

InPresence 0019: Divination

with Jeffrey Mishlove

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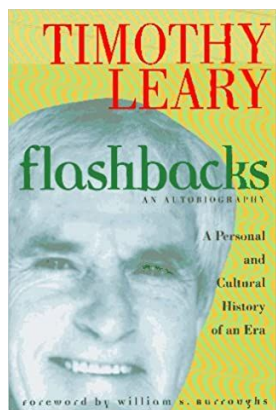
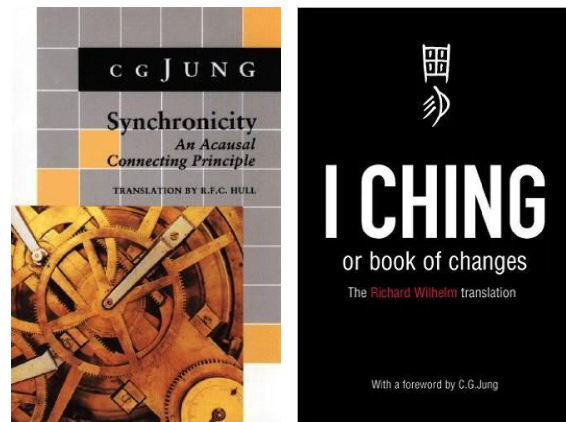
(00:38) Hello. I'm Jeffrey Mishlove. Today I'd like to talk about Divination. Divination, or fortune-telling, is one of the oldest ways that people begin to get in touch with their psychic abilities. And many times, not even knowing it because many people assume that it's almost a mechanical process. There are many forms of divination, such as: astrology; tarot reading; using the Viking runes; reading tea leaves; in Africa they have a process called Ifa, the throwing of the bones; looking into a crystal ball; and on and on – including dowsing which is sometimes called divination, the divining rod.

(01:28) So, all of these approaches have one thing in common, and that is that they serve as vehicles for unlocking certain properties of the unconscious mind, that can well indeed, include what we call psi, extrasensory perception. Now, to be honest, the one that I like the most is the crystal ball because, in a way, it's the purest. You look at a crystal ball, or it could simply be a blank sheet of white paper, and your mind will project an image onto it.

(02:05) I remember one of my first experiences of this sort. It took place in about 1970, and I was participating in a psychodrama workshop - part of my psychotherapy training, at the time. And, somebody had the bright idea. They took a motorcycle helmet with a plastic facemask and told me "Stare into the face mask. Tell me what you see." I got an image of a man and a woman and a certain relationship. The woman was supposed to be the subject of the reading. I just recounted to her what I saw and she was amazed. It seemed like a 100% accurate description of a drama that was going on in her life, at that moment. I had no idea what I was picking up on. I just saw the images, and spoke of them. So that was the most direct.

(03:01) Now, in other examples. Let's take tarot cards with their myriads of dream-like, or occult symbols. People study these. You could spend a lifetime studying the tarot. But one might say to the extent that it produces accurate information, that these symbols give you, once again, an opportunity to project onto them your own intuitions, about things. Or even, for the person who is receiving the reading, to project onto it their thoughts and intuitions. Might even be logical thoughts. A way to portray something logically.

(03:41) Another form of Divination is the *I Ching*. It's very interesting that the great Swiss psychologist/psychiatrist, Carl Jung, wrote an introductory chapter to the translation of the Chinese I Ching by his friend, Richard Wilhelm. And in it, Jung brought up his theory of synchronicity. He said, why would it matter when people flip coins in the air, or toss yarrow sticks into the air, and then they come down, forming certain patterns that the Chinese refer to, or we refer to in English as hexagrams - and then the hexagrams have particular meanings. Why should any of this be relevant? He said, by accordance with the principle of synchronicity - that is, across moments in time, there is an, he would call it, an acausal connecting principle. We are at any given moment in time, connected with everything, and when we come to approach the magic of synchronicity with a real need, and a real problem, sometimes we get real answers. And there have been some studies on the I Ching, that suggests this is, in fact, the case.



