exploring the agreements of the heart and lungs, especially when I was writing from inner thought what I published on these subjects... I noticed that there was a tacit respiration, scarcely sensible, about which it was given afterwards to think and then to write. In this way for many years from infancy, I was introduced into such breathings, especially through speculation, in which the ordinary breathing subsided, otherwise no intense speculation of truth can be given. Then afterwards, when heaven was opened, so that I spoke with spirits, I breathed so completely in this way that I did not take a common breath for a space of an hour, only just enough air being drawn to enable me to think'.

¹³ Emanuel Swedenborg, *Spiritual Diary*.

In 1939, in America, Mrs Garrett¹⁴ observed that when she wished to use different supernormal powers (telepathy, clairvoyance, astral projection, etc.), she made deliberate changes in her breathing. Not only this, but, having attained the clairvoyant condition, she could increase its power by deliberately accelerating her breathing.¹⁵ She considered that born athletes, dancers and skaters do not merely possess perfect co-ordination of mind and body, 'but also an unconsciously perfect correlation of their breathing with their movements.' (We suggest that this is highly significant — that the perfect breathing produces a perfect link between Soul Body and physical body, i.e., a perfect vehicle of vitality. The perfect vital body perfectly obeys the commands of the Soul. 'Myers', in a communication via Geraldine Cummins, called the vehicle of vitality 'the unifying body'. (See Appendix II.)

Mrs Garrett held that whereas animals possess this perfect type of breathing, most men have lost it, and that the methods which the psychic uses to control her sensitiveness through the breathing are allied to those which the dancer, skater and athlete use to control the physical body. Her claim that these things were long known to the East, as is shown in Yoga practices and the ritual of the dance, agrees with the ideas of Gurdjieff, Ouspensky and Dr Kenneth Walker.

In another book, entitled *Telepathy*, Mrs Garrett¹⁶ held that groups of people often fail to receive telepathic messages because of tension due to self-consciousness, which may be overcome by comfortable physical positions and casual conversation. This, published in 1941, is in line with the observations made by K. J. Batchelder, C. Brookes-Smith and D. W. Hunt in 1970, already mentioned — the production of psychical phenomena was not at all difficult, given patience and persistence, if one maintained a serene attitude and avoided scepticism.

It is also in line with the conclusions arrived at by Louisa E. Rhine on quite different grounds (*ESP in Life and Lab.*, Collier Books, 1969). She observed that, in laboratory experiments, high-scoring ESP students lost their ability when they lost their interest and became bored. She pointed out that, in spontaneous cases, psychical impressions are often of deep concern to their recipients. Dr. D. J. West, reviewing this work (*Journal of the Society of Psychical Research*, No. 45, 1970, p.308) said that Dr Rhine's views

¹⁴ Garrett, op. cit. (above, note 6). p. 161.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 201.

¹⁶ Mrs Eileen J. Garrett, *Telepathy* (Creative Age Press, 1941), p. 51.

'command the most respectful attention' and observed, 'Once having accepted ESP as a commonplace fact of life, Dr Rhine may be right that one ought to accept both the unverified case reports and also the mass of results from ESP and PK experiments, regardless of the unrepeatability and ephemeral nature of so many of those results.' He concluded by quoting Dr Rhine: 'If the situation in experiments had been such that the person had a reliable feeling of conviction about his responses, the questions raised by ESP would have been solved long ago... ESP, in that event, would have been as obvious as seeing and hearing.'

Breathing 'Below the Diaphragm'

Mrs Garrett observed, 'When I desire to receive in a telepathic experiment, I begin first to breathe down in extremely deep breaths, as though breathing below the diaphragm.' She explained the process as follows: 'As the breath goes below, the stomach is pushed out and the breath forces the muscles in the abdomen to relax.' This tends to eliminate mental effort and emotion and Mrs Garrett said, 'I have nothing to do except automatically to describe what is appearing before my inner vision.' This was for receiving (for transmitting, the perceptions must be quickened).

Mrs Garrett, having quoted 'C.F.', an artist, who had found the same procedure helpful, observed, 'A preparatory step to assist the receptivity is deep, slow, rhythmic breathing, letting the lower abdomen expand and expelling the air by contracting the diaphragm.' She continued, 'After a while I stop this conscious breathing, and just let breathing go on — it remains slow and deep...' (We suggest that this type of breathing, by retarding the 'vibration' of the physical body, causes a vibrational 'gulf' between it and the vehicle of vitality: the latter is partially released or projected and, since it represents the 'bridge' between the physical body and the Soul Body, this also is partially released, permitting ESP.)

When very ill, Mrs Garrett nearly died. A 'tall man' appeared and ordered her to breathe slowly: he said, 'If you can use the same breathing at night you will relax yourself to sleep and so get well.'¹⁷ Mrs Garrett perfected this breathing-technique and thereby increased her clairvoyant powers. Her method is as follows:¹⁸

'The only movement that I make in breathing is on the intake of the breath. I feel the breath gradually pass below the abdominal

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 103.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 104-5.

muscles and flow out of the body. The next breath is not one that I consciously take... From that I take up my usual rate of breathing, while still retaining that original deep first inhalation. It is from that first breath-intake that I have achieved consciously a voluntary control over many of the involuntary muscles. Out of this original breath-control, I have learned to change my states of perception through a change in the rate of breathing until I now find that the sensory perceptions themselves make their breathing-rate, which varies in depth and rapidity, as I shift from state to state in the course of my work.' Mrs Garrett concluded by insisting that to breathe 'well and deeply' is to enrich the perceptions and to strengthen the spiritual and psychic functions.

In 1943, Mrs Garrett¹⁹ explained that deep (below-diaphragm) breathing affects the solar plexus which is 'the seat of the sub-conscious in a certain sense.' This is a preliminary step to further efforts (both physical and psychic) leading to super-conscious activities, such as telepathy and clairvoyance.

Breathing and Colour

Mrs Garrett²⁰ also discussed breathing and colour. She insisted: 'The breath is an instrument of vitality, a conveyor of life itself.' As already said, the breath can be manipulated to induce dissociation: variations in breathing affect the blood-flow, the blood-flow affects the life-force, this the sentiency of the nervous system and this the level of consciousness. She went further than in her previous books and said that solar-plexus breathing has 'an effect — as though an immaterial essence of the breath somehow operates in my system in ways which are not familiar to physical science... Sentiency is involved in the process, for I become aware of symbols, of the solar plexus, and of subtle movements within my body, like the most delicate flowing of energy over allied nervous systems.' She claimed, 'These are factual occurrences, not the effect of the imagination.' Later²¹ she stated that 'the subtle movements within the body' seem to be 'movements within the vitality of the nerves.'

Still later,²² Mrs Garrett maintained, 'Each phase of consciousness is wrapped within some form of vehicle, subtle and invisible though it may be, which is appropriate to the state of evolution of its being.' This idea — that the 'level' of consciousness is determined by the

¹⁹ Mrs Eileen J. Garrett, *Awareness*, (Creative Age Press, 1943), p. 45.

²⁰ *ibid.*, chapter 5.

²¹ *ibid.*, p. 105.

²² *ibid.*, p. 214.

bodily constitution at the time — is often given, both explicitly and implicitly, in 'communications' from 'Beyond' (see the present writer's *The Supreme Adventure*.²³)

Phoebe Payne,²⁴ another psychic of quite exceptional ability and of undoubted integrity, also held that the vehicle of vitality registers the thoughts and feelings of other people, i.e., it is used indirectly in telepathic activities.

According to A. Zymonidas,²⁵ deep breathing is an excellent preparation for artificial, i.e., deliberate, astral projection: 'First, because it teaches a man how to absorb ["Prāna"] on a colossal scale; and next because it loosens the ties between a man's earth body and its astral partner [= vehicle of vitality].' This 'abnormal supply of magnetic fluids', he warned, led to 'abnormal development', i.e., to an undue loosening of the vehicle of vitality and therefore to entering the 'Hades', or semi-dream conditions of the immediate next world. While deep breathing, as practised by students of singing, improves the health, it should not be overdone. He held that, 'Deep breathing as taught by occult teachers is not a normal, but an abnormal process and is therefore dangerous.'

Olive C. B. Pixley said,²⁶ 'The first step towards making a contact with our consciousness is through breathing. Conscious breathing is exactly the opposite to physical breathing. It is up and down [instead of in and out], starting from the solar plexus... Our bodies over there [= Soul Bodies] are composed of particles of Light, instead of dust, as our flesh is here. Light is as concrete in a world composed of different conditions of Light as matter is concrete in the physical world. In our Light Bodies there are no internal organs. Breath goes up and down instead of in and out; I had to "think" my breath from my solar plexus to my feet, and straight up to the invisible point of a triangle, the base of which rested on each palm of my hand. The intake of breath had to be *thought down* to my feet, the expulsion *forced up*. We were given exercises until conscious breathing became as easy as ordinary breathing, and we immediately felt certain results.' (Olive Pixley was evidently filling the 'aura' with strong vital forces.)

Later she said:²⁷ 'The method by which a man can increase the

²³ Crookall, op. cit. (above, note 3), pp. 69, 174.

²⁴ Phoebe Payne, *Man's Latent Powers* (Faber, 1938).

²⁵ A. Zymonidas, *Normal and Abnormal Spiritual Evolution* (The Spiritual Ray Publications, 1920), p. 89.

²⁶ Olive C. Pixley, *The Trail* (C. W. Daniel, 1934), p. 21.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 57.

strength of his Spirit [= Greater, Eternal Self] is the developing of his conscious understanding... to possess his own Soul he must lose his egotism. The first step towards this union of body and Soul is accomplished through learning to breathe consciously. Breath is a rhythm... In the developing of our awareness we cannot [= must not] make a single automatic [= unconscious] gesture... The teaching in Light is for the developing of our visualizing powers, for it is out through the vision [= clear mental images] that the Spirit can increase the capacity of our mental understanding [= lesser, outer, temporary, everyday self, the personality]. Learning to breathe consciously involves no physical effort, no strain upon the lungs... On the contrary, the body has to be so relaxed that in visualizing the conscious breath you become aware of your spiritual potentialities.'

Edgar Cayce²⁸ described how his remarkable psychic powers were made to function. First he put his hand to his head, between the eyes, (i.e., at the place where 'the third eye' is said to be situated in the Soul Body) and after a few minutes he experienced 'a flash of brilliant white light' (= the Soul Body was released from the physical body). Then, he said, 'I move my hands down to the solar plexus and — they tell me [for he was physically unconscious] — my breathing becomes very deep and rhythmical, from the diaphragm [facilitating the release of some of the vehicle of vitality]. This goes on for several minutes. When my eyes begin to flutter closed — up till now they have been open but glazed — the conductor knows I am ready... This, then, is how I give a [psychic] "reading".'

Mrs Piper,²⁹ on going into trace (often with the production of super-normal knowledge) breathed 'slower by one half than very normal, and very stertorous' (expelling some of the vehicle of vitality).

BREATHING AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Phoebe Payne,³⁰ like Mrs Garrett, pointed out that one of the functions of the vehicle of vitality is to act as an insulator — it dulls telepathic impacts (acting like the 'blinkers' on the harness of a horse and resembling the dense physical body in this respect). Its insulation value is relatively poor with people in whom it is loose (and these therefore tend to be 'negative' psychics, i.e., un-self-

²⁸ Edgar Cayce, *What I Believe* (Association for Research and Enlightenment, 1946), p.21.

²⁹ *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*, xxxviii (1915), p.19.

³⁰ Payne, op. cit. (above, note 24), p. 59.

controlled) and it can be reduced by great fatigue. the excessive use of alcohol, sedation, drugs, etc. In such circumstances, creative thought is of great value: the person concerned should make a clear mental image of a sound vehicle of vitality (and, of course, physical body) and, at the same time, breathe quietly and steadily, deliberately building vitality into the mental image.

In the later book written in collaboration with her husband, Dr L. J. Bendit,³¹ Miss Payne said that 'long, quiet breaths' not only steady the 'bridge' between mind and body that is variously called 'the etheric body' and the vehicle of vitality, but also steady our mental images — they cease to be blurred, indistinct and ineffective.³² Later³³ she pointed out that everyone is born with a congenital pattern of both physical and 'etheric' make-up. The physical cannot be greatly altered, but the 'etheric' or vital body can be considerably modified because it is composed of 'subtle and malleable' substance that is influenced directly by one's thoughts, feelings and willings.

Reference may also be made to a later, and still more important, book by these two eminent authors — *Man Incarnate* (Theosophical Publishing House). In this they quote an ancient Indian saying that is germane to the present issue — 'Prāna [= cosmic vitality] follows thought [including mental images].'

H. A. and F. H. Curtiss said:³⁴ 'The realm of the life-force, or the vital realm [= 'Hades'] is the one in which the life-force is taking on forms and animating them... It is in this vital realm that the various currents of the life-force flow into and through the pattern or thought-form of the thing to be manifested, carrying with them the ethereal astral matter and building it into the thought-pattern until the thought-pattern takes on the limitations of matter and becomes an objective astral form, ready to descend one step further into the still denser and still more limited physical world...'

Frederick Fletcher dealt with illness as follows:³⁵ 'The body would first be thoroughly purified by diet, hygiene, and, if possible, exercise, so as to permit the vital forces having uninterrupted sway. From the mind of the patient would be banished anxiety and despondency and replaced by a positive healthy attitude. In the

³¹ Phoebe Payne and L. J. Bendit, *The Psychic Sense* (Faber, 1943), pp. 99, 193.

³² *ibid.*, p. 139.

³³ Phoebe Payne and L. J. Bendit, *Man Incarnate: A Study of the Vital Etheric Field* (T.P.H., 1957).

³⁴ H. A. and F. H. Curtiss, *Realms of the Living Dead* (San Francisco, 1917), p. 99.

³⁵ Frederick Fletcher, *The Sixth Sense* (L. N. Fowler, 1907), p. 115.

imagination of the sufferer would be formed a mental picture of... perfect health and normal functioning. This image is then... clothed by will with astral and etheric matter...' Later he said, 'Remembering that life-energy is contained within space, by inhaling deeply, we absorb into the body the vitality which is suspended in the "ethersphere" [= 'Hades']. Hence, prolonged and deep inspiration greatly enhance our physical energy... A steady lung-action lends much assistance to mind-control.' He pointed out that deep breathing has long been used in psychic development.

A HIDDEN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BREATHING AND HEALTH
Phoebe Payne³⁶ used the term 'etheric body' for that 'semi-physical' portion of the total physical body which we call the vehicle of vitality: she described it as composed of 'subtle physical material' and attributed it to the same functions as those given by 'communicators' (Appendix II): it is (a) 'a vehicle for the circulation of human vitality' (the Prāna of the ancient Hindus) and (b) 'an infinitely delicate bridge between the psychic worlds and the physical brain-consciousness.' She made a further statement that corresponds with 'communications' (and observations made by other psychics):³⁷ 'it transmits vitality from the surrounding atmosphere into the dense physical vehicle, and eliminates used etheric matter.' A person tends to be psychic because his 'etheric body', i.e., vehicle of vitality, is 'easily drawn upon [= 'loose'] and is usually highly sensitized.' Like Mrs Eileen J. Garrett, C. W. Leadbeater and many other psychics, Miss Payne observed that it possesses specialized centres (the 'chakras' of the ancient Hindus) situated near to important nerve-ganglia and to the endocrine glands (see the present writers book, entitled *The Study and Practice of Astral Projection*).³⁸ She observed, 'The vitality of the outside atmosphere is conveyed to the dense physical body, through all these vortices, but especially through the one situated over the spleen.'

Positive and Negative Psychism

Miss Payne, like other psychics, and like numerous 'communicators', distinguished between negative (un-self-controlled) and positive (self-controlled) psychism: those who undertake 'possession'-

³⁶ Payne, op. cit. (above, note 24), p. 45.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 47.

³⁸ Robert Crookall, *The Study and Practice of Astral Projection* (Aquarian Press, 1961), p. 222.

mediumship are negative; clairvoyants, who remain more or less self-conscious (un-entranced) are positive. The vehicle of vitality of a negative psychic being rather 'loose', allows the vitality to flow through and is relatively insensitive, whereas the vehicle of vitality of a positive psychic is less loose and more sensitive. Negative psychics tend to breathe in a rapid shallow manner: they can convert their negative into positive psychism by gradually breathing a little more deeply (not too deeply) and a little more slowly (not too slowly) since this corrects the loose condition of the vehicle of vitality. Cases in which nausea has been caused by intense emotion can also be relieved by steady, fairly deep breathing, since the process steadies the 'etheric' chakras and permits control over the corresponding emotional centre.

Again, a person with a tendency to negative psychism may be unable to distinguish between the actual Soul Body of a 'dead' person and a mere mental image, and may honestly confuse the two: if, however, he will 'steady' and 'smooth' the 'bridge' between his Soul Body and his physical body, i.e., the vehicle of vitality, by quiet, steady breathing, 'breathing freely and fully, but not too fully, and deeply but not too deeply' (stopping short, of course, of the slightest giddiness), distinctions such as these can readily be made. This should, indeed, become the habitual mode of breathing for us all, obviating tension: the upper chest should first be filled, then the lower; the lower should first be emptied, then the upper.

Bianca Udnorna said,³⁹ 'Thirty years I have been a student of the eastern Yoga philosophy, which teaches that the air you breathe contains more than the gases and chemical elements which alone are cognizable by science. It contains a principle which Yogis call "Prána", the Life Principle, which sustains every atom in the Universe. This "Prána" can be controlled and can be directed to any organs of the body by forceful intention. This I have proved thousands of times.'

THE POLARITY OF BREATH

Zymonidas⁴⁰ warned against breathing alternately through first one nostril and then the other (as taught by some, but discountenanced by other, Yogis). This, he said, 'produces an alternating effect of negative and positive astral [= 'Hades'] and physical vibration that is part of the system for loosening the individual hold on the positive character of the Ego. It begins that swaying motion, that wave-

³⁹ Light, L. (1930), p. 447.

⁴⁰ Zymonidas, op. cit. (above, note 25), p. 82.

vibration of flowing in and out, with rhythmic repetitions, that keeps the mental Ego poised as a bird is poised in preparation for flight... It is no longer mere air... that we draw in and absorb now, but those far subtler emanations from the higher regions of the elemental plane that we are attracting and absorbing with each breath.

'To go on and... breathe deeper and deeper... first in the negative and then in the positive vibrations... to sway the body lightly to and fro... will carry the mind and its astral body [= the vehicle of vitality] into astral [= 'Hades'] conditions... until the astral body and the mental Ego together sweep out of the physical body, opening the door to consciousness on the astral plane... Practise deep breathing as a singer practises it [= simple, fairly deep, regular breathing] — do not attempt these "improvements".'

2

Observations by Temporarily Psychic Astral Projectors

MORTALS IN-BREATHE 'SEMI-PHYSICAL' VITAL FORCES

Sylvan J. Muldoon,¹ like the Yogis (Appendix I) and many 'communicators' (Appendix II) claimed that the 'Astral [here = Soul] Body' is "the condenser of cosmic energy — the very energy you employ in moving about." 'This energy', he said, 'is the breath of life, omnipresent in every living thing... Without this "breath of life" man would be really nothing but dust.' (Compare Gen.2:7).

