

## Chapter 1 — What Is the Subconscious?

of *The Mind at Mischief:*  
*Tricks and Deceptions of the Subconscious and How to Cope with Them*  
(1929)  
by  
William S. Sadler, M.D., F.A.C.S.

© 2013, 2017, 2020, 2026 Matthew Block

### Sources for Chapter 1, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) Paul Bousfield, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., *The Omnipotent Self: A Study in Self-Deception and Self-Cure* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1923)
- (2) J. W. Bridges, “Psychoanalysis and Mental Health,” in *Hygeia: The Health Magazine*, Volume 6, Number 4 (April 1928), pp. 185-188
- (3) William S. Sadler, M.D., F.A.C.S., *The Truth About Spiritualism* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1923)
- (4) William S. Sadler, M.D., *The Physiology of Faith and Fear: Or, The Mind in Health and Disease* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1912)
- (5) Morton Prince, M.D., LL.D., *The Unconscious: The Fundamentals of Human Personality Normal and Abnormal* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1914 and 1921)
- (6) Wilfred Lay, Ph.D., *Man’s Unconscious Spirit: The Psychoanalysis of Spiritism* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1921)

### Key

- (a) Green indicates where a source author (or a previous Sadler book) first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) Yellow highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) Tan highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.

- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and Sadler pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Pink** indicates passages where Sadler specifically shares his own experiences, opinions, advice, etc.
- (f) **Light blue** indicates passages which strongly resemble something in the Urantia Book, or which allude to the Urantia phenomenon.
- (g) **Red** indicates either: (1) an obvious error on Sadler's part, brought about, in most cases, by miscopying or misinterpreting his source, or (2) Sadler's use of an earlier text of his that contained time-bound information which he didn't revise when presenting it in *The Mind at Mischief*, resulting in a historical impossibility, or (3) Sadler's use of an earlier text of his which he revised in such a way as to contradict that earlier text.
- (h) **Gold** highlights key words or themes that will be discussed in the analysis of the chapter.

© 2013, 2017, 2020, 2026 Matthew Block  
 Revised 31 Jan. 2026

## I — WHAT IS THE SUBCONSCIOUS?

1:0.1 AFTER hearing about all the ways in which the subconscious mind is able to afflict the human species, one might be tempted to regard it as a thing separate and apart from the ordinary consciousness; and so it may be helpful, at the outset, to endeavor to make clear just what is meant by the use of the increasingly familiar term, “the subconscious.”

1:0.2 When we speak of “the subconscious” we are merely using a term that refers to our “other self.”<sup>1</sup>

It is a fact that we are all in a limited sense double personalities, even multiple personalities.

### I: THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND (Bousfield 3)

We are actually conscious at any moment of but very few things,

such as the book we are reading, the chair we are sitting on, and dimly of our immediate surroundings.

A thousand memories which we might conjure up of our childhood and our past are, for the time being, far from consciousness (B 5).

It is also a fact that

at any given moment, very little of our mental life and accumulated experience is in the eye of our immediate consciousness.

The vast bulk of our psychic life is, for the time being, latent—

it is in the subconscious realms.

[See endnote.]

## SOURCE

It is an extremely common experience to find that one has forgotten a name completely,

and that no effort will bring it into consciousness,

yet later on,

apparently without effort, the name will “come back to us,” as we say.

In fact, the very phrase we use—“come back to us”—implies that it has been somewhere away from us, that it has been lodged in some place that is foreign and unknown to us, yet which we are aware is somewhere within us (B 5-6).

[A] person may have forgotten completely where and how he spent a holiday ten years ago. No amount of racking his brain brings anything to light. But having been reminded of a single incident that occurred during that holiday,

the whole of the rest may come up from the unconscious in full detail (B 6).

*We may, however, be very conscious of actions and emotions emanating from the unconscious memory (B 7).*

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

1:0.3 How many times we are all but exasperated by our inability to recall some name or other detail of our past experience!

We know it is safely stored in our memory,

altho we are powerless at the moment to recall it,

and then some time—

and we have all had this experience—

it flashes up in the mind as if presenting itself from some outside source, and we aptly remark that it has just “come back.”

This very expression implies that the memory has been elsewhere during the time we so vainly sought its recall.

Sometimes the association of an idea

will quickly recall to our minds something that we had otherwise vainly sought to remember.

1:0.4 And so, while we are not really conscious of what is going on down in the depths of our subconscious mental life,

we may, nevertheless, be highly conscious of emotions and find ourselves being led into actions as the result of the activities of the subconscious.

