

## EXPLORING INTUITION: PROSPECTS AND POSSIBILITIES

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One of the assumptions of transpersonal psychology is that man has the capacity for self-transcendence. Experiential phenomena associated with intuition frequently transcend limited self-concepts and sometimes lead directly to transpersonal states of awareness. This paper provides a brief survey of various approaches to the study and development of intuition.

*broad range  
of experiences  
called  
"intuition"*

Intuition is known to all of us by experience, yet its validity remains a subject of controversy among scientists concerned with empirical knowledge. Experiences which are commonly called intuitive include mystical apprehension of absolute truth, insight into the nature of reality, unitive consciousness, artistic inspiration, scientific discovery and invention, creative problem solving, perception of patterns and possibilities, extrasensory perception, clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition, retrocognition, feelings of attraction and aversion, picking up "vibes," knowing or perceiving through the body rather than the rational mind, hunches and premonitions. Historically, this broad range of experiences has been viewed from different perspectives by Eastern and Western mystics, theologians, philosophers, psychologists and parapsychologists. This paper is an attempt to find the common thread which runs through all intuitive experience, and to formulate an inclusive rather than exclusive conceptual framework for the study of intuition as a psychological function.

*intuition,  
science, and  
education*

Wei! (1972) defines intuitive flashes as transient, spontaneous altered states of consciousness generally associated with strong emotional reactions, and dissociated from logical reasoning. Although we cannot make such intuitions occur, we can prepare the way for them and allow them to happen. Wei! also

points out that the history of science shows clearly that the great advances in human understanding are always the result of intuitive leaps of imagination rather than logical intellectual processes, yet our educational system persists in training the intellect while ignoring the possibilities for developing intuition. Despite the obvious fallacy of equating intellect with mind, fears of abandoning rational levels of consciousness in order to explore non-rational elements of the psyche generate strong resistance to any formal attempts to introduce methods of developing intuition into the educational system.

Psychological conceptions of intuition have dealt primarily with intuition as inference, using the term to describe the process of reaching an accurate conclusion on the basis of less information than would usually be required to reach that conclusion. The assumption is that information is gained through the usual sensory channels, and acted upon by the usual cognitive processes, but both the process and the clues remain essentially unconscious, or below the threshold of consciousness. Thus laboratory studies of intuition are closely related to studies of subliminal perception and perceptual inference (Westcott, 1968).

*intuition  
as inference*

In his experimental studies of intuition as inference, Westcott found that in the laboratory individuals differ in the amount of explicit information they require before attempting solutions to problems and in the degree of success in reaching correct conclusions. Those who were typically successful on the basis of little information were regarded as intuitive. The capacity for intuitive problem solving was found to be significantly related to mathematical aptitude, self-confidence and spontaneity. The intuitive problem solvers apparently enjoyed cognitive risk-taking, and appeared to be consistently self-determining, in comparison with the other groups who were described as wild guessers, i.e. high risk, low success; the careful successful problem solvers, and the cautious careful failures. The obvious advantage of studying intuition as inference experimentally is that it can be tested for accuracy.

Similar studies in parapsychology have attempted to validate extrasensory perception (ESP) by testing for accuracy, although the basic assumptions are different. Whereas the psychological conceptions of intuition discussed by Westcott assume ordinary channels for ordinary sensory stimuli and a lack of awareness of process, parapsychology assumes that ESP is a function of extraordinary receptivity, possibly to extraordinary stimuli, which may be posited as *psi* energy (Ryzi, 1972). The fact that ESP bridges time as well as distance, and

*ESP and  
intuition*

may be concerned with events and personalities as well as communication, makes it much more difficult to explain in terms of perceptual inference. ESP does not fit into the existing psychological theories of cognitive learning. It does, however, have much in common with the experiential theories of intuition which claim direct apprehension of truth, accompanied by global understanding and a subjective experience of seeing into the nature of things.