The Soul Body is not only the primary body, more 'real' and enduring than the physical body, but it is the medium through which the latter is kept alive. The familiar physical body is animated when in coincidence with the condenser-like Soul Body. But the two separate temporarily in sleep (also in fainting, anaesthesia, etc. — hence unconsciousness of the physical world). While temporarily projected, the Soul Body transmits cosmic vitality via the 'silver cord'-extension² to its physical counterpart, which is thus kept 'alive'. Thus, it is literally true that 'Man does not live by bread alone.'³ On hundreds of occasions Muldoon's Soul Body left his physical body temporarily, during which periods he was fully conscious and could make definite observations of the first importance: these events began when he was a boy of twelve and had never heard of such things. He stated, 'Each breath [of the 'breath of life'] taken in the Astral [Soul Body] can be seen pulsating over the astral cord and causes a duplicate breath [of air — in the physical body].' He insisted, 'You breathe in the Astral, and your heart beats in the Astral, just as it does when you are in coincidence. Your physical heart beats because within it the Astral heart beats.'

Muldoon found that, when his Soul Body was projected, or

¹ S. J. Muldoon and Dr Hereward Carrington, *The Projection of the Astral Body* (Rider, 1929), p. 31.

² Eccles. 12:6.

³ Matt. 4:4.

released, from his physical body, breathing of a calm and serene nature reduced the attraction which the physical body had on the Soul Body and therefore facilitated the freedom of the latter: on the other hand, strong and deep breathing increased the attraction and tended to cause the Soul Body to re-engage with the physical.

A writer in *London Forum* (March 1935) described her projections and the conditions under which they occurred. Among these were statements that her physical body became rigid, 'the breathing perceptibly slowed down and the pulsations of the heart followed suit.' This agrees with the American Muldoon's observations.

Whereas most people regard food as the only source of human energy, Muldoon held that 'the main source' is cosmic vitality obtained by the released Soul Body (during sleep).⁴

The 'Silver Cord'

William Gerhardi, M.A., B.Litt., the author, in a book entitled *Resurrection*,⁵ described how his Soul Body left his physical body. He observed that it remained united to the physical by a feature that he variously compared with 'a coil of light', 'a luminous garden-hose', 'a strong ray of light', 'a lighted cord', 'a tail of light' and 'a silver cord'. He realized that it was 'by means of this "silver cord"-extension that the body on the bed was kept breathing', and, like many others, he compared the 'cord' to the umbilical cord of childbirth.

Dr Horace Leaf, Ph.D., F.R.G.S., also observed 'a cord-like connection' between his Astral [= Soul] Body and his physical body, and called it 'the psychic cord' and 'the psychic umbilical cord'. He said, '*It supplies vitality from the Astral [Soul Body] to the physical body.*'⁶

Mrs Gwen Cripps described how her Soul Body quitted its physical counterpart and stated, 'I saw the "silver cord": it appeared luminous... I could see the vitality in it — a pulsation.'⁷ (N.B. This Englishwoman used the same word, namely, 'pulsation' as the American Dr R. B. Hout, also the American S. J. Muldoon who stated, 'Each breath taken in the Astral can be seen pulsing over the Astral cord and causes a duplicate breath to be taken by the insensible [physical] body'.)

Mrs Clara Clayton also used this, surely significant, term. She

⁴ Muldoon and Carrington, op. cit. (above, note 1), p. 93.

⁵ William Gerhardi, *Resurrection* (Cassell, 1934).

⁶ Dr Horace Leaf, *What Mediumship Is* (Psychic Press, 1938).

⁷ Muldoon and Carrington, op. cit. (above, note 1), p. 32.

said, 'I was attached to it [physical body] by a silver thread of light which was pulsating with life. I moved further from the body and found that this cord of light appeared to stretch: it was like elastic... On and on I went... This cord was alive and vibrating all the time...'

Vincent Turvey observed 'a living cord' and said it was 'silver tinged with heliotrope.'⁸ F. C. Sculthorpe said that when he was out of his physical body his consciousness was more vivid than when he was in it: but 'it waxed and waned according to the life-force reaching it through the astral cord.'

F. Huntley, when free from his physical body, not only observed that his Soul Body was attached to his body by 'a feeble thread' but also realized that if this became broken his physical body would die, that it would cease to receive the necessary vitality from the Soul Body.⁹ A Batchelor of Music, Sigrid Kaeyer, who made the same observation, called the 'cord' 'a connection';¹⁰ L. T. Croke called it 'a luminous cord';¹¹ both A. R. Hall¹² and J. M. Stuart-Young¹³ called it 'a cord'; G. A. Ibbetson 'a thread'.¹⁴ All — who had never heard of each other, much less compared accounts — use congruous terms.

The deponents cited above were either British or American. Other nationals gave significantly similar descriptions. A Latvian, Fred Rebell,¹⁵ when alone at sea, left his body temporarily: he saw that he was still attached to it by 'a thin luminous ribbon' and realized that the severance of this 'ribbon' would mean the death of his physical body. Prior to his experience, this man was a sceptic. An American friend of Dr Carrington¹⁶ made the same observations as Rebell, as did the Canadian Peter M. Urquhart.¹⁷ The last-mentioned (like Muldoon, Gerhardi, Leaf, etc.) compared his 'cord' to the umbilical cord which carries nutriment from one body to another prior to childbirth.

⁸ Vincent Turvey, *The Beginnings of Seership* (Stead's Publishing House, 1909), pp.45, 57.

⁹ F. Huntley in J. Arthur Hill, *Man is a Spirit* (Cassell, 1918).

¹⁰ Sigrid Kaeyer, *I was in the Spirit* (Rider).

¹¹ *Sunday Times*, (1 April 1962).

¹² *ibid.*, (18 March 1962).

¹³ *Two Words*, (1932).

¹⁴ *Psychic News*, (12 August 1961).

¹⁵ Fred Rebell, *Escape to the Sea* (Youth Book Club, 1951).

¹⁶ Dr H. Carrington, *Psychic Oddities* (Rider, 1952).

¹⁷ *London Forum* (March, 1935).

EXPANDED CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH BREATH CHANGES

Dr Alice Gilbert¹⁸ told how she felt impelled (1) to perform deep breathing as she sank off to sleep at night and (2) to awaken at 4 a.m.: she then remembered the astral travels she had made (and wisely wrote them down at once). Later she described her use of a breathing technique.¹⁹ It concluded: 'Lying flat on my back, with my palms upward, I emptied my mind and began to draw deep breaths, taking 25 seconds in and 25 seconds out, exactly, in slow deep rhythm... Gradually the thought-web [= vehicle of vitality] relaxed and became still...'

Oliver Fox also told how he induced a projection.²⁰ He said, 'On retiring for the night, I lay on my right side, keeping as still as possible and taking deep rhythmic breaths...' He gave a method for 'self-induced trance' which included 'deep and rhythmical breathing.'²¹

'Betty',²² an American, described what happened when she left her physical body in a body which was 'more of a gas substance.' She said, 'I stopped breathing; but I found a new way to breathe. I felt it when it changed... Everything swirled and swirled and rocked in a kind of rhythm. I was vaguely conscious of trying to force out something [= the 'gas substance' = the Soul Body], working very hard.'

A Frenchman, Yram,²³ found that astral projection (in which consciousness is temporarily expanded and elevated, with clairvoyance and telepathy) is facilitated by relaxing the body and breathing rhythmically. He stated, 'Immediately on becoming free [from the physical body] there is a feeling of well-being; we seem to breathe with greater ease; the consciousness has a feeling of unaccustomed freedom...'²⁴ On one occasion when his Soul Body re-entered his physical body he noticed that his breathing 'slowed down'. When his Soul Body was free, it was sometimes carried away at speed by 'magnetic' or 'electric' currents and these revitalized him.

¹⁸ Dr Alice Gilbert, *Philip in Two Worlds* (Andrew Dakers, 1948), p. 17.

¹⁹ Dr Alice Gilbert, *Philip in the Spheres* (Aquarian Press, 1952), p. 165.

²⁰ Oliver Fox, *Astral Projection* (Rider), p. 92

²¹ *ibid.*, p. 126.

²² Stewart Edward White, *The Road I Know* (Robert Hale), p. 58.

²³ *Practical Astral Projection* (Rider), p. 49.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p. 13.

BREATHING AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Helen Rhodes wrote a book entitled *Psychoma*²⁵ (Soul Sleep) which was said to include teachings that were received during astral projections, i.e., while the Soul Body was released from the physical body. These teachings were tested by a group of students and they experienced the 'cosmic consciousness' that was described by Dr R. M. Bucke, M.D.²⁶

Mrs Rhodes wisely determined to use a special hour each day and to keep to that time over a period of two months. This procedure, which is recommended by many others, is valuable as assisting progress by setting up a kind of rhythm, by establishing a mental habit. She held that most people think they are very much alert and alive, but their consciousness is actually very dim compared with what is possible. (St Paul also held this view — see *The Supreme Adventure*.²⁷)

In recent times P. D. Ouspensky got the idea from Gurdjieff and it was published by Dr Kenneth Walker in his book, *Venture with Ideas*²⁸ But it was said long ago by the mystic William Law (*Spirit of Prayer*): 'The greatest part of mankind — nay, of Christians — may be said to be asleep, and that particular Way of Life which takes up each man's mind, thoughts and actions may well be called his particular dream!' In addition, 'communicators' (who are regarded by some as mere fragments of the minds of uneducated persons) quite often state the same as Mrs Rhodes, St Paul, Gurdjieff, William Law, etc.

Discarnate Helpers

The 'communicator' of Mary Bruce Wallace stated that discarnate helpers are always ready to act as 'deliverers' and temporarily release mortals who are spiritually and morally ready, from the 'blinkers'-like physical body.²⁹ He said, 'Heavenly ones approach any soul who shows a sign of being prepared to assimilate thoughts from our side. They stand ready, waiting to be of assistance, conferring with each other how best to influence the soul: while loosened from its bodily form, it is in a state of trance [i.e., unconsciousness]... There is consultation as to how soon it will be possible to waken him therefrom to participate actively with us on

²⁵ Helen Rhodes, *Psychoma* (1913).

²⁶ Dr R. M. Bucke, *Cosmic Consciousness* (E. P. Dutton, 1901).

²⁷ Robert Crookall, *The Supreme Adventure* (James Clarke, 1961), p. 69.

²⁸ Kenneth Walker, *Venture with Ideas* (Jonathan Cape, 1951).

²⁹ Mary Bruce Wallace, *The Thinning of the Veil* (Watkins, 1919), p. 64.

our side.' The 'communicator' of Majorie Livingston said, 'We know when the butterfly has grown his wings, and we find means to break the chrysalis and set him free.'³⁰

Helen Rhodes similarly maintained: 'The workers on the astral plane put forth every effort to awaken the "sleeper"...' She described us mortals as 'alternatively waking and sleeping in a world of somnambulists, each intent on his own little dream, bent upon self-gratification and ingrown upon itself, unaware that *real life* is yet to be lived.' It is only by sorrow, disappointment, sickness, injustice, etc. — all products of the inharmony of the dream-life (which we mortals call earth-life) — that the soul-sleep is disturbed and the 'super-conscious mind' can be 'awakened'. Self-suggestion is a valuable aid in this work.

Like numerous 'communicators' (and unlike many clergymen) Mrs Rhodes pointed out that 'death does not liberate the soul except it liberate itself.' She added, 'There is only one place for the liberation of the sense life [= the lesser, outer, temporary, everyday self, the personality] — *here!* This is the place of bondage! Real ['super-conscious'] life begins when this bondage ends! The dream to waken from is: "I [the Greater, Inner, Eternal, Transcendental Self, the Over Soul] am this little body", [personality]. One awakens to a realization of 'the oneness of all creatures, of friends and enemies, of the eternal purpose.' There is, of course, nothing new or revolutionary in this expansion and awakening of consciousness. What is of value consists in the methods by which this can be attained.

Badouin, in France, formulated 'the law of reversed effort', expressing the fact that pure 'will-power' (of the lesser or everyday self) not only fails to achieve anything in the psychic realm (of the psychic or intermediate self) or in the spiritual realm (of the Greater, Eternal Self or Over-Soul), but sets up strains within the total Self that prevent integration or 'wholeness'. Mrs Rhodes similarly pointed out, 'Mere resistance is of no avail... Creative energy is at call... Cease to dream! Awake!... Conquer the animal self which dwells in sensation only. Link yourself to the great Over-Soul rather than the human caprice... When a person senses the lower nature governing, he re-adjusts himself quicker through the breath than through the management of the mental machinery...'

'*The method of the inward breath:* (1) Inhale as from a circle with yourself as the centre and the solar plexus as the focus; (2) Hold the

³⁰ Marjorie Livingston, *The Elements of Heaven* (Wright and Brown, 1928), p. 64.

breath a moment, then (3) slowly exhale upward, spreading the breath within and over the entire body, *visualizing* the process as similar to the piece of fireworks known as a "shower". To heal any organ, or to acquire increased power, direct the spraying to that organ, accompanied with certain affirmations. (Do not draw in the abdomen except as you exhaust the breath.)

'Method: (1) Inhale slowly through the nose, inflating lungs, sides, abdomen in turn, following the in-breathing with a *mental picture* of its progression, focusing and holding the breath a moment at the solar plexus; (2) Exhale slowly upward along the spine and *visualize* spraying the entire body... Each exercise should close with a relaxing movement... By carrying a thought on the breath the whole organism is stirred... visualize the thought, fix it in the mind and breathe upon it as a matrix for manifestation.'

Mrs Rhodes gave the following general exercise (which should be undertaken with the *muscles relaxed*): (a) Stand on the ball of foot, arms hanging at sides and rising to the toes as the hands describe an upward and outward circle, reaching the hands out to their farthest limit in front and in line with the shoulder, with each thumb and forefinger held together at the tips. (b) Describe into these fingertips a line straight out to the extreme sides, as if spinning a fine thread. (c) With arms extended turn palms up, bending the hands over, touching the shoulder with the finger-tips (holding them in this position). (d) Bring the elbows straight out to the front. (e) Swing the elbows straight back in place at the sides with elbows bent, leaving hands level with waist-line, weight on ball of foot... When the elbows are brought to the sides at (e) use for the last movement the extending of the hands to the front and describe part of a circle as in supplication, thus spraying your immediate environment with *the thoughts* you desire to see manifested. Repeat 10-20 times. The upper part of the body should be flexible, shoulders flat.

'The next step is concentration and meditation. These begin where breath-control leaves off. It is most important to have a certain time and place; the waking hour is the best time, while the last thought at night, having laid aside worry, anger and fear, should be "I go to seek wisdom and to manifest it through my conscious mind". Ask for, demand of, the super-conscious mind results, whether in knowledge or as regards health, during the forthcoming sleep... Think of yourself in pictures, visualize your hopes.' Badouin pointed out that when the *will* (which belongs to the lesser

or everyday self) and the *imagination* (which belongs to the Greater or Eternal Self) are at war *the imagination always wins*.

A HIDDEN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BREATHING AND HEALTH
This has already been discussed. An establishment of physical health, a process that is greatly facilitated by rhythmic breathing (combined with visualization and self-suggestion) was the first stage in the passage from the common stage of Soul-sleep to a spiritual awakening.

THE POLARITY OF BREATH

Although Helen Rhodes did not mention alternate breathing, later (as Helen Rhodes Wallace) she did, recommending it to restore nervous conditions.³¹ It should, she said, precede the 'inward breath' already mentioned.

³¹ Helen Rhodes Wallace, *How to Enter the Silence* (L. N. Fowler), p. 125.

3

Observations Made at Transitions

We have seen that number of people who left their bodies temporarily, i.e., astral projectors, independently declared that the released Soul Body inbreathes cosmic vitality and also reported seeing the vitality 'pulsating' in their own 'silver cords' on its way to vivify their physical bodies. This applied to Muldoon, etc., in America, and to William Gerhardi, Dr Horace Leaf, Mrs Gwen Cripps, Mrs Clayton and F. C. Sculthorpe in England.

In the following cases the same phenomenon was observed under very different circumstances. The observers were present at deathbeds; the Soul Body, plus the vehicle of vitality, of the dying man was released from his physical body, but the last attenuated connexion, so often compared to a 'silver cord', remained to be severed. These observers, like certain astral projectors, reported seeing the vitality 'pulsating' in the 'silver cord'-extension of someone else, namely, a man who was in course of transition. Once the 'silver cord' was 'loosed' (as Ecclesiastes, 12:6 said) the Soul Body could not re-enter and re-vivify the physical body; this, and not the quitting of the physical body, was the final and irrevocable act in the act of dying. According to our evidence, the Soul Body, which is the primary instrument of consciousness, quits its physical 'condensation' every time we are unconscious of physical things, i.e., during sleep, fainting, anaesthesia, etc. Thus the Soul Body leaves the physical body normally in deep sleep, the vehicle of vitality being only slightly disconnected from it. Death is something beyond this: in that event (1) the vehicle of vitality, the 'bridge' between the Soul and physical bodies, is completely projected; (2) the Soul Body is necessarily also completely freed from the physical and (3) those 'silver cord'-extensions which, remaining intact in astral projections, keep the body alive and permit eventual return to it, are completely severed.

An early case came from America, where Dr A. J. Davis observed a 'passing'. He stated:¹ 'Immediately previous to the final dissolution, I saw, playing energetically between the feet of the elevated Spirit [= Soul] Body and the prostrate physical form, a bright stream or current of vital electricity [= the 'silver cord']. This taught me that death is but a birth of the Spirit from a lower into a higher state; that an inferior [physical] body and mode of existence are exchanged for a superior [Soul] Body and corresponding endowments...I learned that the correspondence between the birth of a child into this world and the birth of a Spirit[Body] from a material body into a higher world is absolute and complete — even to the umbilical cord, which was represented by the thread of vital electricity which, for a few minutes, connected the two organisms.'

¹ Dr A. J. Davies, *The Physician* (1850).

4

Observations by Psychical Researchers

MORTALS IN-BREATHE 'SEMI-PHYSICAL' VITAL FORCES

Dr Hereward Carrington regarded the orthodox idea that food is the only source of energy as untrue.¹ In a book entitled *Modern Psychical Phenomena*, he pointed out that when we are tired and need energy, we do not seek food but sleep. He said, 'The body does not nearly so much resemble a steam-engine in its workings as it does the electric motor — at least so far as its energy is concerned.'² Food repairs the wastes of the body, not the energy which is derived from rest and sleep. He suggested, 'During periods of rest the body (its nervous mechanism) is re-charged with energy just in the same manner as the motor of the electrician is re-charged with electric energy, from without. The body, in short, is an energy-transforming machine and not an energy-creating machine. During sleep the body is in a receptive attitude and is re-charged by some all-pervading cosmic energy, in which "we live and move and have our being."' (Note that John Scott's 'communicator' quoted this same Biblical text³ in this connection.)

A Harley Street specialist, Dr Lockhart Anderson,⁴ on the basis of medical evidence came to a conclusion that was very similar to that of the Yogis (based on clairvoyant observation) and that of Dr Carrington: he held that 'Life (in a physiological sense) is a bi-polar affair, of which an electric battery is the readiest familiar counterpart...'

H. Ernest Hunt gave an excellent popular account of these ideas. It read as follows:⁵ 'We might liken the Soul [Body] to the battery of the [physical] body... When we are tired by our day's efforts we fall

¹ Dr H. Carrington, *Vitality, Fasting and Nutrition*, pp. 44-5.

