

DREAMS AND THE BODY

A Lecture by Arnold Mindell

for the Oregon Friends of Jung

Eugene, Oregon, USA

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Arny in Switzerland around 1982

This is Arnold Mindell's engaging and informal lecture which he presented in the summer of 1982 in Eugene to the Oregon Friends of Jung, just 2 weeks after his first book, *Dreambody*, was published. At this time, Arny was living in Switzerland but frequently visited the U.S. to give lectures and seminars.

Arny arrived in Eugene much later than planned. Because of mechanical problems his plane had been diverted to Washington State and his luggage and all his clothes were lost! He speaks about this during the lecture and shares his passion for following the details and wisdom of our body experiences and how he discovered the concept of the "dreambody." He gives many examples and answers questions from the audience.

The photos of Arny Mindell were taken in the early 1980s. The lecture was transcribed by Amy Mindell.

We are indebted to the Oregon Friends of Jung for recording the lecture so many years ago and keeping it in their library!

You can access the original lecture on the Oregon Friends of Jung website: <https://ofj.org/library/dreams-and-the-body-2/>. The Oregon Friends of Jung welcome anyone to their programs and members can access recordings of more than 350 lectures by various speakers.

Thanks to Julian Jaramillo for reminding us of this lecture.

ARNY: I'll talk as loud as I can. [*The audio system is not yet working perfectly at the beginning of the talk*]. I was surprised to be held up in Pasco, Washington, without my red bag and I meditated on the meaning of that, as I was flying into Oregon about an hour or two ago. I discovered that I should talk to you without much persona. You know what persona means? Not much mask. [So, I'll] be as informal as possible, forget about my degrees and being sophisticated. [I'll] just talk to you as if you are having coffee with me over breakfast after having gone to the bathroom [*group laughter*]. So, let's try.

Most people I have come across in the last 15 or 20 years get interested in their bodies for one of several reasons. For example, some people are gifted healers who put their hands on and help other people; some people are gifted in movement, men and women, capable of dancing and expressing themselves physically, and have found other kinds of psychologies too limiting for that aspect of themselves [and for that reason] get interested in bodywork. The majority of people find their way somehow to body-oriented therapists because they have body problems they can't work with. Everybody has acute difficulties, like sore throats and migraines, and many people have chronic difficulties that last a whole lifetime, like eczema or psoriasis, or chronic difficulties with body shapes, for example, the curvature of the spine. A lot of people have chronic diseases that go on and on, like multiple sclerosis; and other-people find their way to body therapists because they have terminal diseases or are dying of the terminal stages of some particular disease.

What sort of body problems actually interest *you* the most? Each person has a very specific kind of a body.

I became interested in the body about 15 years ago when I got sick after graduating from the Jung Institute in Zurich--no, not because I graduated from the Jung Institute in Zurich [*chuckles*]. I had finished my studies and was good at dream interpretation. I mean, you could tell me a dream and I could figure out about a quarter of it [*group laughter*]. I could figure out the associations, and I knew something about dreamwork. But I knew absolutely nothing about the meaning and relationship of my body to my individuation process--to who I was, and who I was as a developing person.

I began to read and study different kinds of therapies, all of which you probably know about. I read about Eastern subtle body theories, Hatha yoga, and Chinese yoga, Tibetan yoga, and shamanistic trance procedures, and acupuncture from China. I learned a lot from these wonderful [practices]. I also read about and experienced approaches such as bioenergetics, gestalt, and other techniques.

After all that, I was still left with a question: What's the relationship of what's going on inside my body *now* to what I already know about, namely my dreamwork and dreams. At first, I couldn't figure it out. I wondered: What is the body like if you don't do anything to it at all, except encourage it to be exactly like it is? In other words, if you don't *do* something to it, [if] you don't try to break through a resistance, or don't try to cure something. My question was: What happens, what is the body like, when you just let it be itself?

I fell back on Jung at that moment! I had been a physicist originally, and Jung turned me on to the absolutely outlandish idea at the time, in 1905, to take people completely seriously, and not to say that what's happening inside of them was sick!

I'm sure you know the background between Freud and Jung and the break between them. What happened was that Jung decided that he was [just] going to observe the client in front of him and differ from Freud's view. Jung felt that what Freud had called a neurosis or psychosis was a fact to be dealt with, to be understood, and to be researched, and not necessarily simply pathological.

That's really a far-out idea. So, I thought: How about starting like that, with brass tacks, keeping pathology--diseases and what people call diseases--out of my mind for a little bit, and [instead] explore what they're really all about. Today, I still consider myself an ardent Jungian [because], first of all, I look at people as if they are natural phenomena, not sick things that have to be helped and healed.

The second thing I liked about Jung that you can also find in many other therapeutic approaches, is that he was really fascinated by seeing if you could follow the individual. His basic idea was: Take all the theories you've got about psychology and everything--of course you can't put it aside all together--but *try* to put it aside, and be as open as you can to what is actually happening in front of you.

You know, that's easier said than done. In practice, I'm still filled with all sorts of rational prejudices. It's still very difficult to follow what's happening in the individual in front of me and to keep my own stuff aside. It is sometimes important to bring your own stuff in, but not all the time.

I didn't tell anybody at first, not even my wife at the time. I decided, "I'm going to make a study of people and see what happens." I started with my son, Robin. He must have been about two. He had just gotten a big cut on his leg and it had formed a scab. I observed how Robin dealt with his leg problem. About once every fifteen minutes, his hand would go down to that scab and start pulling. And I said to him, "Uh uh, nitt guet. That's not a good thing to do. Das darfst du nicht machen." And he would say, "Doch! It's nice. I like doing that," and he would rip off his scab, and I thought, "He knows that it's bad to pull his scab off. [But] apparently pulling at the scab is a natural thing to do."

