

Description of an Anomalous Experience I Had During 1988 National Book Tour for my Channeling Book

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(written for Charles Tart for his T.A.S.T.E. website (but deemed by him to sound too crazy to use))

To do justice to this experience would take many pages of description; so what I will do is try to capture its essential characteristics in a more abbreviated fashion for now, and I'd be glad to come back and flesh it out for you more at some later date if you'd like me to. It happened during the national book tour for my Channeling book in the fall of 1988, around September or October. I was about 3/4 of the way through the book tour. I had just gotten to Washington D.C., which I don't think I had visited since my high school senior trip. I had just checked into the Capitol Hilton, a very nice hotel, not far from the White House. I had a radio show scheduled for that evening. It was sometime in the afternoon. After checking in, I went from the desk upstairs to put my things in my room. In a special little gesture, Jeremy Tarcher, the publisher, had given me a top-floor penthouse suite, a lot nicer than anything else on the tour. After getting settled in, I shut the door behind me and started down the hall. My plan was to sight-see a bit before supper and the evening radio show. As I walked down the corridor toward the elevator (I was on something like the 12th floor), I began to feel a strange sensation coming over me. Sort of dizzy, light-headed, with a funny kind of magnetic field and pressure in and around my head. I'd never felt anything like that before. By the time I got to the elevator, the sensation was quite strong. Also, as I walked down the hall, there was a strange sensation involving my feet interacting with the floor. All I can say is that the floor and the physicality it represented seemed to give a little, become less solid to my step—things had gotten kind of "rubbery." That is, there was an undulating quality, like a gentle, rippling earthquake would make (though there turned out to be no such thing occurring). I got into the elevator and as it headed down the dizziness increased. At that point, I thought that the increase could just be due to the normal elevator-going-down sensation. As the elevator door opened onto the ground floor and the lobby, I started to step out. As I did so, I realized to my alarm that I could barely move, barely function. I got out of the way of the elevator door enough to allow other people to pass. But it took me some minutes to manage to get across the maybe 20 feet to the nearest easy chair situated in the open lobby area. I finally got to it, shuffling along in a kind of agonized (but painless) slow motion. All the while I was trying to get to the chair I was thinking: "What's wrong with me? It's so hard to make my body work!" The image that came to mind was that my body was like a hand puppet and I—the I of consciousness and intention—was like the hand, and what was happening was that the hand was coming part way out of the glove, so that the fit wasn't the usual, the glove didn't move the way it normally did because the inner hand movement didn't seem to be synched to correctly effect the puppet/body movement. I also thought, fleetingly during this short period, on the heels of the puppet image, that maybe I was becoming dissociated to a partial extent from my own body, that it was a kind of mild or beginning out-of-body state (never having had one before or since, by the way). As I sank into the lobby easy chair, I was thinking very rapidly: "What will I do? How will I finish the tour? How will I be able to get to the radio show tonight? How, even, will I be able to get back up to my room?" I also thought that perhaps I was starting to die; that it was the result of some kind of undiscovered brain tumor. Each time I tried to get out of the chair, I found I couldn't. Either I couldn't make the muscles work or I was overwhelmed with that particular kind of in-and-around-the-head vertigo and something-else atmospheric, energetic, and consciousness-

related, that I cannot even describe. I also thought, if I remained helpless this way, what help could I get? If I could get to a phone or hail someone over to bring a phone to me or go make a call for me, who would I call and what would I say? You were one of the people who came to my mind, Charley [Tart], as I scanned over the people I knew who would constitute the potential “experts” who could help me deal with this. I ended up with the clear feeling (sorry) that I didn’t think anyone I was coming up with was going to be able to do any better job than I would in providing competing hypotheses for what was happening to me, or what could/should be done about it. My head was filled with rich associations, references to ‘the literature,’ ways to speculate about this. The other important part of this is that I felt very exhilarated. Something very different was going on and this definitely excited me, even if it might involve my own demise. I had a very welcoming attitude toward it. Sort of like: “Let the games begin!”

