THINK LOGICALLY, LIVE INTUITIVELY

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**Think Logically, live Intuitively**

**An Out-or-Body Experience: The Nonphysical Becomes Real**

The echoing tones of the energy chime announce that the break is over. It is time to assemble for the introduction to the second tape of the first full day of the program. The initial tape had generated everything from deep sleep to becoming one with a heartbeat. What could be next? The group of 24 settles into their seats and falls silent in anticipation.
"Is everyone ready to do some more exploring?" Charleene asks through a large and inviting smile. Our nods of positive response are enough for her to continue. "The next tape is called Advanced Focus to, and it will involve moving into the Focus 10 state and then exploring the energy that can be created there."
"Creating energy there?" Several participants repeat her words with an air of question and skepticism. "We thought you said that these exercises were a movement toward the nonphysical. How can there be energy outside the physical?" The idea is intriguing, but it is also a departure from simply achieving an altered state of consciousness. This exercise is introducing the idea of *doing something* in an altered state, not simply attaining one.

"Remember how you felt with our first experience of resonant tuning last night?" she asks. "I seem to remember you referring to feeling energized by the experience of making the OM sound."
"But that was physical," one person says tentatively. "We made
physical sounds and felt physical energy." "Well!" Charleene responds in mock amazement, then offers a challenge. "Perhaps' we might want to see what will happen if we explore creating nonphysical energy within the nonphysica1." How one can create or feel energy that is nonphysical is perplexing and sounds almost contradictory. There had to be a physical aspect somewhere to feel energy, didn't there? Charleene reminds us to approach this as an exploration that involves allowing movement beyond what we currently understand. She adds that we should consider imagining a "field of energy" that surrounds the human body and see what happens. The approach on the tape will involve visualizing a ball of energy appearing as light surrounding our physical body. This will be supported by special acoustical sounds on the tape. What might happen then is unknown and should be approached without expectation. Again, the idea is to explore in a playful manner. Hearing no further questions or comments, she continues. "At TMI, we have adopted Bob Monroe's made-up term REBAL which is short for Resonant *Energy Balloon* to describe this type of light ball energy."
Someone asks if this light ball energy field is what is called an aura. Charleene asks if we could defer that question until after the tape. "Let's not create any expectations or limitations that might grow out of language we have heard or used in the past. Let's simply go exploring and see what happens."
John interjects at this point, "Let's say that we agree that it might be interesting to see if there is a possibility of forming a ball of energy around you and explore that in this exercise." Exploring in this venue clearly does not mean intellectual debate, but the experience of trying things and seeing what happens. John explains that this experience might not only deepen our sensation of Focus 10 through additional practice, but it might allow us to work within a new realm of nonphysical awareness.