## SOURCE

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

It is this fact that renders it highly important for us to understand the relation of the subconscious to health and disease.

## OUR DIFFERENT SELVES

“PSYCHOANALYSIS AND MENTAL HEALTH” (Bridges 185)

Before the days of psychoanalysis,

William James, the great American psychologist,

in his interesting chapter on “The Self” in his “Principles of Psychology,”

described the various selves that the same individual may possess in different situations.

He referred to a man’s home self, his club self, his business self, and so forth (B 185).

Psychoanalysis has shown that there may be a self, or rather a part of the self,

that is never known by the person concerned,

though it may sometimes be known by others who observe his behavior.

1:1.1 Even before the days of the vogue of the “subconscious” and psychoanalysis,

William James, the great American psychologist,

in a chapter on “The Self” in his *Principles of Psychology*,<sup>2</sup>

described the various selves that the same individual may possess in different situations.

He referred to a man’s home-self, his club-self, his business-self, etc.

1:1.2 More recent exploration of the human mind has disclosed that there is a vast region of mental life which, while it is a part of one’s self,

is unknown to the consciousness of its possessor;

that this submerged mental region, nevertheless, may become known to those who observe us with the trained eyes of experienced psychologists;

## SOURCE

One aim of psychoanalysis is to make us conscious of **our total personality**,

to make us know ourselves better (B 185).

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

and that such sympathetic observers are, in turn, able so to instruct us about ourselves as to make us more intelligent concerning the true nature and the sum **total of our real personality**.

1:1.3 I know a man who seems to possess every charm of personality when on social duty, but who is anything but agreeable about his home. He can be very pleasant in public, but at home he is a chronic grouch. He has two selves—a home personality and a social personality—and I doubt not but that he may have a third self which is variously manifested in his business life.

1:1.4 It is commonly recognized that we have different personality presentations for home life and for company. We dress up, put on our best manner, and act quite differently—at least the majority of us do—when we have company, as compared with what we do when only the home folks are around.

[Compare Conklin 179.]

1:1.5 I know a man who is “hard-boiled,” domineering and anything but pleasant in his business life; he is not much loved by his business associates. He is feared and dreaded by most of the people who have dealings with him; but I have observed this man in his home life under many and varying circumstances, and he is kindness, patience, and forbearance personified. He unfailingly shows a great affection and consideration for his family; and the entire family, including the servants, almost worship him.

## SOURCE

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

1:1.6 This diversity of selves is also manifested in the matter of work and play. Most of us present an entirely different personality, as compared with our workaday selves, when we relax, throw off the harness, and go out to play. We are more natural and less artificial. We disport ourselves with more spontaneity and greater ease, with less of civilization's restraint and inhibition, with less so-called dignity.

1:1.7 The average individual is in possession of, and constantly exhibits, from two or three up to four or five selves.

[But as personality is thus a composite, that is an integrated system of lesser systems these latter are capable of being reassembled or integrated in varying combinations into many and different composites and thus multiple personality may be formed (Prince 642).]

Personality is certainly composite—

it has many behavioristic facets which we may variously and at will turn to the gaze of the public or our immediate associates.

## V: THE PSYCHIC PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM (*The Truth About Spiritualism* 121)

### 4. THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND (*The Truth About Spiritualism* 128)

[contd] The subconscious mind, like the atomic theory, is a splendid and practical working concept, whether it really exists or not.

One thing we are sure of—the thing which it stands for is an actual part of our mental life.

While sensations can produce ideas, it must also be borne in mind that ideas can produce sensations (*TTAS* 128).

1:1.8 The subconscious mind, like the atomic theory, is a splendid and practical working concept, whether it really exists or not.

One thing we are sure of—the thing which it stands for is an actual part of our mental life.

While sensations can produce ideas, it must also be borne in mind that ideas can produce sensations.

## SOURCE

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

Neural patterns can be laid down in the human brain not only by stimuli coming in from outside, but also by what originates in the mind itself from association and interassociation of ideas—by a reorganization of old impressions and memories, both conscious and subconscious.

### IV: PSYCHOLOGY—HOW WE THINK

(*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 35)

IMAGES AND EMOTIONS (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 40)

As soon as percepts are formed in the lower levels of thinking, the mind at once chooses symbols to represent these percepts, which it forms out of sensations and feelings.