To abbreviate my description, I found that, after about two hours of sitting there trying to get up, reflecting, sorting, speculating, I was finally able to get out of the chair. It took me maybe another half hour, ever so slowly and without drawing undue attention to myself, to get back up to my hotel room. As I was trying to get back to my room, what I kept saying over and over to I’m not quite sure whom/what (myself, my higher self, spirit guides, the Universe, God?): “Please let me get back to the privacy of my room. I don’t want this to be happening in public. Just get me back up to my room and then I don’t care what happens. Do with me what you will then, but please let me get back first.” When I finally got into my room and shut the door behind me, I made it to over to the bed and fell exhausted onto my back. At that point, I felt an absolutely overwhelming rush of what I can only describe as information, without a doubt. It was an inner onslaught of information. My eyes closed, I saw what looked like a night sky blackness with ever more of what looked like shooting stars filling it. And somehow I just knew that each quick streak of light was one proposition, one statement, one information packet, even though they were being processed outside of my attending consciousness at the time. The bewildering part was that, while I knew this was the case of being linear, sentential, beginning, middle and end possessing lines, streaks, of informational light, at the same time there were thousands of them going every which-a-way at once. There was both linearity and simultaneity to it at the same time. The inner sky, so to speak, was full of them! As I lay there under the onslaught, I kept saying within, “I can’t take this. There’s too much. How am I supposed to process this—remember all this?” And each time that response would well up in me, what would come over me was a kind of intuitively sensed response, not from me, to my response, with a non-verbal, direct-meaning message saying something like, “Relax. Don’t worry. Just accept. Take it in. It’s OK. You’re OK.” Finally, this part of the experience ceased. I was more mobile after that and relatively functional. I got to the radio station that night just fine, but still felt concerned about what might come next. Could I trust my mind (or my body)? And, strange as it might seem, some of the things I heard myself saying in response to the radio program host’s questioning that night were, I swear, drawn from, had their origin in, that afternoon hotel room inner shooting star barrage.

Again to collapse the narrative for now, I continued the book promotion tour. But now the really strange part unfolds. A pattern of recurring experiences began. Each time it would start with that tell-tale state-specific sensation in my system, and in and around my head in particular—the same sensation that accompanied my dysfunctional hotel lobby episode days before. But now it would not effect just MY body! The non-physical hand of essential me seemed all the way back within the puppet glove of the body. But what was now happening, accompanying the sensation, was that it

was as if a field effect would periodically be coming down into and through me. It felt like a vertical entering into my head, not so much from above me as from another realm or dimension or frequency, although those are all after-the-fact conjectures. At the time, it just felt like it was coming down, into, and through me—the “it” being some kind of unknown vector of energy, presence, or influence. That was the “vertical” part, we’ll call it. The second phase of each of these recurrent episodes was that, once it came down and through me, it appeared to spread out invisibly and effect whomever would fall within an approximate 20-25 foot radius of influence. We’ll call this the “horizontal” part. And how did it effect people? Here the plot thickens. Take the probably familiar ratio: “Regular dreaming is to lucid dreaming, as regular awakesness is to something like lucid awakesness.” As the people around me were falling under the influence of this spreading field of influence coming through me, from me it seemed, they seemed to be wakened to lucidity within the usually non-lucid dream of everyday life. Once awakened to this hypothesized lucidity, they would stop doing whatever they were automatically doing within the regular dream of life and look toward me as the center of the sphere of influence and waking stimulus—not that it was me who was doing it or that I knew what was going on either. There was distinctly something operating THROUGH me, not originating within me. Each time, as soon as however many people suddenly under this influence had put down their shopping bags, brief cases, whatever, they would just stand there with a kind of bland or mildly bewildered look, as if to say: “Well, now that you woke me, what am I supposed to do? What now?” As I sensed that reaction in others each time and saw them actually looking to me, I would quietly freak out, which appeared to then automatically clamp off any kind of spontaneity or flow. I’d fill up with immediate doubt and fear. I’d think to myself, “Oh no, I don’t trust this! I don’t have any idea what I’m supposed to do here. How am I to respond to them? “ I felt responsible for waking them up, so to speak, and yet I had no idea what was going on, what the larger context for all of this was, and I certainly had no idea what to say to them, what to do. So, to the extent to which there might have been something flowing through me to effect them—one might think of it as an active, influential bio-PK field, for example—there was no accompanying flow of knowledgeable awareness, information, or words into or through me to pass onto them as they looked back to me for whatever response I might have to their response to what seemed to have started with me. My own doubt, self-doubt, ignorance, and fear shut any hope of that off, so it seemed at the time (and ever since).