Later that day I worked with a businessman in analysis who had high blood pressure. His doctor had told him not to drink coffee. It was the middle of the afternoon, and I was exhausted. I said, "Let's go out and have a coffee together" [*group laughter*]. We went out [*Arny laughs*]. The client had just finished telling me this sad story about his blood pressure going up and up, and he takes a coffee--one, two, three cups of coffee. We had a terrific conversation and I thought to myself, "This is a very interesting thing--that one side of the person says he's sick and dying. And this other, very interesting, side that I didn't know what to do with yet, is doing just exactly the opposite!" namely, amplifying the difficulties! "Hmm," I thought, "I've got to take that into consideration."

I started looking around and I saw more of this funny stuff , people, adults, like you and me amplifying things. I saw people who had eczema and mosquito bites. You get a mosquito bite, and you know, if you scratch a mosquito bite too much it gets bigger and bigger and it hurts. You know that. But every now and then, when you're not looking, your hand goes back down there and scratches the mosquito bite! I could give you many more examples. You can imagine. Like, you have a stomach ulcer but there's nothing better than smoking a cigarette, which you know is bad for you. But you've got to do it for some reason. People do things like this.

You know you shouldn't.

[For example,] on all [packaged] foods here in the United States you can read about how healthy it is. And yet, normally, it's the unhealthy food that attracts us more.

I discovered that there are two people: One person inside of you knows you get sore throats and get sick and you should do something about it; and there's another person in there who's doing exactly the opposite, amplifying the problems you have.

And I thought to myself, "This amplification business, that *has* to be an important thing. I'm going to study that." And I started to study amplification, self-amplification. I knew, of course, about homeopathy, where you take a little bit of a substance, and it makes your disease just an itchy-bitsy teeny bit worse. In some funny way, your body develops a biofeedback system, and you learn how to cope with it.

I thought, "I have to find out more about this amplification business." So, I decided after having kept it to myself for a while, to try it on my first client. He was a beautiful guy. He was already sick when he came to me, really sick, and he was dying and... I still get moved... Anyway. He was sick, and he was dying, and he was lying on his hospital bed. He'd just been operated on. I said, "Nothing else works and I'm really interested in this. Let me experiment with you." "Come on," he says, "let's try it. Try anything." So, I said, "Well, tell me, what's your problem? How do you experience your disease? I don't want to know what the diagnosis is. I'm not so interested in that, yet. I'd like to know: How do you experience your own physical disease? What's your personal experience of it?"

He said, "Well, I got this thing in my stomach. They say it's a stomach tumor, a cancer." And I said, "Well, tell me about it. What's it like?" He says, "I've got this big ball in my stomach and it's doing something in there." So, I said to him, with the idea of the amplification in mind, "How could we amplify that experience that you have?" "Well," he said to me lying in bed, "Well, what I'd do, I'd stick my tummy out, like that." He stuck his stomach out and I said, "Well, amplify that stomach tumor more." "OK," he said. He was feeling it for a while and he said, "You know, if I amplify this experience in my stomach tumor more, I'll explode! . . . It's like something inside of me wanting to explode." So, I said to him, "Go ahead!" [*group laughter*].

It's good that you're giggling about that because he *did* explode. He changed channels and he exploded *verbally*. He didn't explode kinesthetically, with movement...he made *sounds*, "Whaaa...boom," and all sorts of sounds and feelings [came out], like you may see when people

beat the couch [in your practice]. He was doing it in his bed. He was saying, “Ueehhhh...oh!” [group laughter] and he was yelling and screaming. After a while, he calmed down and told me a dream.

He dreamt that the healing medicine for him would be the “1st of August,” which in Switzerland is like the 4th of July in the United States in other words, “Independence Day” [. . .] would be a medicine. Fireworks would explode!

I thought, “Now, that’s really interesting. His dream was very similar to the body process when he amplified his body process.” So, I took that and put it in my head, and thought, “Could it be that his body is trying to do the same thing that his dream is trying to do to him?”, namely make him aware of the fact that he is much too introverted and needs to explode more? He was a really sweet guy and wouldn’t normally yell at anybody.

I kept that idea in mind and thought, “Gee, I bet there’s something like a dream inside that’s trying to happen. What happens in dreams, is trying to happen physically.” [In this case,] in terms of this man’s particular disease.

I then realized that the emotions of these experiences are not just wrapped up with the fact that people are scared of dying, which is the most natural thing in the world, not just connected with the fact that one is afraid of death, but also...this business about amplification, and feeling what’s going on in your body more...is probably one of *the* prime unconscious methods of becoming aware of your body. And one of the reasons for ripping off those scabs off, and scratching your dandruff, is to make you more aware of something that’s trying to happen inside of you.

It was then that I began to intuit the existence of something called the “dreambody,” namely a dream happening in the body.

I’ve [since] studied [this] a lot more and [have] found out that this dream process--if you follow a person spontaneously in a seminar or in private practice, or if you work with yourself, if you learn to follow your total individuation situation, your individual process--goes on in various channels. It doesn’t go on in just one channel. Your dreaming process is not just going on in dreams. If you let yourself do some sort of authentic dance, or if you let yourself go, or for somebody who has got multiple sclerosis, the dreaming is going on kinesthetically. Some people have a lot of pain, that means their dreaming process--or part of their personality, or the unconscious, or whatever you want to call it--is happening proprioceptively. Proprioception means feeling in the body. And all of us also have a lot of process that happens inside of us, auditorily. You hear your mother telling you that you’re no good. That’s an auditory process. Everyone has a lot of internal dialogue.