These symbols or *images* may stand for thoughts or for objects,

and they are true to life and facts only in so far as our sensations and perceptions have been truly formed and correctly interpreted.

Images may be correct or incorrect, as the emotions may be genuine, proportionate, and in harmony with the perceptions;

or through fear and sudden fright

they may become exaggerated, distorted, and highly deceptive in their effect upon the mind (*PF&F* 41).

1:1.9 It is a well-known psychologic fact that

as soon as percepts are formed in the lower levels of thinking, the mind forms symbols to represent these percepts.

These symbols or images may stand for thoughts or for objects,

and they are true to life and facts only in so far as our sensations and perceptions have been truly formed and correctly interpreted.

Mental images may be correct or incorrect, as the emotions may be genuine, proportionate, and in harmony with the perceptions;

or through fear, superstition, and other perversions of the powers of psychic association,

they may become so exaggerated, distorted, and highly deceptive in their effect upon the mind of otherwise well-meaning and sincere souls—

## SOURCE

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

as is undoubtedly the case in certain types of clairvoyants and spiritualistic **mediums**—that these individuals become utterly self-deceived by the faulty working of their own intricate mental machinery. They may actually think they see the things which they describe, but they see them through, and with, the eyes of their own distorted and deceived minds.

MISCONCEPTIONS (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 45)

The mind is capable of almost unlimited deception, monstrous imposition,

and is subject to innumerable errors of internal working and inaccuracies in the thinking process (*PF&F* 45).

THE POWERS OF MEMORY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 45)

And now again, in the study of memory,

we are brought face to face with many possibilities for the birth of false impressions, the creation of unreal feelings,

and, in conjunction with imagination, the actual construction of deceptive ideas and the formation of false ideals (*PF&F* 47).

The human mind is capable of almost unlimited deception,

and is subject to innumerable errors and inaccuracies in the thinking process.

1:1.10 In a careful study of the various powers of human memory,

we are brought face to face with many possibilities for the birth of false impressions, the creation of false feelings,

and the calling up of fictitious images,

and, in conjunction with imagination, the actual construction of deceptive ideas and the formation of unreal apparitions.

## SOURCE

V: THE PSYCHIC PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM (*The Truth About Spiritualism* 121)

4. THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND (*The Truth About Spiritualism* 128)

[contd from 1:1.8] It is impossible to conceive of the possibilities of mind deception, extending from the mental delusions of fictitious physical disease to the consummate deceptions of spiritualistic phantasms,

that would be made possible by a working conspiracy between imagination, phantasy, and memory,

when all three of these powers are unstable from heredity or irritated and diseased by a poisoned blood stream (*TTAS* 128).

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

1:1.11 It is impossible to conceive of the possibilities of mind deception, extending from the mental delusions of fictitious physical disease to the consummate deceptions of spiritualistic phantasms,

that would be made possible by a working conspiracy between imagination, fantasy, and memory,

when all three of these powers are unstable from heredity, or irritated and diseased by a poisonous blood stream.

Untold mischief, and almost unlimited torture, as well as unbelievable deception, can be imposed upon a neurotic person already suffering from a highly imaginative intellect which has been overworked on the one hand, and self-poisoned by ill health and a diseased blood stream on the other.

## DEFINITIONS

VIII: THE UNCONSCIOUS (*Prince* 229)

The meanings of the unconscious, subconscious, and co-conscious. (*Prince* 247)

1:2.1 Lest the mind of the reader be confused about the use of the terms subconscious, unconscious, co-conscious, etc., I would like to present the following summary and definitions of these terms as suggested by Dr. Morton Prince:

## SOURCE

For practical reasons, as already stated, it is desirable to have a term which shall embrace all classes of facts,

and of the two terms in common use, subconscious and unconscious, the former is preferable, as it is not subject to the double meaning above mentioned.

I, therefore, use the term subconscious in a generic sense to *include (a) coconscious ideas or processes; (b) unconscious neurograms, and (c) unconscious processes*.

Of course it is only a matter of terminology. The conceptual facts may then be classified:

[*Note*: See Exhibit A for Prince's chart.]

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

1:2.2 For practical reasons, as already stated, it is desirable to have a term which shall embrace all classes of facts,

and of the two terms in common use—subconscious and unconscious—the former is preferable as it is not subject to a double meaning.

I therefore use the term subconscious in a generic sense to include (a) co-conscious ideas or processes, (b) unconscious neurograms, and (c) unconscious processes.

Of course it is only a matter of terminology. The conceptual facts may then be classified.

