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- *Consciousness*

God, who is the Supreme Guide, the Creator, the Consciousness, the Conscience of All That Exists, embraces each of you in presence, in light, and in love. You are all embraced. You are all illuminated. You are all loved.

Your conversation this evening certainly centered around the issue of relationships—relationships to others, relationships to spirit, relationships to the issues of consciousness. We would like to address in more specific ways the issues of consciousness.

Consciousness is defined in so many ways, in so many religious beliefs, in so many traditions, in so many philosophies. It is, in truth, unfortunate that such a broad relationship as consciousness is identified by what is, for many, a single term, for that term does not begin to describe the world to which it truly refers.

Each of you has a personal sense of what you feel being conscious means. For most, it is an awareness that there is something beyond the self. That something may be physical, or it may be spiritual. It may exist within the human framework of time. It may be fully timeless, but it is nevertheless an awareness of another dimension to existence beyond an acknowledgment that one simply lives, that one simply is, that one is just alone.

Consciousness actually involves a way of looking at communication. Let's look at this from the normal human perspective. You are conscious of the existence of others in this room. You are conscious of the existence of family members scattered in many different locations. Accompanying that awareness of those others are thoughts. If you are aware of another person, your thoughts are specifically of that individual.

As you think of another, you are actually sending out an energy to that person. That energy is exchanged. It is given and it is received. The exchange of energy is communication. If you think of someone who has done great harm, the energy that you project is a negative energy. If your thoughts, your awareness, goes to one whom you love, however you may define that relationship, that energy is positive. You are communicating with and through positive energy, energy that is affirming and supportive. All thoughts have energy.

Thoughts are not limited to the function of the brain. Thoughts resonate through the spirit. Thoughts are transmitted to others, not necessarily to be perceived as words, but nevertheless they are felt, and they have an impact, a direct impact. You will never know the effect your thoughts have on another person, and you may never fully understand the effect that those thoughts have upon yourselves. But think for a moment of times when you have perceived of another in a very negative way. Think about what that feels like to you. You may be filled with anger, resentment, impatience, intolerance.

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You may wish to reject, to deny, to distance yourself. These are all forms of energy that are directed back toward the self.

It is not, therefore, a stretch to imagine that energy is like light. It radiates in all directions. So the negative energy that is directed toward the self that you recognize personally is a negative energy that is directed toward others. That is a communication. That is a sense of consciousness.

When you quiet your lives, contemplate the reality of the Creator. You are directing those thoughts outward, but that very existence of such considerations also is directed inward toward yourself and opens, thereby, your own receptivity, your own ability to see beyond the self. That is a consciousness.

You're conscious of your guides when you are assembled in such a way as this moment. You're conscious of each other because of what the senses tell you. You see others. You hear them. You listen carefully to what they are saying. You take into yourselves what each is trying to express. You are open, and as you are open, all who are present feel that openness and respond with similar energy. You have given out an energy of openness. The openness has been received and reflected back. Communication has taken place, and through that communication your consciousness has been sharpened, has been illuminated.

You discuss matters of importance in human relationships, and in that discussing, you become more aware of the impact of those relationships. You are, therefore, more conscious of them, but that increase in consciousness is also communication. The impact of your discussions leads you to other thoughts and emotions, and those thoughts and emotions are reflected outward, heightening a consciousness that is collective.

We've frequently made reference to consciousness through other terms and examples. If you are sitting on an inflated raft in the ocean, and a wave comes, all members in the raft are aware of the movement. If there is no wave, and one individual moves, it can be recognized by others just through the feel of what the raft is doing. There is a kind of ripple of energy that is communicated. There is a consciousness that is collective in its nature.

You know that you are all one. You know that every individual of whom you are aware is an extension of yourselves. The other is not a mirror image but an extension, and there is a big difference between the two. Therefore, it should be less difficult to understand in principle the interaction that is shared by thoughts, the communication that is shared just through being aware.

Through physics we know that merely observing something has an infinitesimal effect on what is happening. If you are observing subatomic particles, the minutest items of existence, that observation has an impact on what those particles do. You're not breathing on them. You're not illuminating them. You're not changing their temperature. You have no perceptible connection that binds your consciousness of

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them to the actual particles, and yet the energy of looking is transmitted. You are conscious of those particles, and therefore the particles respond.

This is a truth that is most difficult to comprehend, but nevertheless, a truth. Being conscious of anything has a direct impact on that thing. There is a communication that takes place between you and the smallest particle that exists. If such a communication can exist, then it certainly follows that your awareness of anything at all, large or small, has an impact. Your thoughts are energies that have an impact.

So consciousness is really about an openness to recognizing that each of you on that raft, that inflated raft, is communicating with everyone else. You communicate through spirit. You communicate with others whom you have never seen. When you pray for those in conflict whom you have never met, you are aware of their existence, and merely the act of being aware has an impact upon those for whom you pray.

You ask God to intervene when there is strife, but what is it, who is it, that is that God presence? It is precisely the energy that belongs to that consciousness that is exercised through prayer. God does not wait to act until you request it. Even your thoughts about those who suffer become an act of God that is comforting, strength-giving, affirming, for in truth, God acts because of your collective and individual awareness or consciousness.

You are aware of your lives where you live them. You are aware of your daily experiences in life. That is an acknowledgment that life is more than the heart beating, the blood flowing, the brain firing its energy centers. That awareness of human life, just the awareness of life, opens you to the strength that comes from your interacting with your life. You're not organisms that just function alone. You're organisms that interact.

You're organisms that have a consciousness, even if it is not a consciousness of words. Flowers are conscious of sunlight. There are no thoughts of sunlight, but plants thrive in that light. Plants turn toward that light. Plants respond to that light chemically and physically. Watch a plant change its direction because of the source of light, and you will see there is a consciousness. There is an energy, but the plant receives energy from the sun, and the plant responds in its own way to that presence.

Consciousness, therefore, is not limited to the brain's function. Consciousness is merely the exchange of energy. God's response is a response of that energy of consciousness. You are aware of us. Through that awareness you are open to our existence, and that openness allows the exchange of energy. In that exchange a part of you becomes us, and a part of us becomes you, not as a change of identity but as a change in perspective. Your being open to your guides shifts your perspective to a perspective of spirit, to a perspective that draws upon a greater vision, a wider experience of the exchange of energy, the energy of love, the energy of light that is God.

We spoke of hands and eyes belonging to the same body. Your perspective and our perspective of reality is not unlike the difference of perspective between the hand

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and the eyes. The hand is aware, is conscious, of what it is that hands do, and the eyes are aware of the potential to do what eyes can do. Each has a different consciousness, but each is exchanging energy, the energy of awareness. Each of you has your own characteristics. Each of you has your own perspectives, and those perspectives are your consciousness. They are the ways that you enhance your connection, your communication, with what surrounds you.

We are conscious of you, not in terms of skin color, hair color, age, race, sex—any other descriptor. We are aware of you because of your consciousness, because of your communication with life around you. We see that communication. We see that awareness. We are with each of you even when that vision you have is not directed toward us. Consciousness is not directed toward a single objective, for consciousness is that light that blazes outward in all directions.

You are blessed in the energies that belong to your communication with life and all that is contained within life. Embrace that communication. Embrace that exchange of energy, and embrace the love which comes from the communication that each of you shares. Your lives are fulfilled as they are opened. Your lives are given meaning as you exchange and share.

Be in the light, be warmed by the light, and find your response to that ever present brilliance.

Amen.