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# Celestine Vision

James Redfield

## About the Book

In the phenomenal international bestsellers *The Celestine Prophecy* and *The Tenth Insight*, James Redfield described an emerging spiritual renaissance and crystallized a new vision for millions of people around the world. Now, for the first time, he discusses the historical and scientific background of this planetary awakening - an awakening that will shape us and our world in the new millennium.

In this remarkable book, Redfield focuses on our individual perceptions of synchronicity and cites examples from his own experience as he clarifies how mysterious coincidences lead us toward our special destiny. Here, too, he examines one hundred years of discovery in physics and psychology to show an inevitable synthesis of Eastern and Western ideas. The unmistakable message in this convergence is that human history is purposeful, that both miracles and scientific discoveries are part of the same unbroken chain of evolution toward a better world.

Illuminating, thought-provoking and written with the same immediacy that made his earlier books so revelatory, *The Celestine Vision* takes us on a journey of discovery to the farther reaches of our memory, recalling the details of the Afterlife and a World vision that can guide our actions in the future.

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About the Author

Also by James Redfield

Copyright

THE  
CELESTINE  
VISION

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*Living the New  
Spiritual Awareness*

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JAMES REDFIELD



*For all those who hold the vision*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## PREFACE: OBSERVING THE TRANSFORMATION

IT DOES NOT take the mystery of a new millennium to convince us that something is shifting in human consciousness. For those with a perceptive eye, the signs are everywhere. Polls show a growing interest in the mystical and unexplained. Respected futurists see a worldwide search for inner satisfaction and meaning.<sup>1</sup> And the general expressions of culture—books, television documentaries, the content of the daily news—all reflect a growing outcry for a return to quality and integrity and for the rebuilding of a community-based sense of ethics.

Most important, we can sense something changing in the quality of our own experience. Our focus seems to be shifting away from abstract arguments about spiritual theory or dogma and reaching out for something deeper: the real perception of the spiritual as it occurs in daily life.

When I am asked about the popularity of my first two novels, *The Celestine Prophecy* and *The Tenth Insight*, I always reply that this acceptance is only a reflection of the mass recognition of the specific spiritual experiences these books describe.

Increasingly more of us, it seems, are becoming aware of the meaningful coincidences that occur every day. Some of these events are large and provocative. Others are small, almost imperceptible. But all of them give us evidence that we are not alone, that some mysterious spiritual process is influencing our lives. Once we experience the sense of inspiration and aliveness that these perceptions evoke, it is almost impossible not to pay attention. We begin to watch

for these events, to expect them, and to actively seek a higher philosophical understanding of their appearance.

Both of my novels are what I call adventure parables. They were my way of illustrating what I believe is a new spiritual awareness sweeping humanity. In the adventures, I was trying to describe the personal revelations that each of us seems to be experiencing as our awareness increases. Written as stories, and based on my own experiences, these revelations could be easily portrayed within a specific plot and group of characters much like they were happening in the real world.

In this role, I've always thought of myself in terms of a journalist or social commentator, attempting to experientially document and illustrate particular changes in the human ethos that I believe are already occurring. In fact, I believe the evolution continues to move forward as the culture experiences ever more spiritual insight. At least two more novels in the Celestine series are planned.

I've chosen a nonfiction format for this book because I think, as human beings, we are in a very special place in relationship to this growing awareness. We all seem to glimpse it, even to live it for a time, and then, for reasons we will discuss in this book, we are often thrown off balance and have to struggle to regain our spiritual perspective. This book is about dealing with those challenges, and the key, I believe, lies in our ability to really discuss what we are experiencing with each other, and to do so as openly and as honestly as possible.

Fortunately, we seem to have passed an important landmark in this regard. Most of us now seem to be speaking about our spiritual experiences without undo self-consciousness and fear of criticism. Skeptics still abound, but the balance of opinion seems to have shifted, so that the knee-jerk ridicule of the past is no longer so common. We once tended to hide our synchronistic experiences from others, and even to dismiss them ourselves, for fear of

being the subject of jokes and laughter. Now, in what seems like only a few short years, the scales have tipped in the other direction, and those who are too closed-minded are now taken to task for their skepticism.

Public opinion is shifting, I believe, because enough of us are aware that such extreme skepticism is nothing more than an old habit fashioned by centuries of adherence to the Newtonian-Cartesian view of the world. Sir Isaac Newton was a great physicist, but as many current thinkers have declared,<sup>2</sup> he shortchanged the universe by reducing it to a secular machine, describing it as operating only according to unwavering mechanistic laws. The seventeenth-century philosopher René Descartes preceded Newton by popularizing the idea that all we need to know about the universe is its basic laws, and that while these operations might have been first pushed into motion by a creator, they now function totally on their own.<sup>3</sup> After Newton and Descartes, any contention that there is an active spiritual force in the universe or that higher spiritual experience is anything other than hallucination was too often dismissed out of hand.