1:2.3 [*Note*: See Exhibit A for Sadler's reproduction of Prince's chart.]

## THE DUAL NATURE OF MIND

### VII: PHASES OF CONSCIOUSNESS (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 64)

#### THE MARGINAL CONSCIOUSNESS, OR SUBCONSCIOUS MIND (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 66)

In the mind, when the consciousness becomes diffused to a certain point,

when the concentration of the mental powers becomes scattered to a certain degree,

when we get so far out from the centre of thinking that we fail properly to hold the various elements and factors of thought in the eye of the attention,

or when we are merely acting from force of habit,

1:3.1 In the mind, when the consciousness becomes diffused to a certain point,

when the concentration of the mental powers becomes scattered to a certain degree,

when we get so far out from the center of thinking that we fail properly to hold the various elements and factors of thought in the eye of the attention,

or when we are merely acting from force of habit,

## SOURCE

we find that our actions arise largely from impulses originating in the unconscious areas of the mind.

A person so doing may be said to be acting in obedience to the voice of instinct speaking through the subconscious or unconscious mind, the marginal consciousness (PF&F 66).

THE DUAL NATURE OF MIND (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 66)

[contd] It is a fact recognized by all physiologists and psychologists that

the human mind presents phenomena of consciousness which can only be explained by the assumption of a dual mentality or other conditions analogous thereto.

These two minds, so-called, are largely known by the terms “conscious mind” and “subconscious mind.”

We cannot help regarding it as exceedingly unfortunate that these terms ever came into general use.

They carry the idea of the existence of two separate and distinct minds.

Their use suggests even two separate brains or two distinct parts of one brain, but we believe this is all entirely wrong (PF&F 66).

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

we find that our actions arise largely from impulses originating in the unconscious areas of the mind.

At such a time, one may be said to be acting in obedience to the voice of memory or instinct speaking through the subconscious or unconscious mind—the marginal consciousness,

in contradistinction to the central consciousness.

1:3.2 It is a fact recognized by all physiologists and psychologists that

the human mind presents phenomena of consciousness which can be explained only by the assumption of a dual mentality, or other analogous conditions.

These two minds, so-called, are generally known by the terms “conscious mind” and “subconscious mind.”

I regard it as exceedingly unfortunate that these terms ever came into general use.

They carry the idea of the existence of two separate and distinct minds.

Their use erroneously suggests even two separate brains or two distinct parts of one brain. [Note: Contrast 2:4.3.]

## SOURCE

The mental procedure of “making up our mind” is merely the process of groping around through the marginal consciousness

for the purpose of finding the diverse ideas which are subsequently brought into focus and association in the realm of the central consciousness.

After the mind is thus “made up” the will is able to order action (PF&F 67).

THE MARGINAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN HEALTH AND IN DISEASE (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 67)

[contd] We believe a careful study of the facts and phenomena connected with consciousness will prove to the satisfaction of all that the term *marginal consciousness* is to be preferred to *subconscious mind*.

We are able to recognize a single mind only, but we recognize a dual consciousness in this single mind.

This dual consciousness is never separated by hard and fast lines.

The condition of the health of the nervous system, the degree of mental concentration, and the acuteness of the physical senses,

are all concerned in constantly moving back and forth the lines of demarcation between the central and the marginal consciousness (PF&F 67-68).

[contd] Under certain conditions a mental process may be taking place in the marginal consciousness;

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

1:3.3 The mental procedure of “making up our mind” is merely the process of groping around through the marginal consciousness

for the purpose of finding the diverse ideas which are subsequently brought into focus and association in the realm of the central consciousness.

After the mind is thus “made up” the will is able to order action.

1:3.4 I believe a careful study of the facts and phenomena connected with consciousness will prove to the satisfaction of all that the term *marginal consciousness* is to be preferred to *subconscious mind*.

We are able to recognize a single mind only, but we recognize a dual consciousness in this single mind.

This dual consciousness is never separated by hard and fast lines.

The condition of the health of the nervous system, the degree of mental concentration, and the acuteness of the physical senses,

are all concerned in constantly moving back and forth the lines of demarcation between the central and the marginal consciousness.

1:3.5 Under certain conditions a mental process may be taking place in the marginal consciousness;

## SOURCE

under other circumstances, this same process may occur in the central consciousness and the thinker be entirely conscious of his mental operations (*PF&F* 68).

