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## CHAPTER THREE

### PREPARING YOURSELF TO BE A CHANNEL

Channeled information, like any other writing, uses the stuff of languages, sentence construction and words, those chameleon-like entities that take on various meanings and shades depending upon the ways in which they are used. Like any other producer of written material, you, as channels, wish to create the best communication you can. Since a channel has little control over the process once the channeling has begun, it is well to look at some of the elements that go into your preparation as a channel.

A very large consideration is the character of your particular mind. The unique nature of your mind complex is profoundly central to you as a channel because of the nature of the practice of channeling. In channeling you are dealing with personalities whom you cannot see. Invisible entities, or thought-beings, have “reality” only insofar as they are pure in their explication of who they are. In the world of channeling thoughts are indeed things. When one is dealing with friends, family or associates, one has a good deal more to go on than the basic purity of consciousness of the person dealt with, as indicated through the words being used. Even in a telephone call, someone can communicate to you by the tone of voice and the placement of phrasing and hesitations much more than the words themselves can convey. When one is face-to-face, one has body language and other visual signals, as well as the full range of the five senses, to aid one, at least potentially.

But in the world of thought within which a channel is attempting to learn how to become powerful, one has only one’s own true nature with which to work in order to be a person powerful enough to control, if necessary, the contacts which one receives. You would not wish any stranger to be able to walk up on your porch, ring your doorbell and talk with you about anything he or she wished, while you had absolutely no control over when the uninvited guest left. Yet in channeling one is very often in the position of receiving an uninvited guest, and it is most persuasively important that you as a channel begin and persevere in the process of knowing just who you are—what the makeup of your mind is, what your basic and pretty unchangeable biases are and what sort of contact you feel you can welcome and share with others as the highest and best contact of which you are capable.

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Two intellectual dynamics which profoundly affect your channeling are the rational mind versus the intuitive mind, or wisdom by scientific knowledge versus wisdom by faith. The mind which is comfortable with ratiocination will be looking for that which can be known and that which can be done by man on Earth in any contact it receives. Consequently, the rational-minded channel will tend towards being an instrument which produces information of a highly ethical content. Conversely, if you rely for many things on your intuition rather than your rational processes, your channeling will contain a large percentage of material having to do with ideals. The rational channel may produce very good day-to-day advice but probably not a satisfactory metaphysical system which works without reference to any situation. One who channels from faith without regard to the intellectual mind may well produce large amounts of lovely-sounding, inspirational marshmallow fluff which will help those already faithful, but have no power to inspire the uncommitted seeker. There is the need, in any channel, for balance between these two dynamics.

Look around your living room. Do you find a large number of metaphysical or religious objects about you? The majority of you will answer either "No" or "Very few." The twentieth century is part of an age in which ideals have fallen prey to ethics and the relative has overtaken the absolute. Most of us live in the mundane world not by faith but by a dependence upon scientific achievement. I have no objection to the century, its achievements or its biases. I would have died several times over had it not been for sophisticated technology, for I was a victim of kidney disease in late childhood and twice came close to death. I embrace the television and all the other media, thankfully dine on meals made simple by microwave cookery, not so thankfully receive and dispense telephone calls thanks to Mr. Bell's drop-dead idea, and earned my living, before I became involved in paranormal research, as a librarian, which is in essence an interpreter and conservator of information for people who may find libraries a bit confusing. I realized just how far behind the technological power curve I had gotten several years ago when I was accompanying two young friends to a movie. After the picture, James and Jennifer, then no more than eight and ten, asked to drop by a neighboring video arcade. James settled down with "Tron" and Jennifer, a mature and serious young lady, courteously inquired as to my entertainment before securing her own. Bewildered by the dazzling array of games, I turned toward another "Tron" and said "I think I'll play that."

Jennifer winced slightly and said, "I think that's a little advanced for you." This is from a ten-year-old.

“Well, then, what would you suggest?”

Jennifer considered, her head cocked to one side. She then led me to a Pac-Man game saying, “I would rather have given you a ‘Frogger’ first, but there isn’t one available.”