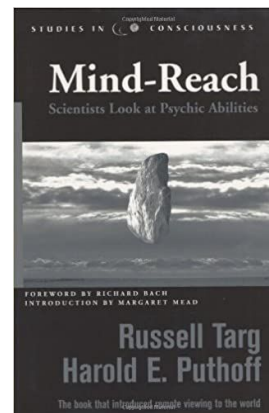
(05:05) The warning, however, is not to abuse the oracle. If you overuse it, as some people can tend to do, if they get into a state of anxiety, or some such thing. I believe, in one of his autobiographical writings, Timothy Leary once wrote, that he thought the I Ching was against him, that the I Ching was working to hurt him. But I think it's because when you approach a phenomenon like synchronicity, you need to do it with an attitude of reverence, of devotion. And that means, you just can't use it casually. It's not a mechanical process by any means. Well, maybe it is, let's say, for people who are professional readers. They know how to approach it. They have developed a professional attitude about it. Where they separate themselves. What's crucial for them, I think, is the need of

the client.

(06:07) I know from my experience as a parapsychologist, that, for example, there are various groups who work with remote viewing, which is a form of direct perception. It doesn't require the mediation of any form of divination. But they work often on cases of missing people, missing children, and helping to find lost valuables, would be another. But my sense, from talking to these people, is that when the human need is the strongest, that the psychic functions work the best. If they're used in a trivial way, they don't seem to work as well. So, it's a question of not over-doing it.

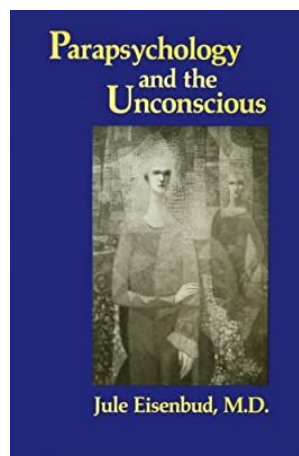
(06:56) Now, let me explain using another analogy. In ESP research, J.B. Rhine at Duke University, starting in the 1930s, did card-guessing experiments. He'd go through a deck of 25 cards. It might take half an hour, or an hour. One after another, after another, after another. And it gets boring. And that kind of boredom can dampen down real psychic functioning, once it becomes mechanical. So they noticed what they call the decline effect.

(07:38) Now subsequently, in the 1970s, with the development of remote viewing, Puthoff and Targ, at SRI, were extremely successful. Some of the most successful research ever. But, they would only do a single trial in a day. Not 25, or 30, or 100, or, sometimes, as with random mechanical event generators, thousands, of trials in a single setting. That is, when each trial, when each effort to tune into your own psychic functioning is special, for you. It works better.



(08:17) Now, I think divination is a perfectly valid approach to developing psi abilities, and to applying psi abilities. And I know that people who use these methods have their own thoughts about them. If you're an astrologer, sometimes you might tend to believe that really the angular relationships of the planets is what's important here, not your own inner intuitive knowing. My feeling is, if that's what works for you, then that's good.

(08:49) That's what William James, I think, would call a pragmatic approach. If it works, it's true - at least within that limited context. So, you ought to - if you haven't ever had a chance to apply divination or to experiment with it - I encourage you to do that. Many people seem to get benefit from it. I have only one other word of caution, and that is you need to go back to some of the early segments of the "In Presence" series about self-love, and positive affirmation.



(09:28) Jule Eisenbud, the great Denver psychiatrist, wrote an important book called *Parapsychology and the Unconscious*. What he'd learned from his own psychotherapy practice, is that, when people have self-destructive impulses because they have unresolved issues, and they're blaming themselves, probably for things they had nothing to do with, like things their parents told them when they were little children. But people who have these self-destructive impulses, and also have a certain amount of psychic ability, may find that the psychic ability gets turned into a tool used by the self-destructive impulses and they get themselves into deeper trouble.

(10:15) So, if you're thinking of exploring divination, for example, and I do encourage it, be sure that you're maintaining a healthy, warm, happy, positive attitude towards yourself. I'll leave you with that thought. Thank you for being with me. (10:34)

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