As I settle into the CHEC unit, the familiar soft music is already setting the stage. After testing the lighting for various effects, I decide on total darkness. I put on my earphones and settle into the soft pillows. Trainer instructions remind us to turn on our "ready light" if we are in place. I notice that I am one of the "offenders" who has not followed standard procedure, but with a flip of the toggle switch, I am positioned to begin the exercise. The tape follows the previous form, the sounds of calming ocean surf, the "energy conversion box," the drone of the resonant tuning, and finally the affirmation.
We are guided to the Focus 10 state. Once there, we begin to practice forming the "energy ball" around our body. This turns out to be more interesting than I anticipated. The process of forming this Resonant Energy Balloon, or REBAL, is assisted by sound effects on the tape that create a realistic sensation of a three-dimensional ball of energy forming around the body. As we are instructed to visualize the REBAL forming, stimulating sounds of spraying fountains flood our ears.
While I know that this is a generated audio special effect, the overall sensation is one of "energy" magically appearing around various parts of my body. It seems so physical that there is a sensation of being lightly tickled on the skin. This is pleasant and encourages a lightness of my being. It adds to a state of serenity already achieved within Focus 10.
After several practice sequences of forming REBAL energies around our bodies, we are given instructions on the tape to continue exploring on our own. We now have deeper experience within Focus 10, and have additional sensations to play with. Remembering that too much intellectual analysis diminished the effects during the first tape experience, I attempt to "let go" as I begin my unstructured journey. I allow myself to flow along with the pink noise of the tape and its quiet underpinning of binaural beats.
Every so often, however, I take a moment to assess my psycho- logical state. I continue to feel alert and aware, but my body has drifted peacefully asleep as the Focus 10 sound waver is processed in my brain. When I later relived and reflected on this experience,  I realized how much of a break in my belief system this state was. Under our normal consensus view of reality, when one is asleep, one cannot also be awake. These terms are mutually exclusive by definition. Yet in a sense, this is exactly what I was experiencing.
As I focus on creating the REBAL, I sense I am floating upward. This is startling in its reality. It is not unpleasant, but it is unexpected. I am aware I am lying in my CHEC unit with my earphones on, yet the physical sensation is of rising upward, as if the mattress had been placed on an elevator. I feel the air moving past my body in breeze- like fashion as the upward motion continues. I open my eyes, or think I do. It is pitch black in the CHEC unit, and difficult to tell whether my physical eyes are open or shut. What follows is challenging to what I consider real and fantasy.
I find myself "seeing" a scene in full color, texture, and detail. I am outside, above the building about 50 feet. This is not like watching a movie; it is a direct experience. While simultaneously experiencing and not believing the experience, my mind races: Is this what an out-of-body experience feels like? The idea that I am having one is not sinking in.
I am looking down on the roof. It is intriguing to realize I am seeing elements of the top of the building that I have not physically observed. I had not yet climbed the circular staircase to the deck-like platform on the roof. I note that this is something that can be verified later. I can accept this scene mentally as some sort of dreamlike sequence, but the reality of the physical sensation of it is difficult to comprehend.
This is a very strange situation and places me in an odd intellectual predicament. The reality of the visualization is vivid, but there is no way it could be real (or so one would think), as I am sure that I am still on the mattress of the CHEC unit deep within the walls of the Nancy Penn Center. But I can clearly see the top of the building and its tower at one end. I am not mentally asleep, nor am I dream- ing; yet I am "seeing" the roof as if I am suspended from a slow- and low-flying helicopter. I am confused.
These events and internal dialogues take place in an instant of time. Yet in that same moment, I realize I am not alone in this impossible space above the building. I also "see" two other members of the group "floating" together toward the top of the tower. When I say I can see them, it becomes even more difficult to explain. I see a glowing ball of light, or a flickering within the air, but for some reason, I know that it is workshop participants I am seeing. In the same manner that I felt the expanded state of knowing on the previous tape, I suddenly know their names: Kellie, the practicing midwife, and Carol, the chief operating officer of a bank.
I take one of my brief self check-ins and note, in addition to being physically asleep, I am also still aware within Focus 10. I am aware that I am having this experience and simultaneously "stepping aside" and observing it.
The saga continues with an interesting twist as, at this point, I note that it appears that the glowing ball of light I had identified as Kellie begins waving to me as if she, too, has seen me and seeks acknowledgment. I think I am getting creative at weaving a story here, but what the heck, let's see where this goes. Lightheartedly, I wave back to the glowing ball that I have identified as Kellie; this appears to please her and we drift apart slightly. I then find that I can move about or "fly" in a sense, by simply thinking the direction I want to go. This sensation is real and physical in my perception, and yet I "know" that it can't be.
I wonder if others are having this type of experience-dream, fantasy, or whatever it is. Soon, I find myself looking with some sort of X-ray vision into the building. This is interesting. My gaze comes to rest on the sleeping form of another class member in her CHEC unit-Olivia, the newly ordained minister, who had noted her frustration of going to sleep instead of reaching Focus 10. My perception and sensation is not one of intrusion, but of a desire for her inclusion in the experience. I know she would want to join in if only she could wake up.