So, this dreambody thing is a reflection of the fact that the unconscious--or your inner process--is happening physically *and* visually. It happens visually in dreams, and it comes out physically in the form of symptoms, and shakes, and getting excited. It's all a lot of dreaming happening.

[*Arny looks at his notes*] I made some notes on the airplane. Let me tell you another example of something that is really striking in this country: Weight problems. In my last seminar in Denver, we worked a lot on overweight and weight. I want to tell you one of those dreambody situations.

There was a woman who felt she weighed far too much. When we started to work on her weight experience, the first thing that she did was to sit back, like this, with her hands on the floor, in a sitting position, sort of a half lotus with her hand back like this [*Arny leans back with one of his arms extended behind him, with his hand on the floor*], looking a little uncomfortable while smiling.

In other words, she was giving a double signal. Her body was looking uncomfortable, like people are too tight in their clothes while their face is smiling. [*Arny shows this double signal of smiling while looking uncomfortable. The group giggles.*] That's a sign that somebody has become incongruent, that the unconscious is doing one thing, and that your conscious mind is doing something else. Everybody is often incongruent. I am too. You have to be incongruent if you're a human being. You're always unconscious of something.

She's sitting in this incongruity, with her hand back and facing forward. I said to her, "What would happen if we took your hand away? I'd like to find out more about it. Let's take the hand away a minute." She said, "Well, then I would lie back because it's hard to sit up." So, I said, "Why is it hard to sit up?" She said, "One of the reasons it's hard to sit up is because I have these really tight pants on." She's holding her stomach in, and her pants are really tight, and I asked, "Why are your pants so tight?" "Well," she said, "I'm a little overweight." And I said, "Well, why not let that be? Why are you trying to put tight pants on?" And she said, right away, that the reason she's wearing these tight pants is because within herself, she has the image of being a very thin woman, the same height but really thin and really little. And she says, she doesn't know how to quite deal with this funny situation. So, I said, "Why don't you deal with it. Go upstairs and put on some really big clothes, the biggest ones that you have, and come on down and we'll continue to work with what's going on."

When she came back down, her sitting posture changed. She looked more comfortable. And now we're faced with this very large body. What are we going to do with that? Feel it! That's where her process was, in that moment. Feeling that immense body. And naturally, feeling that large body was just her edge, the thing she could just barely accept, all of that fat and weight. So, I said, "Let's love that. Let's imagine you were fatter and heavier." "Oh no!!!" she said, "all these years I've been doing just the opposite."

And, at that moment, a childhood dream came to her mind. Again, that's the dreambody thing. In her dream she was trying to live as a proper little girl in a doll house and it wasn't working. That was her childhood dream, like a myth, trying to push her to be a sweet little whatever. And she just isn't a sweet little whatever. She's a big heavy, tough lady. She's terrific!

So, we started working on this childhood dream and myth about her size. I said, "Let's go on working with the childhood dream." You see, it's hard to make a division. "Let's work with that childhood dream and body thing. Go ahead and really act heavy and overweight." So, she stood up. She stood like this [*Arny shows*]. We have been using video recordings lately to go back over the work to analyze the individual postures and their connection with the verbs etc. She was standing like I am now [*Arny stands firmly on his legs with knees bent*]. "Ooof!" And she said, "I am a Chinese wrestler...a happy man." She was magnificent. Use your imagination. A beautiful, beautiful person!

It's the damndest thing [and] I find [it] all the time: That the so-called disease or body problem is always more interesting than the conscious personality [*group laughter*]. Don't tell anybody! [*laughter*]. Actually, that's just saying that the unconscious is very, very interesting and that your "disease" is the real personality trying to come out.

Now, the question is, if she does accept her process, is she going to lose weight or not? It's hard to say. I think she, and each of us, has exactly the body, for the moment at least, that we need. She isn't just this sweet little lady. She's a big tough ancient Chinese warrior. She's gorgeous.

Let me tell you another process that was very similar. The one I just told you is about a 35- or 40-year-old woman. Let me tell you another situation, while we are talking about weight, of a woman who must be in her late 60s, early 70s. She said, "I've been to all the spas where you lose weight and [I've] got this big middle that just doesn't want to go away." So, we worked with that middle, and we did everything. I couldn't get to first base. I didn't know if I was coming or going. After about a half an hour I said, "Well, this is one situation where I just don't know what to do." She said, "Well, why don't you follow me?"--intelligent woman that she is.

I said, "How do you mean?" And she said, "Well, what I'd like to do is to just stand up and feel that tummy." So, the easiest thing is naturally the best. She stood up and started moving around, back and forth like that. I said, "Well let's amplify that a bit." She put some stuff underneath her blouse to make it a little bigger and she was walking back and forth. After a while she said, "Well, you know what that is, don't you? It's a baby! This is ridiculous at the age of 70 that I should be having a baby, but there's a baby in there, and what's going to come out of that?" "I don't know," I said. "Let's see what happens."

To make the story short, she gave birth to the blanket that was in there. It came right out, like that. She looked at the floor and she was really touched, genuinely touched, like [she was having] an old-time religious experience, like people used to have in the bible, a religious experience. She said, "I just gave birth to a divine child. It's like God was inside of me, in my tummy." And she was absolutely astounded and walked around for a while.

Then she told us a dream. She was trying to get to Mass and was having the hardest time getting there. She went and couldn't get what was trying to happen in Mass, the bread wafer, the body of Christ, and kept going back and forth, and back and forth, and finally, at the end of the dream, she goes back again to the church, to go to communion. The dream ends there.

