

Letter from Elinor Gebremedhin, New *Lucidity* Editor

You, the reader, already know that the publication you have in your hands right now is not the *Lucidity Letter* you've been used to for the last few years. This special issue commemorating the first ten years of *Lucidity Letter* is organized more like a full-length book than a periodical; the name has been changed from *Lucidity Letter* to *Lucidity*; the overall format of the cover design is different and there have been some changes in typesetting/page format as well. The most striking change is the change in Senior Editor, since this publication has been nurtured entirely by Jayne Gackenbach ever since she founded it ten years ago.

It's a truism that a new manager tends to make a few obvious changes just so everyone knows there's a new hand at the helm—regardless of whether or not changes are needed. However, the "top-down" implication of this model does not accurately describe what really has happened in the production of the "book" you have in your hands. For instance, discussions of a name change have gone on for years, due to the evolution away from a newsletter orientation. Because of heavy involvement from a Steering Committee whose members meet face-to-face once a year, and otherwise must telephone from their scattered locations across the United States and Canada, the commemorative "book" you have in your hands came out of a variety of processes. The source material we had to draw on was so rich, there were many hard decisions to be made as to what should be included and what left out. It shortly became obvious that the new papers we had been readying for publication this year had to be postponed until next year. As the "book" outline grew more oriented toward certain topics and not others, we had to set aside many more fine pieces—and as it was, the "book" turned out to be longer than we originally intended. There were times in which I was not certain whether I was on top, bottom or crosswise relative to this creative process, but it was fascinating how well it all worked out.

In her Letter from the Editor, Jayne has repeatedly remarked on how few people are seriously interested in this field, but to me this book nevertheless chronicles the unfolding potential of an experience that can be deeply important, to at least some people. To me, it seems quite important not to let *Lucidity* die. The development of new ways to teach lucidity, the new level of communication enabled by *Lucidity Letter*, the advent of similar publications in French and German, the existence of research projects for more than twenty years in several countries in the world, the increase in the amount of research in the last ten years and the foundations laid for the use of lucidity in creative, healing and sports applications—all these point to the possibility of something new emerging in our culture at large. Only time will tell whether lucidity will remain a subject for only a few, but books like the one you are holding in your hands may be influential in gradually changing this. When you read it,

I think you'll agree that something is really going on here.

At any rate, it's a vision that has supplied Lucidity with an editor for a while.

Moving from visions to more practical matters, I have been writing and editing for the computer industry for more than twenty years, but this is the first time I have been responsible for setting typestyle/layout standards and overseeing the entire book through production of galleys for the printer. The first thing I have to say about this process is that it is incredibly time-consuming. I don't know how Jayne Gackenbach managed to do all that AND write a significant number of articles herself, AND run annual conferences, AND keep track of subscriptions, AND do creative organizational moves, such as obtaining nonprofit status for Lucidity Association, AND engage in university research and teaching, AND, of course, have a family. It is significant that she has to be replaced by three people—myself for the editing of Lucidity, Fariba Bogzaran for mounting the annual conferences, and a third person, yet to be designated, for the handling of subscription fulfillment, list maintenance and related financial matters. I wonder what she is going to do next, after she catches her breath.

Lucidity Letter has been an unusual publication in that it started up at the beginning of a new chapter in consciousness studies the development of scientific methods of studying dream content that can be validated in the laboratory. Jayne Gackenbach and many of the early contributors to *Lucidity Letter* (such as Stephen LaBerge, George Gillespie and Harry Hunt) were quick to see implications that extended far beyond the studies themselves. The evolution of *Lucidity Letter* from a newsletter to a journal format, stylistic changes over the last ten years and English problems in manuscripts from non-English speaking countries meant that there was quite a bit of editing to do, more than you would think, since these articles have all been previously published. The overall aim has been to present you with a consistent style with, however, as few departures from the original texts as possible. Several articles from non-English speaking countries have been more extensively edited, and reviewed again by their authors. In some cases, an article has not been reproduced in its entirety, usually because only part of it was appropriate for the focus of the book in a given situation; these are indicated in Editor's Notes at the beginning of the article. The original titles have been retained; in all cases, it is easy to identify the original issue from a footnote at the bottom of the first page.

