New Age Consciousness: Part II
— The Rediscovery of Mind, Body, Spirit —

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“These two epochal transitions, the appearance of life and the rise of humankind, [were instances of ‘evolutionary transcendence,’ and each] marked the beginnings of new evolutionary eras. ... Humanity has also evolved by means of minor and major steps toward yet another epochal transition. For certain types of extraordinary human development, I believe, herald a third evolutionary transcendence. With them, a new level of existence has begun to appear on earth, one whose patterns cannot be adequately specified by [the old] physics, biology, or mainstream social science. [Just as] life developed from inorganic elements and humankind from its primate ancestors, a new evolutionary domain is tentatively rising in the human race, both spontaneously and by transformative practice...”

Why “New Age Consciousness”?

I have decided to change the title of my “new series” of reports from “New Age Medicine” to “New Age Consciousness.” The reason is quite simple: “New Age Medicine” suggests that the field of inquiry or research is limited to new kinds of medicine or treatment. I’m sure you already know that my intention or goal is much broader than that.

The breadth of New Age Science can be seen in the definition of it by Ken Wilber. It is, “The attempted synthesis of empirical science and transcendental traditions.” However, I’ve never studied physics, so I don’t really feel qualified to use that title. I will have to leave the science to Mr. Tachiki. Finally, I could not use the title, “New Age Mind,” anymore, because it is clear that “consciousness” is much broader than “mind,” and includes mind, body, and spirit. In fact, consciousness may include “Cosmic Consciousness,” and the entire universe.

The Rediscovery of Mind, Body and Spirit

The sub-title to the small paper I gave in Tanigawa was, “The Rediscovery of Mind, Body and Spirit,” but I didn’t have time to talk much about that, so I’m using it again. I would like to explain what I mean by this sub-title.

These days the human brain and mind are being “rediscovered.” This is a result of an intellectual shift in various fields of research from

the "Old Science" (mainly classical, Newtonian physics) to the "New Science" (mainly Quantum physics). We are now entering a "New Age" in which the human brain and mind and spirit are being understood more deeply--rediscovered, so to speak. We are especially learning about our great potential for using our own brain and mind to bring about mental, physical and spiritual health, and long life.

But the new understanding of human consciousness is pointing far beyond the self; indeed, ideas such as the "anthropic principle,"¹ suggest that human consciousness is directly involved in the very existence of the universe as we know it. I will say more about that in my next report.

Where Does Reality Come From?

The title of this report relates to the fundamental idea of Buddha: "All that is, comes from our thoughts." Rather than John Locke's idea that, "All that is in the mind comes from the senses," it may be that, "All that is in the senses--i.e., perception itself--is created by the mind."² The title also expresses my conviction that New Age Science is providing a great deal of evidence for a totally new understanding of human existence, the concept of self, and the role of human consciousness in the unfolding of life in the universe.

Morality, echoing the same idea, emphasizes the central importance of seishinsayou as the source of our reality. Perhaps that is why Dr. Hiroike said that psychology would play such an important role in the future development of morality as a moral science. "Psychology," after all, means "science of mind," and since morality comes from the mind, morality is not only a moral science, but a mental science. Or, indeed, it may be said that, prior to being a moral science, morality is itself a mental science, a science of mind. For that reason, it seems to me that a major theme of research in morality should be the study of human consciousness.

This leads me to raise a question: Can morality as it presently is--that is, our study and practice of the five principles of morality--do everything we need in order to realize our full potential, mentally, physically, spiritually? Is it possible to practice supreme morality (and get sufficient positive cause-and-effect) simply by making "small efforts" or by having "good intentions" day by day? Can we, or should we, be satisfied with our present state, or way of practicing?

It seems to me that, given the way by Dr. Hiroike talked about cause and effect, a small effort is bound to result in a small result. An effect is in direct proportion to its cause. Thus, a "relaxed and comfortable" approach to moral practice must surely result in a "relaxed and comfortable" morality. Of course, this is better than not trying to practice supreme morality at all. Yet, if we are to use the sages as our example of practice, this is certainly not the approach taken by most of them--e.g., Jesus Christ, whose practice of supreme love, obedience and morality resulted in his death by crucifixion.