This sequence of events within kept occurring dozens of times. Each time, believe me, I also reality tested as much as I could and knew how. Obviously, I thought, I could just be hallucinating this, making it up, projecting it outward. It could be part of some delusional system, paranoia, wish fulfillment, dissociation—all the other possible candidates. Each time this experience happened, I would rapidly thumb through my inner DSM-IV manual, looking for answers, trying to rule out possibilities, always ready to explain it away as just self-generated, as taking place just in my own mind. But what wouldn’t go away was the participation of others. This was not just in my head. It took a number of other people to tango with me, so to speak, in this experience. But, each time the doubt and fear would well up in me in response to seeing others turn to me with that arrested, sheep-like, uncertain look, I’d freak out, as I said, and then that would break the spell and everything would immediately snap back to normal. People would pick up their bags or whatever and go back to doing whatever they were doing before that little hiatus broke into the normal sequence of things. And, whenever I tried to go up to some of them right afterward and ask: “Did you see what just happened? What was that? Tell me you experienced that too,” they would look blankly at me, or even irritably, as if to say: “What are you talking about? I don’t know what you

mean.” That is, this appeared for them to be a state-dependent, shared, experiential situation with dissociative features. I was not dissociating, THEY were, so far as I could tell. I had continuity of consciousness, or unbroken co-consciousness before, during, and after each such episode, but they did not, it seemed to me. They had the before and after the event same consciousness, but it appeared to me that they would lose the during-the-episode anomalous part immediately after it upon returning to normal waking consciousness.

This experience repeated itself dozens of times in a wide variety of public situations involving different numbers of people, and always unannounced and unbidden to me. I was getting exhausted by it. I must either be entirely mad, I thought, or I was entering, on such occasions, a more complex, multi-dimensional Universe than before. I don't know if your book Waking Up was out by then (I think it was), because I think I recall, during this whole period, reflecting on that book's references (or, if not from your book, then from my own notion) about the consensus reality being a consensus trance, and, if so, then how to awaken ourselves and others from it, and, if done, to what would we awaken? I seemed to be experiencing a force spontaneously, uncontrollably, and sporadically operating through me, triggering isolated, exquisitely anomalous and troubling vignettes of what appeared to be dumb-type group lucidity never lasting long enough for any kind of meaningful action, interaction, or communication to take place, and then snapping back to non-lucidity for them.

This whole sequence of unusual events reached its high, or extreme, point in the following: As the book tour wound down, I had just gotten into Grand Central Station in New York City. I had another radio program to do that night and an old friend of mine was supposed to meet me there. I had an hour or two to wait. I remember slumping down against a wall around a corner from the vast, main room with the kiosk information/announcement booth in the middle. I was exhausted from all these unbidden field-of-influence episodes. It was like getting the metaphysical hiccups periodically, except that they were contagious. Or, rather, it was probably more like having some kind of unavoidable, consciousness-altering seizures coming over me (which also had a contagious aspect). I was just concerned about remaining functional enough to complete the tour and do all those shows and appearances. They're demanding enough even in a normal state filled with normal-type experiences. As I sat on the floor against the wall around the corner from the big room hoping another episode would not occur, I noticed the voice on the public address system. Up until then, I suppose that I had been habituated to it, since I didn't need to listen for train information. But now I found myself mildly curiously orienting toward the voice. Something different seemed to be going on. It sounded like only consecutive counting. “Well,” I thought to myself, “They're probably just testing the system,” and I went back to my own troubled reverie. But, in a little while, I was brought back out of it by my noticing the counting again. Quite a bit of time was passing. No train information was being announced. This is no way to run a railroad, a train station public address system, I thought. Was anyone else noticing this? Something dysfunctional is going on here. By now I was sitting up straight, very attentive, again processing competing hypotheses. Then it struck me, loud and clear: This confirms it again: I remembered how in lucid dream research, it is the occurrence of something anomalous within the dream that can alert the dreamer to the fact that he/she is dreaming, and then lucidity can kick in. So, in my earlier ratio of “regular dreaming is to lucid dreaming, as regular awakesness is to something like lucid awakesness,” something anomalous within the non-lucid dream of normal waking life can trigger one into lucid awakesness. So, there was the possibility that the voice from the kiosk's public address system echoing through the huge