Here again, you have a dream experience trying to happen physically in that overweight problem. Namely, it's not overweight. She's trying to get to Mass. And that God body was right there inside of her. If you know something about Indian mythology, you know that this is an old idea, nothing new. God is inside and the body is the temple. God is inside that temple. That's an old idea. But there she had it. That's another dreambody experience.

Now, let's talk about a man, an analysand of mine, who went to a workshop given by a friend. This guy had had a dream about a doll and freaked out because of his dream. See if you can figure out this dream, see if you can imagine what sort of bodywork is going to come out of this dream. In the dream, this man woke up one morning and he was completely in shock because he looked in the window and saw a doll there, moving, and starting to talk English. "Hello! Good morning. How are you today?" Ayyyyy! He was really scared. That's the dream.

He goes to this friend's workshop and here's the report that I got.

Can you imagine what's going to happen? Anybody have an idea? Want to take a guess? It's too hard. You won't get it. That's why I'm telling it. It's a hard one.

It goes something like this: The man sits down in the workshop, and my friend is doing painting, or [drawing or] something like that, and this man suddenly says, "I don't know. I feel a little trancey." My friend who's leading the workshop says, "Well go ahead into that trance. Let's see what your body wants." And the guy slips down to the floor. He lies on the floor, and [my friend] says to him, "What are you doing down there?" He says, "Don't get scared, something is happening to me, but I don't know what. Let's see what!"

And after a few minutes, he makes a few epileptic-like jerks, like a grand mal [*Arny shows some jerky motions*]. Those of you who know something about your bodies may have experienced something like that. He moves around like that. And he sits up quickly, bang, like that, and jumps to his feet, and starts dancing around like wild. And after a few minutes, he breaks out roaring with laughter and says, "Now I know what the meaning of that dream was!"

The meaning he discovered himself was that the doll was *alive*! You see, his body is like a doll. We all treat our bodies like dolls, in the sense that we make them up. I combed my hair tonight and tried to dress the doll up with whatever [hair is] left [*group laughter*]. And I brought it [here] to face you. We are all treating the body like a doll, playing with it, talking to it, "How are you today?" And actually, it has a life of its own. You may know it, I know it. But actually, letting your body do its own thing is *very* unusual. It's scary too at first, as a lot of what goes on inside your body is very shamanic, or shamanistic. Know what a shaman is? A shaman is a healer, in Siberia [and other places], who goes into trances and heals.

A lot of people have that [potential] inside. I would say many epileptics, many people that I've worked with, with multiple sclerosis [for example], have bodies that are trying to do specific things. The doll is alive, and they just can't quite get to it, consciously. So, their bodies are trying to help them with what we call a disease.

That's another dreambody experience. A dream *also* trying to happen in the body.

I've collected over a thousand such cases and I'm pretty convinced that all the spontaneous things that happen inside your body are like dreams trying to come out.

With my Jungian background, I've done a lot of studies about archetypes. I'm not going to tell you what an archetype is because it's still a hard thing to describe today, in spite of all the years of talking about it. But let's take the doll. The doll is an archetype. Did you ever hear of the archetype of the doll? Golem? You know about Golem? [It appears] in kabbalistic mythology and in European alchemy. [A long time ago], people took clay and they started to make little dolls like children, and then in the kabbalistic mythology and in alchemy, you take the doll, and you go "Whooo, whooo." You blow into it, and it has a life of its own. According to the gnostic legends God blew pneuma into man when he was born. He made man out of clay. Adam, *adaman*, meaning clay. God blew his spirit into the man and we're supposed to be the spirit of God working through us.

I knew all that when I heard that dream, but I would have never guessed that dreambody work. That's another example of how this kind of bodywork process helps you understand your dreams better, and vice versa. Knowing the dreams helps you understand and pattern body experience better.

What would Don Juan have called this man who was going through all these jitters? What would Don Juan have said he was having? What was he experiencing? You know Castaneda's Don Juan. Jung would probably have said, "It's the Self coming out in the person." And Don Juan? What do you imagine he would have said? "Being grabbed by the ally, or personal power, or the dance of death that holds up death," something like that. Those are all great [ideas]. In India, you might call it the subtle body, the kundalini. [These are all] other terms, it seems to me, for the dreambody.

Let's see... I'm going to make this lecture short because it is hot today. I see you all fanning yourselves, so I notice it's a little warm in here.

Take the case of another person I saw recently at a seminar. His body experience was being very tired and very trancey for long periods at a time, very passive. He showed me that he was sitting like this, slumped down. He said, "I have been tired for a long time. I have been feeling a little passive." And I said, "Well, that's good. Let's work with that. Let's amplify that." "OK," he said, "all right." We amplified that passivity and in a short time he came to the conclusion, "Gee I'm becoming a statue." His eyes started changing and he said, "This is not a person. This is a statue that I am now experiencing. Oh!" He said, "I just remembered the dream that I had last night." He must have read *Dreambody* or something! [*group laughter*]. No, he hadn't!

The man said, "[In] the dream I had last night [there] was a statue of Buddha and a therapist [who] was saying to me, 'That's just the problem. How about more aggressivity, and more of the masculine spirit?!'"

The man was very awake when he remembered and told the dream. He said, "Well, I thought I was pretty masculine." He felt he had a lot of what he would call masculine drive. He went like

that [Arny slaps his leg]. I said, "What's happening there?" He said, "I'd like to push somebody!" Well...[the work] almost turned into a group process session, where everyone is on top of everyone else! But it didn't, thank God.

Instead, he started pushing four or five people, and some of that inner aggression started to come out...Wow! His trance states left, and what came out was a guy feeling very definitive [Arny slaps table to show] and pissed off, and direct about certain things. He simply had a hard time saying it. Instead, he tried to be loving, but it wasn't quite genuine.