[contd] There can be little question of the fact that thoughts and ideas which may be born in the central consciousness may pass outward in the mind both during waking and sleeping—

later to find themselves lodged in the marginal consciousness, where they will be able to influence the life and health of the individual for weal or for woe (*PF&F* 68).

[contd] It is this element of the consciousness that is so largely appealed to in mental therapeutics.

An idea is suggested to the patient with a view to its passing outward through the central consciousness to find permanent lodgment in the marginal consciousness,

from which place it is supposed to influence unconsciously the mental state of the patient or the operations of the body (*PF&F* 68).

By strongly concentrating the attention upon a single thought,

the mental powers can be so perfectly focussed as to bring the entire process of thinking almost within the central area of consciousness; that is, the area of consciousness is greatly decreased.

On the other hand, when the attention is focussed upon a given thought and then is manipulated or misdirected,

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

under other circumstances this same process may occur in the central consciousness and the thinker be entirely conscious of his mental operations.

1:3.6 There can be little question of the fact that thoughts and ideas born in the central consciousness may pass outward in the mind during both waking and sleeping hours,

later to find themselves lodged in the marginal consciousness, where they will be able to influence the life and health of the individual for weal or for woe.

1:3.7 It is this element of the consciousness that is so largely appealed to in suggestive therapeutics.

An idea is suggested to the patient with a view to its passing outward through the central consciousness to find permanent lodgment in the marginal consciousness,

from which place it is supposed to influence (unconsciously) the mental state of the patient or operations of the body.

1:3.8 By strongly concentrating the attention upon a single thought,

the mental powers can be so perfectly focused as to bring the entire process of thinking almost within the central area of consciousness; that is, the area of consciousness is greatly decreased.

On the other hand, when the attention is focused upon a given thought and then is manipulated or misdirected,

## SOURCE

it is entirely possible so to control the channels of thought as practically to throw the whole mental process into the realm of the marginal consciousness;

and this is exactly the feat which is performed in the practice of hypnotism, which will be more fully considered in a later chapter (*PF&F* 69).

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

it is entirely possible so to control the channels of thought as practically to throw the whole mental process into the realm of marginal consciousness (the subconscious);

and this is exactly the feat which is performed in the practise of hypnotism.

## TECHNIQUE OF SUB-CONSCIOUS PROCESSES

### VI: SUBCONSCIOUS PROCESSES (Prince 147)

Neurograms may also function as subconscious processes exhibiting intelligence and determining mental and bodily behavior. (Prince 150)

We may now speak of these processes as subconscious memory.

But when their manifestations are carefully scrutinized they will be found to exhibit more than memory.

They may, for instance, exhibit logical elaboration of the original experiences, and what corresponds to fabrication, reasoning, volition and affectivity (P 151-52).

#### 1:4.1 In the study of the subconscious,

while its operation seems to be based on memory,

we observe that it manifests a creative ability that includes all the powers of thought,

fabrication, reasoning, volition, etc.

The unconscious seems to be able to function logically and intelligently in its subconscious sphere.

## SOURCE

As life's experiences include fears, doubts, scruples, wishes, affections, resentments, and numerous other affective states, innate dispositions, and instincts, the subconscious memory process necessarily may include any of these affective complexes of ideas and tendencies (P 152).

Indeed, a subconscious process may become very complex and constellated with any one or many of the psychophysiological mechanisms of the organism. In special artificial and pathological conditions where such processes reach their highest development, as manifested through their phenomena, they may exhibit that which when consciously performed is understood to be *intelligence*,

comprising reasoning, constructive imagination, volition, and feeling; in short, what is commonly called thought or mental processes (P 153).

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

The elements of the unconscious realms, therefore, include all the ideas and emotions of our every-day experience, such as fears, doubts, affections, wishes, resentments, etc.,

and therefore all the factors are present for the building up of fictitious fears and false images, with which the patient can deceive himself and lay the foundation for the various neuroses.

1:4.2 In a word, we must recognize that the subconscious is *intelligent*;

it is adaptable;

it is able to reason, to indulge in constructive thinking, and to utilize the powers of a creative imagination;

and further, that it is keen, cunning, and crafty, and is able to formulate and perpetrate systematic deceptions and sustained delusions upon the minds of neurotic sufferers as well as upon the minds of "mediums" who accept these experiences as supernatural and thus come to deceive the credulous beings who so unquestioningly receive these mediumistic teachings as either messages from the dead or as the voice of God.