*transcending  
the intellect*

Philosophers such as Bergson and Spinoza have claimed that intuition affords direct experience of truth, transcending the *use* of reason and intellect. The philosophical tradition of intuitionism assumes that truth can be known intuitively, and that objects of perception can also be apprehended intuitively. This view has much in common with the Buddhist concept of intuitive mind as defined by Lama Govinda (1969). Intuitive mind is said to be that aspect of mind which is simultaneously one with universal mind, and one with the mind system which comprehends differentiated knowledge. It is through intuitive mind that universal consciousness experiences itself in the multiplicity of the material world. For Lama Govinda, as for Bergson and Spinoza, it is through intuition that the essence of life may be apprehended. Trungpa (1970) points out that in the intuitive mind we find that all is within us. We may use theories and imagination, but this is only the beginning of intuitive knowledge. Sri Aurobindo (Satprem, 1970) tells us that in the evolution of consciousness humanity will not remain at the present mental level, but will become more and more intuitive.

*Western  
emphasison  
practicality*

Intuitive experience in both Eastern and Western philosophy affords contact with reality which is not possible by any other means. It is true in the same sense that sensations are true. Both are incontrovertibly real, yet both may be subject to distortion. **In** the West we tend to value intuitive leaps of imagination which follow the exhaustive use of logic and reason, leading to creative problem solving or scientific discovery and invention. Our preoccupation with measuring worth in terms of benefit to society has led to a disregard for subjective experiences which seemed to have no practical application. Yet intuitive experiences of a mystical nature have frequently been regarded as divine revelation, carrying with them the conviction of truth, and becoming the object of faith and the justification for action on the part of large groups of people throughout history. Religious experience is characteristically intuitive, going beyond reason, and conveying certainty, understanding and joy. It is also experienced as surrender to a higher power which transcends the individual. Intuitive experience includes mystical knowledge of God, knowledge of essence, absolute truth, ultimate beauty, bliss, ecstasy and the experience of prime

*religious  
intuitive  
experience*

reality in which all objects and processes are unified. Intuitive experience of a religious nature does not afford knowledge of facts. It is an experience of another dimension of reality which is perceived as more basic, more valid, and more real than the everyday world of ordinary experience. The intensity of that reality can only be expressed metaphorically, and may be compared to ordinary three-dimensional reality as a mountain is compared to a two-dimensional picture of a mountain.

With the advent of psychedelics, intuitive levels of awareness suddenly became accessible to large numbers of people who inadvertently found themselves experiencing profound and sometimes disturbing insights into the nature of reality which no longer appeared ordinary. Conventional psychology offered little in the way of conceptual theory which could account for the nature of these experiences which, by altering consciousness, changed values, beliefs, and behavior as well. Only the analytical psychology of C. G. Jung offered a comprehensive system of personality theory which could accommodate the experiential phenomena reported in psychedelic experience,

For Jung intuition was by no means reducible to inference. Intuition, like thinking, feeling and sensation, was a psychological function present in all men, albeit in varying degrees, and manifested according to personality type. Like sensation, intuition perceives irrationally and uncritically. The intuitive knows, but does not know how he knows. He is concerned primarily with perception, and, in the case of the artist, with the shaping of perception. The extroverted intuitive personality perceives implications and possibilities in the external world, while the introverted intuitive focuses on the inner world and perceives the implications and possibilities of his own unconscious processes, both personal and collective. The intuitive is likely to perceive and comprehend the whole at the expense of sensory detail, yet his perceptions are experienced as true in the same way that sensory data is experienced as true. Jung's intuitive types may not translate their intuitive perceptions into meaningful expression in actual living. However, intuition remains primarily a cognitive function outside the province of reason, and is brought into play whenever established values and concepts do not work. More simply, intuition is defined as a perception of realities which are not known to consciousness (Jung, 1933; Fordham, 1953).

*Jung's theory  
of intuition*

Assagioli (1965) has also considered intuition primarily as a cognitive function which apprehends reality directly, as a whole. He maintains that only intuition gives true psy-

*personal and  
spiritual  
intuition*

chological understanding both of oneself and others. Assagioli makes the distinction between personal and spiritual intuition which is useful in clarifying the confusion and controversy between the proponents of intuition as inference and the proponents of intuition as experience of truth. Assagioli, like Jung, sees intuition as a function which can be active on different levels and remain fundamentally the same.