I'm going to tell you one more and then let's see if you have questions. This work--this business of amplifying and following the process, depending on whatever channel it goes through--is exciting work. One of the reasons it's exciting [for me] is that I'm still not sure about the spectrum of its applicability. I've been trying to work with a wide spectrum of situations, including people who are really troubled and ill, and I've been working with dying people for a long time. For me, dying people aren't sick, by the way.

I am also thinking [about how the work applies to] people who are supposed to be psychotic, like a catatonic person. A catatonic person is somebody like this, frozen [Arny shows]. Can you see? My feet are pigeon-toed, my hands are clasped strongly, like that, and they're between my knees, frozen in. With a frozen face like this. That's a possible catatonia state.

It's a wild problem. Difficult. And it's hard to work with. [People with catatonia] fill up the backwards of a lot of mental hospitals. It's a rough part of schizophrenia. Most schizophrenics you can talk to, at least, with drugs. A catatonic [person] is tough to work with, even when they are drugged.

Huh, another story came to mind. I have a friend who is a hermit in the Swiss alps. When I told him, years ago, that I didn't know how to work with catatonic schizophrenics, he said he didn't know what they were. When I showed him, he said, "Well if I were you, I'd just give them some more schnapps!" [group laughter].

With this woman I decided to do something more refined! She was sitting like this, and I first talked to her, "How are you feeling today?" No movement. Her therapist brought her in, by the way. She hadn't come by herself. "And how do you feel?" No contact, no eye contact. "Would you like something? Are you comfortable?" She took a long time to sit down on the chair. When she did sit down, she sat on the very edge of the chair. We tried everything. We talked to her. I put a hand on her leg, and she pulled it away.

She had had a dream earlier, before she went into this episode. I want to tell you the dream before I tell you the bodywork. The therapist told me that, in the dream, she wouldn't eat before she prayed. She was also anorectic, meaning she doesn't, she couldn't, eat. She was losing weight, and everyone was nervous that she was going to die. The dream was she wouldn't eat before she prayed. So, I said, "Should we pray?" She wouldn't talk. I said, "Should we pray together?" She didn't want to pray. She couldn't say anything.

I [have] learned something about how to amplify body signals in recent years, and one of the ways is to do it directly, and the other is to do the exact opposite. One way of working with the

body and a posture is by doing the exact opposite. You can amplify a body signal by temporarily forbidding it, which is what I did with her. Because by saying “Please don’t do *that*, do *this!*”--in that moment, when you forbid the signal, the reason for wanting to do [the forbidden signal or motion] in the first place comes back and is amplified. It’s like self-amplification.

I tried to do that with her, too. I said, “Well, just put your head up.” I slightly pulled her head up a bit [*Arny shows this, putting his thumb underneath his jaw and lifting his head up a bit*]. She was sitting in front of me, and I said, “Now look me straight in the face, and then go back in your position. It’s really the right position.” The position everyone has is their dreaming position. “Go back to the position your body wants. That’s the right one. And then tell me what it is. But don’t go back until you’re ready.”

As soon as I removed my finger from her jaw and let her go back to her position, she went back like this [*Arny sits up straight and clenches his teeth*] “I want to be like this!” she said, with her teeth clenched. I said, “Why do you want to be like that?” She said, “I want to be like that, because I want to focus inwardly, on myself.”

Ah! When I tell you now, it's [all] pretty obvious. I had to be stupid not to see that! [*group laughter*]. I didn’t see it! I just didn’t see it! And I said, “Go ahead and focus inwardly.” And she was really looking like she was in heaven. She went really deep inside. I said, “Go deeper inside. Go all the way in, and just keep track of what happens to you. Are you feeling? or hearing?” I was talking to her about channels. “Are you seeing something? Don’t say a word to me.” I was amplifying her being quiet. “Don’t say anything to me until you really need to. Right?”

After a couple of minutes she said, “I’m feeling lots of warmth in my tummy.” She started talking to me! Which is already something. “I’m feeling a lot of warmth in my tummy,” she said. And the visualization that came out of the warmth was, “Now, I’m seeing people eating together, in there.” In here [*Arny points to his stomach*], where nobody had been eating.[Now] there were all sorts of people eating in her tummy. And she was talking to me about it. She was very excited. Her therapist said that afterwards they went out and she ate a big dinner, and that she was excited. In other words, she came out of this episode, using [dreambody] work.

Her body was doing something. She wasn’t sick, catatonic. The woman was trying to realize the meaning of a dream. She is really another religious person who needs to pray--meaning she needs to go inside and talk to God, or get in deep contact with herself, and then come out and eat. We’re all the same, not liking extroverting and smiling. Her family was the kind of family that would really pull her out and make her an extrovert when she wasn’t feeling it. Her catatonic episode was in part a reaction to her family situation. In part.

Should I tell you one more story and then finish? [*Group says, “Yeah, two more!”*] Yeah? OK, two more? Who said that? Terrific. All right!

I want to give you a feeling [for the fact] that the body is dreaming up something interesting. Take the case of somebody who’s got a lot of curvature in her spine. In the United States, it seems that many people’s spines are curved, [and many] go to chiropractors to get [their spines]

stretched, and [for surgery to have] rods put up their backs. This woman had something like that done to her. She had an S-curve in her spine, a “scoliosis.”

She wasn't in much pain, but one leg was shorter than the other. A case of a chronic body problem, a characteristic body situation, which is trying to speak to the person.

She came to a workshop and one of her problems was that now she's had the operation for scoliosis, the standard operation, where they put a steel rod in her spine so she could stand straight. [Without the operation] the doctors told her, “You're going to tip over,” something like that.

