

Letter from Jayne Gackenbach, Past *Lucidity Letter* Editor

It is with great pleasure that I introduce this 10th year commemorative issue of *Lucidity Letter*. Although I did not edit it, I did edit it! This issue is made up solely of articles selected from the nine volumes for which I was Senior Editor. These were chosen by Stephen LaBerge, Harry Hunt and myself in conjunction with our new Senior Editor, Elinor Gebremedhin.

I thought I would talk about the history of *Lucidity Letter* and its publisher, Lucidity Association. In the fall of 1981, a few years after the completion of my dissertation on lucid dreaming, it became apparent through my correspondence that there was a small group of people who were interested in this dream experience. I had learned how very obscure a topic it was with my dissertation, even though I had the good fortune of living near and seeking the advice of one of the dreaming greats, Bob Van de Castle, and the support of the Association for Research and Enlightenment and especially Henry Reed and Scott Sparrow. Although Scott had written one of the early monographs on the topic and Celia Green had graciously given me her books on lucidity and related topics free of charge, I was to soon face the reality that there were really very few people "out there" who were interested in this topic. It wasn't until just after my dissertation was completed in the fall of 1978 that I stumbled on an early abstract by Stephen LaBerge. Although he was to become my closest colleague during those formative years, I also wanted to somehow reach out to others who wrote to me with some interest in the topic.

So it was on a rather impromptu note that in December of 1981 I put together some excerpts from letters of colleagues, notes on my own research program, and news about other lucid dreaming activities and called this compilation, *Lucidity Letter*. I mailed it out to about 40 (my memory fails me!) colleagues who I thought might be interested in this work. By the second issue (March 10, 1982) I had received letters of encouragement as well as suggestions for improvement from Julian Jaynes, Judy Malamud, Scott Sparrow, Charles Tart, Robert Ogilvie, Patricia Garfield, Stanley Krippner, K. Ramakrishna Rao, and Stephen LaBerge among others. Thus this quarterly newsletter was born.

The December 1985 issue was our first bound "journal" with the special theme "Dream Lucidity and Death." It remains one of our most popular resale issues. Starting with 1986 we went to a twice yearly, bound journal format, which we continued through 1990. Two people were especially instrumental in supporting my early efforts to publish *Lucidity Letter*, my colleague Stephen LaBerge and my friend Mary Tuttle. Without either of their continued and loyal support we surely would have folded.

So too my departmental chair at the University of Northern Iowa was for years behind this publication. But more changes were afoot. After a few years of supporting my journal-creating efforts, the university notified us that we needed to find a new publisher for *Lucidity Letter*. Although we had already begun a minimal subscription fee, the university was still carrying the bulk of the expenses. Thus Lucidity Association was created as a nonprofit organization to publish *Lucidity Letter*. We formed Lucidity Association in 1987 and recently received notification that we now have permanent nonprofit status from the United States Internal Revenue Service (there is a five-year trial period after application). Lucidity Association is incorporated in the state of Iowa and you may have noticed that *Lucidity Letter* is still printed and mailed from there.

The first proceedings of our now annual Lucid Dreaming Symposia were published in the June 1986 issue. These were from a symposium that Stephen LaBerge and I organized in the summer of 1985 at the University of Virginia preceding the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Dreams (ASD). All subsequent symposia have been organized and hosted by the Lucidity Association and held in conjunction with the annual ASD meetings. These proceedings appeared in the December issues of 1987, 1988, 1989, and 1990.

Although my family and I moved to Canada in the fall of 1987, the operations of Lucidity Association and *Lucidity Letter* have continued very smoothly from north of the border. During our years here several other people have emerged as strong supporters of Lucidity Association/Letter. Harry Hunt has morally supported all of our work as well as sat as Chair of Lucidity Association, Consulting Editor and frequent contributor. Kathy Belicki has served as Associate Editor and occasional contributor. Fariba Bogzaran has sat on the advisory committee and been a contributor and a presenter at our annual meetings. Elinor Gebremedhin has served as Associate Editor and contributed to the last few issues. A special salute to Stephen LaBerge, who has remained a steadfast supporter, shoulder to cry on, friend to argue with, and overall cheerleader and workhorse throughout the entire 10 years of our operation. We have now diversified and with this commemorative issue we begin our new structure. Elinor Gebremedhin, as the new Senior Editor, has mounted an Herculean effort in bringing forward a huge amount of material (three times the normal issue length) and reediting it for this special issue. Fariba Bogzaran is planning the 1992 annual meeting in Santa Cruz, California. I am staying on, for a short while, as managing director handling the subscriptions, correspondence, mailing list maintenance, and brochure/advertising. We hope to transfer these duties to someone in the U.S. in the next year. I will also continue as general advisor to these wonderful women as they get used to their new volunteer duties.

The final new change is with the frequency with which we can publish *Lucidity Letter*. Due primarily to rising production costs in the context of a recession in the United States we have had to make the difficult decision to go to an annual publication, which saves substantially on shipping costs. Starting in 1992 *Lucidity Letter* will come out once a year, midyear, with issue lengths of 200 to 300 pages (twice the issue length of the semiannual copies). This not only allows *Lucidity Letter* to continue to exist financially but will also allow more time for a more formal review process of potential articles. So the reader will get the same amount of material as they did with twice yearly publication but in a more refined version. We have also increased the subscription cost (which has not gone up for four years) to \$35 per year. We feel that with these changes we can guarantee the continued existence of *Lucidity Letter* as a place where many voices are heard.