*purity,  
or clarity*

Assagioli (1973) also suggests that true intuition should be distinguished from hunches and presentiments. This distinction is important, but it seems to refer to a difference in degree, or in purity, rather than a difference in kind. While pure intuition may be true by definition and does not rely on sensory data, intuition which is filtered through the senses, the emotions or the rational mind is more susceptible to distortion, but is nevertheless a form of intuition. If we assume a range of intuitive awareness which may be manifested in the mystical experience or simply as a vague hunch, ESP would be included in the broad range between the two. Depending on the degree of accuracy of perception, it could be rated higher or lower on the scale of intuitive purity. However, since hierarchical scales tend to be misleading, it seems preferable to use the term clarity to describe the quality of intuitive insight.

*activation  
procedure:  
quiet the mind*

The procedure which Assagioli outlines for the activation of intuition is identical with the procedure outlined by Ruzl for the activation of ESP. The first step is to quiet the mind, clearing it of all extraneous thoughts. This, as anyone who has done any form of meditation knows, is not as easy as it sounds. However, it is essential as a point of entry to deeper levels of awareness. This quieting of the mind may also be described as a lowering of the threshold of consciousness to include awareness of normally unconscious processes. It is important to recognize that the process inevitably opens the door to both the higher and the lower unconscious. Semantic confusion resulting from a linear description in which consciousness is said to be raised through a lowering of the threshold, can be avoided if the process is described as a clearing of inner vision, which occurs when we turn off the preprogrammed videotapes which occupy our attention most of the time. However, the term inner vision may also be unduly restrictive, as intuitive perception may be translated into any sensory modality. Intuition may become accessible to consciousness through visual imagery, auditory imagery and kinesthetic responses as well as vague undifferentiated feelings usually referred to as hunches. In any case, the subjective experience of receptivity is invariably associated with optimum intuitive functioning. The receptive mode of consciousness associated with meditation (Deik-

man, 1971) and the spontaneous emergence of inner imagery are essential to the development of intuitive functioning.

Gerard<sup>1</sup> has distinguished four levels of intuition, corresponding with the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual levels of consciousness. Tuning in to bodily responses and kinesthetic imagery in a given situation may give a subject information regarding unconscious reactions, which might otherwise be blocked from his awareness. Sensations of constriction, tension, tingling, lightness, heaviness, trembling, and so forth, may give an early indication of personal response to another person or a situation which has not yet developed sufficiently for any rational evaluation to make sense. Likewise, intuitive awareness on a feeling level frequently performs an evaluative function in terms of approach-avoidance responses, or like and dislike responses, with no apparent justification. On a mental level, intuition operates as an irrational factor in problem solving, as when the solution is reached suddenly by a leap of imagination, rather than as a result of deductive reasoning. Intuition on a spiritual level enables one to tune in on the inner core of being of another person, transcending the external aspects of the personality. This level of intuition may be cultivated by an attitude of loving acceptance, a suspension of judgment, and non-analytic, empathetic understanding. As in contemplative meditation, rational cognition is inhibited in favor of perception, and the active intellectual mode is replaced by a receptive perceptual mode. As in the process of deautomatization in meditation (Deikman, 1969) a reversal of the customary organizational style results in a perceptual expansion of reality.

*four  
levels*

Once this state of open receptivity is attained, the next step, in Assagioli's terms, involves reaching for the part of reality one wishes to contact. Ryzl describes the next step in developing ESP as intensive concentration on the question. The third step is quiet waiting. Impressions received should then be noted, interpreted, and checked for accuracy.