As I read the Treatise, it seems clear that Dr. Hiroike felt that other sources (e.g. whatever religion one might already be committed to) were all right and even necessary. He established the Research Department with the intention that the institute should continue to study and accumulate new ideas and new information that would perpetually "update" morality.

For us to be too satisfied with our present state or practice would be to ignore two major revolutions in the evolution of the human mind and

² Pribram, K. "Brain, cognitive commodities and the enfolded order. Presented at the Symposium on The Optimum Utilization of Knowledge, University of Massachusetts, November 5-8, 1981.
self: the Cognitive Revolution and the related, but larger, New Age Science Revolution, which together constitute what I want to call the New Age Consciousness Revolution. Actually, it's not possible to separate the many disciplines that make up this new revolution. All of them—psychology, neuroscience, physics—are integral and interrelated parts of a new and unique way of thinking. They embody a new stage we have already entered (whether we are aware of it or not) in the ongoing evolution of man and man's mind, body, and spirit. Note that this is not merely “evolution” in the biological or Darwinian sense, but is an evolution of mind, spirit, and consciousness.

The “seven kinds of mind” I mentioned in my paper “New Age Medicine - Part II” showed the historical evolution, within science, of man's awareness of his own potential, especially his potential for influencing his own health and longevity with his mind. The “seven kinds” are thus cumulative, not separate or exclusive; each later view improves on the former. The evolution is from “reactive” (animalistic) mind to “mindful mind.” Perhaps the next step in that evolution will be from “mindful mind” to the Mind of God. This is now a possibility because, “For the first time in 300 years, science is admitting spiritual values into its explanations.”

Ordinary Mind and Extraordinary Mind

Dr. Hiroiike distinguished between “ordinary” morality and “supreme” morality, feeling man was capable of gradually converting himself from one to the other. He believed we have the innate power to transform our attitudes and that, thereby, our whole life would be transformed. By changing our attitude our individual destiny can be changed and improved. Since only we can change our own attitudes, he says clearly in the Treatise that each of us is responsible for our own destiny.¹

In the same spirit, I would like to distinguish between “ordinary” (normal) human potential (development, abilities, style of living, etc.) and our potential to be extraordinary. Why should we (or why do we) choose to be “ordinary” when we have the power within us to be “extraordinary”? (I ask myself that every day!) It seems to me that we need to work constantly and consistently to develop our full human potential (mentally, physically, spiritually). This ongoing task is, it seems to me, a necessary “parallel track” to the attempt to practice supreme morality.

Evolution of Mind

Our understanding of how the brain and body and mind function has changed dramatically in the last 40 years. For hundreds of years it was thought that mind and body were essentially separate—that the body was “physical” and the mind was “mental” and that their nature was completely different, although they somehow interacted. As for the brain, it was considered to be a kind of telephone “switchboard” relaying messages from without and within; it was thought to be a passive organ—merely responding to external stimuli.

Now we know conclusively that “mind” is more than brain, and that brain, mind and body function together in a unified fashion—intimately and interdependently—that, in a very real sense, they are all one entity. For example, in biofeedback training, and image training, it has been

¹ Treatise, XIV, viii, 3, (p. 2216).
shown that the mind can directly control various bodily processes, thereby bringing about healing or improvement. There is no separation between mind and body.

Indeed, instead of merely responding passively to external reality, it may be that the human brain is actively creating our everyday reality—both the internal interpretation of sensations, and the objects of perception themselves. Thus, we need to rediscover and reexamine the whole idea of human consciousness.¹

We should keep in mind that Dr. Hiroike's research and writing about psychology and the brain were based on the information of his time. In much of that research, the emphasis was on "hard science"—measurement, objectivity—in the attempt to make psychology as rigorous as the natural sciences. Each science was looking separately at only one aspect of "objective" reality. New Age Science encompasses and includes particular fields of study.....such as physics, neuropsychology, stress research, biofeedback, etc......but takes a "holistic" approach to understanding them.