² Dr H. Carrington, *Modern Psychical Phenomena* (1919), pp. 43-7.

³ Acts 7:28.

⁴ Dr Lockhart Anderson in A. T. Caton's *Activity and Rest* (Philip Allan and Co., 1936), p. xii.

⁵ E. Ernest Hunt, *Do We Survive Death?* (Rich and Cowan, 1936), p. 69.

asleep and the Soul [Body] is withdrawn from the [physical] body. In the interior world it is put "on charge" and duly renewed and refreshed during sleep. In the morning it returns fully charged...

'In effect, we have died to the physical world and have been alive in the "next", or super-physical World of Soul.' He added, 'Our Soul during the hours of sleep is not unconscious; it is learning much and sometimes helping other people. These experiences, if they are remembered at all, may be recalled as some dim dream.'

In 1938, Dr Carrington⁶ also discussed levitation by Yogis and later said, 'The theory is, of course, that levitation is induced by breathing exercises, which increase the flow of Prāna through the body, which in turn neutralizes the pull of gravity.'⁷ He then quoted from a paper which he had given previously where 'the lifting game' was described: a loss of up to 60 lb was noted. Carrington compared these results with certain results obtained in experiments with Eusapia Paladino (in which there was a loss of 17½ lb). He suggested that these were *partial* levitations and might have been developed into full levitations.⁸

According to H. Ernest Hunt, the Rev. Stainton Moses experienced difficulty in breathing when levitated.⁹

Max Freedom Long held that our minds control our bodies by means of 'vital force' which can affect gravity.¹⁰ After referring to Hereward Carrington's *The Story of Psychic Science*¹¹ and his experiments that seemed to show a loss in weight caused by deep breathing, he drew attention to the fact that Dr Schrenck Notzing reported the case of a young man who practised breath-control and levitated his own body on seven occasions.¹² He said that, on the other hand, there are many reports of people who, through breath-control and will, produced the opposite effect, i.e., increased their weight. Long pointed out that in Hawaii, as in Tibet, 'will-breathing' facilitates the running of great distances at great speed.¹³

Mme. A. David-Neel described the latter phenomenon ('lung-gom'). She said, 'The man did not run. He seemed to lift himself from the ground, proceeding by leaps.'¹⁴ She found that those men

⁶ Dr H. Carrington, *Higher Psychic Development* (Aquarian Press, 1978).

⁷ Dr H. Carrington, *The Psychic World* (Methuen, 1938), p. 169.

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 174.

⁹ Hunt, *op. cit.* (above, note 5), p. 96.

¹⁰ Max Freedom Long, *The Secret Science Behind Miracles* (Kosmon Press, 1948), p. 76.

¹¹ Dr H. Carrington, *The Story of Psychic Science* (Rider, 1930).

¹² Dr Schrenck-Notzing, International Psychic Congress, Paris, 1927.

¹³ Long, *op. cit.* (above, note 10), p. 77.

¹⁴ Mme. A. David-Neel, *With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet* (Penguin, 1936).

who could do this were, at the time, in a state of trance, and therefore physically relaxed. They repeated a formula, the syllables of which were said at the same time as they took a breath and a step. The Yoga teaching that a force that counteracts gravity is generated in deep breathing is well known.

Professor C. Flammarion, discussion conditions of seances, observed, 'The breathing seems to have a very great influence... It seems as if the sitters released, by breathing, an amount of motor energy comparable to that which they release when rapidly moving their limbs.' He commented, 'There is something in this very curious and difficult to explain.'¹⁵

Experimental Evidence

We now come to some definite evidence. Dr Gertrude Schmeidler reported an experiment:¹⁶ six graduate students made an ESP 'run' which proved to be very close to chance; then they listened to a swami's lecture on meditation and Prâna and performed a breathing exercise which he prescribed. This procedure was followed by a second ESP 'run', in which the results were above chance expectation. (As a rule, the second 'run' is lower than the first, owing to decline in interest.)

In 1930, Dr. E. Osty, the French physician who followed Dr G. Geley as Director of the Institute Metapsychique International of Paris, experimented with Rudi Schneider and obtained results the significance of which do not seem to have been generally realized.¹⁷ An object, such as a handkerchief, was placed on the laboratory table to see if Rudi could move it by super-normal means. The object was projected by a beam of infra-red light focused on a photo-electric cell: if anything interrupted this beam, a bell rang (after the fashion of a burglar alarm). During certain experiments the bell did ring, and, as pre-arranged, ultra-violet light flooded the room and a camera automatically photographed the whole scene. The photographs showed that the obscuration of the beam had not been brought about by Rudi's arm or leg (which in any case were held by the experimentors) but by something (ectoplasm, from the vehicle of vitality?) that was normally invisible.

Now Rudi's breathing was normally twelve to fourteen per minute, but during these experiments (when he was in trance, i.e., with a significant part of the vehicle of vitality released) it was

¹⁵ C. Flammarion, *Mysterious Psychic Forces*.

¹⁶ J.A.S.P.R. (64), p. 101.

¹⁷ Dr E. Osty, *La Revue Metapsychique* (1932).

120-300 per minute and very noisy. When the alarm-bell was replaced by suitable instruments, Osty found that the vibration rate of the ectoplasm(?) was always exactly twice Rudi's rate of breathing. Moreover, the greatest emissions of ectoplasm(?) were under the control of Rudi's will — they occurred after he said they would occur.

The very noisy nature of Rudi's breathing is interesting. Observations as given in *Events on the Threshold of the After-Life* by the present writer,¹⁸ indicate that the process of transition involves two factors and therefore tends to take place in two stages: the Soul Body (which is highly tenuous — 'super-physical' in nature) leaves the physical body quickly and easily — in fact, it has usually left an hour or more before 'the end', hence the pre-death coma; on the other hand, the vehicle of vitality (which is denser — 'semi-physical' in nature) leaves slowly and occasionally with some difficulty (hence contortions which, however, are not felt by the person concerned). The one in course of transition, towards 'the end', breathes noisily, as though labouring to pump out of the body all the remaining elements of the vehicle of vitality. The trance of 'physical' mediumship (e.g., that of Schneider) is clearly related to death — in each case the release of the vehicle of vitality causes (unfelt) contortions and the body becomes lifeless. Comparisons may also be made with the observations of Pawlowski at a materialization seance.¹⁹

Dr Osty considered that 'behind the use of the mind in feeling, in thinking and in acting on matter [i.e., the conscious mind of the personality] there is another intelligent plane of being, usually not manifest, which very probably represents the fundamental reality of ourselves and forms part of the plane of life quite different from that in which we exercise our ordinary intelligence.'²⁰ It may be added that Dr Gerda Walther, who was a Roman Catholic and an eminent psychical researcher, on the basis of personal observations, is convinced of the genuineness of Schneider's phenomena.²¹

An idea very similar to Osty's was held by William James on the basis of a study, not of the 'physical' phenomena of mediumship (which, on our hypothesis, involve the use of a somewhat loose and extensible 'semi-physical' vehicle of vitality), but of mystical

¹⁸ Robert Crookall, *Events on the Threshold of the After-Life* (Darshana International, India, 1967).

¹⁹ *Zeitschrift f. Parapsychologie* (1926), pp. 5-22.

²⁰ Dr E. Osty, *Supernormal Aspects of Energy and Matter* (Paris), p. 39.

²¹ Dr Gerda Walther, *Zum andern Ufer* (Remagen, 1960).

experiences (which we regard as representing consciousness operating through the 'super-physical' Spiritual Body): he considered that 'beyond each man, and in a fashion continuous with him, there exists a higher power which is friendly to him and to his ideals.'²²

The above-mentioned experiments of Dr E. Osty in Paris with Rudi Schneider (which, as said, indicate a correlation between the breathing-rate and the emission of ectoplasm) had been preceded by observations made by Professor Winther of Copenhagen, with Miss Rasmussen. Having obtained evidence of supernormal raps, telekinesis, etc., Winther made a special pendulum and found that the pendulum-rate often approximately corresponded to the medium's breathing-rate.

EXPANDED CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH BREATH CHANGES

Swedenborg held that we are surrounded by 'an ether' as well as by a physical atmosphere, and that when we in-breathe the latter we also in-breathe the former. His experiments led him to conclude that when he took in less air and more 'ether', clairvoyance ensued. Laurence Oliphant edited a book entitled *Sympneumata, or Evolutionary Forces Now Active in Man*, in which this idea was explained.

Fodor, speaking of Mrs Piper's trance, said, '*The trance begins, as a rule, with hissing intakes of breath and ends with deep expirations.*' He added, "There is a suggestion in it of the Yoga system of breathing".²³

Major J. H. Webster, describing a medium at a seance, observed, 'Within a few moments of her eyes closing, a very deep breathing indicates that the process of entrancement has commenced... Now let us see what happens when control of the medium is relinquished. Within a few seconds of the control expressing his intention to leave, there is a long exhalation of breath.'²⁴

Describing his observations on Eusapia Paladino, Professor Cesare Lombroso said:²⁵ 'When she is about to enter into the trance state, she lessens the frequency of the respiration movements, just as do the fakirs, passing from 18 inspirations to 15 and 12 a minute; while on the other hand, the heart-beats increase from 70 to 90, and

²² William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (Longmans Green, 1916).

²³ Dr Nandor Fodor, *The Encyclopedia of Psychic Science* (Arthur's Press, 1933).

²⁴ Major J. H. Webster, *Through Clouds of Doubt* (Psychic Book Club, 1939), pp. 43, 45, 390.

²⁵ Cesare Lombroso, *After Death — What?* (Fisher Unwin, 1909), p. 113.

even to 120.' Dr F. Tyndall described how his wife became entranced. He said, 'These trances come on by quick breathing.'²⁶

'Partial Suffocation'

Miss Tanner's studies were quoted in *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, xxviii, 1915, pp. 19-20. She made observations at six sittings with Mrs Piper and held that the latter's entrance into the trance state was voluntary. Miss Tanner observed, 'She tries not to think intently of anything', and that she 'makes her breathing much slower... In five or six minutes... the breathing is slower by one half than the normal and very stertorous, and the hand is ready to write.' Again, 'The breathing varies from approximately 22 in the normal to, at lowest, 7 and, as a rule 10 in the trance.' Miss Tanner suggested that, 'This profound variation in the breathing, with the lessened oxygenation of the blood, must result in a partial suffocation [as with ether, chloroform, the breathing of fumes, etc.] a temporary toxæmia, and is probably the agency by which the normal consciousness [which uses both the medium's own Soul Body and the physical body with which it is in gear] is put out of commission and the 'control' is put into possession [the discarnate soul whose Soul Body replaces that of the medium].' The suggestion is that when partial suffocation is induced (by a marked reduction in the breathing) part of the vehicle of vitality leaves the body: the normal 'bridge' between the medium's Soul Body and her physical body being thus broken, the former can no longer control the latter and the conditions permit possession by the 'control'.

Elizabeth Eslinger was imprisoned at Weinsberg for a minor offence: she and her companions witnessed many of the 'physical' phenomena of psychical research. Before any phenomena began, the lady 'began to breathe hard, as if suffocating.'²⁷

According to Harry Edwards, medical men who examined the entranced Jack Webber (the 'physical' medium) found that both heartbeat and respiration were accelerated, the former to 90-100 and the latter to nearly twice the normal rate.²⁸ Anna Maria Roos said,²⁹ 'Hypnotic sleep appears to a superficial observer quite like ordinary sleep — though in hypnotic sleep the respiration is fainter, and in deep somnambulism becomes almost imperceptible.'

²⁶ Dr F. Tyndall, *Spiritual Christianity* (Christian Occult Society), p. 21.

²⁷ Mrs Catherine Crowe, *The Night Side of Nature* (1848, 1904).

²⁸ Harry Edwards, *The Mediumship of Jack Webber* (Psychic Book Club, 1940), p. 76.

²⁹ Anna Maria Roos, *The Possibility of Miracles* (Rider), p. 44.

F. W. H. Myers mentioned the case of a woman doctor.³⁰ On several occasions she had tried to appear to a friend, Mrs C., who had gone to live many miles away, but the attempts proved unsuccessful. However, when ill and feverish [= with part of her vehicle of vitality released] she idly thought of Mrs C., and then did appear to her. (Mrs. C. wrote telling of her vision: she described the 'dream' of the phantom: it was one that she had never actually seen.) The point that interests us in the present connexion is that, while the lady doctor had partially released her vehicle of vitality (1) her breathing became 'slow and loud'; (2) her body became numb; (3) she succeeded in being seen when only 'idly' thinking of her — her released vehicle of vitality obeyed the direction of her attention.

The following is from an account, by William Oliver Stevens, of an investigation of a 'house-bound' spirit in which Mrs Eileen J. Garrett, in trance, sat relaxed. When Uvani (the 'control') had finished speaking, the tempo of her breathing changed. The breathing became laboured. It was evident that someone else was in possession instead of Uvani. Apparently now it was the ghost who was in control of the medium.³¹

Dr Edwin F. Bowers described a person in trance:³² the respiration, etc., varied: he observed 'This juggling with pulse and respiration was repeated two or three times.'

'Spirit to the Soul'

'Starr Daily' transcended 'all personal and bodily limitations': he stated:³³ 'Time and space vanished... I was free. I had found the Reality within the actuality, the breath within the breath, the consciousness within the consciousness, the Soul within the form.' He also recorded that a friend told him, 'Every time we breathe, we bring spirit to the Soul, as well as oxygen to the body.'

Nita Epton, having by means of certain exercises achieved an out-of-the-body experience, popularly called an astral projection, said,³⁴ 'My experience reminded me of the origins of the word "inspiration". Inspired utterances are said to occur as a result of breathing-in by a divine breath.'

³⁰ F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* (Longmans Green, 1906), vol. 1, p. 692.

³¹ William Oliver Stevens, *Unbidden Guests* (Allen & Unwin, 1949), p. 277.

³² Dr E. F. Bowers, *The Phenomena of the Seance Room* (Rider), p. 117.

³³ 'Starr Daily', *Release* (Arthur James, 1954), p. 54.

³⁴ Nita Epton in *Trances* (Allen & Unwin, 1966), p.54.

Al Koran, known to millions through his demonstrations on television of psychological principles, wrote a book in which he stressed the importance of faith and belief, and observed, 'Regular deep breathing is necessary towards making belief work...'³⁵

Dion Fortune, a psychologist, said: 'The first physical sign [of trance] is a change in the rhythm of the breath; a few deep, sighing respirations are followed by a complete stoppage of breathing for a few seconds, then respiration begins again with a different rhythm, shallow, slow, and from the diaphragm only; the ribs seem to play no part in it. Respiration, in fact, seems to be reduced to a minimum.' She further observed, 'This fact appears to relate trance-mediumship to Yogi — breathing, as a change in the breath-rhythm, plays an important part in inducing changes of consciousness and aiding deep meditation. Moreover, the minimal nature of the respiration must induce oxygen-starvation in the blood and oxygen-starvation of the brain is the reason for loss of consciousness in syncope. It is possible, therefore, that the reduction of the oxygen supply to the brain renders the perception of the sense-impressions less vivid, and so make it easier for the Ego to withdraw...'³⁶

Harry Price said, 'A peculiarity of both the Schneider brothers' trance technique was a very quick and shallow breathing... The rapid respiration sometimes reached 260 cycles per minute...'³⁷ Dr William Wilson considered, 'Sleep is not due to physiological brain-changes, but to the withdrawal of the "Soul" from the everyday world. In this way it seeks communion with the primordial rhythm of life.' Again, 'The secret of safe passage through the shoals of the "world beyond the visible" is to have an interest in life, some object to achieve in the world of today. Then life will be energized by an excursion among the intangibles, just as it is by periods of restful, natural sleep, which serve the same purpose — that of re-charging the run-down battery of life.'³⁸

In a book of the first importance, Dr A. Puharich mentioned *prānāyama* and, stating its effects in his own terms, said, 'Breathing is a vehicle for building up the power of the *psi pasma*' (= Soul Body). This power enables one to exercise ESP, i.e., telepathy, clairvoyance, psychometry, etc. He observed, 'There is no question that the Yogi makes maximum use of the consciousness-

³⁵ Al Koran, *Bring Out the Magic in Your Mind* (A. Thomas, 1966), p. 25.

³⁶ Dion Fortune, *Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science* (Rider), p. 64.

³⁷ Harry Price, *Fifty Years of Psychical Research* (Longmans Green & Co., 1939), p. 108.

³⁸ Dr William Wilson, *After Life* (Rider), p. 82.

maintaining properties of oxygen... Under the impress of a given amount of energy (e.g., a few thousand volts D.C. potential) converts oxygen easily into... ozone. Under the influence of such electrical fields the oxygen in the air gains a negative charge (ionized)... Negative ionized oxygen exerts a beneficial effect... slowing respiration, lowering blood pressure and giving mental alertness... I have found that an excess of negative ions breathed by a sensitive definitely increases ESP test-scores for telepathy.³⁹

Odic Force

Dr Puharich also described the role of carbon dioxide in ESP.⁴⁰ He mentioned the work of L. J. Meduna: a mixture of 30 per cent carbon dioxide with 70 per cent oxygen was administered in mild psychoses, with beneficial effects, since it has 'a remarkably restorative power on the individual nerve cells.' He also discussed 'od' (borrowing the term from Reichenbach). He said, 'Od [from the vehicle of vitality] has been photographed by scientists as ectoplasm. It probably has a gaseous composition, O₂, N₂ and H. It is luminous. It has the properties of an odorant... Mediums are able to utilize it to gain intelligence about humans [= the mental phenomena of psychical research] and to concentrate it for use in bringing about "physical" phenomena.'⁴¹

Marghanita Lasky cited several cases of breath-changes that were associated with mystical experiences:⁴² 'Forster's Helen... after her ecstasy, was "breathing the autumnal air"; Fox writes that "all creation gave another smell unto me than before", which [said Miss Lasky] must, I think, imply breathing more deeply... Jefferies, after one of his ecstasies, rested, "inhaling the richness of the sea". The need to breathe more deeply afterwards might suggest momentary cessation of breathing earlier, and this is occasionally implied... R. H. Ward writes that, "in those approaches to ecstasy which are sometimes experienced under the stimulus of nature (for instance), breathing deepens, slows, tends to become more like that of a person anaesthetized or otherwise "entranced". This also implies deeper breathing than before the experience... the origin of the word "inspiration" must come to mind.'

³⁹ Dr A. Puharich, *Beyond Telepathy* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1962), p. 132.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 156.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 239.

⁴² Marghanita Lasky, *Ecstasy* (Crescent Press, 1961), p. 79.

BREATHING AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Mrs Philip Champion de Crespigny observed small materializations. She said, 'The most interesting, because the most convincing point, from my own point of view, lay in the fact that the "materialized" were appreciably under normal size... They were about three-quarters as large as that of the ordinary adult.'⁴³

Professor F. W. Pawlowski, Professor of Anatomy at Michigan, U.S.A., investigated the non-professional 'physical' medium Kluski.⁴⁴ He reported 'phantoms' which began as 'luminous fog' (ectoplasm) in a very few seconds and took the form of a human head and sometimes that of a complete human figure. The latter walked about and 'exhibited absolutely human behaviour'. The Professor said, 'I could see... that they were particularly anxious to convince us of the fact that they actually existed and were not illusions or hallucinations.' Then followed the observation which is of particular interest in the present connexion.