I expect future issues to be much easier to produce than this one was, not only because there are working style guides, but also because of a hidden weapon—the assistance of Carol Sparks of Ralamar Sparks Enterprises. Carol offered many, many suggestions, and probably feels as if she owns this book as much as anybody. We crossed horns on at least a weekly basis on matters of punctuation and page formats in a variety of

situations, while trying to improve on ten years worth of style changes, but we survived.

Although nearly all steering committee members provided input to the initial paper selection process, Jayne Gackenbach, Harry Hunt and Stephen LaBerge were especially involved in molding the shape of this book in the interim and final stages. Fariba Bogzaran and Stephen LaBerge put their heads together on the cover design. George Gillespie, in his capacity as Sanskrit scholar, deserves special thanks for his help in preparing our manuscript on Tibetan Buddhism for a much-needed second review by Tarab Tulku; it is very difficult to translate Tibetan concepts into English.

Developing Lucidity Into a Book

As we worked out what it was that we wanted to emphasize out of the wealth of material *Lucidity Letter* has been publishing over the last decade, we found that we could support a true book structure, rather than just assembling a miscellaneous collection of "classics." For example, in the section on Historical Perspectives, it turned out that without ever having been deliberately planned that way, *Lucidity Letter* had published articles on most of the key early modern figures, beginning with the Marquis Hervey-de-Saint-Denys [another article significantly improved, and reviewed again in the Netherlands] up to and including the work of Hearne and Worsley, who were the first to design a method of laboratory validation of lucidity.

However, before dealing with the history of nonlaboratory research on lucid dreaming, we decided that the best place to begin was with reports of the phenomenon itself. Although we have records of lucidity as a part of human experience for more than a thousand years, even those who experience or know about the minimalist definition of lucidity (a dream in which one knows one is dreaming while the dream is still in process), may not realize the many experiences and avenues of development open to them within this new state. Finally, it is becoming increasingly clear that lucid dreaming as a learnable skill is more accessible to the population at large than some other types of nonordinary consciousness experiences.

For these reasons, we begin with a variety of experientially-oriented accounts from individuals from all walks of life, plus a few brief commentaries by Charles Tart and George Gillespie to put these experiences into perspective. The very first, by Krisanne Gray, tells of problems encountered by a woman who started lucid dreaming spontaneously at a very young age, and how she made use of her capabilities to solve some very practical problems as she grew older. As we move through the section, we find that spontaneous development of lucidity is not at all uncommon, but only a few of our dreamers started in childhood; one of them is Alan Worsley, the first dreamer

ever to signal to a waking laboratory technician that he was dreaming, and yet remain asleep while he was doing so.

Among the dreamers who have written accounts for *Lucidity Letter*, it is more common for lucidity, whether unpremeditated or induced, to emerge in adulthood. At the present time in our culture, this event is likely to disturb established conceptions of waking and dreaming consciousness, as well as initiate all kinds of new experiences which may or may not be enjoyable: witness the articles by Father "X," a Catholic monk who wonders about the demonic, as opposed to the mystical experiences of George Gillespie, a Baptist clergyman and Sanskrit scholar. Both of these men started having lucid dreams in their adult years without ever having heard of the phenomenon.

The papers that follow show how some dreamers "fall" into new states and situations, while others engage in highly organized experimentation, highlighting a phenomenon which seems "natural" or "organic" with some and learned by others. Even more indicative of the possible universality of the phenomenon is the existence of some dreams reported from mainland China. Regardless, once lucid, what the dreamer decides to experiment with in the relative freedom of the lucid dream has a great deal to do with how things turn out—and there are many unexpected results. Our section on dreamers experiences has been deliberately designed with heavier emphasis on the ends of the bell-shaped curve (as we know it), rather than the middle.

As George Gillespie indicates early in the first section, some lucid dreamers find strong parallels and even direct relationships between their lucid dreams and other states of consciousness. The section on Related States draws connections and parallels between altered states like OBEs and NDEs, as well as meditation and mystical experience. While there are more theoretical papers and several formal studies in this section, most of the articles are still heavily focussed on individual experiences. Having established an experiential base, we next turn to a very important section, the section entitled "Empirical Work".