*concentration*

The problem of determining when a perception is truly intuitive, in the sense that it apprehends reality, or when it is imaginary, or simply a function of personal projection, is a function of intellectual discrimination. The elusive nature of intuitive perceptions makes it difficult to test in the laboratory, yet lack of discrimination can lead to mistaken assumptions with no foundation in reality. At this point, each individual

*reality  
testing*

<sup>1</sup>Robert Gerard: personal communication. Workshop in psychosynthesis: Intuitive awareness. Berkeley, 1972.

seeking to develop and nurture the cognitive function of his own intuition must be willing to learn by trial and error. Paying attention to intuitive flashes and learning to trust them are important factors in functional development, and presuppose a willingness to test the validity of perceptions. Here, however, as in the pursuit of enlightenment in meditation, personal striving or the desire to be right interferes with the process itself. As in the evocation of spontaneous inner imagery, the ego must stand aside in order to permit the experience, Interpretation and evaluation must be temporarily suspended or held in abeyance, but they are nevertheless essential to the process of development and integration.

*ESP and  
the intuition  
continuum*

The fact that the process recommended for developing ESP and activating intuition is identical does not mean that the two functions are identical. It appears, rather, that ESP is one manifestation of intuition, occurring on a continuum between intuition as inference and intuition as direct apprehension of truth. While ESP is evidently one of the powers which can be attained through the practice of meditation, its use for worldly purposes has been eschewed in religious contexts. Today, however, secular training for the development of ESP tends to regard an increase in personal power as an asset, and uses it as a strong selling point. Techniques for the development of ESP are no longer the exclusive property of esoteric schools requiring discipline and preparation. Popular systems of mind training have already developed efficient methods for activating psychic powers through the use of hypnosis and imagery techniques. The Greens (1973) have pointed out some of the dangers involved in crash programs for the development of psychic potential, but entrepreneurs continue to reap the profits from public interest and eagerness to learn. The popular appeal of commercial mind training programs is based largely on the promise of increased power to achieve what you want in the world, in addition to self improvement on the level of personality. It is not surprising that in the West the esoteric teachings of the East have been packaged and sold to anyone who is willing to pay the price of admission. Nor is it particularly surprising that the science of psychology, concerned primarily with measurement, prediction and control, is reluctant to deal with the ethical implications involved. Hopefully, by giving ESP a legitimate place in the context of transpersonal psychology as an aspect of intuition, we can begin to recognize its emergence on a broad scale as an obvious next step in the development of human potential.

*power,  
danger,  
and ethics*

However, ESP as commonly understood, remains only one aspect of man's intuitive function. Development of intuition

also facilitates higher states of consciousness and transpersonal experience. Through intuition man increases his knowledge and understanding of both the inner and the outer world. When we use metaphors, such as referring to the psyche as the mirror of the universe, or saying that the inner and the outer are simply two sides of the same fabric, it is only through direct intuitive experience that we know the truth of these statements. The metaphors are meaningful only when they reflect experience which cannot be conveyed except by symbolic representation. Through intuition we grasp the deepest, most basic level of reality in the depths of our being. Our intuition determines the way we perceive reality, our understanding of truth, and what we conceive to be ultimate states. Values, belief systems, gurus, teachers, paths, and disciplines are chosen intuitively, not rationally. It is the intuitive grasp of the implications of subscribing to a particular school that determines our choices. We cannot know everything about a system before we go into it, yet we are attracted to some and not to others. The same is true in interpersonal relations.

*personal truth  
is determined  
intuitively*

The importance of the guiding function of intuition is repeatedly affirmed in myths and legends of all cultures. Weil has stated simply that our intuitive faculty is a source of sound premises about the nature of reality. True intuition does not contradict reason, but goes far beyond it, and in so doing may sometimes conflict with our preconceptions and expectations. Yet it is essential to break through the old conceptual structures in order to experience new levels of awareness.

We have at our disposal a vast technology for the expansion of consciousness. Voluntary control of formerly unconscious physiological and psychological processes is demonstrably within our grasp (Green, Green & Walters, 1970). In recent years we have learned much about releasing energy, raising energy, transforming energy, directing energy, and controlling energy flow. Yet the energy we are talking about remains undefined. Its relationship to other familiar forms of such as kinetic, thermal and electrical energy remains a mystery. If we define it as light energy we are relying on synesthesia, since it is certainly not limited to visual manifestations. If we define it as *psi* energy, whose properties are not yet fully understood, we may be less hampered by preconceptions about how it is generated and transmitted.