'Moreover, these apparitions are not always of life-size. Toward the end of a seance, when the medium has become rather exhausted, or if he happens to feel indisposed before the seance opens [i.e., under conditions in which the amount of available ectoplasm is unusually small], the phantoms do not appear in their full size, but small by a third or a half. When I saw a phantom of this kind for the first time, I thought it was that of a child until, on close examination, I could tell by the wrinkled face that it was an old man or woman, though much below normal size.

'When such a shrinkage [ectoplasmic deficiency ?] occurred, the leader of the Society would often say: "Let us help the medium" [i.e., contribute some of our own ectoplasm]. He would then beat time, while all spectators breathed deeply and regularly. The effect was remarkable, for the shrunken figure of the phantom would instantly begin to grow, and in a few seconds would regain its full size.'

Dr Nandor Fodor pointed out that, 'At the Third International Congress of Psychical Research, Paris, 1927, Baron Schrenck-Notzing, a noted German scientist, described the case of a young man who, by breathing exercises, levitated his own body twenty times. The young man was a student of Yoga.'⁴⁵

⁴³ Mrs Champion de Crespigny, *This World — and Beyond* (Cassell, 1934), p. 170.

⁴⁴ *Zeitschrift f. Parapsychologie* (1926), pp. 5-22.

⁴⁵ Fodor, *op. cit.* (above, note 23), p. 17.

A HIDDEN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BREATHING AND HEALTH

Dr Julia Seton Sears, M.D., published a small book in which she expressed certain doctrines that are by no means unfamiliar.⁴⁶ (We have had to paraphrase here and there for the sake of brevity.) She said that we have within us 'a vital power against which everything else is powerless, if we know how to use it. This centre is the power-house of our being, and here we attract and accumulate force. It is ruled over by our thoughts and our will... Thoughts are things, and whatever a man can "think" he can become... Through concentration man links himself with the true life. It is the first step towards conscious power... We may be whatever we *wholly* desire to be...

'First we should decide just what we wish to express and then set about fashioning it in consciousness. The unsuccessful life is the non-concentrated life, the sick mind is the distracted mind. If we want health we must think health thoughts, displacing thoughts of disease with the strong, positive idea of health. No matter how we appear, we see [= image] only the perfect self and hold this idea.

'Next, pass the idea into form, create from the indestructible thought-substance of the universe a perfect thought-form of health... Work on this thought-picture, make the Christ within us rise in consciousness until it is actualized in flesh and form. Centralize and hold the mental image and we create it — we have only to persist in this conscious imagining...

'Next, "let go" [= relax] — simply hold this image, feeling and knowing that creative energy is flowing through it, pushing it into form.

'There is one sure way of contacting the universal supply of health. It is through concentration, thinking creatively [= imagining] health and then breathing ourselves into connection with it. We may concentrate for ever, but if we do not link the need to the supply [= 'breathe for it'] we will never make it ours... The one who desires and does not breathe to create his desires is not really in atonement. [Compare Huna teachings]... In our everyday physical world, our point of contact with physical things is our hands... What our hands are on the physical plane, our breath, if used consciously, may become for us on the subjective plane;... having made sure what we want (one thing at a time) and concentrated on it, we breathe for it consciously and persistently...

'Take 10-30 minutes to concentrate. Decide you want perfect

⁴⁶ Dr Julia Seton Sears, *Concentration* (Edward J. Clode, 1909).

health. Make a perfect image of this. Concentrate on it in all its bearings. Condense the thought with one word (or very few words).

'Relax, then, with every inhalation (through the nostrils), hold the mental image, think of the word (or words), realize that you are in reality drawing the needed force from an unlimited supply. Gradually, as your health improves, faith will give way to knowledge; you will see that you are drawing in energy that creates. The physical breath is only the expression of divine atmosphere... Breath on the higher plane is simply life, cosmic energy. Inhalations should be soft, natural and deep, first done consciously and for a definite purpose, then relinquished and carried on by natural relationship.'

The Cosmic Link

E. S. Shrapnell-Smith identified 'Prâna' with cosmic rays and radiation.⁴⁷ He quoted the famous wrestler George Hackenschmidt's *Man and Cosmic Rhythmic Energy*. Hackenschmidt claimed that he had beaten men who were superior to him in strength. This, he said, was because he learned that the human body is 'linked with the energy and rhythm of the Cosmos', and applied his knowledge to the art of wrestling. Shrapnell-Smith urged: 'Let those who doubt its benefits try deep breathing — genuinely and not in a mood of doubt or hostility, and, above all, not only on a few occasions, but daily over a period of at least two months... Deep breathing aids one to attract natural radiant energy to oneself.'

Douglas Hunt, M.A., pointed out that breathing is an important part of Hatha Yoga. He said, 'To the Yogi, breath is something much more than the air we breathe in. That air, together with everything else in the universe, is impregnated with a vital energy known as Prâna... that "in which we live, and move and have our being"'. In other words, we breathe in not only the air but something of that divine quality which both occultist and Yogi believe to be inherent in the whole of creation...

'Whether you believe in Prâna or not, there is no doubt that everyone, even the sick and the aged — perhaps especially the sick and the aged — can obtain enormous benefit from the proper use of Yoga, which involves the conscious extraction and exploitation of Prâna from the air, food and drink.'⁴⁸

Although Captain W. P. Knowles, M.C., who maintains an Institute of Breathing in London, does not believe in the existence

⁴⁷ E. S. Shrapnell-Smith, *What is the Prana of Yoga?* (L. N. Fowler, 1951).

⁴⁸ Douglas Hunt, *Exploring the Occult* (Pan, 1964), p. 141.

of any hidden forces behind breathing, he is convinced on the great importance of the employment of the correct methods: he maintains that, 'Whatever you do, you can do it better by breathing better.' In 1966 he published a book on the subject, in which he said that in 'the very gentle rhythm of true slow and deep breathing' the rate is reduced from about eighteen per minute to about nine, or even five. This is preceded by 'the almost-panting' breath — obviously the 'Kapalabhati' of the Hindus and Yogis — which cleanses the lungs.⁴⁹

Knowles recommended the use of a watch or metronome for counting the breaths; alternatively, paces can be taken. While in-breathing one should concentrate on the sensation in the nose, where the movement of the air can be felt. Since the exhalation of stale air is as important as the inhalation of fresh air, it is good to start with an exhalation.

Like other experts on these matters, the author warns against forced, self-conscious movements of the abdomen, chest or neck; on the contrary, the whole body (and, of course, the mind) should be relaxed; nevertheless, the shoulder-blades should be kept back, without actually hollowing the back.

Knowles recommended that his exercises be used for a few minutes each and repeated a few times a day. The 'Kapalabhati' exercise (always preceding the slow, deep exercise) involves breathing in gently but deeply and then breathing out, taking slightly longer and forcibly blowing out at the end. Three times suffices. In the slow-deep exercise that follows there is a second's pause between each inhalation and each exhalation — say, in for four seconds (pause) out for four (pause), in for five (pause) out for five (pause), in for six (pause) out for six (pause), in for seven (pause) out for seven (pause), then reverse this, i.e., in for six (pause) out for six (pause), in for five (pause) out for five (pause), in for four (pause) out for four (pause). Each 'round' occupies about one and a half minutes: it should be repeated at least six times a day. Most people can cease this slow-deep breathing exercise after two to three weeks.

The cleansing breath ('Kapalabhati') is then lengthened (in for seven seconds, pause one second; out for seven, pause one), and repeated twelve times. Then the power of exhalation is strengthened: after the 'Kapalabhati' exercise, in for four (pause), out twelve (pause), in five (pause), out thirteen (pause), in six

⁴⁹ Captain W. P. Knowles, *New Life through Breathing* (Allen and Unwin, 1966).

(pause), out eighteen (pause), in seven (pause), out twenty. This takes one and a half minutes and may be repeated three times.

Then concentration is directed to inhalation: (a) take a full breath in (no pause), exhaling in short breaths through nostril, blowing out the last part of air; (b) pause for ten seconds; (c) repeat (a); (d) pause for fifteen seconds (e) repeat (a); (f) pause for twenty seconds.

The exercise for holding the breath is: in for fifteen seconds, hold twenty (pause one second), out fully (pause); in for fifteen seconds, hold twenty-five (pause one second), out fully; in for thirty seconds. This is done once only.

5

Summary and Conclusions

In considering the suggestion that there is 'something very big' behind breathing, something more than the mere inhalation of chemical elements from the earth's atmosphere — the imbibition, in fact, of some 'semi-physical' vital force — we shall begin with what is actually known (or at least highly probable), and proceed to what is more or less doubtful.

Although there is no 'scientific' evidence in favour of the existence of cosmic vitality (and possibly none will ever be available, since it is not a physical substance), many independent groups of people have claimed its existence: among psychical researchers, etc., Dr Carrington simply spoke of 'energy' (which he maintained, was obtained during sleep), while Dr Sears called it 'cosmic energy'.

Among clairvoyants, Phoebe Payne called it 'vitality' and Mrs Garrett 'the vitality of the universe'; she described it as 'an immaterial essence of the breath' (which 'essence' affects consciousness). Among people who had out-of-the-body experiences, S. J. Muldoon called it 'cosmic energy' and equated it to 'the breath of life' of the Scriptures; he, like Dr Carrington, held that it (and not food) is the main source of our energy. Dr Leaf and Mrs Cripps simply called it 'vitality' and Mrs Clayton 'life'. The American Dr A. J. Davis, who observed what transpired at certain transitions, called it 'vital electricity', while the German Frau Hauffe, who was in a half-dead condition, called it 'life', 'nervous energy', 'a vivifying principle', etc., and claimed that it was the whole source of her energy.

A number of psychics have lived for considerable periods without eating any food whatever.

Frau Hauffe observed that she obtained all her vitality from 'the air'. Mrs Garrett claimed, 'I gather vitality from the atmosphere and draw strength to myself by breathing with my whole body. Phoebe Payne also stated that 'cosmic vitality' is obtained from the atmosphere.

Many of these people make congruous statements concerning our possession of a non-physical bodily feature which condenses or collects cosmic vitality, in which it circulates and from which it is transmitted to the physical body. The 'more than half dead' Frau Hauffe, in 1829, described to her physician how she saw that she possessed a 'nerve spirit' which, during earth-life, links or 'unites the Soul [Body] with the physical body'; after the death of the latter it is occasionally heard and seen by the physical senses, i.e., it is a 'ghost', because it can use 'a substance which it extracts from the air...'

Among psychical researchers and others, Dr Puharich said, 'Breathing is a vehicle for building up the power of the psi-plasma [= Soul Body].' It facilitates the use of the psychic faculties. Ernest Hunt regarded the Soul (Body) as the 'battery' of the physical body. 'Starr Daily', a convict, discovered 'the breath within the breath, the consciousness within the consciousness, the Soul within the form [= physical body]: he claimed, 'Every time we breathe, we bring the Spirit to the Soul, as well as oxygen to the body.'

Phoebe Payne, the clairvoyant, saw the 'etheric body' which, she said, is composed of 'subtle matter': it is (a) a vehicle of vitality, since vital forces circulate in it, (b) a bridge between the psychic (Soul) Body and World and the physical body and world, and (c) a transmitter of vitality from the atmosphere to the physical body. This 'bridge' needs to be 'steadied' by steady, fairly (not very) deep breathing. Mrs Garrett, also from clairvoyant vision, described the 'surround', declaring that it is 'a receiver and transmitter of life-substance'; she observed that 'the breath and the blood' carry 'the vitality of the universe'.

Among astral projectors, Muldoon similarly stated that we all possess an 'astral body' which 'condenses cosmic energy': he saw that 'Each breath [of cosmic energy] taken in the astral body can be seen pulsating over the astral ['silver'] cord and causes a duplicate breath [of air in the physical body].' He repeated, 'Each breath taken in the astral can be seen pulsing over the "cord" and causes a duplicate breath to be taken by the physical body.' There is much evidence in favour of this idea — that the physical body, which we inevitably regard as our primary body and the touchstone of reality, is, in fact, a secondary, or even a tertiary, instrument of the Soul. Gerhardi observed that his vacated physical body was kept breathing, and therefore 'alive', via the 'silver cord'-extension that united it to his released Soul Body. Dr Horace Leaf made the same observation. Mrs Gwen Cripps, like the American Muldoon, saw that there was 'a pulsation' of vitality in the 'cord'-extension. Mrs Clayton similarly

observed that her 'cord' was 'pulsating with life'. Turvey called his 'cord' 'a living cord'. These people claimed to have seen their own 'cords'.

A number of people, who were present at transitions, where the Soul Body is in course of permanent, and not merely temporary, release, described the 'silver-cord'-extensions of others. Thus, Dr A. J. Davis observed 'a stream or current of vital electricity' (i.e., the 'silver cord') which joined the newly-released Soul Body and the vacated physical body; Florence Marryat observed 'cords of light, like electricity in the same position'; Mrs Porter described the 'silver cord' of a dying man — it 'appeared to be vibrating, as though a light were flashing up and down'.

According to the eminent anthropologist, Dr Ronald Rose, Australian aborigines, who often saw their 'clever men' (mediums) produce the 'physical' phenomena of psychical research, described the 'silver cord'-extension as 'a *living* thing that was not a snake or a cord — but it looked like a cord and moved like a snake' — it 'seemed to be *alive*'.¹

The conception of 'another world' interpenetrating this, with its own 'atmosphere' (not, of course, air) which we breathe along with the air, without, of course, being aware of the fact, accords with the conception of 'the next world' as given by psychics, 'communicators', etc. We mentioned this in *The Next World — and the Next*: "The clairvoyant Leadbeater insisted that death does not involve "any movement in space". Mrs Leonard observed that the next world "seems so near" to us — "perhaps it is really all around us". Many "communicators" said the same. Scott, describing his passing, stated, "I had slipped out of this [physical] body. I had not moved". Heather observed, "Many people think we who have died are among the stars, but we are not — we are all around them. I had no sense of travelling as I passed over". "Communications" published in England in 1876 similarly insisted, "The spiritual world is round about you".

Arthur Ford, in U.S.A., recently stated, "Invisibles are not in another place, but in another state of consciousness" (because operating in another type of body, namely, the Soul Body). Ford cited a discarnate husband as saying, "I haven't gone anywhere!" He was also told, "Your loved one has not gone from you: there has been no departure — only the visible clothing (the physical body) has been removed". "A.W.K." told Drayton Thomas, "I awoke

¹ Dr Ronald Rose, *Living Magic* (Chatto & Windus, 1957).

just after leaving my body. I did not go away". "Amicus" received much the same statement — "During the process of dying the spirit takes no journey, but emerges [from the body] just where he was".

Borgia's communicator stated that the newly-dead find that "the greater world has been round them all the time". Kate Wingfield summed up many "communications" thus: "When you leave your world you go neither above nor below — you enter the sphere round you". Andre's communicator said, "The next world envelopes and interpenetrates the physical world" and "There is no going away at death — only a change of state". A.B.'s said, "Death is a change of condition rather than of place". Another communicator stated that, when he had died, he had not travelled any distance.

The husband of M.L.S. told his incarnate wife, "We are close to you. You always seem to think that when I come to you I have to take a long journey. In reality our world is no distance in space from yours — it is only a vibrational one". Stainton Moses transmitted the following communication: "Round your world is the spiritual sphere. In the spirit world there are the same gradations of substance that you have, such as vegetable, mineral and animal. Thus, the change from your world to ours is only a change of condition. When you have thrown off your physical body you will not have changed your place, only your state". Brandon was told: "The most astonishing thing to the new arrival in the next world is that he doesn't go anywhere: in the fifth-dimensional state of being, people can inhabit the same space and still be unconscious of one another".²

'Julia' told Stead: 'We are all around you, without your seeing or feeling our presence... When you look for the stars in the glare of noonday, they are not to be seen — but they are there all the time.'³ Later (p.85) she said that all mortals can develop the power to see the physically invisible things that 'surround' them. Earlier she had stated, 'When we wake up into the new life, we are still in the same world. There are (the etheric doubles of) all the familiar things around us — the walls, the pictures, the window, the bed and the only new thing is your own (physical) body, out of which you stand... It is no longer "you". And then you begin clearly to understand what has happened.'⁴ 'Samuel Wilberforce' said, 'It is only the change of condition that makes the difference. Flowers, animals and birds are with us as with you. Only the material

² Robert Crookall, *The Next World — and the Next* (T.P.H., 1966), p. 204.

³ W. T. Stead, *After Death* (Stead's Publishing House, 1897), p. 83.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 31.

conditons are changed. We do not crave for food... We move freely by volition.⁵ Maurice Barbanell summed up many communications that he had received as follows: 'The spirit world is round about us. Some people can see it and hear it because they can "tune it" to its "vibrations"... It is part of the Universe, blending and intermingling with the physical world.'⁶

Charles J. Seymour said, 'None of the various "worlds" are worlds other than this one. They co-exist with it and interpenetrate it and one another. All worlds are one. If a world *seems* separate to its denizens, this is because of their limited vision. There are spheres upon spheres, not distant from one another but each an aspect of one reality and the earth is but one of them and (because it is the least developed) the least real of them all — for all its seeming solidity; or the least but one, for there is stated to be a lower. At the dissolution of the body we do not "go" to "another world" — simply we begin to become aware of those other spheres in which our Spirit has always lived and moved and had its being, but from which most men are veiled.'⁷

This idea, given by (a) psychics, (b) astral projectors and (c) 'communicators', concerning the interpenetration of the physical world by the next world (with its totally unexpected consequences) has been held by many eminent thinkers. G. N. M. Tyrrell, a Past President of the Society for Psychical Research, on the basis of many years' study, concluded, 'It is very unlikely that we shall be shot off into another world, the location of which we cannot imagine. We are there already; for a change of world is not brought about by spacial travel, but by a change of what we are aware of.'⁸

Dr Mervyn Stockwood, Bishop of Southwark, said, 'Each of us has a physical body and a spiritual or counterpart body disengages itself from the physical and continues to exist as the medium of our personality in a new dimension.'⁹ F. W. H. Myers suggested that certain types of men of genius reach out into 'an interpenetrating spiritual world.'¹⁰ Dr A. T. Schofield, the Harley Street psychologist, published a book entitled *Another World*, in which he deduced, from a study of dimensions, including the fourth, what psychics, astral projectors and 'communicators' observe concerning the next

⁵ *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, xi (1895), pp. 87, 88.

⁶ M. Barbanell, *They Shall Be Comforted* (Psychic Book Club), p. 50.

⁷ Charles J. Seymour, *This Spiritualism* (Psychic Book Club, 1940), p. 85.

⁸ G. N. M. Tyrrell, *The Nature of Human Personality* (Allen and Unwin, 1954).

⁹ Dr Mervyn Stockwood, *The Bridge*.