**Human Potential**

What is it possible for a human being to do mentally, physically, spiritually? Are there any limits? In my report last year I mentioned various unusual and amazing feats of mind control and physical ability that I had encountered in my own experience.

And I’m sure you still remember the short report I gave in Tanigawa about the “marathon monks” of Mt. Hiei (the Hiei-zan). At one point in their training, they are running two full marathons a day, for 100 days in a row. However, the important point of that report was not to be amazed at the things they can do—and then forget it and move on to other things. The important point I would like you to remember is that the monks of Hiei are able to do what they do because they have a unified, integrated approach to their practice of morality. They can do what they do because they have a perfect integration of mental, physical, and spiritual practice.

Now, all of us are dedicated and committed to the ideals of Dr. Hiroike; and we are sincere in our individual efforts to practice supreme morality. But the question I want to examine more in depth in this report is whether morality in any way demonstrates or offers an integrated, unified way or approach to the practice of supreme morality.

**The “Principles” of Supreme Morality**

According to morality, the "structure" or "framework" of the practice of supreme morality seems to be the five theories or principles elaborated by Dr. Hiroike, which he found to be common to, or manifested in, the practice of the great sages. And even a superficial analysis of the practice of the Hiei monks clearly shows that their practice also manifests those principles:

* They give up their selfish ego and become totally dedicated to practice.
* They give up their personal rights and put duty to God, practice and service to others before everything.
* The running they do is not just running; it is actually for the purpose of getting to a large number of stations of worship—more than 250—in order to pay their respects to their ortholinons.
* Of course, they practice many kinds of meditation and self-examination, the most severe of which is doubi, a 9-day period of meditation during which they do not eat, drink, sleep, or rest.

* Finally, everything they do is for the single-minded purpose of discovering and emulating the benevolent mind of God. Those who survive the training clearly reach their goal of conversion and salvation and seem to become living Buddhas.

Let me summarize by quoting from the book:

"The marathon monks of Mount Hiei achieve [the ability to fly like the wind, running lightly in a state of deepest contemplation] ... with their training methods; but the secret of their success lies in their spiritual rather than their physical strength. This spiritual strength--derived from the desire to realize Buddhahood, for the sake of oneself and the sake of others, in this life, this very mind and body--is the key to the question, 'What makes the marathon monks run?'" For "Buddhism can never be understood purely through the intellect; it must be experienced: 'Learn through the eyes, practice with the feet.'"  

[Their conviction is that:] 'If mind and body are unified, there is nothing that cannot be accomplished. [We should] strive to attain the ultimate..." 

Does Morality Have Integrated Practice?

In morality, too, we are "striving to attain the ultimate." But how shall we characterize our method of practice? If morality does have an integrated practice, which unifies mind and body, I wonder how we would describe it? According to Michael Murphy, anyone who is interested in fulfilling his potential, or who is interested in transformational practice--such as the practice of supreme morality, or the desire to embody the benevolent mind of God--needs to take a balanced, integrated approach. If I refer only to the three dimensions of man that we call mental, physical, and spiritual, I wonder how we would describe morality's approach to the physical aspect of practice?

And Murphy gets much more explicit than this. He refers to the Stoic philosophers' idea that, "Every virtue requires other virtues to complete it." No single approach to practice is enough, or sufficient unto itself. He says,

...Creative practices draw upon our entire organism, sensitively guiding its various processes toward new efficiencies, enhancing contact among them, bringing them into resonance with metanormal [beyond-normal] activities. To do this, our practices must promote perceptual, kinesthetic, communication, and movement abilities; vitality; cognition; volition; command of pain and pleasure; love; and bodily structures.

