

MindScience

AN EAST-WEST DIALOGUE



THE DALAI LAMA

HERBERT BENSON

ROBERT A. F. THURMAN

HOWARD E. GARDNER

DANIEL GOLEMAN

and participants in

THE HARVARD MIND SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

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Edited by

Daniel Goleman & Robert A.F. Thurman



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THE DALAI LAMA

Foreword

I believe the ultimate aim of all human beings is to obtain happiness and a sense of fulfillment. These objectives can be achieved through physical amenities and proper mental development, but the dominant and ultimate factor is the mental aspect. In order to achieve these objectives one must have knowledge about both mind and matter.

Science has made tremendous progress in understanding and harnessing matter. Buddhism, on the other hand, has a profound philosophy and over the centuries has developed a systematic method of shaping and developing the mind. Whether we are scientists or spiritual practitioners our basic needs and aspirations are the same. Scientists may study mainly matter but they cannot ignore the human mind, or consciousness; spiritual practitioners may be engaging mainly in developing the mind but they cannot completely ignore their physical needs. It is for this reason that I have always stressed the importance of combining both the mental and the material approach to achieving happiness for humankind. I am therefore very happy to learn that Wisdom is publishing this book *MindScience*.

August 5, 1991

Preface

The talks published here were originally delivered at a symposium called *Mind Science: A Dialogue between East and West*. Part of a program of Harvard Medical School's Department of Continuing Medical Education, the symposium took place on March 24, 1991, at the Kresge Auditorium, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, under the joint auspices of the Mind/Body Medical Institute and Tibet House New York. It gathered together experts from the fields of medicine, psychiatry, psychobiology, neurobiology, education, comparative religion, and Indo-Tibetan Buddhism in open dialogue and exchange on the various concepts, approaches, and understandings, East and West, of the science of mind. Guest of honor was His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

The symposium celebrated more than a decade of collaborative research between the Tibetan Buddhist community and Harvard Medical School. This work had its genesis on October 18, 1979, when I met with His Holiness the Dalai Lama during his first visit to Harvard University. On this occasion, I had explained our laboratory's experiments on the physiological effects of simple meditative techniques, and requested permission to study several of the advanced meditative techniques of Tibetan Buddhism.

The rationale was straightforward: If simple meditative techniques resulted in such notable physiological changes as decreased metabolism, heart rate, blood pressure, and rate of breathing, as well as distinctive brainwave patterns, what could the effects of advanced meditative techniques be? Could they possibly demonstrate even more striking mind/body interactions? We had been attempting to investigate these advanced techniques for several years, but could find no practitioners who would consent to be studied—they had little interest in the scientific documentation of their practices.

I had just finished reading Alexandra David-Neel's *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*, which contained her early-twentieth-century accounts of *tumo* yoga being performed by Tibetan Buddhist monks. In this practice, an internal heat, which is generated for religious purposes, has demonstrable effects on the body. David-Neel described what she saw in a midwinter encounter:

The neophytes sit on the ground, cross-legged and naked. Sheets are dipped in the icy water, each man wraps himself in one of them and must dry it on his body. As soon as the sheet has become dry, it is again dipped in the water and placed on the novice's body to be dried as before. The operation goes on [in] that fashion until daybreak. Then he who has dried the largest number of sheets is acknowledged the winner of the competition.

Besides drying wet sheets on one's body, there exist various other tests to ascertain the degree of heat which the neophyte is able to radiate. One of these tests consists in sitting in the snow. The quantity of snow melted under the man and the distance at which it melts around him are taken as measures of his ability.¹

I hoped that with the permission of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I would be allowed access to study the remarkable alleged mind/body effects of *tumo*.

Our October 1979 meeting took place in the living room of the Dana-Palmer House in Cambridge, an 1823 building in which William James had lived and where he is believed to have conceived his idea of a pluralistic universe. After I had explained my rationale for requesting to study practitioners of *tumo*, His Holiness replied, "It will be very difficult to measure these abilities. The people who practice this meditation do so for religious purposes. It must be experienced in order to feel the benefits. You *must* experience it first." Then he added, "Still, our culture is undergoing many changes. We have been forced out of our homeland into exile...perhaps there is some worth in allowing this study to be done."