## SOURCE

V: THE PSYCHIC PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM (*The Truth About Spiritualism* 121)

17. HYPNOTISM AND PSYCHOANALYSIS (*The Truth About Spiritualism* 159)

[contd] From our study of hypnotized subjects and trance mediums we conclude that

the subconscious mind would be able to pass a very satisfactory Binet Simon test, and in many cases to take a stiff civil service examination.

If a subconscious mind—a marginal consciousness, or whatever other name it may be called—holds its memory material in such an organized form as to manifest such a high degree of intelligence

it should not be difficult for us to conceive of such a realm of the mind as being wholly capable of the creation and perpetration of the psychic frauds which characterize modern spiritualism (*TTAS* 159-60).

[The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jer. 17:9)]

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

1:4.3 From the study of hypnotized subjects and trance mediums we conclude that

the subconscious mind would be able to pass a very satisfactory Binet-Simon test, and in many cases successfully to take a difficult civil service examination.

1:4.4 If a subconscious mind—a marginal consciousness, or whatever we may call it—holds its memory material in such an organized form as to manifest this high degree of intelligence,

it should not be difficult for us to conceive of such a realm of the mind as being wholly capable of the creation and perpetration of the psychic frauds which characterize the vagaries of our present-day neurotics and spirit mediums.

1:4.5 The Biblical writer must have referred to the subconscious when he spoke so understandingly of the human mind, saying,

“The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?”

## AN ILLUSTRATIVE CASE

VI: SUBCONSCIOUS PROCESSES  
(Prince 147)SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF THE  
SUBCONSCIOUS (Prince 162)

A series of observations conducted with a fourth subject (O. N.) gave the following results, briefly summarized. (This subject, like the others, is practiced in introspection and can differentiate her memories with precision.) She distinguishes “two strata” in her mental processes (an upper and lower).

The “upper stratum” consists of the thoughts in the focus of attention.

The lower (also called the background of her mind) consists of the perceptions and thoughts which are not in the focus. This stratum, of course, corresponds with what is commonly recognized as the fringe of consciousness, and, as is usual, when her attention is directed elsewhere she is not aware of it.

1:5.1 An interesting experiment was made by Dr. Prince with a rather unusual subject, a woman, who, in her ordinary state of consciousness, was able so to manipulate the drift of her thoughts as to

distinguish two strata in her mind or consciousness, which she called the upper and lower strata.

She seemed to be able, without the use of hypnotism, to experience consciousness of

those psychic elements which were in the direct focus of her attention

and those which were on the fringe or in the adjacent area of the marginal consciousness—

the so-called subconscious.

## SOURCE

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

Commenting on her case the doctor says:

She can, however, bring this fringe within the field of attention and then she becomes aware of, or rather remembers, its content during the preceding moment.

1:5.2 She can, however, bring this fringe within the field of attention, and then she becomes aware of, or rather, remembers its content during the preceding moment.

To be able to do this is nothing out of the ordinary, but what is unusual is this:

To be able to do this is nothing out of the ordinary, but what is unusual is this:

by a trick of abstraction which she has long practiced, she can bring the memory of the fringe or stratum into the full light of awareness

By a trick of abstraction which she has long practised she can bring the memory of the fringe or stratum into the full light of awareness,

and then it is discovered that it has been exceedingly rich in thoughts, far richer than ordinary attention would show and a fringe is supposed to be.

and then it is discovered that it has been exceedingly rich in thoughts, far richer than ordinary attention would show and a fringe is supposed to be.

It is indeed a veritable coconsciousness in which there goes on a secondary stream of thoughts often of an entirely different character and with different affects from those of the upper stratum.

It is indeed a veritable co-consciousness, in which there goes on a secondary stream of thoughts often of an entirely different character and with different effects from those of the upper stratum.

It is common for thoughts which she *has resolutely put out of her mind as intolerable or unacceptable, or problems which have not been solved, to continue functioning in the lower stratum without entering awareness.*

It is common for thoughts which she has resolutely put out of her mind as intolerable or unacceptable, or problems which have not been solved, to continue functioning in the lower stratum without entering awareness.

She can, however, at any time become aware of them by the trick of abstraction referred to, and sometimes they emerge apparently spontaneously and suddenly replace the "upper stratum" (P 174-75).

She can, however, at any time become aware of them by the trick of abstraction referred to, and sometimes they emerge apparently spontaneously and suddenly replace the "upper stratum."

## THE REPOSITORY OF EXPERIENCE

[Compare 26:4.3 and Lay 84.]