In this book, we will see that this old mechanistic worldview has been discredited since the early decades of the twentieth century, chiefly through the influence of Albert Einstein, the pioneers of quantum physics, and the newer research on prayer and intentionality. But the prejudices of the mechanistic worldview linger in our consciousness, guarded by an extreme skepticism that serves to screen out the more subtle spiritual perceptions that would challenge its assumptions.

Understanding how this works is important. In most cases, to experience higher spiritual experience, we must be at least open to the possibility that such perception exists. We know now that one actually has to suspend or “bracket” skepticism and try in every way possible to open up to spiritual phenomena in order to experience them. We

must “knock on the door,” as it has been expressed in Scripture, before any of these spiritual experiences can even be detected at all.

If we approach spiritual experience with a mind that is too closed and doubting, we perceive nothing and thereby prove to ourselves, quite erroneously and repeatedly, that higher spiritual experience is a myth. For centuries, we cast out these perceptions not because they weren’t real, but because at the time, we didn’t want them to be real. They didn’t fit into our secular view of the world.

As we shall see in greater detail later, this skeptical attitude gained supremacy in the seventeenth century because the failing medieval worldview it succeeded was so full of contrived theories, charlatans on power trips, hexes and salvation for sale, and all manner of insanity. In this setting, thinking people longed for an established, scientific description of the physical universe that cut through all the nonsense. We wanted to see the world around us as reliable and natural. We wanted to be free of all the superstition and myth, and create a world where we could develop economic security—without thinking that strange and weird things were going to pop up in the dark to scare us. Because of this need, we understandably began the modern age with an overly materialistic and simplified view of the universe.

To say that we threw the baby out with the bathwater is an understatement. Life in modern times began to feel devoid of the inspiration that only higher spiritual meaning can provide. Even our religious institutions were affected. The miracles of religious mythology were too often reduced to metaphors, and churches became more about social togetherness, moral teaching, and intellectual belief than about the pursuit of actual spiritual experience.<sup>4</sup>

Yet, with our perception of synchronicity and other spiritual experiences in the current historical moment, we are connecting with a genuine spirituality that has always

been our potential. In a sense, this awareness is not even new. It is the same kind of experience that some human beings have had throughout history, documented by a whole treasury of writers and artists around the world, including William James, Carl Jung, Thoreau and Emerson, Aldous Huxley (who called such knowing the Perennial Philosophy), and, in recent decades, George Leonard, Michael Murphy, Fritjof Capra, Marilyn Ferguson, and Larry Dossey.<sup>5</sup>

The scale on which these experiences are now entering human consciousness is, however, completely unprecedented. So many people are now having personal spiritual experiences that we are creating nothing less than a new worldview, one that includes and extends the old materialism and transforms it into something more advanced.

The social change we are talking about is not a revolution, where the structures of society are torn down and rebuilt as one ideology overcomes another. What is occurring now is an internal shift in which the individual changes first, and the institutions of human culture more or less look the same but are rejuvenated and transformed *in place*, because of a new outlook by those who maintain them.

As this transformation plays out, most of us will probably remain in the general line of work we have always pursued, in the families we love, and in the particular religions we find most truthful. But our vision of how our work and family and religious life should be lived and experienced will transform dramatically as we integrate and act on the higher experiences we perceive.

My observation—as I have expressed before—is that this transformation in awareness is sweeping across human culture through a kind of positive social contagion. Once enough people begin to live this awareness in an open way, discussing it freely, then others see this modeled awareness

and immediately realize that it allows them to live outwardly more of what they already intuitively know inside. Afterward these others begin to emulate the new approach, eventually discovering those same experiences—and others—for themselves, and go on to be models in their own right.

This is the process of social evolution and consensus building in which we are all engaged in the waning years of the twentieth century. In this way, we are creating, I believe, a way of life that will ultimately drive the next century and millennium. The purpose of this book is to more directly explore the experiences so many of us are sharing, to review the history of our awakening, and to look closely at the specific challenges involved in living this way of life every day.

It is my hope that this work will confirm the underlying reality behind the information illustrated in the first two novels of the Celestine series, and, while far from complete, will help to further clarify our picture of the new spiritual awareness already forming out there.

—J.R.  
Summer 1997



# 1

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## EARLY INTUITIONS

OUR NEW SPIRITUAL awareness first began to emerge, I believe, in the late 1950s, when, at the very apex of modern materialism, something quite profound began to happen in our collective psyche. As if standing on the pinnacle of centuries of material accomplishment, we seemed to have paused and asked, “What now?” There seemed to be a mass intuition that something *more* was possible in human life, that some greater sense of fulfillment could be attained than our culture had been able to articulate and live.