Several months later I received a letter from His Holiness's office inviting us to study three *tumo* practitioners who lived near Dharamsala, India. Some of the successful and striking results of these studies and others are described in this book. We determined through scientifically based investigations that advanced meditative techniques do indeed lead to profound, hitherto unrecognized human mind/body capacities.

In the autumn of 1990, we believed that it was time to take stock of where these experiments had brought us, and thus the Mind Science Symposium was conceived. His Holiness agreed to attend, and the dialogue was further expanded to embrace Eastern and Western concepts of the mind.

I am grateful to all those who attended and made the symposium such a success. My hope is that it will not only act as a watershed for the decade of fruitful mind science interactions between East and West, but also point to future advances in our continuing collaboration.

Herbert Benson, MD
Boston, 1991

Introduction

A Western Perspective

It was the historian Arnold Toynbee who predicted that one of the most significant events of the twentieth century would be the coming of Buddhism to the West. For modern psychology, that may be so in a special sense: as a discipline we are awakening to the fact that there is a more ancient science of mind, and perhaps a wiser one, than our own, and that its fullest articulation is in Buddhism.

Modern psychology has had a myopic historical vision, assuming that the psychological endeavor began in Europe and America within the last century or so. We have lost sight of the deeper roots of our discipline in philosophy, and, in turn, of philosophy in religion. Few psychologists, for example, remember that William James, one of the fathers of modern psychology, was a member of the philosophy department at Harvard until he founded the psychology department there near the turn of the century.

But Buddhism confronts modern psychology with two facts: that the systematic study of the mind and its workings dates back to well before the Christian era, and that this exploration is at the heart of spiritual life. Indeed, every major world religion harbors an esoteric psychology, a science of mind, usually little known to its lay practitioners. In Islam, for instance, it is to be found in Sufism; in Judaism, in the kabbalah; in Christianity, in monastic meditation manuals.

In Buddhism, the classical mind science is called “Abhidharma.” Developed, systematized, and refined over the thousand years after Gautama Buddha’s teaching in the fifth century B.C.E., Abhidharma is an elaborate model of the mind. Like any thorough psychological system, it describes in detail the workings of perception, cognition, affect, and motivation. A dynamic model, Abhidharma analyzes both the roots of human suffering and a way out of that suffering—the central message of Buddhism cast in the technical language of a psychology.

Apart from the metaphysical context of Abhidharma, it represents a significant entity from the perspective of modern psychology: it is a psychological system with completely different roots. As such, for the first time it offers modern psychology something akin to a “close encounter of the third kind”—a meeting with an alien intelligence that few, if any, really thought existed. Certainly, most psychologists and psychiatrists, if asked, would have said that there is no other fully mature psychology beyond the fold of modern Western thought. Now, though, it is clear that there is one, and that it has something of significance to say to the psychologies of the West.

Buddhist psychology offers modern psychology the opportunity for genuine dialogue with a system of thought that has evolved outside the conceptual systems that have spawned contemporary psychology. Here is a fully realized psychology that offers the chance for a complementary view of many of the fundamental issues of modern psychology: the nature of mind, the limits of human potential for growth, the possibilities for mental health, the means for psychological change and transformation.

This symposium marks a beginning of that dialogue. As it continues, Western psychologists will discover that, just as there are many schools of thought in Western psychology, there is an equally diverse range of schools within Buddhist psychology—Abhidharma is the classical Buddhist psychology, but there are several versions of it by now. And, especially within Tibetan Buddhism, there are many more psychological systems, each elaborating its own practical applications in psychospiritual development.

The structure of this book follows the order of the symposium, its two parts marking the division between the morning and afternoon sessions.

In chapter 1, His Holiness the Dalai Lama describes the Buddhist concept of mind, bridging the views of scientific materialism and religion. He points out that understanding the nature of mind is fundamental to Buddhist thought. Tibetan teachings include a detailed map of how changes in the mind and body affect each other, and techniques for bringing those affects under voluntary control. The Tibetan view of the subtle relationships between mind and body holds that it is possible to separate mind from body—one of many notions that can be tested

by researchers as their studies enrich our understanding of mind/body links.

In the dialogue with neuroscientists that follows in chapter 2, His Holiness addresses several issues that are particularly challenging to Western science. These include whether or not mind can observe and understand its own nature; similarities between mathematical lawfulness of occurrences and the workings of karma; the Buddhist concept of emptiness and the ultimate nature of mind; the roots of psychological confusion and disturbances. Also explored is the question of gross and subtle levels of mind, and the provocative possibility that a subtle level of mind might exist independent of body.

