

The Dancing of Lights

"The eyes are the windows of the soul." Logically, to take that proverb literally you would have to believe in the soul. For me, though, it happened the other way around. I didn't have a clue about spiritual matters other than my religion didn't fulfill me, but that's another story. My ideas changed about spirituality when I saw something flickering in the eyes of a stranger. The best I can describe it is that *lights* were in the eyes.

Over the years, I have seen two varieties of those lights, both dark and white. The variety, oddly enough, isn't that important. What frightens or uplifts me is their energy. When two people commune at this level, often without words, they touch each other energetically. Dark lights radiate various forms of iniquity while the bright ones send out the purest levels of love.

What are these lights? For one thing, they are not static — they dance like etheric fire. They are not “physical” lights either. Rather, I believe they are higher forms of consciousness shining through into the material plane.

Dark Lights

My earliest encounter with this phenomenon, at least the first one I can recall, happened when I was seven years old. I was innocent then, innocent in that I didn't know evil. One spring afternoon my father had taken me for a drive. At the top of a hill, the traffic signal had turned red and we slowed to a stop. In the right lane, a black sedan pulled up close beside us. I casually glanced over at the driver, who looked about 40 years old. He was staring at me and slowly smiled an evil smile. In his eyes I saw something that I never imagined: dark lights were in there, and they were moving. How could this be? This was something I didn't want to see or believe. Instinctively, I turned away. I sat there, shaken. My father sensed something was wrong and asked, "Are you all right son?" I nodded but didn't say anything.

This would be my secret for many years. It was too weird to talk about. It bothered me so much that I avoided deep eye contact for two decades. I was afraid of what I might see.

Bright Lights

Fast-forward 20 years to a makeshift Sai Baba commune. It was a crisp Saturday morning as eight of us climbed into a VW van. We were heading for the Washington National Cathedral in Washington DC, about 15 minutes away. As we passed through the tall church doors, the bells in the gothic spires pealed overhead. We strolled through the nave and chatted as we approached the altar. We then went on to explore the small chapels and alcoves that dotted the sides of the building. We admired the art: the colorful mosaics, the rich stained glass, the architecture. The marble sculptures were smooth and cool to the touch. Even if the Catholic Church had an odd way of seeing some things, it still fed the higher sensibilities of humanity through its support and display of fine art, which uplifts the soul.

We eventually found our way to the cafeteria downstairs. Bob, who was confined to a wheelchair and had organized the trip, noticed someone seated nearby. The man was in his 50s and impeccably dressed in black. Bob's eyes opened wide. "Wow!" he said. "There's the holiest person I ever met! You have to meet him!"

We eagerly followed Bob to the gentleman's table, and Bob introduced everyone to him. He stood to greet us and, when I shook his hand, I looked deeply into his eyes. What I saw stunned me. The lights that I had avoided for so many years were there again. This time, though, they were not dark and menacing. They were bright, uplifting, and joyous. This was my first encounter with what I could call “heavenly lights.” Later I would discover that this man was, among other things, a Great Master of a mystical order. I spent the next 15 years studying metaphysics with this wondrous being. The lights have been a constant delight.

More Lights

Several years later, my family moved from the area. After we settled in, I drove my daughter around to the local karate schools. She had been practicing different forms of karate since she was six years old. (She is now 16.) As an Aries, she enjoys the martial arts, the work out, and the challenge. We visited several dojos (karate schools), and I had the opportunity to meet the owners. They were all black belts of course, but having a black belt doesn't make a person a master. She chose a Taekwondo school and quit after a few months. It didn't challenge her enough she said. To me the place was a McDojo — a corporate-like system that served up black belts regardless of one's skill.

Only one owner-sensei had impressed me. He was from Japan and taught Oyama karate. "Sensei," by the way, is a Japanese title used to address your teacher. To me, he was a true master of his art. I became his student not because fighting interested me — it doesn't — but because I was using my guiding philosophy: follow the direction of my spirit. And I felt that spirit wanted me to be with this master.

Although I didn't see any lights in sensei's eyes, I discovered early on that we had a psychic connection. I would think, "Should my foot be at a 45 degree angle?" In a moment, sensei would give me instructions about the angle of my footing. This has happened so many times that I'm convinced they weren't coincidences. I haven't mentioned the connection to him, as I imagine it's against esoteric protocol to do so. But who knows. In any case, my tendency is to look for metaphysical significance in ordinary events, so I have to examine my assumptions carefully — reality has overruled my imagination before.