Grand Central Station room reaching the ears of thousands of people in the middle of the afternoon could be the anomaly that potentially might catalyze lucidity of a sort within some of those people who were not so somnambulistic that they were totally habituated or unaware of their surroundings within the dream. Certainly not all of them were limited to processing it on one level, through one mode, one state-dependent function of their non-lucid consciousness and overall attending psychoenergetic system. So, there I was, sitting thinking that the anomalous quality of the on-and-on droning numbers was the opportunity to be kicked awake for whomever cared to notice.

At that point, and on the heels of all the bizarre experiences I'd been having earlier, I decided that I had to head for that central booth and find out what was going on. For example, did whomever was doing this know that they were doing this for this purpose, or were they asleep at the wheel too? I rounded the corner and faced the huge room. I could see the kiosk in the center. It must have been 100 feet away or more. I started to walk toward it, not quite knowing what was going to happen. As I got nearer, I could see a 40-to-50 year old white man in uniform and hat seated at the window side of the booth facing me and a 30-40 year old black woman, also in uniform and hat, standing and speaking into the microphone. As I got about half way to them, I saw that they were both looking at me approaching. They looked at each other, smiling, if I remember, and then back at me. I dimly recall plenty of other people standing and walking around; it seemed to be normal activity, but everything for me, needless to say, was focused on me nearing those two in the booth. As I got about half way there, a sudden thought hit me like an explosion. It was not a certainty, but a loud inner question. The question simply was: "Extraterrestrial?" That is, it had struck me that maybe those two people in the booth, or what/who was behind what was happening here, or what was behind those earlier influence-spreading episodes, had something to do with extraterrestrials. But it was like it was given to me, from outside of me, to wonder about this, or so it felt. I know this sounds beyond the pale, and I apologize for this. All I can tell you is that this is what was happening. And I know, if I didn't sound crazy before, I most certainly did now, throwing flying saucers and little green men into this mix of already hard to swallow description of what probably sounds like it's just imagined, hallucinated, or paranoid delusional anyway. As soon as the "extraterrestrial" question hit me, the next thing, equally quickly that hit me was: "Good or bad?" Again, it was like the earlier trust or not-trust option. Do I go with the flow or pull up halt and critique it, run through all the competing hypotheses about it, doubt it, doubt myself, think I'm just crazy again? And as I had that "Extraterrestrial? Good or bad?" thought, as I moved closer to the booth, my head was getting overloaded with inner activity and processing. I was doing everything I could to deal with what was going on. Was it just me? Was this really happening? Did I really hear that, see that? As I got up to the booth, the woman had stopped speaking into the public address system. They were both watching me, with a very interesting look in their eyes, it seemed: again, almost twinkly, bemused, waiting to see what I'd do, or so it felt to me.