Dr. Herbert Benson, in chapter 3, reviews his pioneering research on the mind/body relationship, and especially on the “relaxation response,” which combines ancient meditation techniques with modern medicine. He also describes his more recent work in which advanced Tibetan meditators were studied practicing *tumo* yoga and striking changes in oxygen consumption and body temperature were found. Such work, he hopes, can increase our understanding of how the mind can influence the body.

In chapter 4, Robert Thurman addresses the question as to what Western cognitive science and neuroscience stand to gain from Tibetan mind science. He traces the development of Buddhist mind science, arguing for its pressing relevance by making the point that in the West our power to affect outer reality has far outstripped our power over ourselves. In suggesting what Tibetan mind science has to offer he cites as an example the remarkable diagnostic abilities of those trained in the Tibetan medicine method of pulse-taking. And he describes the inner states of the *tumo* practitioner—the inner technology that creates the changes Dr. Benson has measured.

Howard Gardner’s topic in chapter 5 is the modern Western view of the mind as found in cognitive science. His focus is on *hard* cognition: thinking, intelligence, rationality—as opposed to feeling, spirit, and consciousness. And his plea is that we make use of all the disciplines and experience available—“what is in the East as well as what is in the West”—in a spirit of ecumenicism in which each system mutually shapes the understanding of the other. He proposes a genuine dialogue, with a promise of a final synthesis greater than where each began.

In chapter 6, I compare Tibetan and Western models of mental health. Like Western psychology, the Tibetan system offers a model of the mind and its workings, as well as a definition of mental health and a way to achieve it. But the vision of human possibilities in the Tibetan model holds forth a model of mental well-being that offers a challenge to the paradigms of Western perspective psychology: it asserts that cessation of the suffering caused by clinging and anger and the attainment of states such as equanimity and compassion are not just desirable but possible.

Finally, in the concluding panel discussion in chapter 7, several of the issues raised in the symposium are further discussed and elaborated upon, particularly some that suggest a fertile meeting point between the psychologies of East and West.

For me, this dialogue under the auspices of Harvard Medical School marks a full circle in a personal journey. I first encountered Abhidharma—and Tibetan Buddhism—in 1970, while on a Harvard predoctoral traveling fellowship in India. I was fascinated: here was a psychological system with a radically different set of premises from any to which I had previously been exposed. It was a system that not only explained how the mind worked, but how it could be methodically transformed. And it was a psychology that held out as the ideal of human development spiritual values like equanimity and compassion—a vision far more hopeful than that of any modern psychology.

On my return to Harvard I found the beginnings of research into meditation, the applied technology of Buddhist and other Eastern psychologies. At the Medical School, Herbert Benson was engaged in his pioneering work on the relaxation response; in my own department of psychology, Gary Schwartz, Richard Davidson, and I began a similar program of research on meditation.

While the fruits of research on meditation for behavioral medicine have been great, this dialogue represents a next stage. Meditation is but one of many applied tools from the psychologies of the East. As we explore what else of value for modern life is to be found from that source, we may discover that there are yet more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our psychology.

Daniel Goleman

A Tibetan Perspective

Tibet has the inner science civilization *par excellence*. In her mountain remoteness, her finest minds developed and refined the inner sciences received from the rich and ancient Indian Buddhist civilization. The monastic universities in which Tibetans lived and worked, some with over ten thousand scholars resident, were utterly dedicated to a curriculum that centered on these inner sciences. And the entire Tibetan nation was utterly dedicated to the flourishing of those monastic universities.

Bertrand Russell once said that each of the three great philosophical civilizations, the Western, the Chinese, and the Indian, had its own specialty. The Western excelled in exploring the relationship between humanity and nature, and so developed the extraordinary sciences of the material universe. The Chinese excelled in exploring the relationships within society, and so developed a remarkably peaceful history and an elegant civilization, presently challenged by the difficult encounter with modernity. But the Indian excelled in exploring the human's inner world, and so developed the supreme knowledge of the self, its depth consciousness, its processes of knowing and expressing, and its extraordinary states.