The first thing we did with our intuition, of course, was to look at ourselves—or rather at the institutions and lifestyles we saw in the culture surrounding us—with a kind of restless criticism. As has been well chronicled, the emotional climate at the time was stiff and class-oriented. Jews, Catholics, and women had a hard time attaining leadership positions. Blacks and other ethnic minorities were excluded completely. And the rest of affluent society suffered from a vast case of material judgmentalness.

With the meaning of life reduced to secular economics, status was achieved by how successful one appeared, creating all the hilarious efforts to keep up with the Joneses. Most of us were instilled with a terribly uptight *outer-directedness*, always judging ourselves according to

what those around us might think. And we yearned for a society that could somehow liberate our potential.

## THE SIXTIES

So we first asked *more* from our culture, which led to the many reform movements that characterized the 1960s. Quickly, there arose many legal initiatives seeking racial and gender equality, protection for the environment, even opposition to the disastrous undeclared war in Vietnam. We can see now that underneath the turmoil, the decade of the 1960s represented the first mass departure—the first “crack in the cosmic egg,” as Joseph Chilton Pearce called it—in the dominant secular worldview.<sup>1</sup> Western culture, and to some extent human culture in general, was beginning to look past its materialistic orientation to search for a deeper philosophical meaning of life.

We began to sense, on a scale larger than ever, that our awareness and experience need not be limited by the narrow focus of the material age, that everyone ought to be functioning and interacting at a higher level. We knew at a level deeper than we could explain that we could somehow break out and become more creative and alive and free as human beings.

Unfortunately, our first actions reflected the competitive dramas of the day. Everybody looked at everyone else, and at the various institutions that irritated us, and demanded that the social structures reform. In essence, we looked around us at society and said to others, “You should change.” While this activism certainly led to basic legal reforms that were helpful, it left untouched the more personal problems of insecurity, fear, and greed that have always been at the core of prejudice, inequality, and environmental damage.

## THE SEVENTIES

By the time the 1970s arrived, we began to understand this problem. As we shall see later, the influence of the modern depth psychologists, the new humanistic approach to therapy, and the growing volume of self-help literature in the marketplace began to filter into the culture.<sup>2</sup> We realized that we were asking others to change but were missing the conflicts within ourselves. We began to see that if we were going to find the *more* we were looking for, we had to look past the behavior of others and look within. To change the world, we first had to change ourselves.

Almost overnight, going to a therapist lost its negative stigma, and it became acceptable, even trendy, to actively explore our inner psyches. We discovered that a review of our early family history, as the Freudians knew, often created a kind of insight or catharsis about our individual anxieties and defenses, and how and when these complexes originated in our childhood.<sup>3</sup>

Through this process, we could identify ways in which we were underactualized or holding ourselves back. Immediately, we realized that this focus within, this analysis of our personal history, was helpful and important. Yet, in the end, we found that something was still missing. We found we could analyze our inner psychology for years, only to have our same old fears and reactions and outbursts come back again every time we were in situations of high stress and insecurity.

By the end of the 1970s, we realized that our intuition of *more* could not be satisfied by therapy alone. What we were intuiting was a new awareness, a new sense of self, and a higher flow of experience that would replace the old habits and reactions that plagued us. The fuller life we sensed was not about mere psychological growth. The new awareness

necessitated a deeper transformation that could only be called spiritual.

## THE EIGHTIES AND NINETIES

In the 1980s, this insight seemed to take us in three directions. The first was marked by a return to the traditional religions. With a renewed spark of commitment, many of us engaged in a rereading of the scriptures and holy rituals of our heritage, looking for the answer to our intuition in a deeper consideration of the conventional spiritual pathways.

The second course seemed to be a more general and personal spiritual search that we directed ourselves, where we sought a closer understanding of the more esoteric spiritual pathways that had been found throughout history.

The third direction was a flight from idealism or spirituality altogether. Frustrated with the introspection of the sixties and seventies, many of us wanted to recapture the sleepy materialism of the fifties, where economic life alone seemed to suffice. If anything, however, this attempt to make economic reward a substitute for the higher-life meaning we intuited only led to an inner pressure to get rich quick. The excesses that typified the decade of the 1980s were exemplified by the savings-and-loan scandals and the many stock market corruptions.

I've always called the eighties a return to the Wild West, as the three urges—an attempted return to materialism and a renewed exploration of the spiritual both old and new—convulsed and competed. As we can see now in retrospect, all were attempts to find the something *more* that we felt was just around the corner. We experimented, pretended, competed for attention, raising much of what we did to the level of a superficial fad, and, in the end, we were left disappointed.