*"energy"  
undefined*

Finding ourselves on the frontiers of a new science of consciousness, we must inevitably rely on intuition in formulating new concepts. Whether we create a new reality in the process of discovery or simply uncover a pre-existing form, intuitive

formulations precede proof and verification. Mathematicians have articulated more clearly than psychologists the importance of intuition in the process of innovation and discovery, and its relationship to the logic necessary for proving the validity of tentative formulations. In the past, psychical research has been primarily devoted to proving that the phenomena of ESP, i.e., telepathy, clairvoyance and psychokinesis actually exist. Current research, however, is increasingly concerned with how they operate.

*destructive possibilities*

If we are willing to assume some responsibility for shaping our future, then measuring and defining human evolution is not enough. When the technology of mind control is available, which it is, ignoring it can be a dangerous choice. It has been suggested that the development of ESP may have built-in safeguards, in that when a person opens up to greater dimensions of psychic awareness his own consciousness is raised, and therefore he would be unlikely to misuse his powers. At present this appears to be a totally unsubstantiated assumption. The corrupting influence of power itself has been eloquently conveyed in symbolic form by Tolkien in *The Lord of the Rings* (1965). Jung has pointed out that the intuitive type could be either constructive or destructive, and we have only to remember Hitler as a vivid example of the destructive potential of an intuitive type. Lama Govinda has also warned that while intuitive mind is the source of highest knowledge, it may also be a source of error. Paradoxically, we find that the way can also be the trap.

*the need for harmony*

The metaphysical perspectives outlined by the Greens (1971) are relevant to this problem. By focusing on the vertical rather than the horizontal expansion of consciousness, the trap may be avoided. By examining psychic phenomena in relation to intuition as a whole it may be possible to shift the emphasis from the horizontal to the vertical dimension. It is apparent that the function of intuition corresponds to the spiritual level of human development in the same way that thinking corresponds to the mental level, feeling to the emotional level and sensation to the physical level. However, these functions obviously do not operate independently of one another, and the harmony and integration of these four functions remains essential for the development of a healthy, fully functioning human organism. In differentiating these functions, however, we can begin to distinguish patterns of intrapersonal development. It is clear that overemphasis on thinking tends to interfere with the development of intuition, and in our culture intuition has been one of the least appreciated functions, and therefore repressed. (Assagioli, 1965).

Intuition is clearly differentiated from the functions of thinking, feeling and sensation by the phenomenon of insight. Though sometimes defined as seeing into the nature of things, intuitive insight results from identification with rather than looking at an object of attention, whether it be the divine nature of God or simply the end of a matchstick. In breaking down distinctions between subject and object, intuition leads into self-transcendence.

*insight*

When the self is no longer identified with the body, perception of time and space may also be altered. Activating intuitive awareness thereby leads into a new awareness of the fourth dimension and even further into realms of being which transcend experience as currently conceptualized. When the barriers between self and other dissolve, knowledge shifts from the rational mode of knowing-about, to the intuitive mode of knowing-by-direct-experience. Intuitive knowledge tends to be general rather than specific, subjective rather than objective, and is characteristically experienced as subjectively meaningful. The imagery of inner vision becomes imbued with profound meaning leading to deep insights which may not be translated into verbal messages. In relation to another person, insight resulting from intuitive identification with the other may lead to deep understanding without revealing particular events or contents of consciousness.

*intuitive  
knowledge*

Intuition is rarely experienced in a pure form. Yet through intuition consciousness may begin to detach itself from its contents and know itself as essence. The experience of consciousness as distinct from its contents is apprehended intuitively, not intellectually. Only in retrospect can the intuitive experience be translated into language comprehensible to others who are not receptive to the direct experience. Verbal rational accounts of intuitive experience inevitably remain inadequate, just as verbal descriptions of taste, smell or sound are inadequate to convey the sensation.