¹⁰ F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* (Longmans Green and Co., 1916).

world.¹¹ Dr W. R. Matthews spoke of 'the Apostolic interpretation of the conception of "heaven"' — it 'implies two worlds which are distinct from one another yet interpenetrate one another.'¹²

With interpenetration in mind, there is some reason to accept the numerous descriptions by (a) psychics, (b) astral projectors and (c) 'communicators' to the effect that the immediate 'next world' (only) is, in fact, earth-like. The idea was held by Dr. L. P. Jacks who, after saying that the world in which a man survives the death of his body is 'not another world, but this', continued, 'By placing him in "another" world, you would make another man of him and that would be tantamount to saying that *he* does not survive at all. The conditions under which the departed continue after death are essentially the same conditions as those under which they lived here.'¹³ (See also the present writer's *The Supreme Adventure*, 1961, p.146).

Just as, in the Cosmos, the Macrocosm, the immediate normal next world, namely, 'Paradise', is primary (a world of causes), the physical world being secondary and derived (a world of effects), so in man, the microcosm, the body (in the sense of an instrument of consciousness) which is next to his physical body, namely, the Soul Body, is primary (a Body in which causes are found — willings, emotions, etc.) while the physical body is secondary and derived (a body in which effects are worked out: just as the 'Paradise' environment, with its 'atmosphere', interpenetrates the physical world, so the Soul Body interpenetrates the physical body).

OBSERVATIONS REGARDING 'SEMI-PHYSICAL' VITAL FORCES

(1) **Psychical Researchers, etc.**

During the deep breathing that is used in 'the lifting game' there was some evidence of weight reduction, and the abnormal breathing that is observed in mediums who are in trance (presumably with the Soul Body released from its physical counterpart and therefore in the most favourable condition for in-breathing vital forces) is sometimes also correlated with a reduction in the weight of the body. In some cases, indeed, the force of gravity is exceeded by that of the vital forces, so that the body rises from the ground. Certain Tibetans, using will-power plus deep and rhythmic breathing, while in trance, are said to produce such remarkable energy that they are able to run in a super-normal fashion. These are human observations.

¹¹ Dr A. T. Schofield, *Another World* (Allen and Unwin, 1888, 5th ed., 1920).

¹² *Daily Telegraph* (June 1967).

¹³ Dr L. P. Jacks, *Near the Brink* (Allen and Unwin, 1952).

Dr Osty, of Paris, provided instrumental evidence that a certain medium (presumably with a 'loose' vehicle of vitality) namely, Rudi Schneider, when in trance, and when the breathing was very noisy, rapid and vigorous, emitted a substance that may fairly be described as 'semi-physical' since, although it differed from physical things in being invisible and intangible, it could, on occasion, be used to move a physical object, namely, a handkerchief. Osty made two observations that are of great importance. First, the vibration rate of the 'semi-physical' substance (ectoplasm, from the 'loose' vehicle of vitality?) was always twice that of Rudi's breathing. Secondly, the emission of the substance was under the control of Rudi's will — it was 'biddable'.

(2) Psychics

Frau Hauffe, as early as 1829, observed that, while oxygen was in-breathed by her physical lungs, 'nerve-force', or vitality, was in-breathed by her 'nerve-spirit' (vehicle of vitality). The latter was so 'loose' that physical movements set it free. She stated that, although 'nerve-force' is not visible (i.e., has not all the properties of physical substances), 'it is at least organic'.

In England, Mrs Eileen J. Garrett told how, even as a child, she had observed that the ordinary breathing of air into the lungs was accompanied by the in-breathing of vitality by the 'surround' (which she also called the 'magnetic field'), i.e., the vehicle of vitality: in fact, she described this feature as 'a breathing outer lung'. Mrs Garrett observed that she thus gathered vitality, as well as oxygen, from in-breathed air, supplementing the energy that was obtained from the food eaten. She insisted that this is a fact and not (as many people might suppose) the product of imagination. An American, the Rev. T. L. Harris, made essentially similar observations, as did Phoebe Payne, Bianca Unorna, etc., in Great Britain.

(3) Astral Projectors

When S. J. Muldoon's 'Astral' (or Soul) Body was projected and freed from its physical counterpart, he observed that he was breathing with both: he noted, in fact, that the act of breathing was primarily carried out by the Soul Body; this inhaled vitality, which he saw passing down the 'silver cord' (a temporary extension composed of the denser parts of the Soul Body and the subtler forces of the physical body). It was this 'vitality', in-breathed by the Soul Body and transmitted down the cord-like extension to the physical body, which caused what Muldoon described as 'the

duplicate breath', i.e., the ordinary breathing of air by the lungs. He saw vitality 'pulsing over' the 'silver cord'.

Other astral projectors observed the vitality which passed from the released Soul Body, down the 'silver cord' and into the physical body. Still others realized that if the passage of vitality from the Soul Body, via the 'cord' to the physical body ceased (as it would if the 'cord' became severed, or, as Ecclesiastes 12:6 said, 'loosed'), the physical body could no longer remain alive. An Englishwoman, Mrs Cripps, used the same word as the American Muldoon: she described vitality as 'pulsating' in the 'cord'. The author, William Gerhardi, Muldoon, Dr Horace Leaf, Peter M. Urquhart and others compared the 'silver cord' to the umbilical (nutriment-conveying) cord of childbirth.

Many astral projectors realized that if the 'silver cord' were severed it would result in the death of their physical body, since the supply of cosmic vitality would cease.

(4) Observers of Transitions

Dr A. J. Davis in America (more than a century ago) observed 'vital electricity' streaming between a released Soul Body and a vacated physical body; he realized that this corresponded to the umbilical cord of childbirth. Dr. R. B. Hout observed 'vibrant energy' in the 'silver cord' of his dying aunt.

In Great Britain, a number of observers of transitions (Major Pole, Geoffrey Hodson, Miss F. E. Porter, etc.) described the vitality which vibrated in the 'silver cord'-extension. Death ensued when the extension snapped, cutting off the flow of vital forces.

OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE USE OF BREATH-CHANGES TO ELEVATE OR EXPAND CONSCIOUSNESS

(1) Psychological Researchers, etc.

Drs Nandor Fodor, F. Tyndall, E. F. Bowers, William Wilson, Lombroso, F. W. H. Myers, etc., all made observations to the effect that breath-changes were related to changes in the 'level' of consciousness.

(2) Clairvoyants

Swedenborg reported a correlation between breath-change and the 'level' of consciousness. Mrs Garrett deliberately induced changes in her 'breathing-rate' in order to elevate her consciousness and engage in telepathic and clairvoyant activities, or to induce astral projection (which may permit both types of activity). She found that

deep, slow, rhythmic breathing, using the diaphragm, helped by relaxing the abdominal muscles.

In England, Phoebe Payne observed that the vehicle of vitality is greatly affected by the breathing-rate: it 'registers the thoughts and feelings of other people' (i.e., is concerned in telepathic activities). Zymonidas observed that breath-changes can induce trance (involving the dissociation of the vehicle of vitality from its physical counterpart).

In U.S.A., Edgar Cayce described the breath-changes that occurred prior to his 'travelling clairvoyance'.

(3) Astral Projectors

In England, Dr Alice Gilbert, Oliver Fox, etc., in U.S.A. Betty White and in France, Yram all independently observed that deep and rhythmical breathing, together with relaxation, facilitated the release of the Soul Body from the physical body (i.e., astral projection) in which condition telepathic and clairvoyant activities were possible.

OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING BREATHING AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

(1) **Psychical Researchers**

Professor Pawlowski observed, in connection with materialization phenomena, that while a very considerable amount of 'semi-physical' 'ectoplasm' was emitted by a 'physical' medium (a person with a very 'loose' vehicle of vitality) who was in trance, including an extremely inactive and relaxed condition (with much of the vehicle of vitality, and therefore also the Soul Body, released from the physical body): supplementary amounts of ectoplasm were emitted by non-mediums, i.e., ordinary folk, not in trance, who deliberately breathed deeply and rhythmically.

The production of genuine materializations is a supreme act of creation. Charles Richet said, 'A living being, or living matter, formed under our eyes, which has its proper warmth, apparently a circulation of blood, and a physiological respiration, which has also a kind of psychic personality, having a will distinct from the will of the medium — in a word, a new human being! This is surely the climax of marvels! Nevertheless, it is a fact!'¹⁴

Dr G. Geley observed: 'The formations materialized in mediumistic seances arise from the same biological processes as normal births. They are neither more nor less miraculous or super-normal; they

¹⁴ Dr Charles Richet, *Thirty Years of Psychical Research* (Collins, 1923).

are equally so... The singular analogy between normal and so-called super-normal physiology extends even to details: the ectoplasm is linked to the medium by a channel of nourishment, a true umbilical cord, comparable to that which joins the embryo to the maternal body. In certain cases the materialized form appears in an ovoid substance... I have also seen, on several occasions, a hand presented wrapped in a membrane closely resembling the placental membrane...¹⁵

Dr Nandor Fodor pointed out that occasionally the materialized form may be physically more perfect than the medium from whose ectoplasm it was temporarily created.¹⁶ In these rare phenomena creative activities take and mould the 'semi-physical' 'ectoplasm' into what is practically a temporary human being, temporary because its life and substance is borrowed from, and must be returned to, the medium.

In *Events on the Threshold of the After-Life* we said,¹⁷ 'At the beginning of this book we envisaged a hypothesis: it was that, quite apart from, and in addition to, "doubles" that represent mental images (and are subjective in nature), every human being possesses a "real", i.e., an objective "double", a replica of the physical body. The released "double" may consist of a "semi-physical" portion, the vehicle of vitality, and a "super-physical" portion, the Soul Body. This hypothesis is amply justified by the facts of experience. An important work by Professor W. H. C., Tenhaeff was recently reviewed by Anita Kohsen. Tenhaeff regards telepathy (an activity of the Soul Body) as an established fact. In addition, like St Thomas Aquinas, Professor William Mc.Dougall, Bergson, Hans Driesch and Dr Gustave Geley, he is a vitalist, i.e., he invokes the principle of entelechy (vital purposive forces) to explain both normal phenomena (e.g., food assimilation) and paranormal (= ectoplasmic) phenomena (e.g., astral projections and materializations). He quoted Driesch as saying that vital purposive forces not only regulate normal bodily processes and forms, but that 'they can, in conjunction with the imagination, produce *abnormal* structures.' Geley, Thouless and Weigner arrived at similar conclusions. Tenhaeff said, 'Food-assimilation is, from this point of view, but the first link of a chain of which materialization is the last'. These purposive vital forces, we suggest, circulate in the vehicle of vitality.

¹⁵ Dr G. Geley, *From the Unconscious to the Conscious* (Collins, 1920).

¹⁶ Dr Nandor Fodor, *The Encyclopedia of Psychic Science* (Arthur's Press, 1933), p. 218.

¹⁷ Robert Crookall, *Events on the Threshold of the After-Life* (Darshana International, 1967), p. 219.

As early as 1911, Professor William Mc.Dougall claimed that there is justification for the belief that 'the normal processes of growth and repair are in some sense controlled by mind or a teleological principle of which our conscious intelligence is but one mode of manifestation among others.'¹⁸

(2) Psychics

Phoebe Payne observed the importance of thought, will and clear mental images in creating good health: the substance that composes the vehicle of vitality is 'malleable' or 'ideo-plastic', tending automatically to take form according to such mental impulses. (This, while it is, on the one hand, 'semi-physical' in nature, is, on the other hand, 'semi-mental', and constitutes a link, bridge or intermediary between mind, Soul or spirit and physical matter.)

(3) Astral Projectors

Helen Rhodes observed the importance of relaxation, of definite mental images and of rhythmical breathing in the creation of a thoroughly healthy body.

OBSERVATIONS REGARDING A HIDDEN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BREATHING AND HEALTH

(1) Psychical Researchers

Dr Sears noted that to form a clear mental image of good health, to affirm or suggest it, and to 'breathe for it', when combined, have a very strong tendency to create it.

(2) Psychics

Phoebe Payne observed that vitality is absorbed during breathing along with the air and that the health is improved by breathing *a little* more deeply and *a little* more slowly than usual. The practice strengthens the vehicle of vitality, and therefore steadies the emotions. Bianca Unorna observed that vital forces are absorbed along with the air and that they can be directed ('bidden' or willed) to various parts of the body.

(3) Astral Projectors

Helen Rhodes made observations that are identical with those made by Phoebe Payne and Bianca Unorna.

¹⁸ William McDougall, *Body and Mind* (Methuen, 1911, 6th ed., 1923).

DEDUCTIONS, INTERPRETATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

(1) Psychical Researchers

Drs Carrington and Wilson are among those who concluded that the physical body obtains energy not only from earthly food but also from cosmic sources — that it is re-charged (much like an electric battery) during our periods of sleep, that this cosmic vitality is in-breathed by the vehicle of vitality at the same time as air is in-breathed by the lungs.

(2) Psychics

Mrs Garrett, Phoebe Payne and many other psychics expressed views identical with those deduced by psychical researchers, but on the basis of first-hand observations.

(3) Astral Projectors

Muldoon, the greatest of all astral projectors, similarly claimed that the 'Astral', or Soul, Body is a 'condenser or cosmic energy', of the omnipresent 'breath of life', and that it chiefly does this work while it is free from its physical counterpart, i.e., while the person concerned is in deep sleep.

If, as all these people, on various grounds, have concluded, vitality is omnipresent in the universe, the old conundrum as to how 'life reached the earth' and the equally old one as to whether other worlds bear living creatures, will be approached from a new angle.

WARNINGS

Phoebe Payne reported her personal observations on the effects of a 'combination of thought, i.e., concentration, and rhythmic breathing' on certain of the delicate sense-organs (chakras) of the Soul Body. She stated that if people breathed rhythmically and at the same time concentrated on the solar plexus they might over-stimulate, and therefore prematurely 'open', the corresponding sense-organ in the vehicle of vitality: they would be in touch with certain astral realms, but without the power to shut off contact when desired. She insisted, 'There are untold dangers to both health and sanity for the injudicious person who meddles with these things without competent instruction.'¹⁹ Dion Fortune said the same.²⁰ Walter H. Scott warned his readers as follows: 'Meditating upon any other parts of the body than (a) between the eyes and (b) the heart, especially when combined with "Yogi-breathing", is most

¹⁹ Phoebe Payne, *Man's Latent Powers* (Faber, 1938), p. 222.

²⁰ Dion Fortune, *The Training and Work of an Initiate* (Aquarian Press, 1978).

dangerous, and any books teaching such methods are to be highly condemned.²¹ These methods, he admitted, might bring about rapid results but are dangerous in the absence of special and individual training.

Mrs Eileen J. Garrett made many statements of great interest and value on the control of breathing and its possible psychic effects.²² However, she also issued the following warning: 'There is a danger in this intrusion of the conscious upon the sub-conscious, for in such an undertaking one assumes direct responsibility for the management of the deep physical processes of his life — responsibilities which are commonly left to nature. No such practice should be undertaken except under competent direction and supervision... When the consciousness becomes unified and creatively active to a relatively high degree, much of the automatism of our habitual and routine living is transcended, and we consciously transpose the forces of life and of nature to new particular ends.'

Helen MacGregor and Margaret Underhill said, 'Certain practices which may be suitable to the Eastern mind are not desirable for the Western. We do not advise students to practice Yogi breathing and other Eastern methods, since they force the trance condition by producing reactions which may be injurious to the physical and Soul bodies.'²³ They continued, 'We believe that the growth of the Soul itself is of primary importance, and the awakening of its perceptions should be the outcome of that inner unfoldment. Any method which causes unnatural stimulation of the psychic powers, which tends to develop them before the Soul has acquired stability or strength is injurious.'

Professor F. A. Bainbridge insisted: 'Perfect co-ordination of the movements of the muscles and the activities of the circulatory and respiratory systems... brings about the maximum of work with the minimum of effort — the body acts as a physiological unit.'²⁴

Dr V. Bogomolitz said that all exercises (of arms, legs, etc.) should be made very slowly and without violence (unnatural breathing being avoided): the breathing should remain stable and, if it quickens, the exercise should be stopped and replaced by one that has not a quickening effect on the breathing.²⁵

²¹ Walter H. Scott, *How Know?* (C. W. Daniel), p. 116.

²² Mrs Eileen J. Garrett, *Awareness* (Creative Age Press, 1943), p. 136.

²³ Helen MacGregor and Margaret Underhill, *The Psychic Faculties and their Development* (L.S.A. publications, 1934), p. 22.

²⁴ F. A. Bainbridge, *The Physiology of Muscular Exercises* (Longmans, 1919), p. 137.

²⁵ Dr V. Bogomolitz, (Arco Publications, 1954).

A. Abplanalp suggested that, during exercises (of arms, legs, etc.) the breath should not be held or suppressed (otherwise the heart may eventually suffer distension). There should be a rhythmic connexion between the breathing-rate and the movements of the exercise. This allows the elimination of waste products via the lungs (and skin). Breathing exercises in the absence of muscular exercises are insufficient; the relatively deep breath should be caused by muscular exercise. He regarded the recumbent position as the best for abdominal breathing.²⁶

Karin Roon rejects breathing exercises of any kind, but recommends the adoption of breathing that accords with one's own personal rhythm, and that is consequently effortless: one should become aware of one's own personal rhythm and live in accordance with it. It includes not only the physical act but also mental and emotional elements. One's natural breath-rhythm may be as low as six or as high as twenty-one breaths per minute: it should be discovered — and kept, so obviating mental and emotional unrest. The latter condition is often due to sitting for a long time with a bent back, i.e., to prolonged shallow breathing. The rhythm is discovered by watching and listening to the body and not by conscious breathing. There should be a feeling that the abdomen is lifted from the region between the pelvic bond and the navel, not that it starts at the navel.²⁷

Dr F. C. Happold said, 'Do not attempt some of the breathing exercises found in books on Eastern Yoga: they are not suited to Westerners and can be dangerous. Here, however, is a simple, safe way: take up a position (sitting upright in a chair or lying prone on a bed) in which the spinal cord, neck and head are kept straight. Then breathe in deeply, evenly and slowly, but without strain; then, without holding the breath, slowly and evenly breathe out. Continue this for two minutes. During the whole period, concentrate, intensely but without strain, on each breath, not letting the mind wander from concentration on the act of breathing. You may murmur such words as "peace", "stillness", "wholeness", etc... Breathing exercise, done just before going to sleep, is beneficial.'²⁸

A GENERALIZED TECHNIQUE

The observations concerning breathing, made by many independent people, some of whom were psychics and others astral projectors,

²⁶ A. Abplanalp, *Slimness and Health* (1930.)

²⁷ Karin Roon, *The New Way to Relax* (The World's Work, 1951), p. 52.

²⁸ F. C. Happold, *The Journey Within* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1968), p. 92.

are concordant. They are supported, though not 'proved', by certain facts of psychic science. They can at least be used as the basis of the following:

(1) Hypotheses

First: the physical body (which to us mortals is necessarily the touchstone of 'reality') is actually only a materialization of condensation of the Soul Body, 'spiritual body' of St Paul. The 'matter' of which it is composed does not obey physical or biological laws, so that the Soul Body, unlike the physical, is not subject to decay and death — in fact, after physical death, after it has been freed from the mortal body, the Soul Body reverts to the prime condition, as has been shown by the present writer.²⁹

Secondly: the Soul Body, being extremely tenuous, automatically reflects the thoughts, feelings and mental images of the Soul, i.e., it is automatically mouldable or ideo-plastic (hence the after-death reversion to the prime condition, mentioned above). It is this characteristic that causes the Soul Body to express, or externalize, habitual thoughts and feelings, so that one's character is visible to clairvoyants (and the 'dead').