Over a period of millennia, the Indian Buddhist civilization profoundly influenced all the other civilizations of Asia. Eventually Buddhism was lost in India, and the twentieth century has seen its disappearance from much of the rest of Asia, as well. But in the seventh century C.E., the Tibetan civilization opened itself in a unique way to receive the great treasures of Indian Buddhism, and, over the next thirteen centuries, the Tibetan people became more and more devoted to it, as it transformed their lives, land, society, and deepest hearts.

The Tibetans' greatest gifts to the world today are their knowledge of these matchless inner sciences and their mastery of the rich panoply

of the arts of transformation of the human mind that derive from these inner sciences. Although the West appreciates other cultures for various excellences and exotic beauties, such as their spiritual treasures or works of art, it tends to consider itself the dominant intellect on the planet because of its mastery over the material universe.

But this might be a logical error. Perhaps those who choose *not* to develop such power over external nature understand it best. Perhaps those who make it a priority to understand themselves and control their own minds and actions have the superior intellects. Perhaps we in the West have something *scientific* to learn from them.

The Mind Science Symposium had an atmosphere of inspiration and delight for all concerned, because it was grounded on mutual respect. Westerners as well as Easterners were open to the possibility that they could learn from each other.

Tibet House New York was established in 1987 to help preserve Tibetan civilization, which has been threatened by the most devastating kind of encounter with modernity—military occupation and industrial colonization. While the world of officialdom tries not to recognize the suffering of Tibet and her people, a grass-roots movement from thirty-seven countries proclaimed 1991 to be the International Year of Tibet. It is altogether fitting and deeply moving that the intellectual jewel of Tibet, the healing medicine of Tibet, the unique gift of Tibet—its inner arts and sciences—should have been celebrated at the very beginning of the International Year. I am grateful to Herbert Benson and his colleagues at the Mind/Body Medical Institute for working with Tibet House to honor Tibetan civilization and its ancient tradition of inner science in this way.

Around 1,350 years ago, Tibet was a great military empire in the heart of Asia. But her emperors eventually tired of war and conquest and invited the inner scientists of India to establish their teachings and institutions in Tibet. They thus began the long transformation of Tibet from a culture of violence that held the conquest of others to be the highest goal, to a civilization of nonviolence where the conquest of self was the highest goal. It is my hope that the inner science conferences and studies of the past decade and the ongoing work of the future will all contribute to the world becoming a more peaceful place.

Robert A.F. Thurman

PART ONE

BUDDHISM, NEUROSCIENCE,
& THE MEDICAL SCIENCES

1

The Buddhist Concept of Mind

The Dalai Lama
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Geshe Thupten Jinpa
Translator

1

The Buddhist Concept of Mind

I would like to explain briefly the basic Buddhist concept of mind and some of the techniques employed in Buddhism for training the mind. The primary aim of these techniques is the attainment of enlightenment, but it is possible to experience even mundane benefits, such as good health, by practicing them.

As a result of meeting with people from different religious and cultural backgrounds, including scientists and radical materialists, I discovered that there are some people who do not even accept the existence of mind. This led me to believe that Buddhism could serve as a bridge between radical materialism and religion, because Buddhism is accepted as belonging to neither camp. From the radical materialists' viewpoint, Buddhism is an ideology that accepts the existence of mind, and is thus a faith-oriented system like other religions. However, since Buddhism does not accept the concept of a Creator God but emphasizes instead self-reliance and the individual's own power and potential, other religions regard Buddhism as a kind of atheism. Since neither side accepts Buddhism as belonging to its own camp, this gives Buddhists the opportunity to build a bridge between the two.

First of all, I would like to give a brief account of the general approach of Buddhist thought and practice common to both the Theravada and Mahayana traditions of Buddhism.

One very obvious feature in Buddhism is the element of faith and devotion. This is particularly apparent in the practice known as "taking refuge in the Three Jewels":² the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. To understand the role that faith and devotion play in this practice, emphasis is placed on clearly understanding the nature of the path in which one is taking refuge, called Dharma or the "Way" by the Buddha.

The emphasis on first understanding the nature of the path, or

Dharma, can be appreciated by considering how we normally relate to someone whom we take to be a great authority on a particular subject. We do not regard a person as an authority simply on the basis of their fame, position, power, good looks, wealth, and so on, but rather because we find what they say on issues related to their particular field of expertise convincing and reliable. In brief, we do not generally take a person to be an authority on a subject simply out of respect and admiration for him or her as a person.