I want to digress for a moment. If people have never experienced anything similar to this, like dancing lights or psychic connections, then they may not believe me. Frankly, I understand. I've heard wild stories before. In the past, I would dismiss many of them as too fantastic. At one point, though, I learned that some people viewed *my* experiences as "whacko." Sure, I've had uncommon experiences, but then I didn't seriously consider them unreal. Because of this, two things happened: I spoke less freely about my spiritual beliefs, and I opened my mind. Who am I judge another person's inner world, especially their experiences? Naturally, I run across cases that I just can't accept. ("The Queen of England is a lizard.") Everyone has limits. In addition, everyone is wrong sometime. Anyone can misinterpret what he or she experiences. In any event, I try to be flexible.

Anyway, when it came time to test for my blue belt, I had the opportunity to meet my sensei's teacher. He is the founder of the Oyama karate school. The test took place at his dojo where he oversaw the testing. I wasn't expecting anything metaphysical to happen. I hadn't felt any spiritual vibes at my sensei's dojo (except the psychic link). If I did well, then I would advance in rank. However, when the founder approached me and smiled, I saw the twinkling lights in his eyes. What a joyous person!

Next Tuesday, I went to my karate class. Sensei said I did well on my test, and I would probably get my blue belt. I mentioned to him how wonderful the founder was, but I didn't say anything about the lights. He tilted his head, puckered his lips, and pointed to the poster of his sensei that hung on the wall. "You mean him?" he said, unsure. I nodded. "I don't know," he said doubtfully. "He's a tough guy." Yes, he's tough, but what surprised me was that sensei couldn't see the joyous side of him. But looking at the face on the poster, I can see how anyone would have doubts. On the surface, only the tough shows.

Two Lights — New Philosophy

Having seen two different lights, both light and dark, made me wonder about my belief system. I always thought the soul was pure and beyond corruption. *People* might behave horribly, but the soul would remain untouched and was intrinsically good. Having seen the dark lights made me question this. After considering this periodically over the years, I decided that my idea about this was both right and wrong. I was wrong about the *soul* being incorruptible: it was corruptible; but I was right about *spirit* being incorruptible. Before, I didn't have the proper spiritual model to make sense of what I felt. Here's what I mean.

The Ancient Egyptians claimed that the spiritual body has two aspects: the Ka and the Ba. They considered the Ba to be the soul or personality and the Ka to be the life force. I adopted these ideas, so now I believe that I have a soul and a spirit, the latter being my highest individual form. Spirit projects its consciousness into the lower dimensions where it animates an astral body (the soul) and, in turn, a physical body. We call our lowest body (the physical) "me," because all the sensory information supports that conclusion. Yet, "me" is a hierarchy: spirit, soul, and body. The higher you go, the longer the life span is for the particular body.

For instance, when the short-lived physical body dies, the soul moves on and can reincarnate. Like a stone skipping across the water, it sails through time, touching down now and then into the pool of the material world. It acts as a link through which the life force (spirit) projects its consciousness and animates the physical body. Eventually the soul flies home and reunites with spirit. You could say that this is one level of "going to Heaven."

Unlike the soul, spirit exists beyond the confines time. It doesn't have to skip anywhere. Some call it the Witness, because it simply watches the drama of the body and soul from a place of Peace. Spirit, in its wisdom, also can decide to bring the soul home whenever it wants, without the need to reincarnate further. At the death of the universe, spirit surrenders its individuality: it merges with the All-That-Is. It too goes home. Everything — everyone — goes home eventually.

Borders of Belief

Generally, people want to think that their beliefs are true. That's natural. I've taken this a step further and decided that it doesn't matter whether my beliefs are real or not. As long as they don't hurt anyone — God hasn't told me invade somebody else's country for example — then only three points are important.

First, if science can disprove my belief beyond a reasonable doubt, then I'll change my belief. I apply this rule to religion, politics, philosophy, economics, spirituality, sociology, theology, psychology, and whatever is left. What's the point of believing something that's obviously false? A woman once told me that she could fly if she chose to. Interested but doubtful, I asked her to show me. She said that she chose not to.

Second, if the belief is positive and uplifting, or if it helps keep my ego at bay, then I could accept it; but I don't accept fatalistic beliefs. For instance, in the 1970's I read about a branch of Hinduism and its view on reincarnation. It said that through good works you finally achieve the ultimate goal: you incarnate as a divine cow. That could be OK. Sometimes I think dogs have a good life, and they're not even considered holy. However, there's more.