If habitual thoughts, feelings and mental images affect the Soul Body, their effects being visible to those who have 'eyes to see', they presumably also affect, though more slowly, its materialized form, its condensation, the physical body. It may well be true that many physical diseases, organic as well as functional, begin with disharmonious thoughts and feelings which immediately affect the Soul Body and later the physical body. Apart from certain results of physical heredity and environment, the Soul Body and the physical body are essentially similar.

Thirdly: the physical body, being secondary, thinks, feels, speaks and acts only because its more 'real' and more enduring counterpart, the Soul Body, first engages in those activities; in fact, the physical body breathes in air and therefore lives only because the Soul Body breathes in cosmic vitality and therefore lives.

Fourthly: there may well be a hidden connexion between breathing and health apart from the mere intake of oxygen and the expulsion of carbon dioxide. An advantageous technique may therefore be envisaged.

(2) Basic Principles

Some of the underlying principles of the envisaged technique are of

²⁹ Robert Crookall, *The Jung-Jaffe View of Out-of-the-body Experiences* (World Fellowship Press, 1970), pp. 34-8.

a bodily nature: (1) Avoid tension and cultivate a relaxed condition at all times and especially when performing breathing exercises. (Tension wastes the vital forces.) (2) The breathing should be rhythmical and fairly (not very) slow and deep. (This type of breathing facilitates the intake of vital forces.)

Other principles are of a mental nature:

(1) Mental effort and strain must be avoided — the mind must be relaxed. (Tension not only wastes vital forces, as already mentioned; it also interferes with their perfect circulation in the body, by directing them to certain parts.)

(2) A positive mental attitude, which expresses itself in faith, belief, courage, hope, cheerfulness, acceptance, etc., facilitates the intake, and thereafter the control, of vital forces: on the other hand, a negative mental attitude, which expresses itself in scepticism, doubt, disbelief, fear, depression and the avoidance of duties, etc., retards the intake, and thereafter the control, of the vital forces. (The vital forces are 'semi-mental', as well as 'semi-physical': they are 'biddable', accepting one's 'orders', whether given consciously or subconsciously. Is not this the explanation of the phenomenon of suggestibility, and of its increased incidence under hypnosis, when the Soul Body is freed from the restricting physical body?).

(3) Habit helps: if breathing (and other) exercises are faithfully repeated daily at a predetermined time (and so far as possible in a particular place), a valuable rhythm is established which helps in maintaining progress.

(4) A clear and definite mental image of perfect health and poise of body and mind should be made — and re-made whenever it tends to become vague and therefore ineffective. (The reason for this is that the substance of the Soul Body is so subtle as to be malleable by thoughts and mental images — it is ideo-plastic). When one creates a clear image of the physical body as being perfect and as operating — eating, talking, walking, etc. — perfectly, that creation immediately affects the highly tenuous Soul Body, which actually assumes the perfect appearance and the perfect manner of working, though this effect is not, of course, visible to the physical eye. It lasts at least as long as the mental image is held clearly in the mind. While the tenuous Soul Body thus spontaneously externalizes a mental image, the physical body (which, as already said, is a materialization of, or 'condensation' from it) is also affected, though slowly so that the effects are often unobserved. If,

therefore, one wishes definitely and observably to perfect the physical body by the use of perfect mental images, the latter must be frequently created, and the process demands not only faith but perseverance.

(5) The cosmic vital forces that are in-breathed by the Soul Body can be 'willed', 'channelled', 'bidden' or directed either to circulate in the body generally or to go to a particular organ that is in need. (The reason for this is that given above — vital forces are not only 'semi-physical' but also 'semi-mental' in nature: they are 'biddable'.)

(6) Affirmations, prayers, suggestions, etc., to this effect assist the process.*

We here draw attention to a pamphlet by F. E. Pearce entitled *The Art of Breathing* (The League of Healing). In the introduction, William Watson, having claimed that the application of the methods advocated brings definite rewards, advised the reader as follows: 'Ponder the symbol of the key turning gently in the unfamiliar lock. Go easily! Start with a dozen or so breaths at a time and do not overdo a good thing! And let each breath, though slow and complete, be light and silent: a feather held before the nostrils should not move... The breath should be easy, light and without strain.'

Mr Pearce considers that, in the process of breathing, we possess the key to controlling all our functional activities. Rhythm is important: 'When the motions of the body are in perfect rhythm, the Life has a greater channel through which to flow, and the exercise of the will to think and act becomes more potent... A perfect control of breath gives a stimulus to the mind, so that it can even reach stages of super-consciousness. We all have a certain rhythm of our own, indicated by our normal rate of breathing; it can

*Trance, the condition in which the Soul Body is free from the physical body, because much of the 'bridge', the vehicle of vitality, has been freed, provides the most favourable conditions under which vital forces (which may take the form of ectoplasm) can be exteriorized from the physical body. There are three reasons for this: (1) In trance, the body is in a state of extreme inactivity and relaxation so that little or no vital force is required to maintain or move it — in fact, the body may lose weight during this period; it may even shrink visibly and become corpse-like. (2) The unconscious condition of the body involves an absence of directed, willed or 'bidden' vitality in particular organs. (3) The fact that much of the vehicle of vitality and the whole of the Soul Body are released from the physical body favours the intake of cosmic vitality. Thus, the condition of deep trance favours these processes in every possible respect. Appendix II shows that supposed discarnate souls, 'communicators', knew much about these matters.

be changed to a deeper one... Watch the rates of breathing in response to certain thoughts and emotions. By experience, the particular rhythm most restful to the individual will be found. This is not an end in itself, but a means to increase control and to develop latent powers.

'If, when we in-breathe the vital forces, the latter are directed by the mind, with the affirmation, "I am drawing in the breath of life", the Soul begins to function on a plane higher than the normal, everyday one. The breath is drawn in, with the mouth closed, deeply but lightly and without strain. At the end of the inhalation the body is filled. Let it remain for a moment, realizing in quietness the recuperation of every cell. Also, the intuition now comes into play, if given the chance.

'The exhalation, like the inhalation, should be "light, slow and well-modulated": it should be used as a channel of blessing for the "life" of others, so that one forgets oneself. The lungs should be emptied (otherwise the next inhalation cannot be complete) and here there is a sense of relief, release or relaxation during which tensions can be eliminated from the mind and body and relaxation achieved'.

Pearce observed: 'The emptying of the lungs is not necessary at every moment of the day, but at times... *Avoid strain*. Each has his own limitations and his own rhythm to take into account. This will become the habit; the breathing will become easy and light, almost imperceptible. In times of crisis the moment of exhalation gives release; the sigh... proves that the body appreciates release from tension... *The ideal to be held is renewed energy without strain or effort.*'

(3) Suggested Procedure

We now indicate the procedure suggested by the underlying principles that are based on the observations of psychics, astral projectors, psychical researchers, etc.

Physical conditions — the air to be in-breathed should, of course, be fresh. The whole of the physical body should be relaxed. The mouth should be closed, the spine straight (without being rigid). The hands and feet should be uncrossed.

Mental conditions — one should definitely desire, wish, pray for success in the procedure ('Ask, and you will receive'³⁰), and this prayer should be repeated.

The mind should be relaxed in the sense of there being an absence of hurry, impatience, effort or strain; the attention should be

³⁰ Matt. 7:7.

withdrawn from everyday affairs; there should be an inward awakening, a quiet, almost casual, yet intense alertness and vigilance ('Awake, sleeper, and Christ will shine upon you.'³¹) If some strain should arise, pause and relax. Perseverance pays. ('The man who has will be given more.'³²)

A clear, definite mental image should be formed of the physical body in a state of perfect health, poise and functioning, at first static apart from breathing, but later also engaged in some normal activity such as walking, writing, speaking, eating, etc. Certain facts should be reviewed: first, that the Soul Body interpenetrates its 'condensation', the physical body; secondly, that the Soul Body automatically assumes the imaged form and retains it so long as the image is held in the mind; thirdly, that our mental images are stronger and more effective than our wills (as Coué said, 'When the will and the imagination are at war, the imagination invariably wins.'³³) Fourthly, that, intermediate between the Soul Body (which is 'super-physical') and the physical body, 'bridging' them, as it were, is the vehicle of vitality ('semi-physical' and 'semi-mental' in nature) and this acts after the fashion of our physical hands, handing over, as it were, the image of perfection from the Soul Body to the physical body. It is doubtless engaged in performing this function in every human being at all times. The operation is automatic and therefore the individual concerned is normally unaware of it. The technique makes the process conscious and definite and utilizes an increased intake of vital forces.

Simultaneously with the 'holding' of the perfect mental image, the intake of vital forces is increased by rhythmic breathing, i.e., (a) a moderate amount of air is inhaled fairly slowly (count, say six), filling the abdomen first, then (b) a pause (count three), then (c) exhale completely, emptying the abdomen first (count six) and (d) pause (count three) before taking the second breath. This can be repeated, say ten times, but if any strain or dizziness is felt the time factor should be shortened, after a pause for recovery. At the same time, a verbal assertion or command is made that the extremely ideo-plastic Soul Body at once assumes the desired condition, the slightly less ideo-plastic vehicle of vitality not only follows suit but accretes 'semi-physical' substance to the image, facilitating its transference to the physical body. (The image-plus-affirmation procedure is valuable quite apart from the breathing technique, but

³¹ Eph. 5:14.

³² Matt. 13:12.

³³ E. Coupé, *De la Suggestion et de les Applications* (Barbier, 1915), p. 10.

a combination of the two produces the maximum effect.) The chief causes of lack of success are: (a) failure to relax body and mind; (b) failure to form and 'hold' a clear image; (c) failure to 'breathe' vital forces into it and (d) failure to make the procedure habitual.

(4) G. C. Barnard's Observations

The psychologist, G. C. Barnard, referred to cases of 'stigmatization' (in which marks appeared on the physical bodies of certain people, e.g., St Francis of Assisi, St Veronique Guiliana, Therese Neumann, etc.,) that corresponded with those left by the nails and the spear at the Crucifixion.³⁴ Barnard pointed out that such cases show that 'even a highly stable organism like the physical body is yet, in spite of the inertia of its heredity and its habits, amenable under somewhat exceptional circumstances to quite drastic modifications at the instance of a pure idea: it is, in fact, essentially ideoplastic.' He added, 'And when we come to the semi-material amorphous living ectoplasm, it is obvious that this ideoplasticity is far more complete.'

Later, Barnard observed, 'The mind can, and does, move and control the physical body... The blisters suggested to the hypnotized patient, the wealth of physical symptoms shown by hysterical patients, are due to purely mental factors, and the phenomena of stigmatization, all illustrate the fundamental ideoplasticity of the physical body... When we deal with the materializations of the seance room, we find this ideoplasticity is greatly enhanced.' He continued, 'This is just what ought to be expected, since the ectoplasm is not, like the physical body, a crystallized, almost petrified structure, canalized through centuries of habit and heredity, but is still amorphous and amenable to the slightest organizing influence. What is gained in stability is necessarily lost in plasticity.'³⁵

The physical body has some degree of ideoplasticity: the property is most obviously exhibited by 'hysterics' (people who, according to our interpretation, possess relatively 'loose' vehicles of vitality). Barnard and other psychologists failed to make the most significant observation and we suggest that his statement should be amended as follows: The physical body of every person (and every animal) is at all times more or less amenable to modification, on account of its ideoplasticity, by strong emotion and clear images, conditions that obtained unconsciously with St Francis, etc. The

³⁴ G. C. Barnard, *The Supernormal* (Rider, 1933), p. 102.

³⁵ *ibid.*, p. 250.

condition was not confined to 'hysterics' but is universal and can be consciously utilized by anyone — to his or her great benefit.

Although cases of stigmatization (involving Crucifixion-marks) are extremely rare, other related phenomena, not mentioned by Barnard, are not very rare. Red marks may develop on the skin; in some cases they are blister-like and may even bleed. The existence of such phenomena has been recorded on photographic plates. Again 'dermatography' (i.e., skin-writing) occasionally occurs: the marks last only a few minutes or hours. In addition, we have the strange phenomenon of mimicry (in which, e.g., an insect's body is stick-like, so similar to the stick on which it lives, that it tends to escape the observation of its enemies): we suggest that this phenomenon also derives from ideo-plasticity.

It would appear that a number of independent considerations converge to support the idea, which has been given in ancient teachings for many centuries (see Appendix I) and also in 'communications' from the supposed 'dead' (see Appendix II) that there is indeed a hidden relationship between breathing and health.

Appendix I

Ancient Teachings Concerning Breathing

THE HEBREWS

The ancient Hebrews believed that 'God', i.e., Jehovah, their tribal deity, breathed 'the breath of life' (*Nephesh*, *Ruach* or *Neshama*) into man's nostrils, by which procedure he became 'a living Soul'.¹ When he died this 'breath of life' would return to 'God' — a process which was not confined to man, but also applied to the animals.

An interesting passage, describing the healing of a deaf and dumb man, suggests that in this case, at least, the Master was observed to utilize deep breathing, though the observer failed to realize what had taken place. The passage is as follows: 'He put His fingers in his ears... Looking up to Heaven, He sighed and said to him, "Be opened"'.²

In this connexion we may note that a Tibetan monk mentioned by W. S. MacMillan closed his eyes and took a deep breath. MacMillan felt a 'pricking' in his closed hand, and on opening it found stigmata ('Aum'). As the hand was being opened, the monk 'gave a quick gasp', and his face was 'contorted' as though he had felt a sudden pain. He said, "You should not have moved as quickly!"³ (This may have indicated, first the extrusion of ectoplasm, facilitated by the deep breath, and its unduly rapid return, causing 'repercussion'.) MacMillan called himself 'a reluctant healer': a more exact title would have been 'a reluctant co-operator' — see the book by the present writer entitled *During Sleep*.⁴

¹ Gen 2:7.

² Mark 7:31-6.

³ W. S. MacMillan, *The Reluctant Healer* (Gollancz, 1952), p. 102.

⁴ Robert Crookhall, *During Sleep: the possibility of 'co-operation'* (T.P.H., 1964).

THE HINDUS (YOGA TEACHINGS)

We now go back some thirty centuries to the earliest Aryan literature. The word 'Veda' comes from *vid*, 'to knot', and the Vedas, representing books of 'sacred' knowledge, or 'scriptures', were mostly composed before 1000 B.C. The word 'Upanishads' means 'secret teachings', the principal ones being composed before the tenth century B.C. These are the sources of Yoga (= union) aiming at the union with the Infinite.

Innumerable books have been written on Yoga. They include Yogi Ramacharaka's *Fourteen Lessons in Yogi Philosophy* (L. N. Fowler) and *The Hindu-Yogi Science of Breath* (*ibid.*), F. Yeats-Brown, *Bengal Lancer* (Gollancz, 1930, pp. 136, 194, 267, 269, 285) and *Yoga Explained*, (*ibid.*, 1938), Paul Brunton, *The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga*, (Rider & Co. Ltd.), Ernest E. Wood's *Practical Yoga, Ancient and Modern*, (*ibid.*, 1951), Claude Bragdon, *Yoga for You*, (Andrew Dakers,) Geraldine Coster's *Yoga and Western Psychology, A Comparison*, Oxford University Press, Swami Akhilananda's *Hindu Psychology, Its Meaning for the West* (George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1948) and Charles Wass's *The Inner Teaching and Yoga* (Rider & Co. Ltd., 1921). Much pretentious and, what is worse, potentially injurious matter has been written about Yoga. Ernest Wood's book is sound. Hatha-Yoga uses physical exercises, certain bodily postures and breath-control: Father Déchanet, Prior of the Benedictine Monastery of Saint-Benoit (Kanseria, Katanga), gives these procedures a Christian setting in a book entitled *Christian Yoga*, but some of the exercises — and especially nose-stopping exercises — are potentially dangerous.

Our only concern here with Yoga is the statement that, in addition to its chemical constituents, i.e., chiefly nitrogen and oxygen, the air we breathe contains a vital fluid, known as Prâna, which can be made to circulate in the body — or can be directed to a particular organ — by means of those breathing exercises that are called 'prâna-yama' (literally breath-holding, practically breath control). When the vital forces are directed within the body they are said to move via vital channels called 'nadi'. (These, however, are not actual physical nerves — they are supposed vital currents.) The Yogis claim that Prâna, or cosmic vitality, accumulates when the breathing is fairly slow and deep.

An Indian, K. T. Behanan, Ph.D., wrote a book entitled *Yoga, A Scientific Evaluation* (Martin Secker & Warburg, Ltd., 1937) after several years' study in the Graduate Department of

Psychology, Yale University. He had the advantage of tuition from Swami Kuvalayananda, a Yogi who has sympathies with science. This is an important book.

It will be evident that there can be no direct physical 'proof' of 'semi-physical' things such as Prāna. Biologists will not (and should not) envisage the possibility of its existence unless and until they are obliged to do so (i.e., when the orthodox physical hypotheses are manifestly inadequate for their purpose). But psychical research may provide valuable 'pointers' for biologists.

THE POLYNESIANS (HUNA TEACHINGS)

The Hawaiian Islands were cut off from civilization for untold centuries before their discovery, in 1778, by Captain Cook. However, they were found to hold ideas that are essentially identical with those transmitted by 'communicators' from 'Beyond', those held by the ancient Hindus, by psychics and astral projectors. For instance, they described man as possessing a hierarchy of *three bodies*, so that the total man (apparently) has three *selves*, each with its own 'level' of consciousness (see Max Freedom Long, *The Secret Science Behind Miracles*, Kosmon Press, 1948; *The Secret Science at Work*, Huna Research Publications, 1953).

Long suggests that the ancient Polynesians knew what few learned Westerners know, namely, why some prayers are 'answered' and others not — that the matter is connected with the 'low' or animal self which uses the 'body' which we call the vehicle of vitality — that it is connected with the breathing. The Huna teachings concerning breathing are remarkably like the 'communications' published ten years before Long's account of the Huna doctrines.

In *The Secret Science Behind Miracles*, Long pointed out that deep breathing facilitates psychic activities of the telepathic or psychometric type which, he says, depend on the movement of thought-forms (= mental images) along a thread of connecting shadowy-body stuff (= ectoplasm from the vehicle of vitality). He suggested that this type of breathing operates by favouring the general relaxation of the body.⁵ He described a certain healer as 'breathing heavily' while praying.⁶

In *The Secret Science at Work*,⁷ Long mentioned a method of obtaining a surcharge of life-force in the body (based on the idea

⁵ Max Freedom Long, *The Secret Science Behind Miracles* (Kosmon Press, 1948), p. 171.

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 341.

⁷ Max Freedom Long, *The Secret Science at Work* (Huna Research Publications, 1953), p. 77.

that the force is in the air — an idea developed by Dr Oscar Brunler). It included deeper and faster breathing: Brunler stood with his feet fairly close together and 'raked' the air with widespread fingers, reaching up as high as he could, standing on tiptoe, and reaching forward with a circling movement which swept past the sides of his ankles (the body being bent to reach the ankles) and ended with the hands and fingers brought on around and up behind him as high as possible. This raking circle was thus about three-quarters of a full circle. At the end of each raking movement, the arms and hands were relaxed for a moment, then brought back while the body was straightened, the arms then lifted and the raking stroke repeated. The exercise was done several times, while holding the mental picture of the life-force being gathered and stored in the body.