At Tanigawa I talked about the monks of Hiei, and again today. I mention such things not just because they are sensational, or even truly amazing--because we may not care about what others can do. It may seem irrelevant or unimportant to our own daily life and practice. But it seems to me that much of morality is "mental"--intellectual and educational--but is not aimed at the whole person (mind, body and spirit). I would like us to think about such feats--such as those accomplished by the "marathon monks"--seriously and reconsider our own practice, for example, whether we accept the importance of having a strong body in relation to our mental and spiritual practice.

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2 Ibid., p. viii.
Are "Small Steps" Enough?

It seems to me there is a possible danger in limiting ourselves to the idea of daily practice consisting of "small steps"—with the relaxed belief that this will "somehow" lead to everything else (a supremely moral life, salvation, long life, enlightenment, highest self). I like the idea of committing ourselves to a larger, integrated approach to transformation. Look how hard the monks work at their individual enlightenment! And in the process they reach deep and wide aspects of their human potential. Is morality less vigorous and less demanding than Tendai Buddhism? I am not suggesting that we should all start running! But in terms of the overall, integrated approach to their practice of supreme morality—should we do less than "strive for the ultimate"?

Morality is already committed to ongoing research for what to include or update in its educational philosophy. And Dr. Hiroike encouraged people to be committed to a specific religion and "add" morality. So there is already a theoretical commitment to expanding our sources of information and learning. But there is no specific writing or teaching about the need for a total transformational program as Murphy is talking about.¹

Thus, as far as I know, there is nothing in morality that comes even close to suggesting the need for a "holistic" or "integrated" approach as elaborated by Murphy. I'll say more about this in a few minutes.

Are We Practicing "with Awareness"?

For now, I would like to approach the vital importance of our conscious attitude, or seishinsayou, by raising the question of our own daily awareness as we go about attempting to practice supreme morality.

One of the most interesting things I find in morality, and Dr. Hiroike's thought, is the idea that we are responsible for our own destiny, and we create our present and future reality with our thoughts and actions. Thus, we are completely responsible for our present mental, physical, spiritual (and economic) condition. It follows that we are also responsible for the way we are using and developing our further and wider potential as individual human beings.

"Ordinary" Supreme Morality?

We are all, I'm sure, making a sincere effort day by day to practice supreme morality. We study morality because we have already decided we don't want to be satisfied with ordinary morality. So, in our thoughts and our actions we try to achieve the highest morality. But if we aren't healthy, if we are getting prematurely old, if we still drink or smoke too much, and if we are not optimistic about realizing our full potential, perhaps it's because we are satisfied to be "ordinary" in some dimensions of our human existence and our practice of supreme morality. (I already confessed in my Tanigawa report that I know how little I, myself, am doing to "practice what I preach," and to harvest my unused potential. Maybe I keep talking about it so that I'll be forced to change!)

But I wonder: is it enough to settle for a rather "ordinary" practice of supreme morality?

Is Morality A Religion?

Like many religions, morality has a commitment to specific moral and spiritual principles. This, in itself, is not necessarily bad—though we always tend to say that morality is not a religion. But, as Murphy points out, "...Most religious disciplines aim to promote some version of

personal wholeness. [So this idea is not unique to morality.] Few if
any, however, cultivate all of our capacities for extraordinary life, or
address the full range of our greater possibilities. 1

In the case of morality, I am suggesting that we should not be too
easily satisfied or too dependent on the idea that “someday” we will be
better in every way if we just continue with our present style. There are
so many more things we can do to help the process of becoming our best
self and realizing our full potential. If we really want to help our own
evolution towards transformation, it seems to me we need to learn about
other things we can do in addition to our efforts to practice supreme
morality.

Avoiding Dogma, Expanding Practice

I’m sure Dr. Hiroike never intended for us to follow the ideas of
morality as a dogma or religion and to get too relaxed or comfortable in
that framework. It is important that we don’t because, as Murphy says,
“No discipline is immune to excess or lack of wisdom. ... All programs
of self-cultivation are affected by inherited or culturally induced disabi-
ilities that afflict human activity in general.” He mentions the follow-
ing four destructive effects. 2

* A practice can reinforce limiting traits, preventing their removal
or transformation. For example, I may have some bad habit, and may
embrace morality because of the fact that morality doesn’t insist I
change. As Murphy says, “People are frequently attracted to activities
that preserve and disguise their shortcomings.” 3

* A practice can support limiting beliefs, giving them greater power

in the life of an individual or culture. For example, if someone believes
in determinism, and that they really have “no choice” about what they do,
they may not accept responsibility for their actions.