“How hard can this be?” I thought to myself. Then I found out. After playing an entire game without discovering any connection between what my hands were doing and what was happening on the display, I turned again to Jennifer for help. She taught me patiently and I tried again, with only limited success. It would cost me a fortune to learn video skills, unless my family and school both had computers, and I began early. This generation’s children often have that set-up.

Much has been written about the increasing pace of technical advancement in the civilized world today, perhaps too much, so I will not belabor the point. Although I am aware that we tend to treat sages of science with the awe formerly reserved for dons of divine lore, and while we certainly reward professionals in the sciences with monetary gains outlandishly exceeding those which can be earned by most parish priests and preachers, I think it is a waste of time to cavil. In a free society we pay for what is most valuable to us and if my priest is not getting as much as my doctor, it is not the fault of his knowledge or value but of my perception of it, and the responsibility lies squarely with me.

It is easy to make the case for our world’s being one in which rational thought is enormously more respected than the faculties of intuition. Consequently, when you look at yourself as a potential channel you need to do so with an eye for the need to bring yourself into balance. A good instrument has an attitude in which the rational and intuitive faculties are in cooperative harmony, and the whole of your mind and heart is at the service of the gift of channeling. Were out-of-balance channels all equally helpful this advice would be superfluous although probably helpful in the general sense since we all have both faculties, and it is well to use the whole being in one’s thoughts and actions for the most effectively lived life. However, if you are completely rational and accept no intuitive influence, or if you are completely intuitive and accept no rational thought, you will be an off-balance channel, channeling off-balance information, helpful only to those distorted in just the same way as you. The closer to an equitable blend of these faculties that you can come, the more people besides yourself there are who will find your channeled material helpful to them. You see, your mind is just a radio in terms of the telepathic process. Just as a radio must be

tuned, so the mind must be tuned to the station that you wish to get. Furthermore, there is a drop-off of stations towards both ends of the band, and a large percentage of desirable contacts are to be found pretty much in the middle, in terms of a balance between intuition and rationality. Balancing your mind is part of the tuning process.

When you have analyzed your own habits of thinking and have decided whether you rely largely on intuition or rational thought, then you may have a good deal more insight than you had before as to what principle you may find which seems to you to be worthy of your fidelity. If you value scientific, objective thinking and empirically proven information, it would be outrageous to expect that you would be able to turn wholeheartedly to a religious system based on faith alone. Conversely, if you find your opinion being that nothing, in the end, is what it seems, and that science is deluding itself if it thinks it has the deeper answers, it would be reasonable to expect that you would have difficulty accepting the universe as a thing which yields best to scientific study. Now although it is widely accepted that religious people live a moral life by virtue of faith in their intuitively perceived source of wisdom, it is not so often clearly seen that those who believe in the world of relative values and empirical data can have faith in themselves and their ability to acquire wisdom and live a morally committed life. However, both paths are viable; passion and commitment of self can ensue from either bias of thought.

To continue the tuning process by examining the character of your own mind, it is well to settle on that principle to which you, just as you are, can be wholly faithful. If it is an orthodox religion to which you are drawn then it is well for you to become an active and practicing religious person. If it is a philosophical system that appeals to your rational mind, then it behooves you to choose that one statement of what is true that you consider to be worthy of your complete fidelity, and practice its dictates and ethics conscientiously and lovingly. Whatever you choose, keep the pressure up to be constantly faithful and regular in your pursuit of and devotion to that which you believe. The more profound and vehement you can make that choice and that decision, the more grounded you will be as a channel, and the more powerful your “magical” personality and, as a result, your telepathic receiver will become. I have said often, in speaking to groups, that when you know what it is you would die for, then you know what it is you wish to live for. All things are acceptable, in an absolute sense, as far as I am concerned. However, not all things are helpful avenues for a channel’s mind to run in. For instance, it is a perfectly acceptable philosophical point of

view that experience through the senses is everything and that wisdom will come only from excess. The artist's suffering is the understatement of this philosophical system, with wondrous drunken poets like Rameau, Dylan Thomas and James Morrison trying always to "break on through to the other side." It is the agony of confrontation carried further and further, to the limit of the mind's ability to express or receive meaning. It is a philosophy that fires the imagination, as well it might, since those who adhere to it destroy themselves in the service of communicating their special wisdom to others. It is not, unfortunately, a very helpful attitude for a channel, for there is no allegiance given to any truth to which one can cling in the face of the enormous influence of excess. It is to be noted that excessive asceticism runs into the same problem. There have been many saints, in religions the world over, who have inspired disciples by their presence, but were far too finely turned to offer themselves as instruments for that which overshadowed them.