The interesting thing about getting healed--you've got to be crazy not to want to be healed of a body problem...but it's hard to heal a body problem, because there's a pattern behind it, like a dream pattern. If you just get rid of your sore throat, or your migraines, there's something happening that's not quite being picked up, if you just take a pill that gets rid of it.

That was her case. She had gotten all the conventional healing that needed to be done. And the feeling she used to have in her back had now traveled down into her hips and to her pelvis area. She now had this funny experience, which she used to have in her back, in her pelvis.

So, how would you work with that?

You work with it by trying to find out what her pelvis *really* wants to do. So, we did that. She stood up, and “Lolita” came out. She starts moving her hips, the way her hips really want to go. I mean, she followed the pain that was now in her hips--I can't show you with my body--but she does a swinging motion that is in her hips, and “Lolita” came out, sexy, attractive young woman, just exactly what she was trying to block out. She's really introverted and shy.

And then another body therapist in this workshop got up and said, “Well now, let's do a belly dance, let's really do something great with your hips. Let's get them rolling.” But the woman had an immediate severe pain against that, which is to say that to do what *you* think would be right for her body can make it feel worse, could even be very dangerous. That's why I don't recommend that people do what [they] think is really good for their [or their client's] body. I prefer you follow the body itself. It has a lot more wisdom in it than your mind.

Before I go further, do you have any questions about anything I've said, now?

QUESTION: ...(inaudible)

ARNY: Good question. The dance therapist got up and said to the woman, “Yes, do, go on with that Lolita thing.” She had an idea of what's right for the body from a dance therapy perspective, from bioenergetics, other therapies. She felt that it would be right to free up the pelvis, so the woman could twist around and do things like that. The dance therapist wasn't yet trained to really follow an individual process. A more experienced therapist wouldn't have done that.

She thought it would be good for the woman to forget that steel rod in her back. The dance therapist hoped the woman could be free—[move] beyond her body and beyond her disease. The idea is that you can get around your disease. Of course, there are special situations where that could be useful because some people make too much out of their body stuff. But that's very rare.

QUESTION: So, you're saying acknowledge...

ARNY: Yes, acknowledge what really is there and use it. It helps you to individuate. It helps you to become the exact, crazy, individual you really are. Everybody has this little funny spark inside of them, and that crazy spark always does exactly the thing that you cannot bear to have done. Maybe for you, or for some other woman, to be Lolita, and to be sexy, and to feel herself, isn't going to be a big problem; or to explode and to shout at somebody is not a big deal. But for the man I spoke about earlier, the person who had this particular body symptom, it was simply their edge. Just what they *can't* do.

That's why I say, "Don't do what you think is right, but follow what's inside of you." It makes you an incredible individual.

QUESTION: Am I understanding you, are you saying that all diseases are...(inaudible)

ARNY: I'm saying that not *all* diseases are a sign of psychic deprivation because just being a very aware person, just being alive, and always changing and growing, means that the unconscious is going to bring up something new all the time. So, having a disease is nothing more than having a dream. Everybody is dreaming, [everybody] is unconscious, of something.

What I'm saying is that the body is not a sign of psychic deprivation *only*--it could be in many people, that's true--but [I'm saying] that symptoms are a sign of a piece of unconsciousness that hasn't yet arrived, and that you need that disease and that symptom to help you.

Let me give you an example with multiple sclerosis. This man has multiple sclerosis. He's in his tenth year with it. And he walks like ...I was looking for a crutch. I have a crutch here. He is walking like this, with a gait [*Arny shows*]. I can't show you the rhythm and tempo with my legs, but just imagine me walking, very uncertainly. This person is very aware of himself. I wouldn't say he's psychically deprived, but it's a disease that is trying to say something to him.

What is his disease trying to say? It's always individual. I've never been able to arrive at a psychosomatic theory that agreed with anybody else's. If I follow the individual, two people with the so-called same disease have very different experiences.

We took the [man's] crutch away, and I said, "Go ahead and let your body do what it really wants to do. Let go of the crutch." He started wandering like a probability field through my practice. He fell into me at one point and said, "Would you please give me back my crutch? I've had enough of this." And I said, "OK. Very good. Excuse me," I said, "I didn't mean to be troublesome to you." He said, "I just don't like that!" "OK," I said. "What is it you don't like?" He says, "I just don't like being out of control," and he was really angry. I said, "Well, I don't blame you. I prefer to have things under control, too." I mean, I also got angry when my suitcase

didn't appear today [*group laughter*] and I found myself in front of Republic Airways and telling the guy off!

His dream was that he had to let go of a railing. I said, "What happened in the dream when you let go of the railing?" When he let go of the railing, there was a woman at the end of the hall. The association to the woman was "love."

The particular problem this guy has [at this moment in his life] is that he is afraid to fall in love. He's in love with a woman and is trying to control himself. His life situation is too complicated. He doesn't want to be in love with this woman. But actually, he's completely in love with her. And his body process is trying to say, "Let go a little bit, otherwise you're going to have to learn how to let go." The body is trying to make [him] let go. "You can't be in control".

We talked about it a little bit and he felt better. He said, "I'm going to try to mentally let go in my head. I'm going to let go and just fall and let life happen, even if it's only [for] a crazy hour, now, with you." And he did! He let go inside, and he stood on his legs. He said, "I'm letting go." He rocked back and forth and walked pretty well without his crutch. He walked out of my office without using his crutch.

It didn't heal him. The problem of healing doesn't come up here because, will he really be able to integrate that? Integrate means, can he really now let go and fall in love, or let go and not be so controlling? I don't know, it's hard to say. That depends on his individuation process.

Thanks for asking your question. It gave me the opportunity to give you another example of that [particular] body process. Is that multiple sclerosis a disease? Or is that multiple sclerosis trying to teach him? Is it a very wise thing inside of his body trying to teach him, trying to help him with his dream of letting go of the railing? Yes?