As I remember her frustration in her report to the group, I attempt to wake her so she might join. Surely she would want to if she could become aware of the pleasurable nature of the sensation of floating and flying. I "yell" at her with great intensity in my thoughts: "Wake up! Don't sleep through this! This is fun!" Then I reach down and try to shake her to wake her up. Throughout this process, I feel that I am actually doing this action, not just thinking or imagining it.
At this point, I realize what I am doing and feel it is past time to rein in my fantasy. Geez, this is going a bit far, I think. My imagination is running away with me! At that moment, Monroe's voice issues in the earphones to end our experience. He tells us to count back down to C-l and become awake, alert, and aware. As I follow these directions, the altered state of dreamlike but realistic imagery fades and I am back in my CHEC unit and wondering if I also, like Olivia, had gone to sleep during this tape session and simply had a vivid dream.
John's voice in my earphones informs me that we have a few minutes to make notes. The soft music begins in the wall-mounted speakers, and we are further instructed to join the others as soon as possible in the group room for debriefing. As I reflect on the experience and jot down a few notes, I'm not sure what happened. Perhaps I went to sleep, but my mind seemed to be awake and alert during this strange series of events. Could I have had a lucid dream? As I scribble notes, I think, "Well, it was interesting if nothing else." I emerge from the CHEC unit, visit Ken and see that he is still writing, exit my room, and join the group forming in the hallway on the way to the stairs.
By chance, as I get to the end of the hallway, Kellie merges into the line of people directly in front of me. I sense that we are looking at each other as if we each have something to ask but are afraid to. I start to speak and then withdraw. She hesitates too, and then turns to go down the hall toward the stairwell to the group room.
My mind is jumping back and forth between saying something and remaining silent. I have a thousand conflicting conversations with myself with each step: "Why not just ask?" "Nothing ventured, nothing gained." "It's probably just a dream anyway, so why not just see if she had any experience at all?" "Geez, what's the big deal?" Finally, the memory of Charleene's speech on "safe space" and being open to experience during this week gets the better of me. I reach forward and tap Kellie on the shoulder just as we reach the stairwell. I can feel my heart racing as she turns in response. I try to be nonchalant as I ask, "Did you see anything in that last tape?"
"Well," she stops and looks at me intently, her eyes questioning. I hadn't thought of the possibility that she was going through the same level of self-doubt that I was. Then tentatively she says, "This may sound really crazy, but I thought I saw you and someone else up at the top of the tower." She speaks as if she expects either to be viewed with total amazement at the concept or disbelieved entirely. She apparently can perceive by my stunned look that I am going to do neither.
At first I am too shocked to speak. Then words spill out. "This is simply too wild to believe. I thought I saw you and Carol there, quite clearly!" There is a look of astonishment between us as we freeze in that position.
She is quiet for a moment and then becomes pensive. "You know, I think it was Carol that I saw also," Kellie notes almost in a whisper. Silence. As we start down the stairs together in reflective silence, we both eye Carol, who stands alone on the landing. Kellie cannot contain herself and blurts out, "Carol, did you see Richard and me at the tower during that last tape?"
"Well, no," she responds. Our excitement plummets. "But you have to understand," she goes on with a measured tone, "I don't seem to 'see' much visually, I tend to have a 'feeling' of what's around me by sensation alone. But yes, I definitely did go to the top of the tower during that tape. It was a quite real sensation, and I did 'feel' two others 'out there' with me-was that you?"
Kellie and I are speechless. Finally, I speak, "We both think that we saw you at the top of the tower." "That's where it felt like I was," Carol responds, her voice quivering. The impact of what we are all saying is beginning to sink in. We continue down the stairs in silence. This is going to take a little thinking about. I need time to sort all this out. I sit down just outside the group room and notice Olivia talking with trainer John. She is intense, upset about something. Indeference, I keep my distance to allow them to complete their discussion. But it is apparently completed and Olivia moves away from John toward the refreshment area. I need some help sorting all this out and I want John's perspective. I get his attention and move over next to him. I quickly pour out the experience of the mutual "seeing" of Kellie and Carol and my nonphysical attempts at shaking and waking Olivia. John smiles broadly and interrupts me with a call to Olivia to return. She does, but I notice that she still has a look of concern.
"Tell Richard what you were just telling me," John invites Olivia. She, looks at me, apprehensively, again at John, and then speaks.
"I was just telling John that I was concerned for my safety because someone was in my CHEC unit and it was very disturbing. I opened my eyes and no one was there, but it was so real, I could actually feel someone *shaking* me. It was frightening." She is clearly upset and the experience has been real for her. "Did something like that happen to you too?"
"No," I murmur after a bit of silence and embarrassment. I have no intent of upsetting her. "But I may have been the one that you thought was shaking you."
Her bewildered look quickly moves John to explain my experience to her. With John's assistance, we share the experience from both our perspectives, and it becomes a mind-boggling realization. The implication of what we are saying is a challenge to our belief systems about physical reality.
Before we can reflect even a few moments on the magnitude of this event, the sound of the energy chime announces our need to move to the group room. We all move in that direction and find places to sit. As everyone is settling in, Charleene opens again with "Does anyone have anything they would like to share with the group?"
John interjects, "I think Richard, Kellie, Carol, and Olivia may have had an interesting experience if they would be willing to share it." Kellie cannot contain herself and announces emphatically that she, Carol, and I had all seen each other above the roof at the tower.