*consciousness  
knowing  
itself*

Differentiating the various levels of intuition is an important part of developing awareness of it. In examining the ways in which intuition becomes conscious, we can immediately differentiate clear perceptions from those which are cloudy or vague. Just as the musician is able to differentiate tones which for the untrained ear seem nonexistent, the individual who attends to his intuitive flashes can learn to differentiate those which are valid and reliable from those which are not. Pure intuition does not rely on clues at all, and transcends sensation, emotion and thought. However, an awareness of how intuition can function on the level of sensation, feeling and thinking.

*the various  
levels **Of**  
intuition*

helps to dispel the misconception that intuition as a way of knowing is an all-or-nothing proposition. Degrees of intuitive awareness may be affected by such factors as time, place, mood, attitude, state of consciousness, and innumerable idiosyncratic variables. In considering intuition as a level of consciousness which is higher and therefore subsumes the physical, emotional and mental planes (Green & Green, 1911), we find that the clues on which intuition depends at lower levels, are regarded as interference on the higher level. For example, any attempt to apprehend the totality of another person through intuition involves quieting the mind, as well as dissociation from personal emotions and physical sensations. Only when an individual can free himself from his own personal interests or ego involvement, can he reach the level of transpersonal experience, in which he knows the other person through empathetic identification with the totality of the energy field.

In the process of intrapersonal development, identification with the body, the feelings, and the mind, as manifested in imagery, precedes the process of *conscious* disidentification or emptying. Likewise in the development of intuition, the differentiation of specific clues available on a physical, emotional and mental level paradoxically precedes the abandonment or transcendence of all clues. True intuition needs no clues, yet its development may depend on cultivating the awareness of clues on all levels. In meditation, the function of form is to carry the mind beyond forms, and in intuition the function of imagery is to train the mind in direct apprehension of reality.

*role of  
imagination*

The problem of gaining access to this level of experiential knowing is accentuated by the fact that it sometimes seems illogical or at least incomprehensible to the intellect. Like dreams, intuitive flashes are frequently dismissed as illusory, imaginary, or at least irrelevant perception. This raises the question of how intuition can be distinguished from self-deception and imagination. Imagination plays a paradoxical role in this process. Although it serves as a vehicle for carrying the mind out of the confines of ordinary rational consciousness, it too is transcended, and needs to be distinguished from clear intuitive perception. In discussing meditation, Trungpa (1910) refers to the meeting of imagination and reality, where the feeling of words and concepts meets with intuitive knowledge, at first in a vague and imprecise way. He says that if one cultivates the intelligent intuitive insight, the imaginary element is gradually clarified and eventually dies out. Frequently, intuition may be apprehended first through sym-

bolic imagery-the language of the unconscious which is familiar, but not always comprehensible, to everyone who is aware of dreaming. Just as dreams reveal their meaning through various methods of interpretation, the symbolic imagery of intuition may also need interpretation. This does not preclude the possibility that clairvoyance may occur, just as precognitive dreams occur, but for purposes of clarification it is important to consider the symbolic content as well as the manifest content of imagery.

Symbolic imagery which brings intuitive perceptions into conscious awareness may be either personal or transpersonal, Intuition has tremendous potential for unlocking both the personal and the collective levels of the unconscious. Grof (1972) has defined transpersonal experience as an expansion or extension of consciousness beyond the usual ego boundaries and the limitations of time and space. Transpersonal imagery then, can be defined as that which pertains to transpersonal experience, or the collective unconscious, as opposed to personal projections pertaining to ego-consciousness. Familiarity with the nature of the personal unconscious can be helpful in learning to recognize this distinction subjectively. Transpersonal imagery is frequently, but not necessarily, archetypal. Direct perceptions of an intuitive nature may also be idiosyncratic. For example, one method of evoking intuitive awareness through symbolic imagery is to suggest that when a state of mental quiescence has been attained, personal memories of childhood scenes be allowed to emerge. The individual's personal memory may thus become the vehicle for conveying meaningful information which is not readily apparent. This deliberate evocation of imagery is an attempt to see behind appearances into the innermost nature of the object, person or situation. Frequently, like dream imagery, the imagery may appear incongruous or meaningless. At this point any attempt to impose meaning interferes with the process, and must therefore be relegated to subsequent interpretation.

