

“Talk of the Month” Spiritual White Papers
VOLUME 4

The Study of the Machine

E.J. GOLD



High A at 440

E.J. Gold, JazzArt® “monumental” painting, 36” x 72” canvas ©HEI.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Reader:

When I first read about Gurdjieff explaining “man is a machine” in a paperback copy of *In Search of the Miraculous*, it made me so angry I wanted to throw the book across the room. It was a knee-jerk reaction, typical of me, resulting in me avoiding this idea for years. This is an example of what E.J. Gold might describe as “the defense mechanism of the human biological machine against the threat of the waking state.”

What I did not understand is that work ideas are meant for use, not for mental masturbation. That they are given as tools, meant for each of us to use in our own work. That like other tools, their use must be practiced and mastered one degree at a time.

To my knowledge, the material in these white papers has never before appeared in printed form. The text is taken from the incredible series of talks published by IDHHB on their talkofthemonth.com website. These talks were given by E.J. Gold and others starting in the late 1960s. They cover “topics including personal transformation, spiritual life, the Fourth Way, Alchemy, Angels, Attention, Death & Dying, Bardo Training, the Great Work, Healing, Invocation, Metaphysics, the Man on the Cross, Reincarnation, Shamanism, Practical Work on Self, Work Traditions, Gaming and others.”

I hope you will find a way to use these ideas with wonderful results for your own work. And may your efforts be used for the benefit of all beings everywhere.



For further information, exercises, and guidance related to the ideas discussed in this white paper, please visit the Institute for the Development of the Harmonious Human Being at <https://www.idhhb.com>.

Copyright ©1983-2020 by IDHHB, Inc. All rights reserved.

“Transformation is 100% attitudinal.”

— E.J. GOLD

ABSTRACT

We wish to use the will of attention specifically to awaken the machine, because we want to exercise the attention and get it strong. However, awakening the machine does not guarantee it will function as a transformational apparatus; it must be applied toward transformation. To do that, we must learn to recognize the waking state, or at least the sleeping state. That is why we should learn to study the machine, both in its sleeping state and in its waking state. The technologies of the psychology of sleep and the psychology of the awakened machine provide us with tools and methods for our study of the machine.

1 Strengthening the Will of Attention

If awake, the machine begins to function totally differently. It loses interest in the environment. It loses interest in its thoughts. It loses interest in its moods. It loses interest in its physical state. It becomes disinterested.

In the old terminology, that is the first stage toward samadhi, called jhana. It is a state of disinterest, or in other words, high indifference.

The state of high indifference can be induced artificially as well, but we're not interested in that. The reason we're not interested in that is because we are interested in developing the will of the essential self.

Even though that will is only the will of attention, that can be a very powerful will if it's trained, so we want to continue to use it.

We can wake the machine in ways other than the use of attention, but it won't actually exercise the attention. So, because we want to exercise the attention and get it strong, we want to use the attention to awaken the machine. That's the tool we want to use.

We don't want somebody else to awaken the machine for us, which also could be done, because then we'd have an awakened machine but we'd have a very weak will of attention.

2 Looking into the Eyes of the Machine

The machine's attention, when it's exerting its own will, will generally wander back and forth between its own internal subjective states and the external environment. In other words, it will dart back and forth between one and the other.

A peculiarity of the machine's attention is that the machine's attention is only capable of functioning on one level of reality at a time. In other words, it can only handle one idea or one input or one impression at a time.

The essential self is capable of handling a multiplicity, or a multi-dimensional reality, which has many, many dimensions at one and the same time.

We'll get into that later on. For the meantime, you should realize what happens to the machine's attention when the machine is awake.

The machine's attention has been focused on itself and on the environment. When the machine is awake, the attention turns from the machine and the environment toward the being, and it becomes enraptured toward the being.

It's as if the machine were faced away from you. In other words, you the being are more or less behind the machine. The machine's attention is all going out — either to itself or outward to the environment.

Then, when the machine is awake, its attention suddenly turns and looks at you directly. It's as if somewhere inside your head, there was another head which turned 180 degrees and looked back at you.

Then you're looking into the eyes of the machine. The machine is looking at you. Its full attention is turned toward you, as a lover.

At this point, the transformational effect can begin.

3 Characteristics of the Waking State

There are several characteristics, and I'll go over them again with you. Number one, you'll notice the absence of negative emotion.

Two, you'll notice that the machine has lost interest in the environment, and even in itself, and that it no longer exerts its own will upon the situation.

Third, its attention is turned toward you, the essential self. At this point, you can actually feel your separation from the machine. You can feel the difference between you and the machine. You're no longer enmeshed in the machine.

Four, the sleep of the machine is no longer proceeding, so you are no longer immersed in the machine's sleep, which means that you now have access to a completely different type of consciousness.

4 Gradations of Consciousness

In other words, the machine's consciousness normally dominates the higher consciousness. You'll find that each of the lower gradations of consciousness dominates the higher gradation, so that as it lifts off, the next-highest gradation is revealed. The higher the gradation, the more likely it is to be dominated by the lower or the next-lower gradation.