I was by now processing so much, trying to figure out what was going on and what I should, do, that I was pretty much overwhelmed. As I stood there, with all this welling up within me, all I could first think to ask the man was: "What is she doing?" I figured that was fairly safe to ask. I couldn't get committed for simply asking that. After all, I had really heard that strange counting in the middle of a real workday involving thousands of others. The two of them looked at each other again, smiling, and then looked back at me. He then replied, watching me for my reaction, it felt: "She doesn't have anything better to do." This then sent me into another round of rapid-fire high-gear reality-testing, processing, conjecturing, calculating. For example, it seemed, in New York a

lot of people seem to talk to themselves on the subways and streets. Hell, the whole world is kind of nuts. Maybe I've just come upon some people goofing off on the job, on the humdrum assembly line of life. Maybe they're just testing the waters themselves, not from some metaphysical or lucid point of view, but just to see how others might react. Yes, that certainly was one possibility. Forget extraterrestrials or fields of influence. They could just be goofing around on the job or experimenting, good naturedly, bored. Then, as I was steeped in all this inner figuring out and reflection, the man in the booth asked me: "Where do you want to go?" Now I was really reeling. Sure, he could just be asking the obvious real-life question: What train do I want? Do I want Scarsdale or White Plains? Where do I want to go? After all, it is an information booth! Let's get real. But I also could not help other possibilities from flooding in. Where did I want to go with my life in this great existential pivotal moment that all this strange experience had led up to? I even, God help me, had the spontaneous, fleeting delusion-of-grandeur image of me as some kind of Christ figure astride a donkey, entering Jerusalem—the New Jerusalem, New York, and other vaguer, imageless connotations of the save-the-world ideation kind, again, on the heels of those days of whatever it was seeming to work through me that effected others, waking them to who knows what new possibilities. After all that exhausting reality-testing and monitoring, those experiences that I could no longer doubt were really happening. So, "Where do you want to do go with what is happening," was maybe what was being asked of me. What did I want to do with all of this? Did I want to finally stop fearing, doubting, and mistrusting, and, instead, let something larger flow and play out that might effect a lot more people; and that if I stopped my shutting-off response, that maybe I'd even know what to say to them once they were awakened, so to speak. And maybe this could lead to who knows what: a wondrous spreading activation of enlightenment and lucidity beyond the early inklings, freshly destabilized from the prior trance.

So, once more, all this is swirling around in my head in response to his just asking me where I wanted to go. By now, I felt so overwhelmed I could hardly function. I was just too used up with wondering what was going on and how to proceed, how to react. So, I looked at him and her and totally let go. I released and stopped all attempts to intellectualize, figure out, calculate, reality test. I simply surrendered. And I looked at him beseechingly, putting all my eggs in his basket, looking to him for answers, for what to do next. And I just said to him, pleadingly, "What should I do!?" As soon as I said this, as soon as I stopped trying on my end to do anything, something immediately changed with him, just like with the others in the earlier field of influence episodes. He suddenly seemed to lose all interest in the interaction we were apparently having. He was now right back in the mundane groove of his job and normal consciousness. He looked at me in a sort of mildly disgusted way, shaking his head, and at that point two or three people crowded up behind me to the booth, shouting questions to him about train times and he began answering them, looking back at me as if to say, "What's your problem? I have work to do here." It was like he had dissociated from what had gone just before; or maybe he was playing dumb; or, of course, maybe I was just out of my mind.

I walked slowly away from the booth, now abuzz with normal activity. As I headed away, I noticed two beautiful young Pre-Raphaelite-type figures in the middle of the vast floor—street musicians, playing my very favorite kind of Renaissance music, made to order for me. They smiled knowingly at me, or so it seemed at the time. I sat down on the floor next to them and just let the music soak in and heal me some. I was so tired. But after a little while, I knew I had to get back up and go back to the booth and pick up where I had left off. I just had to get to the bottom of this. What on Earth was