1:6.1 Thus we come to recognize the unconscious as the final and ultimate repository of human experience. Here are to be found stenciled on the nerve-cells of the brain, the real and final record of our thoughts, feelings, and emotions, out of which must be created those new ideas which shall constitute and characterize our constantly unfolding panorama of associative thoughts, feelings, wishes, purposes, and emotions.

1:6.2 Further, we must recognize, if the flow of the content of the subconscious up to the mind is uncontrolled, or in some way becomes abnormal, that we may have a series of psychic disturbances ranging from the mild vagaries of neurasthenia up to the serious manifestations of hysteria, on the one hand; and from the subtle hallucinations of the spiritualistic medium and the clairvoyant, up to the insane delusions of the raving maniac, on the other hand.

V: THE PSYCHIC PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM (*The Truth About Spiritualism* 121)

17. HYPNOTISM AND PSYCHOANALYSIS (*The Truth About Spiritualism* 159)

The subconscious may become responsible for our spells of periodic depression, our temperamental moods, hysterical catalepsy, trance states, somnambulistic wanderings,

as well as the unique phenomena of secondary personality.

1:6.3 The subconscious may become responsible for our spells of periodic depression, our temperamental moods, hysterical catalepsy, trance states, somnambulistic wanderings,

as well as for the unique phenomena of secondary personality.

## SOURCE

And to any power of mind so versatile as this,

it requires not a stretch of the imagination to understand how the subconscious may be the birthplace of the deceptive vagaries and the unique hallucinations of spirit mediumship,

for this unconscious realm is richly endowed with all the memory and experience material of one's past life (*TTAS* 160).

[contd] *The Unconscious Wish*. If dreams represent an effort on the part of the subconscious during sleep to experience wish-fulfillment,

to project its wishes out into the conscious mind by means of the symbolisms of the dream world,

it may also be true that the mediumistic phenomena,

in the form of visual and auditory hallucinations, spirit messages and spirit forms,

may be but a representation of the same effort of the unconscious to gain expression—to eliminate its complexes—to experience wish-fulfillment (*TTAS* 160-61).

[contd] When certain unstable types of human beings have long desired and intensely wished, in their minds, to communicate with the dead,

when they have studied, thought and prayed over this problem;

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

And for any power of mind so versatile as this,

it requires not a great stretch of imagination to understand how the subconscious may be the birthplace of the deceptive vagaries of the paranoiacs and even of spirit mediumship,

since this unconscious realm is richly endowed with all the memory and experience material of one's entire past life.

## THE UNCONSCIOUS WISH

1:7.1 If dreams represent an effort on the part of the subconscious during sleep to experience wish-fulfillment,

to project its wishes out into the conscious mind by means of the symbolisms of the dream world,

it may also be true that the mediumistic phenomena,

in the form of visual and auditory hallucinations, spirit messages, and spirit forms,

may be but a representation of the same effort of the unconscious to gain expression—to eliminate its complexes—to experience wish-fulfillment.

1:7.2 When certain unstable types of human beings have long desired and intensely wished to communicate with the dead;

when they have studied, thought, and prayed over this problem;

## SOURCE

when they have faithfully attended seances and have allowed the longings of their souls to be focused and concentrated on the thought, the desire to draw the veil aside and communicate with the spirits beyond—

I say, after all this preliminary psychic preparation,

it is little wonder, then, that ultimately their day dreams and reveries should begin to flow in the channel of wish-fulfillment,

and that the overflowing content of the subconscious should push itself up and out toward the attainment and realization of those visions and experiences which would in some measure gratify this intense longing of the soul (*TTAS* 161).

## IX: MAN'S UNCONSCIOUS SPIRIT (Lay 286)

### §5. *Relativity of Images* (Lay 297)

Therefore the unconscious wish, which, through the mechanism of projection elsewhere described,

launches upon the external world the qualities of sense that constitute its chief or special gratification—

the unconscious wish is under such circumstances much more likely to be in a position to externalize itself in a mental image which will be taken for a real external perception (L 298).

## 1: THE MIND AT MISCHIEF

when they have faithfully attended seances and have allowed the longings of their souls to be focused and concentrated on the desire to draw the veil aside and communicate with the spirits beyond—

I say, after all this preliminary psychic preparation,

it is little wonder that ultimately their day-dreams should begin to flow in the channel of wish-fulfillment,

and that the overflowing content of the subconscious should push itself up and out toward the attainment and realization of those visions and experiences which would in some measure gratify this intense longing of the soul.