Because you are reading this book it is quite likely that you have more faith than discrimination. Most who wish to channel harbor that wish out of a desire to pursue the unseen and so increase the world's store of inspiration and wisdom. If this is your particular orientation I would suggest that you go through a period of intentionally seeking out information concerning how society works. This store of information need not become encyclopedic. However, it would be well to read a book or two on American history, on present-day politics, on the history of science, on space exploration and on the social problems of today. The intuitively felt desire for a peaceful world becomes far more articulate when one learns a bit about the function and nature of wars in history and the dilemma of the arms race. The gut feeling that no one in the world should be hungry gets real teeth when you leave your comfortable dwelling place and walk for hunger while missing a meal or better yet, volunteer to aid the homeless and hungry in finding their way back through the cracks in society's social floor. Get your hands dirty, so to speak, and not only your awareness will be raised, but also your ability to function as a channel. Social naiveté is almost as inexcusable as cynicism.

For a channel, balance is most important. If you are in a situation where your mind is not telling you that there is a distinction between right and wrong you may be in a good environment for your own growth, but you are not in a good environment for a channel. The more you polarize—that is, exercise your rational and intuitive discriminative ability in choosing what *you* think is right—the more powerful will be the antenna which brings in

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your signal. Do not baffle yourself by asking what is right for all of mankind. Take it as given that you cannot tell another soul on this planet what is right for him. Then realize that you are responsible for your own stance. When you decide what is right, your world view will come into perspective and your discrimination will equal your faith. The great value of the intellect is that it is a marvelous workhorse and to leave it out of the equation is as foolish as the opposite choice. Remember, I am not attempting to judge the thinking process of those who do not channel but only attempting to indicate what makes it more possible to be an effective instrument. For those of you who consider yourselves to be largely creatures of rational bias and highly articulate social awareness, but not primarily competent at grasping the dynamics of worship or beingness' ascendancy over all manifestation, it would be an excellent idea for you to invest in a series of classes or lessons in whatever discipline you feel would be most instructive to you. Some of the world's best thinkers have reached an awareness of the possibility and necessity of a balanced mind and a balanced life by investigating the Roman Catholic or Episcopal faith, which are by far the most rich in magical and mystical illusions which have been rationalized by a series of stupendously gifted writers. Others may find Sufi retreats to yield a more clear understanding of the seemingly holy nature of all experience, when the "doors of perception" have been cleared and purified. Mountain climbing, jumping out of airplanes, and any and all investigations into religious or meditative disciplines offer a varied and helpful tapestry of choices for those of you who wish to balance an overwhelmingly rational consciousness. What I am encouraging in you who think rather than feel the majority of the time is not that you become dedicated to the worship of any unseen God or practice, but that you become aware enough of the consciousness which attends spontaneous worship that you may transfer the seeking of that consciousness to your commitment to that statement of the truth about the creation and the Creator so that you may be a passionate advocate of that in which you believe. Advocacy, or a clear expression of who you truly are, what you believe in most deeply, and that to which you are committed, is the structure or skeleton of your magical personality, and without passion, without bias, your ability to deal effectively with invisible entities is quite small.

When you are satisfied with your intuitive/rational balance of mind and you feel that your power to discriminate is roughly equal to your power to believe, it is time to conclude your conscious analysis. All of the work so far has been done using the intellect. You have subjected both your intuitive

and rational minds to the examination of rational thought processes. Now it is time to subject both intuition and rational thought to the catalyst of intuition and faith. The most effective way of immersing yourself, during your waking hours, in the subconscious powers of your mind is to meditate. If you are one of those people who has decided that you are some orthodox religious follower such as a Theosophist or a Christian, you are already going to church and may well have daily religious devotions and prayers. Meditation is recommended in addition to these things. Meditation is silent. The basic idea of meditation is that no rational processes are accepted in the practice. For this reason, those who teach meditation are usually interested in finding ways to still the conscious mind with all of its complex worries and chains of thought.

