

Paranormal Perception and the Nature of Reality

The late Edgar Cayce, according to one biographer (Sugrue, 1942), was born on March 18, 1877, near Hopkinsville, Kentucky. There were instances of paranormal abilities in Cayce even as a young boy, though at the time they were not taken seriously. Mr. Cayce did not become active in the area of the paranormal until after he had reached maturity. As a young man he worked as a salesman. While employed as a salesman he began to develop a paralysis of the throat that resulted in a gradual loss of his voice and threatened his means of livelihood. Medical doctors were unable to ascertain the cause of this ailment, nor was hypnotic treatment successful.

Mr. Cayce, in desperation, called on a friend to help him enter into a form of hypnotic trance or sleep which he had used earlier in his life in pursuit of his school studies. While in this trance, Mr. Cayce was able to diagnose and prescribe for his own condition successfully. A physician friend, Dr. Wesley Ketchum, asked Mr. Cayce to attempt to use his unusual talent for the benefit of some of his other patients. The results of the "experiment" were impressive enough that they continued, and Edgar Cayce was launched into a career as a psychic.

For many years Mr. Cayce gave "medical readings" for persons suffering from a wide-ranging assortment of physical problems. The medical readings followed a pattern whereby Mrs. Cayce would put Edgar into a trance and then give the name and location of the person requesting the reading. The resulting information was usually far too sophisticated and technical to be produced by a man of Edgar Cayce's limited education. Upon waking, Mr. Cayce had no recollection of what had taken place or been said during the "reading." Subsequently a secretary, Gladys Davis, was hired to transcribe the "readings" and she was to remain with the Cayce's for the rest of Edgar Cayce's career. As a result of Gladys Davis' efforts, there exists today a massive collection of data derived from the Cayce trances.

Some years after the medical readings commenced, a Mr. Arthur Lammers became interested in the talents of Edgar Cayce. Mr. Lammers was interested in religious and philosophical questions and hoped that Cayce's talents could be employed for delving into these as well as medical questions. Again the "experiment" proved a success and a new area of Edgar Cayce's talent was opened up. The result was the production of considerable material on issues related to the nature of man, the world, religion, the future, and the past.

Throughout his career as a psychic, Mr. Cayce gave "readings" to all comers and charged nothing or only nominal fees for his services. He supported himself and his family through his work as a photographer. Edgar Cayce died on January 3, 1945, in Virginia Beach, VA, where he had made his home for some years. There is still today an active group, The Association for Research and Enlightenment, Inc., located at Virginia Beach, which is devoted to the study and distribution of the Cayce material.

The remainder of this piece will be devoted to a brief outline and philosophical analysis of Edgar Cayce's paranormal perception of the nature of reality.

CREATION: The Cayce records indicate (Robinson, 1972) that the universe as we know it had its origins in a single omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent consciousness or mind which is the source of all -- God. God withdrew His consciousness into Himself until there was only emptiness and at its center individuality awakened and became aware of itself. With self-awareness came desire, desire for expression and for companionship. God projected from Himself his essence and created all that is. The universe is an expression of God's thought and His mind force projected and maintains it. For companionship, God created other consciousnesses or souls patterned after His own, inherently equal to but far less evolved than Himself.

MATTER: The material universe (Sugrue, 1942) was built from the essence of God, sent out from His mind like a ray. The length of the wave and rate of vibration resulted in various substances and designs. All forms carried with them an evolutionary plan to be unfolded through movement and growth or change. Change is the product of activity, which was initiated by the law of attraction and repulsion. The basic building block of the cosmos is the atom (Robinson, 1972) -- the atom, with its negative electrons and positive protons exemplifying the law of attraction and repulsion, each a world unto itself, each a manifestation of the single, unitary life-giving essence. Everything that exists in the material universe has its counterpart and pattern in the "spiritual" universe. The spiritual principles, which governed the process of creation are represented in the material plane through the concepts of harmony, system and balance. These same principles are inherent in activities such as music and mathematics. In either universe or plane the principles are in essence identical though differently manifested.

MAN: Consciousnesses or souls were created to be companions to God. They were inherently equal but vastly inferior in terms of development. Each soul was given free will, for in no other way could it become an equal to and companion of God. The soul rests upon two principles (Sugrue, 1942), spirit, which contains knowledge of identity with God, and mind, which can experience itself and its activity separate from God. The evolution inherent in each soul from the beginning called for unlimited experience, to end only when the individual will or desire no longer differed from the thought, which produced it -- God. When the will of the individual was in harmony with the thought of God, their consciousnesses would merge and the soul would become a companion to God. The soul would retain its individuality because God is aware of all, including each individual consciousness as recorded in the mind through experience. For the individuality of a soul to be destroyed by the merging of its consciousness with that of God's, it would be necessary for a part of God to be destroyed. The new and independent souls were attracted to the material plane by the activity there (Robinson, 1972). Aware of the creative powers that they had received from God, they played at creation. The souls caused materialization of life forms and attached their consciousness to them in order to experience matter. The power that was theirs was applied in its grossest form and abused. The souls pursued their own immature desires and became enmeshed in matter and took on many forms. Other more highly evolved souls intervened and from the many

forms a physical pattern suited to the evolution out of matter for these entrapped souls was created and set upon its course -- man. Once a soul became trapped in matter through too great an identification of its consciousness with matter and the pursuit of its desires through material form, the pattern of its evolution was set and required that its evolution take place through the material plane. The physical vehicle (body) to which a soul was attached could not possibly last sufficiently long, nor provide the diversity of experience needed for this evolution. Thus, a process of life and death cycles came into being – what we call reincarnation. The cycles are governed by the law of cause and effect and are known as karma (Woodward, 1971). The law of karma controls the timing, place and conditions of each incarnation of a soul into material form. Such things as the physical conditions of the body, talents and relationships are influenced by karma, either positively or negatively. Each soul, by its own actions, creates itself and each incarnation is a process of "meeting self." The only way in which this cycle of births and deaths may be ended is for an individual soul to exhaust the possibilities for spiritual evolution available to it in the material plane.

SPACE AND TIME: According to Cayce (Carter, 1968), there is in fact no actual time and space -- all is one without distinction. The concepts of space and time are products of the finite mind trying to conceive the infinite. Both concepts are conveniences of thought, which have meaning only in the context of a three-dimensional plane, i.e., the material universe. They are concepts that have meaning only in the mind that can experience itself as separate from the spirit. Man is a soul, and the soul has both mind and spirit, but in the material plane mind dominates. The spirit is the soul's contact with the consciousness of God and God is One and All and neither time nor space has any real or meaningful existence in the infinite consciousness of God.

<http://www.edgarcayce.org/>

References

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