1:7.3 In this way the unconscious wish, through the mechanism of projection elsewhere described,

gratifies itself by materializing those very qualities which constitute the basis of these subconscious longings.

Under such circumstances this sort of an externalized wish could be easily mistaken for an external reality.

## III: PSYCHOANALYSIS (Lay 73)

## §4. Repression (Lay 78)

For us the significant fact about psychoanalytic therapeutic methods is that so many early memories forgotten for many years

1:7.4 Psychoanalysis has shown us that an idea may be securely buried in the subconscious mind for two-score years,

and then, by means of the psychoanalytic sounding-line,

were brought into consciousness,

be brought up to the light of day—resurrected to memory.

[[J.Arthur Hill's skepticism about supernormal phenomena] is the proper attitude but it is not strong enough, due probably to the writer's being unacquainted with the extreme reach of the psychoanalytic sounding line which, as I have elsewhere mentioned, has brought up memories after thirty years of oblivion and made them live with dramatic vividness in the consciousness of the person being analysed (L 299).]

that quite evidently no experience whatsoever is lost by the mind in spite of apparent forgetfulness (L 84).

Nothing put on deposit in the unconscious is ever lost;

it is all effectively conserved, and is capable of being recalled and utilized in the subsequent life of the individual.

# 1. Some parallels for the idea of one's subconscious being one's "other self":

## (1) What Is Your "Other Self"?

Your "other self" is your subconscious mind.

— Eugene Victor Legaren, *Subconscious Power—The Secret of Achievement: Book One: Getting Acquainted with Your Other Self* (1926), p. 5ff.

(2) In *The Saturday Evening Post* of October 20, Harvey O'Higgins, who has been contributing to *Metropolitan's* discussion of Spiritualism, psychic phenomena, etc., writes of "Your Other Self." ... Mr. O'Higgins writes entertainingly and those who have what he has not, the clues to the threads of causation, may gather something of value from his illustrations of the action of the "subconscious self." [Etc.]

— *Theosophy*, Vol. VI, 1917-18, p. 141.

(3) Would you not think yourself fortunate to have a secretary of great ability and worth absolutely subject, day and night, to your will, and so susceptible to instructions that even your slightest mental suggestion would be faithfully carried out? ...

Now, just substitute for this personal secretary **your subconscious self**, that part of you which is below the threshold of consciousness, and try to realize that this self is actually the sort of secretary I have endeavored to describe ...

This secretary is closer to you than your breath, nearer than your heart beat, a faithful servant, walking by your side all through life, to execute your faintest wish, to carry out your desires, to help you to achieve your aims. Every bit of help, of encouragement, of support you give to this **other self** will add to the magnificence, the splendor of your destiny.

— Orison Swett Marden, *Victorious Achievement* (1916), p. 286-87.

(4) The **Other Self**. — ... There is no doubt that there are two natures in the curious personality of man. Everyone at times has the uncanny feeling that there is something within almost apart from himself, leading him in ways that he does not quite understand.

— James Joseph Walsh, M.D., Ph.D., *Psychotherapy* (1912), p. 148.

(5) [Prince, a source author of this chapter, offers a contrastive view:]

In the unconscious may be conserved a vast number of life's experiences ranging in time almost from the cradle to the grave. The hopes, the wishes, the anxieties of childhood may still be there, lying fallow, but capable of injecting themselves under favoring conditions into our personalities. Properly speaking, from this point of view, aside from certain artificial and pathological conditions, **there is, normally, no distinct "subconscious self,"** or "subliminal self," or "secondary self," or "hidden self." In artificial and pathological conditions there may be, as has been frequently shown, a splitting of consciousness and the aggregation into a secondary coconscious system of large systems of ideas which have all the characteristics of personality. This secondary personality (of which the primary personality is not aware) may have its own memories, feelings, perceptions, and thoughts. It may appropriate to itself various complexes of neurograms deposited by the experiences of life which are not at the disposal of the principal personality. Such a coconscious system may properly be spoken of as a subconscious *self*. But there is no evidence that, *normally*, such systems exist. All that we are entitled to affirm is that every individual's consciousness may include ideas of which he is not aware, and that he has at his disposal, to a greater or less extent, a large unconscious storehouse in which are neurographically conserved a large and varied mass of life's experiences (P 256).

2. William James, *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, Chap. x (Br 469, fn). [Note: The chapter is called "Consciousness of Self".]