An immersion in silence is powerful. Even one such experience may be life-changing although that is not the norm. Perhaps the most important feature of your meditative practice should be its dailiness. No matter how well or poorly you feel that you are meditating, it is well to intend to do it the same way each day, not to dwell on any past “bad” meditations or missed ones. Aim for doing it every single day. The length of your silence may vary although it is a good idea to become regular in your habits in order that you might do it at all. If you set yourself too ambitious a schedule of meditation you will surely miss one when you are fatigued, and after the first miss or two, you will be far less enthusiastic about doing it again. You can say to yourself, “Oh well, I have already missed so many, one more day won’t hurt.” Meditating a modest fifteen or twenty minutes a day will be of inestimable value to you if you are faithful in doing it every day.

The real work of meditation is the relaxing of the structure of the conscious mind so that thought processes do not occur necessarily governed by the rules of mentation. We, as biocomputers, are perceivers and recorders of an astonishing array of anarchic, unstructured sensations—visual, aural and the rest. We have several large programs and subprograms within our computers which ruthlessly organize the data presented, throwing out over ninety-nine percent of it and concentrating on those things which it has tagged as relevant to the programs it is organized to run. Meditation allows new programs to surface, programs designed to assist in decision-making, the only purpose of the computer, and programs designed to feed more data into the base from within the mind itself, its far memory and so forth. However, the conscious programs block out the program assists and the special programs which are offered by the subconscious mind. For the two to work together, these controls must be lifted. Meditation will accomplish

this if done faithfully and daily for long enough. It is not often an astonishingly quick process. This explains, by the way, why great trauma creates a heightened rapidity of learning. During traumatic times, the programs of the mind are being urged to change. Computer programs cannot change without dying and being restructured. The computer strives to maintain, and must dump the program instead. This releases an enormous amount of power, because any time the conscious programming is loosened, the program assist from the subconscious mind springs into action, and a very enhanced field of data, and program for organizing data, goes into effect. This is why it is not necessary to achieve a perfect meditation each time. It is an aesthetic joy to worship by offering a perfect service, whether ritualistic or silent, to the Creator—but not biologically necessary. It is only necessary that the intention be strong and that the mind will accept instruction at some level and begin to loosen the logical programming compulsion, thereby automatically completing circuits into the subconscious mind and into the frontal lobes. It is as though heart and mind were at once linked—a very helpful state.

There have been many books written on how to meditate. Although I teach meditation, I do not teach a certain practice. I have known one or two people who were in meditation nearly all of the time and who hoped to hone their consciousnesses to the point where meditation would be a steady state. I have never known one who succeeded. But it is a valid way of meditating, although perhaps the most difficult. I have known people who found it most illuminating to meditate with eyes open, staring at what was in front of the eyes without attempting to force it into making sense. This is not recommended for the Occidental meditator because our entire way of life is active rather than passive. For the product of the western hemisphere, aids such as background music or soothing sounds of some kind such as recordings of wind through trees or even white noise are often very helpful, since it gives the rational mind something to chew on, something to follow and become entrained to while the deep mind does its work unhindered by the noisy chatter of rationality.

Aids internal to the meditator fall mostly in the area of visualization. It may be helpful to picture the breathing of air as a black and white flow in and out of a reservoir, the good clean, energized air being breathed in as a bright white light filling the reservoir of the lungs, becoming dimmed by all this is negative within you, and then all that dimness exhaled into the outer darkness so that you may picture yourself becoming lighter and lighter as you breathe in new energy and get rid of dead energy.

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I have spent many an enjoyable meditation watching the inside of my eyelids. Hallucinations have always come easily to me and I am soon off watching an ever-shifting kaleidoscope of colors and shapes.