going on? And who else knew what about it, if anything? And, as usual, was it maybe all just me? I had to take this further, exhausting as it was getting. So I stood up and started back toward the booth. I could see the two of them in the booth looking at me as I neared them. About half way toward the booth, I closed my eyes in mid-stride and said, very clearly and authentically inside myself: “HELP,” to no one in particular, but oh how I meant that word! The instant I said that within me, I felt a hand on my shoulder, I looked around, and there was my friend to meet me to go to the radio station. I looked at him. I must have looked a wreck. He looked into my eyes with, again, that odd kind of twinkly, knowing bemusement, and said something like, “You’ve had a really hard day, haven’t you?” (I hadn’t seen and barely talked on the phone with him in perhaps ten years.) We hardly talked as we walked the 10 or 15 blocks to the building where the radio station was. For some reason, I just sensed an understanding on his part about what had been going on for me. I was so tired, I just wanted to sleep; I was beyond worrying about whether I was crazy or not. We went up the elevator and came out on the floor of the station. Everyone else on the floor seemed to have gone home; there was just one door on the hall open. WOR was the radio station, I think. We walked in. The first thing I saw in the room felt a little bizarre to me. It was what I took to be a station staff member talking with two men. But these were not two normal men. They were a fitting end to this part of the story. They were very large—at least six and half feet tall and looked to be identical twins, slightly overweight and dressed in identical suits and vests, almost like costumes. They both had curly-lambs-wool-looking whitish-blond hair. They looked like Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee cherubs or something from a William Blake painting. I was so tired, I hardly thought how odd they looked. I was probably just thinking to myself, “Oh God, what now?” As I get closer to them, they had that same twinkly, bemused, knowing look in their eyes, I might even venture that it was a lucid, awake look, and one of them says to me, in a kind of Irish or Scottish accent, “And where would ya be, Jon, if they were all on the right hand side ‘a God and not on the left hand side?” I just looked at him and smiled faintly, resignedly, and shook my head, as if to say, “I just can’t play anymore. I’m just too tired right now. I have no sweet idea what’s going on.” Then I proceeded on to meet with the show’s host. The radio show went alright, but the host was in some kind of a surreal, fast-motion mode before the show, briefing me about the kinds of questions he would be asking me. Rarely in my life had I heard someone talk so fast. I could barely keep up with him. He was overwhelming me. I knew him to be one of the grand old men of New York talk radio, hardly someone known to move very fast in thought or speech. So it was just another bewildering piece of the puzzle for me.

Immediately upon returning home from the book promotion tour, I took my wife to our favorite Chinese restaurant in North Berkeley near where we lived at the time. As we sat there, I began to tell her about what had happened. I remember the main theme of that dinner conversation was my almost angrily saying over and over again that if this was some kind of way I was supposed to change the world or make a consciousness-changing or spiritual difference in things, I just didn’t trust it; and, even if I did trust it, I didn’t trust myself. I was hardly the one to be used then or in the future for this, because I was basically just not worthy, let alone not worthy of this task. I mean, just look at who I am! It was a very self-deprecating theme I got onto. And it was not a new theme either. My whole life had (and has) been influenced by that low self-worth, self-deprecating stance. But I was actually angry about it: “How dare they (whomever, whatever) think that I should be involved with this awakening-of-others activity. I’m just an old ex-crazy loser.” I can’t remember which feeling was the bigger one: that I doubted the whole bizarre series of events that had been happening, or that I knew they were real but felt I should not be the one to be doing it; that the

opportunity should not have been wasted on me. And, probably, I was also angry, maybe even primarily angry, about the whole un-asked-for experience, and how much it had confused and scared me, bewildered and belittled me, driven me almost crazy, worn me to a frazzle, and kept me so much in the dark. After our meal, we drove part way back home, and my wife let me out of the car so I could walk the final 10 blocks home and she could drive on up to the local church for choir practice. As I started to walk, I kept that angry, tired, sorry-for-myself emotion going in me. And then, all of a sudden, another bizarre thing happened: I felt this extremely powerful, clenching at the lower back of my head and upper neck area. It felt exactly like an invisible, large hand had grabbed me like a misbehaving puppy dog by the scruff of my neck. It was so painful and powerful and pushing me downward at the same time, that I fell uncontrollably to my knees in what felt like submission. By now I was sobbing, apologizing to whomever/whatever had seemed to grab me and force me down. I said to whomever it was (and, of course, as always, I may have only been saying it to the one true source of all this—myself): “I’m sorry. I’m sorry I screwed up all that field-of-influence stuff. I’m sorry I was too stupid to figure out what was going on. I’m sorry I’m so limited and self-centered and fearful and doubting. And I’m sorry I’m so hard on myself. Do with me what you will, but please, let me get home first. Don’t shame me here in public like this. Let me get home.” This was just like it felt as I pleaded in the armchair in the Hilton hotel lobby in Washington a week or two earlier. (I must admit, I tried to stop putting myself down so much after that for fear of being brought low in stern rebuke again. Maybe I was beginning to learn my lesson, or so it felt.)