Long considered: 'Brunler's method, coupled with the affirmation, "I am now accumulating a large surcharge of mana [= vital force]" repeated with each swing, is excellent.'

In effect, the Huna case concerning prayer is as follows: (1) the personality (mid-self) formulates the prayer. (2) This is offered to the Eternal or Greater ('High') Self to be transmitted to the Deity. (3) The 'path' that it takes consists of 'shadowy' (ectoplasmic) threads from the vehicle of vitality (the 'low' body or 'sub-conscious' self); the power required for transmission is obtained by rhythmic breathing.

The Polynesian priests held that prayers remain unanswered because all the selves (the physical self in rhythmic breathing, the 'low' self in providing (a) the power and (b) the ectoplasmic-thread 'path' — both facilitated by suitable breathing — the mid-self in formulating the prayer and the Eternal Self in transmitting it to the Deity).

Appendix II **‘Communications’ Concerning Breathing**

DISCARNATE SOULS IN-BREATHE ‘SEMI-PHYSICAL’ VITAL FORCES

(1) Great Britain

‘Imperator’ told the Rev. William Stainton Moses that discarnate Souls who were on his level ‘have no need of sustenance save that which we draw from the air we breathe’, and ‘We are supported by the spirit-ether which interpenetrates space and by which your spirit bodies are even now supported.’ He added, ‘It is the universal food and support of the spirit, whether incarnated or not.’¹

‘Julia’ said, ‘We have no need of sustenance, save that which we draw in with the air we breathe.’² ‘Wilberforce’, the ‘communicator’ of *Letters from the Other Side* (Watkins) stated: ‘We take in nourishment as you imbibe air.’³

‘Sir William Barrett’, communicating, said: ‘I do not absorb nourishment through the mouth, but through the pores of the skin and *the air we breathe*.’⁴ Later, he said that this also applies to mortals:⁵ ‘There is a power, a help that comes through co-operation with the Etheric Body [= vehicle of vitality] that will also help the physical well-being... If we are aware of the body [= vehicle of vitality] we can draw upon the life, or the magnetic currents, of that body in order to re-charge the life-currents in the physical.’

According to Mrs Rhys Davids, a young engineer, soon after being drowned at sea, said that *breathing* seemed to give him strength.⁶ A ‘communicator’ told the Rev. C. L. Tweedale: The *breath* we breathe is sufficient to sustain our etheric body. Nothing more is wanted.⁷ John Oxenham was told: ‘When we first come over, the desire for food is still strong in us... but the longer we are

¹ Rev. William Stainton Moses, *Spirit Teachings* (L.S.A.), pp. 59, 61.

² W. T. Stead, *After Death* (Stead’s Publishing House, 1897), p. 47.

³ ‘Wilberforce’, *Letters from the Other Side* (Watkins, 1910), p. 46.

⁴ Lady Barrett, *Personality Survives Death* (Longmans, 1937), p. 21.

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 89.

⁶ Mrs Rhys Davids, *More About the Hereafter* (Psychic Review Ltd., 1930), p. 49.

⁷ Rev. C. L. Tweedale, *News from the Next World* (Psychic Book Club, 1940), p. 321.

here the less we want. As a matter of fact, *every breath we take restores our vitality.*⁸

'W. T. Stead', communicating soon after death, said that he ate a meal, but the operation was 'more from habit than from need'.⁹ He stated, 'I seem to draw much more energy out of *the atmosphere itself.*' In a later series of communications, 'Stead' said, 'Our nourishment comes from vegetable growths here and certain materials which we get from *the ether.*'¹⁰

A 'communicator' told Dr George Lindsay Johnson that he thought his energy was derived from '*the ether.*'¹¹ The Rev. C. Drayton Thomas's (deceased) father said that he no longer needed food because he, 'nearer to the source of life', breathed in his life-giving forces from *the atmosphere.*¹² His (deceased) sister (*ibid.*) said, '*We breathe in our nourishment.*' The 'communicator' of N. O. Davies said, 'We have no need to eat and drink... *We subsist upon the ether or atmosphere.*'¹³

John Scott was told by a 'communicator': 'We receive a kind of nourishment from our environment. I keep reminding you of "in Whom we live and move and have our being" (Acts, 17:28). With you it is the case, but you mostly ignore the fact because it does not seem to affect your body. Your type of body [the physical] is not nourished directly from your atmosphere, whereas the corresponding circumambience with us is of vital importance.'¹⁴

(2) U.S.A.

Dr J. M. Peebles was informed, 'Breathing is living... *The very air we breathe seems to be life itself.*'¹⁵ Wilfred Brandon was told: 'Our vitality is constantly renewed by *the ether*, in which there is all the nourishment our Etheric [= Soul] Bodies require... As the ether contains all that is needed to nourish the new body, eating and drinking are not essential.'¹⁶ According to Sylvan J. Muldoon, Maurice A. Craven, when temporarily out of the body, 'met' his (deceased) grandparents. On being asked how they lived, they

⁸ John Oxenham, *Out of the Body* (Longmans, 1941), p. 16.

⁹ 'W. T. Stead', *The Blue Island* (Hutchinson, 1922), p. 49.

¹⁰ 'W. T. Stead', *Life Eternal* (Wright and Brown, 1933), p. 87.

¹¹ Dr George Lindsay Johnson, *The Great Problem and the Evidence for its Solution* (Hutchinson, 1937), p. 306.

¹² Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, *Beyond Life's Sunset* (Arthur's Press, 1931), p. 27.

¹³ N. O. Davies, *The Children of Evolution* (Psychic Book Club), p. 26.

¹⁴ John Scott, *I Lent my Hand to a Ghost* (Psychic Book Club), p. 155.

¹⁵ Dr J. M. Peebles, *Immortality* (Colby & Rich, 1883), pp. 77, 161.

¹⁶ Wilfred Brandon, *Open the Door* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1935), pp. 5, 40.

replied that they needed no food — that '*the air was vitalized for them.*'¹⁷

MORTALS IN-BREATHE 'SEMI-PHYSICAL' VITAL FORCES

(1) Great Britain

We have already noted that 'Wilberforce' made the statement that mortals in-breathe 'semi-physical' vital forces. Mrs Kelway Bamber said, 'The spirit body grows with and round the physical body, for the spirit attached to the body is providing itself automatically as an act of self-preservation, with a "shell", or form, to use when it is dissociated from the flesh. The *atmosphere* provides the minute and refined kind of material required.'¹⁸

'Myers', communicating through Geraldine Cummins, stated: 'During sleep the Soul [in the Soul Body] exists within the double [= vehicle of vitality] while the [physical] body is recharged with nervous energy, the life-units.'¹⁹ Again, he said, 'The nerve-soul [= Soul Body] is detached from the [physical] body in sleep... is withdrawn into a metetheric atmosphere. The nerve-soul [= Soul Body] is bathed in this atmosphere and receives nourishment from what I believe you now call ether. It is owing to the need of nourishment that the nerve-soul has to withdraw, and this leads to an isolating process [and therefore to physical unconsciousness, i.e., sleep]²⁰

In a later series of communications, 'Myers' said, 'During sleep this body receives the Soul (Body) and feeds the physical shape with life-units, with nervous force.'²¹

'Myers', in England, said the same as May Wright Sewall's 'communicator' in America — that a man who has 'passed on' 'becomes conscious of the fact that his Etheric [= Soul] Body assimilates "light" automatically if nourishment is required.'²²

Marjorie Livingston was told that man, created in the likeness of God, 'maintains independent life by absorbing the divine magnetism which is the atmosphere of his normal world [= 'Paradise']'.²³ Like other 'communicators', e.g., 'Peter', he said that

¹⁷ S. J. Muldoon, *The Case for Astral Projection* (Aries Press, 1936), p. 141.

¹⁸ Mrs Kelway Bamber, *Claude's Second Book* (Methuen, 1919), p. 21.

¹⁹ Geraldine Cummins, *The Road to Immortality* (Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1932), p. 80.

²⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 115, 117.

²¹ Geraldine Cummins, *Beyond Human Personality* (Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1936), p. 68.

²² *ibid.*, p. 36.

²³ Marjorie Livingston, *The Harmony of the Spheres* (Wright & Brown), p. 44.

this is exhaled 'impregnated with his own personality'. He pointed out that this in-breathing of 'the divine magnetism', (= 'semi-physical' vital forces or 'the breath of life') is analogous to the in-breathing of the air by the physical body.

The 'communicator' of *Life Beyond the Grave* also maintained that 'Paradise' has 'an atmosphere' that is analogous to our air and that it is in-breathed by discarnate souls.²⁴ He said that if a mortal dies before the Spirit [= Soul] Body is fully developed i.e., in early youth, the Soul Body 'has to be built up by the spiritual atmosphere which it absorbs in the spiritual world.'

The 'communicator' of W. S. Montgomery Smith said the same as 'Barrett', namely, that there is a hidden relationship between breathing and health: 'We cannot separate and keep separate the two worlds... people should try to be conscious of and live in their Etheric Bodies... the channels through which mind links itself with the Divine. Our physical body is only connected with Life Force through the Etheric [= Soul] Body, the seat of consciousness.'²⁵ 'Azriel' described breathing as 'one of life's most powerful manifestations'.²⁶

(2) U.S.A.

Anne Manning Robbins said, 'To the finely-developed mind of the naturally sensitive person, it must be only the thinnest of veils that separate him from the denizens of a higher world, for he himself draws his breath in those elements which apparently are sustainers of life in that higher world.'²⁷ The 'communicator' of *The Betty Book* said that true breathing is regular and slow; it yields 'a sort of nourishment'.²⁸ He recommended that a mental image of what we wish to be should be made: this is 'creative thinking'. He urged, 'Breathe life, determination, enthusiasm into this plan.'

(3) Germany

The 'communicator' of Fr. J. Greber stated that when a medium is in deep trance, 'his Spirit [in his Body of od = Soul Body] has left his physical body', but is 'still connected with it by a band of od' (= the 'silver cord') and his physical body 'receives enough vitality from the Spirit through this band of od to keep the organs functioning'.²⁹

²⁴ Anon, *Life Beyond the Grave* (E. W. Allen, 1876), p. 10.

²⁵ Montgomery Smith, *Life and Work in the Spiritual Body* (Hillside Press), p. 119.

²⁶ 'Azriel', *The World Real but Invisible* (Charles Taylor), p. 203.

²⁷ Anne Manning Robbins, *Both Sides of the Veil* (Sherman French, 1909), p. 246.

²⁸ Stewart Edward White, *The Betty Book* (Psychic Book Club), pp. 59, 68, 86.

²⁹ Fr J. Greber, *Communications with the Spirit World* (Felsberg, 1932).

MORTALS USING BREATH-CHANGES
TO ELEVATE OR EXPAND CONSCIOUSNESS

(1) Great Britain

The author of *Spiritual Reconstruction* forecast that men will eventually absorb 'Prāna' at will.³⁰ He stated: 'By their more ethereal bodies, they will draw to themselves the finer elements in the atmosphere and, by this means, will annihilate the vapours of disease on the planes of illusion [= earth and 'Hades'], breathing the self-sustaining breath and using *the ether* to refine the physical atoms... They will penetrate those planes now open only to the few.'

The 'communicator' of *Illumination* advised: 'Always change the rate of breathing when desiring to contact the inner planes: the normal rate is about 12-16 respirations to the minute — try to slow this down to 6 or 7, or even 4, and see how you feel then.'³¹ In a footnote the following warning is given: 'Such breathing exercises should be pursued with caution, at first but for a few minutes daily. This should never be overdone.'

'Peter', the 'communicator' of Harry Edwards, told his medium, Clare, to precede the seance by sitting quietly in the seance room with mind and body completely relaxed, 'and engage in rhythmic breathing exercises'. He said, 'Do not over-inhale... just fill the lungs.'³² He warned Clare against offering his vacated body as a temporary possession of a discarnate soul, claiming that all but robust people are harmed thereby. He recommended him to 'sit in silence for the feel of a personality', i.e., for 'control from without'. Unduly rapid breathing facilitates 'possession' by disturbing the normal harmony between the medium's three bodies, the physical, the vehicle of vitality and the Soul Body. Usually, the would-be 'possessor' first enters the medium's *aura* and from that proceeds to take possession of the (vacated) physical body, the operation being facilitated by rapid breathing. (In Clare's case his breathing was so slow as often to be imperceptible.)

(2) U.S.A.

'Judge Hatch', the 'communicator' of Elsa Barker, said, 'We *breathe* here'.³³ Later, he explained why Yoga-breathing produces psychic results. He said, 'By holding the breath long, a certain

³⁰ Anon., *Spiritual Reconstruction* (Watkins, 1918), pp. 20, 45.

³¹ Anon., *Illumination* (White Eagle Lodge), p. 45.

³² Harry Edwards, *The Mediumship of Arnold Clare* (Psychic Book Club, 1940), p. 108.

³³ Elsa Barker, *Letters from a Living Dead Man* (Rider, 1914), p. 82.

poison [carbon dioxide] is produced in the body, which poison... changes [lowers] the vibration... [by lowering the vitality?]. In order for a mortal to become adjusted to the psychic world, a change in vibration is necessary. This change [= 'lowered vibration'] may be produced by a slight dose of the above-mentioned poison.³⁴

The 'communicator' of Mrs May Wright Sewall said, 'Ether is a fluid that interpenetrates the air... It is a finer atmosphere, surrounding as well as interpenetrating the atmosphere... which... sustains mortal bodies. It is the inhalation of the ether within the atmosphere [by the vehicle of vitality]... that keeps the mind in vital relation with its fleshy encasement.'³⁵ Later: 'In the plane immediately reached through death, ether as an atmosphere and a life-sustaining element, takes the place of air... It is through ether being inhaled by the mind that the mind is held in the body at all... After death, the mind is still sustained by ether.'³⁶ Again, he stated that the 'etheric atmosphere' is 'susceptible to vibrations' from both incarnate and discarnate souls.³⁷

A HIDDEN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BREATHING AND HEALTH

(1) Great Britain

We have already quoted 'Barrett' and Montgomery Smith as stating that breathing is intimately related to health. 'Peter', a 'communicator' of Harry Edwards, like many others (and many clairvoyants) said that conditions of harmony or disharmony, of health or illness, etc., build up in the first instance in the Etheric, or Soul, Body, after which they tend to 'crystallize' in the physical body.³⁸ (This accords with numerous 'communicators' to the effect that the Soul Body is primary and the physical body secondary, a 'condensation' of the Soul Body.) 'Peter' pointed out that rhythmic breathing is important, 'not only in relation to the balance of air, but primarily to the supply of 'bound ether' associated with that air for the maintenance of the Etheric Body, through which the Soul works. This, he said, is because the 'ether' 'contains all the potentialities of life'. He insisted that, 'Before there was physical matter, life existed in the ether.' He instructed his medium, Arnold Clare, to engage in rhythmic breathing prior to 'sitting'.

³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 161.

³⁵ Mrs May Wright Sewall, *Neither Dead nor Sleeping* (Watkins, 1921), p. 294.

³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 296.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 291.

³⁸ Edwards, *op. cit.* (above, note 32), p. 98.

Later, 'Peter' told Clare that he would derive benefit from engaging in rhythmic breathing (through the nostrils) daily, whenever an opportunity arose, during which exercise the physical body should be relaxed and the mind withdrawn from everyday affairs.³⁹ He explained that, in addition to air, 'free' or 'characterless' 'ether' is inhaled and said that the nostrils filter this 'ether' just as it filters the air. In much the same way as the nostrils allow the passage of pure air but reject impurities, so they allow the passage of beneficial etheric influences but reject injurious influences. During the exercise the mind should be focused on what is true, good, pure and harmonious. This brings about good health, since the (originally 'characterless') 'ether' has been impressed by harmonious thought and feeling. He maintained, 'Through thought-control in breathing, you can therefore transform that stream of "ether" into a veritable dynamic force. Both the etheric body [= vehicle of vitality] and the Soul Body depend upon the ether inhaled with the air ordinarily breathed for their vitality and sustenance.

'The more it is impressed with noble thoughts consciously directed, the more will the subconscious mind be brought into line with things spiritual. Therefore, instead of having part of your "household", as it were, against you, you make of the Soul a strong ally — the three of you, physical, etheric and Soul [Bodies] working together as a whole...'

'Peter' described the etheric body as 'an iridescent silver extension' round the physical body and as having the outline of the latter but as not being a complete replica of it.⁴⁰ The 'Astral' (= Soul) Body is the primary body; it is animated by the Spirit and, in turn, animates the physical body.

'Peter' repeated the above from a somewhat different angle when he said that the human Spirit controls his physical body via the blood-stream and that rhythmic breathing ensures a rhythmic heart action. He concluded, 'Now you see the process whereby knowledge of spiritual work passes down almost unhindered. Rhythmic breathing brings the heart of the individual [microcosm] into the rhythm of its Universe [Macrocosm].'

A 'communication' that is very similar to the above is given in *Christ in You*.⁴¹ After saying, 'Live in spirit, breathe and walk in the innermost heart of yourself', the 'communicator' promised first

³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 109.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 214.

⁴¹ Anon., *Christ in You* (Watkins, 1910), p. 12.

good judgement and then, 'Afterwards the result in your body will be realized, for in the silence the heart of flesh will have become one with the heart of the spirit, and thus you bring about perfect circulation of the blood.'

'Peter' continued, 'By breathing rhythmically, (1) the physical body profits from the air breathed because it is taken in steadily and the heart-motion is steadied; (2) the "ether" which is inhaled with the air does not go into the lungs — it is retained by a sieve... at the root of the nose, and it is from there that it is dispersed. There it receives the impression of the thought-intention, which is important for physical health and also as giving greater etheric ['semi-physical'] vitality... Breathe with intention and say, "With each breath I breathe the Spirit of me!" "Each breath makes me free!"; "Each breath makes me stronger spiritually and physically!"' He insisted, 'This is not altogether auto-suggestion, although there is an element of it; the idea is to impress the breath with your character...'

The Rev. William Stainton Moses was told by his 'communicators': 'The vital force used by us in manifesting is only available when not demanded by bodily functions. When the brain is active, then it is drawn to the brain; when the brain is passive, the force flows to the nerves and is available to us [discarnate communicators]. When the digestive organs are active, it is required there [hence, we suggest, the value of fasting in psychic work of all kinds]... when passivity degenerates into apathy [= pure negativity], it is bad: sustained interest in what is being done [= mental direction of the vital forces being present] causes a pleasant regular flow of the magnetic aura [= vehicle of vitality] which establishes a perfect rapport between us and you.'⁴² (That is, it is the vehicle of vitality, loose in mediums, that is the link or bridge between those 'Spirits' who are in the Soul Body and ordinary mortals whose vehicle of vitality is not loose — and the most favourable conditions, for the exercise of mediumship, are (a) bodily passivity to the point of physical unconsciousness, i.e., 'trance', and (b) mental direction. On the other hand, those discarnate souls who are called 'ghosts', whose Soul Body is still so heavily enshrouded by the vehicle of vitality that they can cause 'physical' phenomena, such as raps, are in more or less direct contact with mediums of the 'physical' type and have little difficulty in manifesting their presence. Finally, it is via their own vehicles of vitality that all incarnate Souls control and use their physical bodies;

⁴² Rev. William Stainton Moses, *Spirit Teachings* (L. N. Fowler), p. 77.

the 'semi-physical' vehicle of vitality is a 'bridge' between the 'super-physical' Soul Body and the physical body.)