A morning meditation while the body has not yet taken on the slings and arrows of that particular day's outrageous fortune gives a fine start to a day. Some find it extremely helpful to meditate again in the evening, gazing back over the day before going into meditation, and asking guidance for what could be done better. Any moment may be used for clearing the mind; any five minutes is a potential meditative refreshment.

I'd like to emphasize that your expectation will mold the actual results of your meditation. It is my opinion that in the metaphysical world, intention is everything. What we wish to do may never seem to come to fruition as we intended it and in an everyday sense this is often tragically so. However, regardless of how one's intentions are manifested, if one has the expectation of doing the very best one can, striving one's hardest, believing one's highest, the world of the spirit will record the intention, not the manifestation. I think that one of the things that Jesus' parable of the Sower and the Seed was meant to demonstrate was the nature of intention. The sower had control over the seed, in that he chose good seed. However, he had to sow as he walked, and he could not choose whether he walked over good soil or bad. His intention remained steady. The growth of the seed once it was sown, was governed by the circumstances of the soil onto which it fell. So no matter what the results of the meditations, keep expecting and intending your very best effort. The exercise of your faith, backed up always by the power of your discrimination, will propel you into a more and more powerful position as an instrument.

At the end of each day, take your observations from your daily moments and the consciousness which you can remember from meditation and bring both to bear on the things which have moved you one way or the other, for good or for ill, during your day. If you have hurt someone, it is well to attempt to go through that conversation or action again, with an eye to bringing the balance of compassion to bear on both you and whomever else was involved. Rededicate yourself to the service of others and open yourself to the power of whatever redemption you believe exists, by forgiving any who have harmed you, and by praying to whatever you may call God, for redemption and forgiveness. In this way, you are constantly dying to yourself as a personal being and opening yourself up as a more polarized, more service-oriented impersonal being in which you are not caught on the tenterhooks of your own feelings and ego but are freer and freer to serve that

principle of truth that we all seek, in whatever manner, and its reflection in all of those we wish to serve.

The remaining consideration for you who prepare to be a channel is complex enough that it deserves its own chapter. So we are not finished with the subject! However, to finish this chapter I would like to mention one remaining, obvious, but sometimes overlooked, skill which may be cultivated if the skill is not already under your belt. Since you are offering yourself as an instrument in order to be of service to your fellow beings you need to be aware that the notes you play are words, sentences, paragraphs and concepts. If you are not fully comfortable with your own degree of literacy, by all means put yourself to the task of reading. It is relatively “good” books that are usually recommended but one cannot, unless one is very special, live on a steady diet of culturally uplifting material. In order to make your tongue wrap itself around a larger vocabulary and become more able to articulate concepts, it is equally helpful to read any good mystery, pot boiler, science fiction, romance or suspense story—or anything that exercises your vocabulary and your reasoning processes. I am not one of those who looks down upon the lesser genres of literature, for I have been a voracious reader of both “good” and evanescent literature all my life and enjoy both enormously.

I have heard several people object when I say that it is helpful to increase one’s ability to articulate concepts and find just the right word by conscious thought. Such people have the notion that the person channeling asymptotically approaches a pure contact, with no contribution by the channel. My opinion is that about one quarter of most good channeling is contributed by the channel, both the channel’s words and experiences. This may be an incorrect view; however, the great bulk of channeled information is produced by those in a light trance, or at least those not asleep, and it seems to me that as it is impossible to eliminate the personal factor from channeling, it surely would be considered desirable by both the instrument and the one who offers the channeled material to the instrument for the instrument to have a disciplined and predictable share, obviously in the minority, but not insignificant, in the material. If you are a new channel and one of your objections to channeling is that you fear that you are channeling yourself, attempt to lessen the influence your personal thinking may have on the channeling, but—and again, this is only my opinion—do not try to eliminate it, for you are a valuable part of the channeling process.

In no way do I wish to indicate that you are responsible for what flows through you past a certain point. However, as an instrument you are

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responsible for the quality with which you are able to transmit what you receive. You will be receiving, most likely, concepts rather than words, and your ability to clothe concepts in examples and telling vocabulary will make the difference between a so-so channeling and an inspiring one.