Again, to keep this narrative short, suffice it to say that what I have been referring to as these “field of influence” experiences finally tapered off after a couple of weeks, shortly after I returned to the Bay Area at the tour’s conclusion, and after that restaurant experience. Once it had passed, I felt a strong sense of failure and guilt. By now, my sense was that either this was somehow unbelievably all happening only in my head, or that I had been used as a vehicle for some kind of wakening change-agentry, some kind of vector of consciousness-altering influence. But I was not up to the task, it seemed. That’s how it felt in hindsight. I kept freaking out each time. I kept being thrown back on old ex-mental-patient memories, self-doubt, and fears. Negatively critiquing and explaining away and not accepting would keep welling up in me around those episodes. My knee-jerk accompanying doubting and fearing would cut off anything more from happening each time. I kept thinking to myself: “I am not worthy of this. Not me. Somebody else. I can’t trust myself. I can’t trust any of this.” And then it would fade away each time. So, now, after the episodes had stopped, I went through a period of months (actually almost two years) of praying, meditating, inner talking (again, to myself, my higher self, spirit guides, the Universe, God—who knows), and the gist of my effort was to say, “I’m sorry that I was not up to what happened. I’m sorry I broke under the challenge; that I kept giving in to my own fear and self-doubt and lack of trust. Please give me another chance. If this opportunity ever reoccurs, I promise I will not let myself give in to that doubt/fear reaction. I’ll keep flowing. I’ll see what will happen if I stay open once that catalyzing field moves into and through me with its tell-tale sensation.”

Then, about two years later, I was coming back from a conference. I was changing planes in Atlanta, Georgia, walking toward the airline terminal, and that tell-tale state-specific sensation hit me again. I had no doubt about it. And, as soon as I felt it coming on, true to my promise, I welcomed it completely, and said inside myself, “THANK YOU!” (though not being quite sure who/what I was thanking). As I entered the airport, it was like old-home week. I felt so much

openness, acceptance, happiness, even love, imbuing everything, coming from total strangers. It was as if they looked like strangers, but, as in a dream, I knew they were not just the strangers they looked like on the surface; they were on another level like old friends I was re-connecting with. People were waving to me, dozens of eyes catching mine with a glow to them—that special, twinkly, knowing, conscious look again. My God, I realized, this confirms it: They're all lucid! They're already awake, but it isn't fading this time, it doesn't seem to depend on me this time, or if it still does, it's working differently because now I'm not scared and self-deprecating and mistrusting in the midst of it like I was years back. The flow of this interpersonal connectedness and shared lucidity and communion of sorts continued unabated. It was marvelous. I was joyful and thankful through and through. But then it started to fade in me. I felt as if a light were starting to go out, a consciousness of a particular sort dimming in me, taking me back to normal waking consciousness. And as I felt that fading in me—not in anyone else by the way, it seemed—people would come up to me and look me in the eye sort of bemusedly, as if to say, “Come on, stay awake. Stay with us. You can do it.” But it seemed to fade throughout all of us then, as far as I can recall. I was left with the knowledge that we all have this potential in us. I had become just another lucid person. Much less felt dependent on me now as a wake-up agent, if I ever was such in the first place. I felt a kind of relief. And I also felt, and feel still, that if and when anything like this ever happens again, that I'll be familiar with it, ready for it, and be an oh so willing participant.