There are quick glances about the room and questions follow. It is interesting to note that there is neither disbelief nor discouraging words in the group. There are many questions about how we felt, what it looked like, and even a couple of comments about how lucky we had been. Indeed, instead of any doubts, it appears that there is more of a sense of appreciation that someone had an experience such as this and been willing to share it.
A few others have a few comments, but our experience has been the highlight of the debriefing session. We have only completed two tapes of the first day of the workshop and already the experiences are almost too much for me. I can easily go home at this point and spend a very long time thinking about these events. The workshop is going to continue, however, and I am snapped back to attentiveness with John's comments: "OK, folks, this next tape is a free-flow tape. You will be going to Focus 10 and exploring on your own. Have fun! Any questions?"

**Pushing the Limits of Belief: Testing Our Version of Reality**

John's words "Have fun" echo in my ears as we exit the group room and head for the CHEC units. It is becoming a custom to stop by one of the 14 restrooms. "No need to have a call of nature 'in-the- body' interrupt a good 'out-of-body' experience," John reminds us. His instructions are that during this tape we are on our own. We can create our own direction to pursue. In TMI parlance, this is a free- flow tape. Going out to Focus to, exploring, and having fun are the only directions given.
Just as the group is dispersing to move upstairs, Kellie pulls Carol and me aside. "Let's *try* to do it this time," she teases. She is proposing that we consciously attempt to replicate the earlier experience of meeting in the out-of-body state. Carol and I exchange looks of intrigue and bewilderment. "Could we do it again?" "Did it really happen?" "What if we can't do it again?" We agree that such an attempt would be interesting, but it is clear that Kellie is the most adventurous of the trio.
Again, the thoughts of "Nothing ventured, nothing gained" and "Why not, aren't we here for exploration and experience?" ripple in the background of my mind. I admit to a bit of performance anxiety. "What if our mutual tower incident was a fluke and that was all there was?" This question challenges my ego.
We come to an agreement, however, that we will try it. We all want to test the earlier experience. At this point, my Ph.D.-trained left brain asserts itself. "You know, it would be very simple to talk ourselves into believing that we had seen or done similar activities if we just discuss it afterward." I still wonder if Kellie's initial inquiry had inadvertently tipped Carol off to agree that she, too, had shared the same experience. "I think what we need for it to be a valid test is harder evidence-like written record comparison."
They agree, and we establish a test protocol that provides more structure for validating the experience if it does, indeed, occur. We will attempt to meet at the tower, decide where to go, and then travel there together. Nothing else is planned. If we can somehow move as a group in the out-of-body state, then we should have similar experiences to report. At the conclusion of the tape, we will not discuss the experience at all, even as part of the debriefing session. We agree to make as complete a set of written notes as possible, and then set them side by side. If the words on the paper agree that we have shared an experience, then we will have a lot more to think about. If not, then maybe we have been deluding ourselves about the earlier experience. This makeshift protocol is certainly not at the level of a major scientific laboratory experiment. This time, however, we will attempt to eliminate the possibility that we might talk ourselves into an experience that might not have happened. There is a degree of credibility to this approach that may not only test the experience, but also provide data that could begin to challenge our basic belief systems.
We then join the other participants in the return to the CHECs. The tape session begins with standard TMI structure. Once we have been guided to the Focus 10 state, we are told to explore this realm of consciousness. The following are my notes of this experience:

I formed my REBAL and "thought" to go to the top of the tower. I met Kellie there. Didn't see Carol. Kellie and I got into a discussion about the fact that we had not decided who was in charge or how to decide where to go, so I told her to go first. She left, I followed.
I saw a mountain stream with steep wooded hills-very green. Water was wide and peaceful, but flowing.
I said it was my turn to take us somewhere and that water was a clue, so I took us to Palm Beach [Florida] to scuba dive. Big resistance and fear from Kellie as she said no scuba. I said we don't need it anyway and "expanded" the REBAl to be a big glass box. I took us underwater in it. We sat in it looking at turtles and dolphins up close. This was very brief, then we were out and she seemed no longer to be present.
I started hearing a radio show out of my left earphone. I wondered if the technology of all the wires in the building was indeed picking up a radio station. I listened really hard and it was a lot of talking and sounded like radio, but I finally realized that it was Carol talking. I couldn't make out what she was saying.
Went to my hometown to show off easily identifiable buildings there. Didn't feel anybody went with me. Sat back and said OK, where are they? Immediately, I found myself in a big cave. It was like Carlsbad [in California], and Kellie was the guide showing us around. Briefly encountered cartoon characters and *Star Trek* stuff.
Suddenly was alone and had deep feelings of irrelevance.
Felt that Kellie and Carol left me and went somewhere together. Briefly saw some kind of tent city on the side of a hill.
Saw a traditional Mexican eagle symbol, the one where the eagle has captured a serpent.
Tried to summon Carol and take her to my boyhood home.
There was an old man there as a reference point.
Saw big, brown tall building with white slatted trim.
We held hands in a ring at one point.
Came back to the tower to try to link up with Carol and Kellie as Bob Monroe's recorded voice on the tape spoke as a reference point at various times during the exercise.
Went briefly to llama farm (a place near TMI).
I got separated from Carol and Kellie.
Saw all three of us in the snow in Alaska watching the aurora borealis.
Noticed a "hole in the sky." This seemed to be sort of a cave in the clouds going straight up and seemed to have some significance, but I did not go into it. I noted what it felt like, so I could try to return there later.