Similarly, in Buddhism, when we take the Buddha as an authority, as a reliable teacher, we do so on the basis of having investigated and examined his principal teaching, the Four Noble Truths.³ It is only after having investigated the validity and reliability of this doctrine that we accept the Buddha, who propounded it, as a reliable guide.

In order to understand the profound aspects of the Four Noble Truths, the principal doctrine of Buddhism, it is crucial to understand what are known as the “two truths.”⁴ The two truths refer to the fundamental Buddhist philosophical view that there are two levels of reality. One level is the empirical, phenomenal, and relative level that appears to us, where functions such as causes and conditions, names and labels, and so on can be validly understood. The other is a deeper level of existence beyond that, which Buddhist philosophers describe as the fundamental, or ultimate, nature of reality, and which is often technically referred to as “emptiness.”

When investigating the ultimate nature of reality, Buddhist thinkers take the Buddha’s words not so much as an ultimate authority, but rather as a key to assist their own insight; for the ultimate authority must always rest with the individual’s own reason and critical analysis. This is why we find various conceptions of reality in Buddhist literature. Each is based on a different level of understanding of the ultimate nature.

In the sutras, the collected original teachings of the Buddha, the Buddha himself states that his words are not to be accepted as valid simply out of respect and reverence for him, but rather should be examined just as a goldsmith would test the purity and quality of gold that he wished to purchase by subjecting it to various types of examination.⁵ Similarly, we should examine the words of the Buddha, and if we find them to be reliable and convincing through our own reasoning and understanding, we should accept them as valid.

Another area in which we find the element of faith and devotion

playing an obvious and crucial role is in the practice of Buddhist tantra. But even here, careful examination will show that the entire system of tantric practice is based upon an understanding of the ultimate nature of reality. Without this, one cannot even begin a genuine practice of tantra. So, in essence, reason and understanding are fundamental to the Buddhist approach on both the theoretical and the practical levels.

One of the fundamental views in Buddhism is the principle of “dependent origination.” This states that all phenomena, both subjective experiences and external objects, come into existence in dependence upon causes and conditions; nothing comes into existence uncaused. Given this principle, it becomes crucial to understand what causality is and what types of cause there are. In Buddhist literature, two main categories of causation are mentioned: (1) external causes in the form of physical objects and events, and (2) internal causes such as cognitive and mental events.

The reason for an understanding of causality being so important in Buddhist thought and practice is that it relates directly to sentient beings’ feelings of pain and pleasure and the other experiences that dominate their lives, which arise not only from internal mechanisms but also from external causes and conditions. Therefore it is crucial to understand not only the internal workings of mental and cognitive causation but also their relationship to the external material world.

The fact that our inner experiences of pleasure and pain are in the nature of subjective mental and cognitive states is very obvious to us. But how those inner subjective events relate to external circumstances and the material world poses a critical problem. The question of whether there is an external physical reality independent of sentient beings’ consciousness and mind has been extensively discussed by Buddhist thinkers. Naturally, there are divergent views on this issue among the various philosophical schools of thought. One such school⁶ asserts that there is no external reality, not even external objects, and that the material world we perceive is in essence merely a projection of our minds. From many points of view, this conclusion is rather extreme. Philosophically, and for that matter conceptually, it seems more coherent to maintain a position that accepts the reality not only of the subjective world of the mind but also of the external objects of the physical world.

Now, if we examine the origins of our inner experiences and of

external matter, we find that there is a fundamental uniformity in the nature of their existence in that both are governed by the principle of causality. Just as in the inner world of mental and cognitive events every moment of experience comes from its preceding continuum and so on *ad infinitum*, similarly in the physical world every object and event must have a preceding continuum that serves as its cause, from which the present moment of external matter comes into existence.

In some Buddhist literature, we find that in terms of the origin of its continuum, the macroscopic world of our physical reality can be traced back finally to an original state in which all material particles are condensed into what are known as “space particles.”⁷ If all the physical matter of our macroscopic universe can be traced to such an original state, the question then arises as to how these particles later interact with each other and evolve into a macroscopic world that can have direct bearing on sentient beings’ inner experiences of pleasure and pain. To answer this, Buddhists turn to the doctrine of karma, the invisible workings of actions and their effects, which provides an explanation as to how these inanimate space particles evolve into various manifestations.