* A practice can subvert balanced growth by emphasizing some vir-
tues at the expense of others. “Every transformational discipline—indeed,
every culture or group—tends to promote certain virtues while neglecting
or suppressing others.” For example, we all know about the five basic
principles of morality. But it would be a mistake to think those are the
only principles important to human growth and potential.

* A practice can limit integral development when it focuses on
partial, though authentic, experiences of superordinary reality. For ex-
ample, Dr. Hiroike’s own “metanormal cognition”—the vision or illumi-
nation about his life and motivations that came out of his
sickness—clearly influenced his beliefs about the world, God, and human
nature.

I am not saying that these potentially negative effects are to be find
in morality—I wonder what you think? But Murphy warns that they
can be found in most programs of self-cultivation, religious and other-
wise. I mention them so we can be aware of them, and be careful in our
thinking about morality and our efforts at self-improvement. There
are, after all, many paths to self-transformation. Morality is one path,
but it seems to me it is not enough by itself.

It seems to me we need to learn and to do as much as we can to study
many other, additional, ways for unlocking our human potential, and
finding ways to salvation and to self-transformation. First we need to
learn more about what is possible for us as human beings, and then put
that knowledge into practice. The form that practice takes, of course,
will undoubtedly be different for each of us. Thus, we need to think
carefully about it. In any case, I think we should be thinking and talking

1 Murphy, M. Ibid., p. 555.
2 Ibid., pp. 555-556.
3 Idem.
more about an integrated approach to our practice.

At the core of our learning and practice, it seems to me, we need the desire to develop and practice a philosophy that emphasizes the balanced unfolding of many virtues and capacities. We need to incorporate many disciplines into our daily life so that all of them can contribute to an integral practice. Thus, we may want to borrow many different ideas from the religious tradition, modern depth psychology, and somatic training and sports, in order to develop an integrated path toward the actualization of our potential and our ongoing, eventual self-transformation.

Possibilities for Extraordinary Life

In the chapter of his book entitled, "Possibilities for Extraordinary Life," Murphy lists 12 sets of human attributes or characteristics possessed by all human beings, and which can be developed to an extraordinary degree. Throughout the book he gives thorough documentation of when and where these abilities were observed. They are:

1. Extraordinary perception of things outside the organism, including apprehensions of numinous [spiritual] beauty in familiar objects, voluntary clairvoyance [psychic knowledge], and contact with entities or events that are inaccessible to the ordinary senses.

2. Extraordinary somatic awarenesses and self-regulation [for example, as in biofeedback training].

3. Extraordinary communication abilities, including the transmission of thoughts, volitions, and ecstatic states through extra-somatic modalities.

4. Superabundant vitality that is difficult to account for in terms of ordinary bodily processes [as with the Hiei monks].

5. Extraordinary movement abilities [as in sports, dance, martial arts, etc.].

6. Extraordinary capacities to alter the environment, including exceptional hand-eye skills and abilities to influence things at a distance without reliance upon direct physical action, as for example in spiritual healing.

7. Self-existent delight, which does not depend upon the satisfaction or desires in the manner of ordinary pleasure, and which persists through sickness and other adversity.

8. The supreme intellectual capacities evident in some works of genius, by which great artistic or other productions are apprehended tout ensemble—all at once; and the unitive knowledge inherent in mystical experience, which differs radically from ordinary thinking.

9. Volition exceeding ordinary will, which unifies separate impulses to produce extraordinary actions [again, like the monks of Mt. Hiei].

10. Personhood that simultaneously transcends and fulfills one's ordinary sense of self while revealing one's fundamental unity with others; and individuality based upon the extraordinary capacities listed above.