The higher the gradation of consciousness, the more it will be dominated, the less force it has, the more subtle it is.

What happens is that when you lift off the beta, beta one and two, it reveals alpha. Lift off alpha one and two, it reveals theta. Lift off theta, it reveals delta one, two, three, and four.¹ That's an analogy to what I'm talking about. It isn't the same thing, but it is an analogy.

Normally your internal dialogue, for instance, and your procession of association of thoughts, and your associative moods — remember that moods and thoughts are both occurring in association by suggestion, one suggests another — those all tend to dominate.

So when those lift off, you'll find that the thing which is underneath it will be accessible to you.

It's like the layers of an onion, where the outer skin dominates the next inner level. As you work inward, toward the center of the onion, you'll have to do that by revealing each of the stages, each of the skins.

5 How to Study the Machine

As you see, this leads to a whole new way of self-observation. "Self-observation" is a kind of catch-all phrase ... actually what we mean by it is not self-observation. You can't observe the self. The self is unobservable.

What we really want to say is the study of the machine. So it was an unfortunate translation to say self-observation. Forget the idea — the words "self-observation"

¹Alpha, beta, theta and delta here refer to progressively lower ranges of brainwave frequencies and associated layers of mental activity.

— and think instead of the study of the machine.

The machine can only be studied in several ways. In real psychology, we study the machine in two definite states, and the machine only has two states. Either it is asleep, or it is awake.

If the machine is asleep, the type of technology that we are going to apply is called the psychology of sleep, and will be concerned with the functioning of the sleeping machine. We're going to be gathering evidence, for instance, first of all, that the machine is asleep. That's fairly easy evidence to gather, if we understand what we're looking for.

Then there's the psychology of the awakened machine. The awakened machine is capable of functioning as a transformational apparatus, so we're interested in the awakened machine in two possible functions.

One functioning is the simple awakening of the machine; that's about as far as most people get. Awaken the machine and enjoy it, and die the same as when they came into this life. Even though they've got an awakened machine, and the machine has been awakened and awakened and awakened, many, many times ... even so, if it hasn't functioned as a transformational apparatus, it's as if nothing happened.

The awakened machine doesn't guarantee that it's going to function as a transformational apparatus. It must be applied toward transformation.

Something else can go wrong, which I should mention. For instance, in your efforts to awaken the machine, you may awaken the machine, but because the awakened state is so subtly different from the sleeping state — it is a very subtle difference — you may function with an awakened machine, thinking it's asleep, continuing to try to awaken it. Then you may miss the opportunity to use it as a transformational apparatus.

There's an additional danger. The additional danger is that because the difference is subtle, you may not recognize awakening, or you may make a mistake in its recognition, thinking the machine is awake when it actually isn't. Then you may try to use a sleeping, dead machine as a transformational apparatus. Or you may try to function with it as if it's awake. That can be very dangerous.

The only way the machine can function as a transformational apparatus is if it's awake. There's no other way that it can function in a transformational sense.

6 Learning to Recognize Sleep

In the very beginning, we're going to try to get a handle on recognition of sleep. That's most important. More than we need to know that the machine is awake, we've got to know that the machine is asleep, for two reasons.

The first reason is because we must know if the machine is awake so we can use it as a transformational apparatus. We've got to know it's awake. If we know the machine is not asleep, we can deduce that it's awake. If we recognize sleep, then we have at least the beginning of recognition of awakening, because we can compare it to sleep.

Secondly, if we can observe the machine's sleep, this will provide us with what's called "the terror of the situation." In other words, to our horror, we discover that the machine is really asleep. We gather evidence to discover that the machine is literally asleep, actually dead. And not just asleep in the psychological sense. Not just asleep in terms of its attention. Not just asleep in terms of its activities or its behavior. Sleep is a state, and awakening is a state.

Almost all of you have had, at one time or another, glimpses of awakening. The awakening includes not just a different outlook. It also includes a whole different set of sensations and a different set of perceptions.

The perceptions are far more magnified, more keen, more brilliant, and more all-encompassing. You also notice a certain sensation of connectedness and life, livingness. That's what we mean when we say "awake."

So the sleeping machine is not just unaware. It isn't just sleeping in the awareness. It's sleeping in the sense that it is literally numb, and its sensations have been dimmed almost to death. It is living in a very dark world. All of the senses are radically reduced from what they could be. That is also what we mean by "sleep."

What we also mean by sleep is sleep in another sense. That's the direct perception of sleep. In other words, you can compare the state of the machine now to the state of the machine when it was awake, even briefly, or even partially awake. The difference between them is the difference between an arm which has gone to sleep, gone numb, and an arm which is functioning in a normal way with circulation.

References

- [1] IDHHB Talk of the Month #114, *The Essential Self and the Machine*.
<https://www.talkofthemonth.com/talkcds/digital/cdt114.html>