My anticipation mounts as we follow the normal tape closing process, the trainers instructing us to turn off our ready lights, make notes, and reassemble in the group room. As we move along the hall and down the stairs toward the group room, Kellie, Carol, and I avoid contact to ensure against corrupting our notes. Even though we do not speak, I can tell they, too, are feeling the growing impatience of seeing if we have experienced anything in common. We stick to our agreement to wait, however, until we can lay the pages of notes down side by side for comparison and review. The intensity grows as we keep glancing at one another, and we each grow uncomfortable with remaining attentive to the debriefing session. Charleene notices our tension and asks if there is a problem.
Kellie explains what we attempted to do and that we are eager to compare notes to evaluate how common our experiences might have been. Several classmates encourage us to share right then and there. We decline, as each of us wants to rewrite our notes for clarity and completeness. John suggests that we work through this process during lunch and, if we are agreeable, we might share the results with the rest of the group during our evening session at David Francis Hall. We agree, and the group breaks for lunch and the extended afternoon break period.
Between lunch and our report that evening, we continue doing tapes according to the normal afternoon schedule. We do several tapes, each providing a new level of comfort in the altered state of Focus 10, and each adding small "tools" to accentuate, or ease, the process of becoming comfortable moving into a realm of the non- physical. As would be expected, there is a full range of experience within the group. A few still have little or nothing to report, while others have rich visual, auditory, or kinesthetic phenomena.

Pushing the limits of Belief

Kellie, Carol, and I stick to our agreed-upon protocol. We do not communicate in any way until we all complete our notes. In summary of our subsequent comparison, we agree that we had experiences that appeared to be related to some degree and some that were unrelated. Here are the experiences we feel we shared:

Kellie and I both recorded meeting at the tower and agreeing to leave together. Kellie saw me, but not Carol. Carol perceived both Kellie and me. This was not considered a major "hit" of shared experience, of course, as it was expected that we meet at the tower to start the exercise. We could have easily imagined this occurrence.
All three of us, however, recorded going to a mountain stream. This we classified as a major "hit" or shared experience. The words "mountain stream" and "river" were written on all three sheets of paper. Carol noted a footbridge over the water and Kellie saw a village off to the side. All three of us made a notation of how green the trees and mountainsides appeared.
Neither Kellie nor Carol made any mention of my attempt to take them scuba diving. On reading my account, however, Kellie volunteered that she has a long-held fear of deep water. Since this was not present in the written notes, we did not count this as a shared experience. I note it here as an intriguing aspect of some sort of communication possibly taking place.
Carol reported that she had a discussion with herself about whether she could do this test experience o~ not; it was new and challenging to her beliefs. In terms of sequence, this discussion occurred at the time of my experience of the radio show. In this same time period, Kellie recorded being separated from the two of us. Had I somehow overheard Carol's discussion with herself? We thought this had possibilities, but could only grade it as a "maybe" in terms of shared experience.
Kellie had seen Carol take on the look of a wolf. In the sequence, this occurred when I saw the two of them go off together. Kellie's notes said that I was not present during this perception. Carol, it turns out, has a very strong interest in wolves and even collects totemic wolf curios. She also has an abiding interest in dogs. Amazingly, she was doing this tape session under a blanket that had wolves pictured all over it. It is important to note that neither Kellie nor I had seen this blanket at this time. We classified this observation as a highly shared experience.
The experience of snow was common to all three sets of notes. I saw snow in Alaska, Carol saw us together in a snow cave, and Kellie had perceived us in knee-deep snow. This, too, we noted as a "hit" in terms of highly shared experience.
I saw a hole in the sky that we could go through if we wanted to, which seemed almost to match Carol's notes about climbing toward the opening entrance to the snow cave. The hole in the sky seems significant in the sense that it represented an entrance to something.

As promised, we report to the group in the evening program in David Francis Hall. Our classmates receive our discussion with enthusiasm and support, and we are applauded for our efforts and for taking the time to attempt this experiment and to write it all down. There is a growing enthusiasm for the remainder of the week as a result of our sharing. Several members of the group comment privately that they are encouraged by our report in the sense that if we could achieve these things then they might too.