QUESTION: Do you have any suggestions about how to work with someone with a serious disease ... (rest of question is inaudible)

ARNY: Yes...oh yes. I think that's a super question. There's so much to say...wow, is that a question! I have to take a glass of water!

You know, there's so much [talk] about dying now. Especially in the United States, people didn't talk about death before. In hospitals, for example, everybody is talking about death. The one piece of information I would give a layman, interested in, or visiting, or in love, or in contact with someone who has a serious disease is to just--in attitude at least--treat that person and their disease with a great deal of respect. That's the very beginning. And do not look at them *only* as a sick person, but as somebody going through an intense process that might lead them to some sort of enlightenment. It could make them wiser. And whether they pick it up or not is their business. I wouldn't push anybody to think that their disease is a beautiful thing, because it isn't. Being sick is a pain in the rear. Nobody likes it.

But, if you can look at it this way, and work with it, it becomes a very meaningful thing. And the surprising thing is that a lot of people [do] get better. But I hate to talk about healing because it's

not the main thing. The main thing should be becoming yourself. Thanks for asking your question.

QUESTION: What about the sort of thing when you have an imaginary symptom. In other words, you keep imagining a heart problem that isn't there. How is that treated with your method and what do you do?

ARNY: That's great. Thanks a lot for asking that question. If you, or your friends, or anyone, is over thirty and has an imaginary heart problem, I take it seriously. Very seriously. I say, "You may be in for some changes soon!" I don't say, "Don't worry about it. It's all in your head." I take it really seriously and I say, "What are you doing about your heart problem?"

I just saw one of my best friends in Denver who said to me, "Arny, what the hell! I feel well, but I'm afraid I've got a bad heart." He is in his early fifties and I say, "Thank God you're afraid about your heart. You ought to be! Run! Get off your rear end and start to do something about it. Start running up and down the mountain and test it. I mean slowly, get more contact with your lungs and your chest." I like to run. So, we started running together. He is overweight, and he eats too much junk.

A lot of these hypochondriacal fears come about...there are many reasons, right? One of the ways to deal with hypochondria is taking it seriously because the hypochondria is trying to wake the person up to the fact that there is something they are doing with their body that isn't right. That fantasy isn't just coming out of no place. So, take it seriously. The first thing is to check out the actual medical possibilities behind their so-called hypochondria. Are they doing something about that hypochondria? And then you can take the next step.

[About taking things seriously.] There was a little girl who came to me with an appendicitis, with a chronic intoxication because of a bleeding appendix. And the question was: Should we operate on the appendix or is it going to get better? I saw her under those circumstances. I asked her, "Where is the appendicitis hurting you? Where is your appendix?" Do you know where it was?

"Oh, Arny," she says, "my appendix is over here!" [*Arny raises his hands above his head*] "OK," I thought, "Let's not call that craziness or hypochondria, let's work on [her] appendix up [t]here," in other words, [I took] the fantasy seriously. We worked on her appendix up there. We banged on it, and we fooled around with it, and she said her appendix was much better afterwards. She didn't have the appendix taken out [and] did get better. Whether it was because of [our work together] or something else...it's hard to say. I take fantasies very seriously when people say they're not feeling well.

QUESTION: Do you believe that people can use dreams to base their conscious decisions...(inaudible)

ARNY: Do I believe that people can use dreams to make conscious decisions for everyday occurrences?

QUESTION: Yes, in relation to everyday problems... (inaudible)

ARNY: I had a really weird analyst myself [*group laughter*], Dr. Riklin. He was the president of the Jung Institute at the time. He was a completely weird guy. He made it difficult to answer questions like that. For example, he once had the worst dreams about going to Alexandria. He wanted to go to Egypt. This is a bit off the dreambody subject, but that's ok. He just loved Egypt, and he had one dream after the other that said "Don't go."

So, he said, "Well, let's try it, and see why the unconscious doesn't want me to go!" [*group laughter*] So, he went, and he had a wild time! A terrific time! But he was a very unusual guy.

What I really would like to say to you is: You should watch your dreams very closely, and if they say "don't do something"--uh... you see, I can't make a general rule!--I'd like to say, "Don't do it!" but then I just thought of this one exception.

Check it out!

QUESTION: In the beginning, you talked about the body as almost a separate entity with a consciousness that is trying to poke through (inaudible). Could you comment on [that]? Are you talking about the possibility of different entities co-existing, or are you talking about a true entity?

ARNY: I like what you're saying. This idea of the dreambody that I've come across is another term for the unconscious inside you which manifests itself, simultaneously, in different ways. Let's say you've got a sore throat. You go to sleep at night and the same process manifests itself in another channel. You dream about it. You see a fire in a narrow hall. Right? You've got a burning sore throat. The next morning you wake up again, and all you remember is that little dream and this funny sore throat and you can't put it together. But if you do this kind of work, you see the connections right away.

So, it looks like the dreambody is a double, a Doppelgänger. It's the double or the real personality trying to happen, and it has various ways of happening. One way is through dreaming, and another way is through body experience. [There are] many other ways too, which I haven't mentioned in this lecture. [For instance,] body experiences can also happen through relationships. You can get into a lot of relationship trouble because of dreams. The dreaming is trying to happen.

To make it short: It's like an entity that is trying to happen in different channels. That's my [basic] idea of the dreambody.

QUESTION: I have several questions... I'm very interested, when I'm working with people on their dreams, in heat coming up, people starting to burn in certain places and also connecting that to real breakthroughs. I wonder if you could talk about heat...