Although this gives you the bare bones of our evolution toward this tenth year issue and beyond, you may still wonder what is the concept driving the content of *Lucidity Letter*? Well, in some sense it is still evolving. As I said above, I started it to simply connect the few people who were interested in this special dream experience. For 31/2 years this informal connecting was the major driving mechanism, but within that we saw some classic work come out on our pages such as the original Senoi articles by Dentan and Faraday (reprinted herein). When we moved to a journal form in late 1985 we had more room. That issue was made up of invited essays prompted by a moving near-death experience (NDE) of physicist John Wren-Lewis while on the Senoi trail in Malaysia with his wife Ann Faraday (reprinted herein). This lively series of essays on how the NDE is like or different from dreams, lucid dreams, and out-of-body experiences launched a new era of *Lucidity Letters*. No longer were we restricted to short notes on works or ideas in progress. Now we had room for more fully developed articles. By this time I had been in academia long enough (seven years) to not want *Lucidity Letter* to become too academic. Although I valued the vast series of academic journals available on virtually every topic, I recognized that we were still too new to be so narrow in our focus. The reality was that for those first bound issues we would always have enough copy, but just enough. They were typically made up of a combination of first hand accounts, research papers, clinical considerations, and theoretical discussions. Although the focus was lucid dreaming, articles regularly appeared comparing them to OBEs, meditation, and nonlucid dreams. We were able to rapidly publish research results in these pages. Sometimes this went wrong, as with the sex differences premature publication which I then went back and changed (the "Second Look" is reprinted herein) and in other cases it allowed the readers to see articles on the cutting edge of the field. Early versions sometimes appeared in *Lucidity Letter* years ahead of their eventual appearance in more traditional academic outlet. We came to especially appreciate the personal perspective provided to us by the many first hand reports of lucid dreaming and related experiences provided to us by our

readers. These clear and precise internal observations led the field in thinking about these experiences. I should especially point to the many papers of Rev. George Gillespie which have regularly been in our pages as well as the experiences of Alan Worsley and Father "X" who have also repeatedly contributed. As Harry Hunt points out in his introduction to the "Experience of Lucid Dreaming" section, "without [these] . . . sort of detailed reports that follow we would have been left with a falsely simplified idea of what dreaming is and can be." *Lucidity Letter* has always tried to maintain its appreciation of the personal experience of dreaming lucidly by consistently devoting many of its pages to these reports.

The clinical possibilities of this unique sleep experience were also discussed in some length on our pages. Some of these are reprinted in this special issue but much had to be left out. As well as the fabulous potential of dream lucidity, all sides of the control–no control, ethical–not ethical, force it–don't force it issues were considered and reconsidered.

I am proud to tell you that we now have a publication where voices from as far away as Australia or China can be heard along with those from the United States, Canada and Europe. We now regularly have articles from around the world in every issue. This international flavor in both contributors and readership has been gratifying but I would especially like to shine the light on Alan Worsley in England, Paul Tholey in Germany, and Harvey Irwin in Australia as well as my Canadian colleagues (Harry Hunt, Kathy Belicki, and Alan Moffitt) and say thanks.

I would like to end this introductory letter by telling you of the two highlights of my years with this publication/organization. For me the highlight issue of *Lucidity Letter* was June 1989. In it were the extraordinary experiences of three ordinary individuals, the OBEs of Father "X," the NDE of Mark Block and the UFO "abduction" of Felicia Payne's husband and mother. While editing this I was finishing my book *Control Your Dreams*, and was thinking quite a bit about how these apparently diverse experiences of consciousness might fit together and with lucid dreams. We published my thoughts (reprinted herein). I tried, as has Harry Hunt in his well-received *The Multiplicity of Dreams*, to place lucid dreaming in its series. This placing lucidity in its series in order to better understand it has become the focus of my work since my move to Canada.

Of the five Lucid Dreaming Symposia we have held over the years the highlight one for me was the meeting in Chicago in the summer of 1990. At this meeting, entitled "Higher States of Consciousness: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives," I was able to bring my professional worlds together into one room. This was no small feat! Because I had lived in Iowa for almost 9 years I had become close colleagues with

Transcendental Meditation researchers at the Maharishi International University. Although I valued their science and their personal style and wisdom I was not a regular meditator and I was always caught between two sets of two worlds. First, I have been very involved with the dreamwork movement yet my TM colleagues told me they were taught to not attend to dreams. Second, I had also become increasingly interested in Transpersonal Psychology focusing on lucidity in the context of the study of higher states of consciousness. Yet TM scientists were virtually incommunicado from the rest of the field of Transpersonal Psychology both because they were shunned and because they shunned. The questionable wisdom of my straddling these two sets of apparent contradictions was all too often brought to my attention. But all those doubts were put to rest during one magical moment at that Chicago meeting during a panel discussion on TM research by both TM and non-TM researchers some of whom had not seen nor spoken to each other in 20 years. It was one of those moments when the universe turned. It was due to the Lucidity Association's planning committee, especially Harry Hunt, Skip Alexander and Stanley Krippner, who had the foresight to know that these groups of people needed to meet and to talk in order to further our combined efforts to understand and communicate about consciousness, be it in sleep, while awake or while somehow "altered" or "higher".