*personal and  
transpersonal  
symbols*

The following exercise is useful for eliciting the symbolic imagery of intuition in a group:

Sitting directly in front of a person who is a total stranger, take a few moments to focus on your own breathing and to clear or empty your mind. Having assumed a quiet, receptive attitude and taken in the visual impressions of the person before you, close your eyes and notice any other sense impressions which may be present. Since the dominance of visual impressions frequently blocks out other sense impressions, the temporary elimination of visual clues may activate more subtle perceptions. Optimum receptivity to kinesthetic, auditory and visual imagery should be maintained in

*a useful  
group  
exercise*

silence for a period of approximately ten minutes, or longer. The *task* should not be approached in a logical or intellectual manner. Participants should relax, free associate, and await spontaneous insight. Preliminary questions which may be suggested in order to facilitate the flow of imagery include the following: If this person were an animal, what kind of animal would he be? If this person were a part of nature, a character in history, an object, a geometrical symbol or a light, what would his characteristics be? For example, if he were a light, what color, intensity and temperature would be associated with it? If he were a body of water, how large, turbulent, clear or deep would it be? Following a period of quiet, non-interfering observation of images associated with the person in question, these impressions may be recorded in writing or verbalized and checked for relevance.

*problems of  
interpretation*

The problem of determining the objective validity of such imagistic impressions is compounded in the process of interpretation. Images which convey a feeling of quietness and serenity to one observer, such as an expanse of new-fallen snow, may convey a feeling of cold and bleakness to another. As in the interpretation of dreams and fantasies, subjective associations inevitably influence cognitive evaluation. The deliberate attempt to evoke a series of images, rather than a single image, in the exercise described above, is helpful in that there is an added dimension in the uniqueness of a particular combination, just as there is greater significance attached to a sequence of dreams than to a single dream.

Interpretation of the symbolic imagery of intuition, like the interpretation of dreams, must take into consideration factors of distortion, disguise and condensation. Here, however, the symbols are assumed to reveal rather than disguise certain aspects of reality. Nevertheless, the language of symbolism remains relatively unfamiliar to the untrained observer. Furthermore, the subject to whom the imagery is assumed to pertain may be as resistant and unresponsive to its interpretation as patients are to the interpretation of dreams in psychotherapy.

The problem of distinguishing what is pertinent to the subject from what is projection on the part of the observer, may, at this point, appear insurmountable. Training and practice in meditation, learning to quiet the mind and hold the ego in abeyance, contributes to clarity and a minimum of distortion, but at present experimentation continues on the basis of trial and error, wherein the observer must continually sustain an attitude of scientific detachment and be willing to risk being wrong.

Fromm (1951) has suggested that the universal language of imagery is a foreign language that each of us must learn in order to tap the deepest levels of human wisdom. The further we go in exploring the depths of inner experience through imagery, whether in dreams, meditation, fantasy, myth or artistic expression, the more easily we can recognize transpersonal imagery and trust our intuitive perceptions. In formulating hypotheses or interpretations, however, it is important to be willing to subject them to empirical validation, and to discard them when they do not fit. It is also important to remember that symbols always point beyond themselves, whereas any attempt at interpretation is necessarily limited to what is rationally comprehensible.

In conclusion the study of intuition as a psychological function is operative on many different levels of consciousness and is potentially significant in channeling future directions of developing human potential. In synthesizing theories of intuition which have been put forth by mystics, philosophers, and psychologists we have found that intuition is not reducible to inference, but neither can it be defined exclusively as extrasensory or mystical. It is operative in many different ways in human experience, all of which merit further investigation.

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