ARNY: This makes me think of a recent case where I was working with a woman who was dying, in a hospital. She was choking to death because of a big tumor in her neck. When I said,

“How do you experience that tumor in your neck? she said, “Heat.” “So, how could we amplify that heat?” I asked. She said, “Well, it’s like hot air around it.” We got ahold of a coil that you put in a glass to boil water, an immersion heater, and we put it right near the entrance of her mouth. I asked her to breathe in and she started breathing in. She switched channels.

First it was a proprioception, a body experience. By amplifying it, she got to the edge of how much heat she could take. She switched channels and saw a vision of her head on fire. She saw herself as a flame, as life, and she went through a number of experiences that were really useful for her. She felt a lot better. That’s one of the many experiences with heat.

Oh, and another one! One of our friends in Zürich had a fungal disease. He’s a doctor himself and he had a fungus all over his leg. He couldn’t get rid of it. His experience of the fungus was heat. So, how did he experience his heat? He said, “It’s like having a match burn my skin.” It’s his body, so I said, “How should we do that? [*group laughter*]. We didn’t [burn] him! We just lit a match and put it near the fungus on his leg! It didn’t hurt his skin. [He got better] without any medication. You know how hard it is to get rid of fungus diseases? It’s half impossible.

This man was trying, at that time in this life, to be too cool...[to be] a cool guy [*Arny acts like a cool guy*]...like all of us [*people giggle*]. No excitement at all. That was a couple years ago. He learned how to integrate that heat. He changed. His body was trying to say, “Come on! Heat up.” This is one of many examples.

I can’t say anything general, there are so many different examples. But it would be fantastic to write a thesis or research paper on the thermodynamics of the body. Please do it!

QUESTION: Can you explain anything about not remembering dreams?

ARNY: Oh yeah! It doesn’t make that much difference! For years and years and years, I felt like I was a deprived person if I didn’t dream! And I’ll tell you something: What I’ve learned recently is that it’s OK if you don’t remember your dreams. Your unconscious is still there. It’s just happening in another channel, and usually it’s happening in a body channel. You may not be remembering your dreams, but you probably have a hemorrhoid or something that’s bothering you! [*group laughter*].

QUESTION: ... if you don’t remember your dreams...(inaudible)

ARNY: One of the easiest things to do, if you want to remember your dreams more, is to have a piece of paper [and pencil] right near your bed. Don’t get up. Don’t open your eyes. Just scribble a few things. Unfortunately, this [tip] depends on how good you are at writing in the dark.

It’s important to remember your dreams, but if you don’t, don’t worry. It means your process is happening in other channels. Fine.

QUESTION: (inaudible)

ARNY: Do older people dream rarely or less? And if so, what does that...?

QUESTION: Much less...

ARNY: That's a terrific question. An interesting thing that I discovered [is that, as you get older,] you have very similar dream processes, very similar experiences: A seventy-five-year-old has very similar processes to a twenty-five-year-old. With one difference: The tempo. The older you get, the more you meditate. And your tempo is a bit slower. You go more like this... [*Arny taps on the table slowly*] Less dreaming as you get older is absolutely right. It's because your tempo is slower. You have more time to integrate the pieces that are coming up.

QUESTION: Do you ever [try] manipulating your dreams while you are dreaming? Using your dreams to ...(inaudible).

ARNY: Well, this kind of work really aims at becoming utterly aware, all the time. Psychology is very Eastern for me, in one sense: It shares with Eastern mythology becoming aware while you are unconscious. Like right now: I'm trying to be aware, while parts of me are asleep [*people giggle*]. Not asleep in the ordinary sense, but I'm unconscious while I am just standing here, right? It's enough just to become aware of [that].

I'm usually very aware of body sensations that are going through me while sleeping at night. The more I work with myself, the more I become aware of [that]. But [myself,] I don't want to manipulate [what's already happening] yet. It's enough for me to become aware of it. But I can imagine that somebody [else might] be interested in manipulation of the unconscious material.

Try it and see what happens.

I've tried it. I don't recommend it. I'll tell you just one case of a person's body I recently manipulated because she wanted it... No, I'll give you a better example: Of a [psychiatrist] who went to a workshop for people working on jaws. In this workshop, one of the ideas was that the jaw should be manipulated and relaxed through the back muscles and [through other interventions] like that. His jaw was manipulated. He wanted to get all he could get out of the workshop and his jaw dropped, after a while. And now he was looser [*Arny drops his jaw and moves it in a loose way.*] He was really hanging out [*group laughter*].

The therapist said to him that he [the psychiatrist had been] too determined before. This is an interesting case because [he] started to slip into a depression. Manipulating the body to do the "healthy thing" can put you in a posture that isn't right for you. This wasn't his trip. *This* was his trip, watch me... [*Arny shows a tight jaw with clenched teeth*].

Why would that be his trip?

That was his process. This is someone, who in his ordinary life, was not biting through, or getting a hold of, his problems, getting through with them. He was always sitting back. This particular [person] needed to get into his problems and solve them.

So, here's a case of manipulating the body--I'm getting a little bit away from manipulating dreams--and how [this person] fell into a depression because he did to his body what he and the therapist thought would be healthy for him, that is, to relax. And it wasn't so good.

By the way, he and I decided to consult the I Ching in our session. We threw the coins and asked what he should do now. If you know the *I Ching*, there's only one hexagram that fits. Number 21. It's called biting through! [*group laughter and amazement*]. Boy scout's honor! It's amazing! It was about the dropped jaw. Isn't that amazing? It says a man should cut through the difficulties he has!

Look, you have been sitting a long time and I think we should take a break. I'm going to be around [for a little longer] if you want to talk more informally with me.

Thanks a lot!

[*Clapping*]