(2) Germany

Fr Greber, in Germany, like both Stainton Moses and Harry Edwards in England, was told by a 'communicator' that, 'Although people possess odic [= ectoplasmic] power, in most cases it is too closely bound to the body to be surrendered or liberated readily...'⁴³ He continued 'A medium has readily detachable od' (= a 'loose' vehicle of vitality), and he insisted: 'This is not a morbid condition and has no relation to nervousness, hysteria or lack of will-power; on the contrary, a good medium must have more will-power, stronger nerves and better physical health than the average person.'

Later, Greber's 'communicator' observed that 'tenseness [attention directed towards the body] militates most of all against the liberation of od [= ectoplasm].'⁴⁴ He also stated that the maximum detachability of od is accomplished by steadfast fixity of purpose, i.e., concentration, on which account 'Only persons who can direct their minds to a given subject, and diverting them from all worldly matters [including, of course, the physical body] can become a good medium.' The oftener they repeat this procedure the more readily do they release the od and 'surrender it by means of radiation'. But there are certain inhibiting factors: 'Fear, fright, distrust, doubt, and all other forms of inward opposition not only fail to release any odic force from the medium, but interrupt the current liberated by the others [= 'sitters']'.⁴⁵ On the other hand, 'thanks to the odic power at its command, the [incarnate] spirit can strengthen the od of its physical body through will-power, expressed as courage, hope, faith and cheerfulness — the best safeguard against contagious diseases.'⁴⁶

These statements were made to a German Roman Catholic priest via an ignorant farm boy in 1932. They are supported by observations made by three British investigators, namely, K. J. Batchelder (a psychologist), C. Brookes-Smith and D. W. Hunt. The two latter published their results in the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, (48, 1970, p. 265): they claim that table-tipping, telekinesis, levitation, etc. (the 'physical' phenomena of psychical

⁴³ Greber, op. cit. (above, note 29), p. 108.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p. 129.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 122.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p. 77.

research) can be 'comparatively easily' produced by 'virtually all human beings' if they will only *avoid scepticism* and adopt a serene mental attitude. In the same journal (p. 308) Dr Louisa Rhine's studies of the mental phenomena of psychical research were mentioned: too stringent 'control' limits success by suggesting failure: the conviction that one can succeed is of great importance. Interest aids, boredom causes failure. Further, Dr Milan Ryzl, in Czecho-Slovakia, found that when doubts and inhibitions were removed (by hypnosis), the degree of success in ESP greatly increased.

(3) U.S.A.

Cora L. V. Tappan, who had no education beyond the 'three R's', nearly a century ago, received 'communications' that are of great interest in this connexion.⁴⁷ She was told that when discarnate souls wish to communicate with incarnates, they must obtain '*a physical atmosphere*' (= the body of od or vehicle of vitality) from a medium. She said, 'Every embodied mind possesses in embryo every power that is possessed by the disembodied mind, but the latter have not physical organization and are obliged to act upon physical organizations of mortals to manifest their presence and intelligence. They, the disembodied minds, have the advantage of possessing greater elasticity of will, of acting upon minute particles of matter that you cannot govern because your actions in connexion with matter must be directed exclusively by the motions of your physical body... The Spirit, on the other hand, (1) has a more subtle will and (2) not being constrained by a physical body, can act upon more nearly ultimated particles of matter, and thereby produce effects which defy physical science.

'They do not understand, for instance, how a Spirit can move a table: they say, "We may will until we are 'blue' — we cannot move the table". By will? No, because your will is limited in the exercise of its function to... your individual bodies... But the disembodied Spirit has greater volition, being less trammelled [= less drawn upon to maintain and move a physical body] and operates upon, not the table with its hands in making the raps with its individual fingers, but upon the aura, or infinitesimal particles, that surround your bodies [= body of od or vehicle of vitality], over which you have no control, but which, when set in motion and concentrated, form as potent and pliable an element as one would wish to have.

⁴⁷ Mrs Cora Tappan, *Discourses* (J. Burns, 1875), p. 68.

'You do not understand how your will controls your individual bodies; you only know it does so. You do not see the infinitesimal globules or molecules that work and tug away [= the vehicle of vitality, which is 'biddable'] every time you raise your hand. You do not see that there is a constant vibration through every part of your system in response to your thought [= that the vehicle of vitality is ideo-plastic] — an absolute, material vibration by which every nerve communicates with the brain, and the brain itself is acted upon by the voluntary will of the Spirit. These infinitesimal molecules or particles... that communicate with the brain substance are surrounded by a fluid that corresponds with the fluid that the Spirit employs when he raps on the table or produces vibrations in the atmosphere... In these minute globules, surrounded by the atmosphere from the medium, resides the power not only of communication, but to lift [= levitation, overcoming gravity] tables and project bodies through the atmosphere [= apports].

'The Spirit *sees* the aura [= vehicle of vitality, the 'odic body', the source of 'od' or 'odic force'] around your physical bodies and the action of the nervous fluids, and knows *from its sight* that these nervous fluids are formed of infinitesimal globules... The Spirit *sees* the vibration of your thought and, when in sympathy, does not require you to speak... and the developed mortal can receive a response from the Spirit in turn. It is a system of mental telegraphy. Think of them often. By thinking of them [= sending out a loving 'call'] you make a vibration towards them by which they can reach your mind. When refraining to think of them your mind vibrates in other directions and the Spirit cannot approach you. For the Spirit must have some chain or link upon which to act, and the only link is (1) the human mind and (2) the aura [vehicle of vitality] that surrounds the physical body and (3) the atmosphere.'

Note that this idea — given out in 1829 by the uneducated German Frau Hauffe and in 1875 by a 'Spirit' through this uneducated woman — that there is something intermediate between the physical body and the mind, namely, what Frau Hauffe called the nerve spirit, and this 'communicator' called the aura that consists of 'infinitesimal particles', 'globules' or 'molecules' which surround the physical body, and which we call the vehicle of vitality, is now seriously envisaged as a hypothesis of a very great value to explain numerous well-attested physical phenomena by Professor H. H. Price, Whately Carington, Dr Raynor Johnson and others (who call it the 'etheric body', 'etheric double', etc.)

Mrs M. E. Keeler's 'communicator' said, 'Breathing is important, as the pulse in the brain is synchronous with it. Therefore various breathing exercises. For getting out of the body, holding the breath is of value, but holding it out has no effect.'⁴⁸ He also said, 'Calmness is essential to progress' (in releasing the 'double').⁴⁹ Fear, worry, depression, lack of courage, impatience, etc. (i.e., the negative, self-regarding emotions) militate against the release of the 'double'.⁵⁰

BREATHING AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

The statement of 'Betty' has been given previously. 'Nannie', a supposed child-communicator of Mrs M. T. Longley, told of the methods employed in 'schools' on 'the other side'.⁵¹ A passage is as follows: 'The pupil must first be taught to perceive the thought clearly in the mind, *picture it mentally* and then produce it in the outer atmosphere. We can make a lily or a rose, but we must first think of it so that we can mentally see the flower; then we must learn to concentrate the mind on that and nothing else. We must learn... how to gather the forces of the flower from the atmosphere. The teacher shows us by her own work. She gathers a lot of "mist" and works it with her hands... At first it is finer than steam, but she works it till it gets as firm as snow, and then till it grows more substantial and just as she wants to fashion into form, all the time she breathes on it and thinks of the colour she wants.' The 'communicator' concluded, 'No one can tell it from a real, grown flower.' The 'mist' gathered is clearly substance from the vehicle of vitality — see the writer's *What Happens after You Die*, Colin Smythe, 1978, pp. 124, 126, 142, 148, 158.

'Questor Vitae', i.e., Oswald Murray, summarized 'communications' received from exceptionally advanced sources in 'Paradise' conditions in a book entitled *The Process of Man's Becoming*.⁵² Those relevant to the present purpose are as follows: 'Everyone is a recipient of vitality by influx, and within the life which they inhale and exhale thought is contained. Thoughts are actual things of life; they are life in the process of taking form, or forms of life in the course of manifestation. The influx of life or vitality, containing what you conceive of as thoughts, is in-breathed

⁴⁸ J.A.S.P.R., x (1916), p. 649.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p. 659.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 653.

⁵¹ Mrs M. T. Longley, *Teachings and Illustrations as they Emanate from the Spirit World*, p. 23.

⁵² Oswald Murray, *The Process of Man's Becoming* (Duckworth, 1921), pp. 147, 148.

through the medium of your atmosphere, and is given off by the same *via media*. It is not the air or atmosphere *per se* which generates thoughts. But man's internal make-up acts and reacts from and with that which is unconsciously received from spiritual sources. Thoughts once formed, although subject to continuous change, are never lost or annihilated. The atmosphere with which your outer world is surrounded is in a state or condition of life in form...

'This thought-sphere is your mentality [with its Soul Body] what the atmosphere is to your physical body. The mental organism draws its sustenance from the vast reservoir of the thought-sphere, albeit the external personality is unconscious of the fact. Such thoughts become modified in quality in passing through human selves in a similar manner as atoms of matter do in passing through the human body...

'The influx of vitality containing thoughts is in-breathed through the medium of your atmosphere. Such thoughts come to man by the force of attraction... No external form of life can generate thought. All the external personality can do is to give expression to what has first been received by it in the form of thought.' It may be added that Murray later published *The Spiritual Universe*.⁵³ These two books are of considerable importance.

In P. E. Cornillier's *The Prediction of the Future* we are told that the 'communicator', Vettellini, made Reine, the sensitive, observe the creation of mental images in order to be understood by mortals (who can also, of course, create mental images — appropriate thoughts necessarily do this). 'Vettellini' told Reine that these (subjective) images can be objectified or 'materialized' by means of *atomic secretions*. He did not, however, state that this process was connected with breathing.⁵⁴

THE POLARITY OF BREATH

The 'communicator' of Gambier Bolton gave an account of breathing that is very like that given by Yogis:⁵⁵ 'Your polarity changes each two hours (or thereabouts) from positive to negative (or vice versa), and your breathing changes with it. From the moment of birth to the moment of death every *normal* human being breathes through only one nostril at a time, and that for a period of two hours (or thereabouts), the only time that it passes through the

⁵³ Oswald Murray, *The Spiritual Universe* (Duckworth, 1924).

⁵⁴ P. E. Cornillier, *The Prediction of the Future* (English ed., 1947), p. 52.

⁵⁵ Gambier Bolton, *Ghosts in Solid Form* (Rider, 1914), p. 85.

nostrils simultaneously being the moment when the polarity and the breathing is changing: the nostril through which a person is breathing at any given moment showing that it is the positive side of that person at the time.'

WARNINGS

Yoga was developed among Easterners who lived comparatively quiet and contemplative lives, close to nature and far from the materialistic bustle of cities. They did not eat meat and avoided alcohol, tobacco, etc. Moreover, the progress of pupils (who were only accepted as such if suitable) was under the clairvoyant supervision of his teacher.

We have already quoted the warning issued by Phoebe Payne, Mrs Garrett and others concerning the unwisdom of certain breathing practices (that are advocated in certain books based on Yoga teaching). It is not surprising to find that 'communicators' issue identical warnings, insisting on the value of a life of loving service rather than one of personal ambition. The Master (Acts 20:35) said, 'Happiness lies more in giving than in receiving.' The following are 'communications' to the above effect.

Dr Alice Gilbert had two years' practice in contemplation, in simple Yogic breathing exercises and in receiving telepathic messages. Her discarnate son, Philip, warned her as follows: 'Go warily over that book on Yoga you are reading! You may safely try some of the practices, but not all! *Not the nose-stopping!* That is not for you!'⁵⁶

The 'communicator' of *Spiritual Unfoldment* recommends meditation by Europeans to begin with (1) stilling the mind, (2) relaxing the muscles and (3) slowing down the breathing, but the last not too much. He warned: 'This will prove safe so long as it is obeyed. If exceeded or tampered with, or if coupled with other breathing exercises, other methods, then the safety factor may depart.'⁵⁷

THE STATUS OF 'COMMUNICATORS'

Some people have suggested that all 'communicators' represent no more than 'splits', fragments of the total minds of the mediums or sensitives concerned. In *The Supreme Adventure* the present writer showed that some 'communicators' knew more than the complete minds of many of our Doctors of Divinity, of Philosophy, etc., and

⁵⁶ Dr Alice Gilbert, *Philip in the Spheres* (Aquarian Press, 1952), p. xxiv.

⁵⁷ Anon., *Spiritual Unfoldment* (White Eagle), pp. 42, 44.

were, therefore, presumably complete minds or Souls that had survived physical death. The 'communications' in this case were chiefly concerning the experiences that had been undergone at, and soon after, death.

The same argument applies in the present study: these 'communications', concerning 'a breath within the breath' by which we absorb cosmic vitality together with its possible effects on the 'level' of consciousness, health, creative activities, etc., were given not only independent of psychical researchers, etc., but, in some cases, before psychical research began! Moreover, whereas psychical researchers, etc., have opportunities to compare notes, these 'communicators' had not.

Appendix III ***Further Suggested*** ***Breathing Exercises***

We have cited several exercises designed to improve the health via the breathing. Others are as follows.

P. G. Bowen gave an exercise in which breathing is correlated with walking.¹ He advised the avoidance of strain. The 'balanced posture' was first assumed (eyes directed at their own level, the nape of the neck pressing back, i.e., spine erect, etc.). Walking was commenced at a rate that was comfortable to the person concerned, then, (1) inhale fully (but not over-fully) over the time taken by four steps, then (2) exhale fully over the time taken by the next four steps. After about half a mile saunter and resume normal breathing. The exercise sensitizes for the receipt of psychic impressions.

Dr Paul Brunton holds that thought is related to breathing, that, by changing the breath-rhythm, one can change the condition of both body and mind.² Brief periods should be set aside daily for this purpose. Relax, then (1) exhale slowly and quietly (through *both* nostrils), then (2) inhale (ditto) without strain or violence, then (3) hold the breath momentarily, then (4) exhale. The eyes should be closed and full attention should be paid to the breathing — 'live in it' for the time being. *Beginners should not exceed five minutes.* Even experts should not exceed twenty minutes. The breath should flow gently and effortlessly — a feather, held before the nostrils, should not move. The slightest discomfort of gasping for breath indicates wrong procedure. Brunton said that this exercise increases harmony and relaxation and can be used, apart from the five minutes definitely set aside for the purpose, whenever one is threatened by anger, fear, etc.

Eustace Miles held that if we can master the breathing we can master the heart-beat.³ Breathing is the most frequent act and therefore the most easily controlled. People who are restless,

¹ P. G. Bowen, *The Occult Way* (Rider), p. 208.

² Dr Paul Brunton, *The Secret Path* (Rider), p. 119.

³ Eustace Miles, *The Power of Concentration* (Methuen, 1907), p. 79.

nervous or lacking in concentration breathe about twice as fast as they should. Exercises in breathing are the most fruitful of all physical exercises. They operate by sheer repetition. It is not a vast chest but a full and rhythmic inhaling, holding and exhaling of the air that matters. For this purpose spare moments can be used. Simple exercises should be done first, and each part of the full breath should be developed in turn. (1) First master the lower breathing. There are two ways. In the first, as you inhale, you send the abdomen in; in the second, there is less movement of the abdomen. (2) Then practise middle breathing: send the chest out as you inhale. (3) Then practise lower breathing followed by middle breathing in a single motion. (4) Finally practise the higher breathing, filling the top of the lungs. Exhalation should be far more thorough than it usually is.

Miles gave the Hindu 'cleansing breath' which is used to conclude the above exercise, etc. (1) Inhale a complete breath: (2) Hold the air for a few seconds; (3) Pucker up the lips (as though about to whistle, but do not swell out the cheeks) then exhale a little of the air through the opening with great vigour. Then stop for a moment; then exhale a little more air. Repeat until all the air has been exhaled. Use vigour in expelling the air through the lips — during this outward breath relaxation is achieved. The system is refreshed and the health improved. Breathing exercises should be done in a gentle and leisurely manner. A few breaths should be taken in the above ways; they can be repeated a number of times a day — not many breaths in succession.

Glossary

Astral Body

Term used with different meanings by different authors: sometimes = vehicle of vitality, sometimes = Soul Body; sometimes = an admixture of both.

Astral Plane

Also used indefinitely: sometimes = 'Hades', sometimes = 'Paradise', sometimes = both.

'Double

An apparition that is the 'double', or replica, of the human body; sometimes = the released vehicle of vitality only (a 'ghost'); sometimes = the released Soul Body and sometimes = an admixture of the two. The released 'doubles' of mortals may be any one of these three. The newly-released 'doubles' of the dead always consist of the vehicle of vitality plus Soul Body (the former being shed, at the 'second death') on an average of three days after physical death.

Etheric Body

Remarks as for Astral Body.

'Etheric Double'

The vehicle of vitality.

'Hades' State

Corresponds to the vehicle of vitality of man: everyone is in this condition and environment immediately after physical death: it is left (and 'Paradise' conditions entered in the Soul Body) after the 'second death', i.e., the shedding of the vehicle of vitality. It is a semi-waking, semi-dreaming even sleeping stage, with the possibility of confusing imaginings and hallucinations with the

realities of the environment (which are the 'doubles' of physical objects).

'Paradise' State

Corresponds to the 'super-physical' Soul Body of man: it is entered after the vehicle of vitality has been shed (at the 'second death') usually three days after physical death. It is 'a glorified earth' (the primary body of the earth, just as the Soul Body is the primary body of man), the normal 'next world' of humanity. People who, owing to fixed ideas, sensuality, etc., are delayed in 'Hades' conditions are said to be 'earthbound'.

Vehicle of Vitality

The semi-physical 'frame' on which the physical body is constructed and through which it is animated — the 'nerve spirit' of Germans, the 'etheric double' of Theosophists, the 'vital body' of Rosicrucians, the 'Bardo Body' of Tibetans, etc. Whereas the 'mental' phenomena of psychical research (i.e., telepathy, clairvoyance and precognition) are due to the exercise of the Soul Body, the 'physical' phenomena (i.e., supernormal 'raps', levitation, direct voice, telekinesis and materialization) are products of the vehicle of vitality.

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*"Time and space vanished. . . I was free.
I had found the reality within the actuality,
the breath within the breath,
the consciousness within the consciousness,
the soul within the form."*

THIS IS ONE OF THE MANY FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS TO BE FOUND IN THIS IMPORTANT BOOK, IN WHICH ROBERT CROOKALL, AN AUTHOR OF MANY BOOKS ON PSYCHIC MATTERS, EXAMINES THE IMPORTANCE OF BREATHING AS A MEANS OF ELEVATING AND EXPANDING HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS. IN FASCINATING PERSONAL ACCOUNTS OF PSYCHICS, ASTRAL PROJECTORS AND PSYCHIC RESEARCHERS, HE ESTABLISHES THAT MOST HUMANS ARE POTENTIAL MEDIUMS AND THAT PSYCHIC PHENOMENA ARE ESSENTIALLY NORMAL.

BREATHING PROVIDES AN ESSENTIAL FIRST STEP TOWARDS MAKING CONTACT WITH OUR HIGHER SELVES AND THUS TOWARDS AN ULTIMATE UNION OF THE WHOLE NATURE OF MAN.