11. Love that transcends ordinary needs and reveals a fundamental unity with others [as in the love of God].

12. Alterations in bodily structures, states, and processes that support the experiences and capacities [mentioned above].

Most of these attributes are evident, to some extent, in the course of everyday life. But imagine if they could be sustained over time as a break with ordinary human activity. Surely their lasting integration by many people would constitute a new kind of life on this planet! That is the possibility, if not the promise, that lies in the New Age Consciousness.

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1 I am quoting at length from Murphy, ibid., pp. 27-28.
The "Consciousness Revolution"

When some people think about the "Consciousness Revolution," they are still thinking of Maslow's "Peak Experiences," and the idea of a "Higher Self," or "Self-Actualization." Or perhaps they are thinking about the beginnings of Transpersonal Psychology, and such people as George Leonard, and Ken Wilber. All of those people and their works are still very important. Through their own research, and by reporting on good research done by others, they have provided a solid basis for a whole new way of thinking about ourselves as human beings.

However, it is important to note two things. One is that the "Consciousness Revolution" was not new when they were writing about it. The Consciousness Revolution has a long history which should be kept in mind—that is one of the most valuable things to be found in Murphy's book. By a "long" history I don't mean just the last 50 or 100 years; I mean a history that goes back into ancient times. Man has been learning about, experimenting with, and practicing, the powers of his mind for thousands of years.

Also, the "Consciousness Revolution" brought about by Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology, already has a history of more than 40 years! For a few moments in time, about 30 years ago, I was actually a pioneer—though not a famous one—in that movement, so I am quite amazed to reflect on that and to think that so much time has already passed. But I wonder if morality has incorporated or assimilated—or even considered—all of the important ideas of that revolution.

Indeed, enough time has passed that we can look more systematically at what has been accomplished—not only during the last 40 years, but over the millennia—and what the future may bring. One of the problems in getting a comprehensive feeling for what our human potential is and how to actualize it, and how to comprehend the role of our human consciousness, is that so much of the information was scattered. Murphy's book is, again, a great contribution because he has collected and organized a huge amount of that information.

Toward A Holographic Universe

Those who are scientifically-minded will find a larger problem. It is the problem of validation of extraordinary experiences. Until recently, there were no dependable criteria for judging or explaining those kinds of experiences or data; it was all quite "unscientific," according to the old science. That they occurred could not be doubted. But how they could occur was a puzzle, so they were largely ignored. It was, however, because the old science was unable to explain such things—which really occur—that New Age Science had to be born. As Thomas Kuhn has pointed out: "...Every dominant paradigm eventually moves to the limits of its methodologies and ceases to be creative. At that point there is an increasing body of information that it cannot incorporate and alternative paradigms come to the fore."1

In the last few years, the new paradigm has achieved great powers of explanation because a great deal of the most sophisticated science imaginable has been published. I am especially thinking of the work of my former boss, Dr. Karl Pribram, and the great physicist, David Bohm. In my next report I want to approach that scientific understanding of New Age Consciousness by talking about the "holographic universe."2 For

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now, let us keep in mind the extraordinary things the marathon monks of Mt. Hiei are able to do with their consciousness. That they can do it cannot be questioned. How they can do it is a kind of mystery, but New Age Science may be able to explain part of it.

Thinking about the monks of Mr. Hiei may help us to change our thinking about what it is possible for us to do if we were to take a systematic, integrated approach in moralogy, and in our daily life, to the development of our consciousness and our mental, physical and spiritual potential. As Murphy says:

“To adopt a Buddhist metaphor, [research surveys into extraordinary experiences] suggest that all of us can become ‘stream enterers’ as we join the river of companionship, teaching, and discipline that flows toward extraordinary life. ...There is good reason to believe that we all can progress in transformative practice, and that we each have access to subliminal processes that help us. Our genetic endowments, shaped (for good or ill) by our respective cultures, can be developed by discipline and lifted by powers beyond our normal purview [range of thinking].”

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1 Ibid., p. 176.