After "you-the-cow" dies, you must reincarnate again. But you don't go higher even if you were a virtuous cow. Instead, you tumble to the bottom of the reincarnation ladder. You then have to climb back — through countless lives — to become a cow again. This cycle repeats for eternity. It reminds me of the Greek myth of Sisyphus. He rolls a boulder up a hill, only to have it roll back down to the bottom each time he finally gets it to the top. This theology is as depressing as materialism — worse, perhaps. At least with materialism, when you die it's all over. In contrast, another branch of Hinduism claims that you only have to live nine lives. After that, you are at one with God again. That's more like it.

Lastly, the belief has to feel right. If it doesn't, then (a) it could be false, or (b) it might not be right for me at the time, or (c) I might need to adjust parts of it. Sometimes I'll adjust or develop the belief, or maybe I'll discard it. The worst, though, is when my ego "makes it right" even when I know it's not true. But what's the point of lying to myself? The ego will rationalize the lie and become inflexible. When this happens, the belief can slip into my subconscious and can continue to operate unconsciously. It can work against me, because it's not real.

Loose Ends

A couple related ideas sprung to mind as I wrote this article. One is, "Where do these lights come from?" My guess is they come from either the astral plane or the spiritual plane.

The Astral Plane

The Astral Plane is the realm of souls and the Dark and Light Forces. The inhabitants take the battle between good and evil seriously, but perhaps not as seriously as humans. It's the place of magic, where forms are loose; in astral reality, you can change your shape at will. Werewolves are examples of how astral abilities have bled into our cultural lore. Some people who have had Near Death Experiences report seeing "the light at the end of the tunnel," the entrance of the Astral Plane. Many have claimed to see sword-bearing angels waiting there. But regardless of the duality and conflict on that plane, the Astral is still lighter, higher, and brighter than the Material Plane. We, as humans, are at the bottom.

The Spiritual Plane

Swords are unnecessary on the Spiritual Plane, because good and evil don't exist at that level. It is beyond duality. There's no need, want, or struggle. Some people think that without those challenges, life would be boring. Being in constant bliss, though, is anything but boring. The mistake is that we tend to define happiness in human terms, and humans aren't programmed for extended ecstasy. We need challenges, goals, social interaction, and entertainment. In short, we need stimulation, preferably the positive kind. And even this doesn't make us ecstatic. Usually, positive

stimulation creates waves of happiness that wash over us for a moment. For spirit, “being” is enough, as the bliss of creation continuously flows through every point of its etheric body. Have you ever felt happy “for no reason at all”? Spirit is eternally blissful for no reason at all.

It's hard for people to reach into the realm of spirit. Nature built humans to operate mainly on the Material Plane. Yet, many people can connect with the Astral Plane without much trouble, at least on occasion. Channeling and ESP are examples of that. To reach the Spiritual Plane takes an exceptional degree of training, a high level of spiritual evolution, or Providence. I imagine that we could consider someone living in that state of consciousness to be enlightened.

Because of all this speculative evidence, I semi-concluded that the lights are shining in from the Astral Plane. The dark lights are most likely immature souls, or they could be Dark Force minions peering into the Material Plane (channeling through someone). The bright ones are the light of advanced souls.

The other question was this: Why would spirit want to involve itself in the painful lower realms anyway? Perhaps it wants to take part in evolution — specifically, in the evolution of humanity and planet Earth and, generally, in the progression of the universal consciousness. To me, that's the highest purpose of all life. Spirit could contribute by embodying spiritual qualities in its physical body, and then the person could work to embed those qualities in the world. If the person was trying to embed, say, the spiritual quality of justice, we could say that he or she was working for “social justice.” Spirit, by embedding this and other spiritual qualities into society, participates in the unfolding of the divine Evolutionary Plan.

God, spirit, soul, and flesh: Of the group, only God is immortal. It is the source of all light. Beyond time and creation, the Creator — the All-That-Is-Was-and-Ever-Will-Be — simply Is. Forever. Whether life is a dream of this Being, or a multidimensional phenomenon, or a manifested illusion, we are all children of God. If we can look beyond our egos, individualized and separative by nature, then we can understand something else. At the highest level of creation, we are not only children, but the parent as well.

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