Newcomers to the study of lucid dreaming may be interested to know that the modern era really took off as a result of the work of Stephen LaBerge, who independently designed and executed the same type of experiment at Stanford University, California as Hearne and Worsley did in Great Britain. Science is familiar with the phenomenon of brand-new experiments that are developed concurrently, and mutually validate each other without the researchers' knowing about each other's work. The work in Great Britain was completed at an earlier date, but LaBerge was much more successful in expanding on and disseminating information about his findings and his methods in the context of the North American research community. The importance of laboratory

studies of the type included in the "Empirical Work" section cannot be overemphasized, because these studies, of necessity restricted to intensive studies of a few individuals, also serve as checkpoints for survey work of larger numbers of people. One of the big problems with laboratory work is getting a dreamer to have lucid dreams on the night he or she is scheduled to sleep in the (expensive) sleep laboratory, hence the interest researchers everywhere have with regard to better induction methods.

Some empirical studies are in other sections of the book because of the stress we are placing on empirical validation of various phenomena. One of Jayne Gackenbach's ground-breaking studies of a Transcendental Meditation practitioner's dreams is in the meditation section, for instance. Of course, the very nature of the history section decrees an overlap with other sections of the book. Paul Tholey's paper on the historical development of German research discusses laboratory work and its relationship to an important theoretical base, which brings us to the next section of the book: Theoretical Approaches.

In a field so young, the impact of lucidity research on waking as well as dream-consciousness theory is hardly realized yet. The placement of Harry Hunt's paper at the head of our list is no accident, for one of the virtues of his position is its capacity for integrating a variety of theoretical threads, as well as bringing lucidity into relationship as one of several intensified dreaming experiences. In addition to Jayne Gackenbach's state-of-the-art framework for lucidity and related states, and the other papers in the Theory section, the reader is directed to the Tibetan Buddhist paper in the Related States (meditation) section, earlier.

Last, but hardly least, we come to Applications. Although the reader will find plenty of analytical and anecdotal material here, on clinical and nonclinical types of applications, it is clear that at this point in time, the exploration of both the creative and the unsettling capacities of the lucid dreaming state is only just beginning. Hopefully, the pages of *Lucidity* will be able to chronicle many more new developments in the years to come.

Upcoming Issues

We have a number of interesting things planned for the 1992 issue. Among the articles scheduled are papers from the 1991 Lucidity Association Symposium, a survey of lucidity and related experiences, an interview with Tarab Tulku on the subject of dream control and conversations between Jayne Gackenbach and Norman Sattler in Germany on Sattler's use of lucid dreaming in his clinical practice. The contributions from Tarab Tulku, a Tibetan lama, and Norman Sattler, a colleague of

Paul Tholey, complement one another because both have used lucidity as a tool in clinical practice for many, many years, but the two are working out of different frameworks.

We are also pleased to offer two very different experientially-oriented articles. Scott Sparrow, one of the early modern writers on lucid dreaming awareness, tells us about the beautiful, poignant, alarming, and joyous experiences he has encountered in the heights and depths of his lucid-dream life. In an entirely different vein, we also hear a whimsical Alice-in-Wonderland tale from Barbara Olson, who tried to get her lucid-dream characters to help her decide whether or not to go to an ASD conference in London.

More than half our readers have expressed interest in seeing more anecdotal, experientially or clinically oriented articles . . . so we call to you, our readers: tell us what you have been dreaming! Write more letters! For a start, we would like to begin tracking experiences in several areas.

- Use of lucidity in creative endeavors (arts, music, writing, etc.), technical problem solving, sports training, or mental training of any sort
- Problematical dreams, bad experiences, nightmares: their impact on waking and dreaming life, if any; differences between lucid and nonlucid types, if any, and especially how you, your friend or your client dealt with the problem.
- Differences between spontaneous and induced experiences
- Last, but not least, write us and tell us what you think of our commemorative "book," and what you would like to see in future issues.