The invisible workings of actions, or karmic force (*karma* means action), are intimately linked to the motivation in the human mind that gives rise to these actions. Therefore an understanding of the nature of mind and its role is crucial to an understanding of human experience and the relationship between mind and matter. We can see from our own experience that our state of mind plays a major role in our day-to-day experience and physical and mental well-being. If a person has a calm and stable mind, this influences his or her attitude and behavior in relation to others. In other words, if someone remains in a state of mind that is calm, tranquil, and peaceful, external surroundings or conditions can cause him or her only limited disturbance. But it is extremely difficult for someone whose mental state is restless to be calm or joyful even when he or she is surrounded by the best facilities and the best of friends. This indicates that our mental attitude is a critical factor in determining our experience of joy and happiness, and thus also our good health.

To sum up, there are two reasons why it is important to understand the nature of mind. One is because there is an intimate connection between mind and karma. The other is that our state of mind

plays a crucial role in our experience of happiness and suffering. If understanding the mind is very important, what then is mind, and what is its nature?

Buddhist literature, both sutra and tantra, contains extensive discussions on mind and its nature. Tantra, in particular, discusses the various levels of subtlety of mind and consciousness. The sutras do not talk much about the relationship between the various states of mind and their corresponding physiological states. Tantric literature, on the other hand, is replete with references to the various subtleties of the levels of consciousness and their relationship to such physiological states as the vital energy centers within the body, the energy channels, the energies that flow within these, and so on. The tantras also explain how, by manipulating the various physiological factors through specific meditative yogic practices, one can effect various states of consciousness.⁸

According to tantra, the ultimate nature of mind is essentially pure. This pristine nature is technically called “clear light.” The various afflictive emotions such as desire, hatred, and jealousy are products of conditioning. They are not intrinsic qualities of the mind because the mind can be cleansed of them. When this clear light nature of mind is veiled or inhibited from expressing its true essence by the conditioning of the afflictive emotions and thoughts, the person is said to be caught in the cycle of existence, samsara. But when, by applying appropriate meditative techniques and practices, the individual is able to fully experience this clear light nature of mind free from the influence and conditioning of the afflictive states, he or she is on the way to true liberation and full enlightenment.

Hence, from the Buddhist point of view, both bondage and true freedom depend on the varying states of this clear light mind, and the resultant state that meditators try to attain through the application of various meditative techniques is one in which this ultimate nature of mind fully manifests all its positive potential, enlightenment, or Buddhahood. An understanding of the clear light mind therefore becomes crucial in the context of spiritual endeavor.

In our own day-to-day experiences we can observe that, especially on the gross level, our mind is interrelated with and dependent upon the physiological states of the body. Just as our state of mind, be it depressed or joyful, affects our physical health, so too does our physical

state affect our mind. As I mentioned earlier, Buddhist tantric literature mentions specific energy centers within the body that may, I think, have some connection with what some neurobiologists call the second brain, the immune system. These energy centers play a crucial role in increasing or decreasing the various emotional states within our mind. It is because of the intimate relationship between mind and body and the existence of these special physiological centers within our body that physical yoga exercises and the application of special meditative techniques aimed at training the mind can have positive effects on health. It has been shown, for example, that by applying appropriate meditative techniques, we can control our respiration and increase or decrease our body temperature.⁹

Furthermore, just as we can apply various meditative techniques during the waking state, so too, on the basis of understanding the subtle relationship between mind and body, can we practice various meditations while we are in dream states. The implication of the potential of such practices is that at a certain level it is possible to separate the gross levels of consciousness from gross physical states and arrive at a subtler level of mind and body. In other words, you can separate your mind from your coarse physical body. You could, for example, separate your mind from your body during sleep and do some extra work that you cannot do in your ordinary body. However, you might not get paid for it!

So you can see here the clear indication of a close link between body and mind: they can be complementary. In light of this, I am very glad to see that some scientists are undertaking significant research in the mind/body relationship and its implications for our understanding of the nature of mental and physical well-being. My old friend Dr. Benson, for example, has been carrying out experiments on Tibetan Buddhist meditators for some years now. Similar research work is also being undertaken in Czechoslovakia. Judging by our findings so far, I feel confident that there is still a great deal to be done in the future.

As the insights we gain from such research grow, there is no doubt that our understanding of mind and body, and also of physical and mental health, will be greatly enriched. Some modern scholars describe Buddhism not as a religion but as a science of mind, and there seem to be some grounds for this claim.