

## No Way

[R.Hodges](#) © Oct 6 2023

The mind is like “a box filled with crazy images that are escaping through a door”:



This was generated by the AI art assistant DALL-E in response to my suggestion just quoted. It is a nice image of my mind. In truth everybody’s mind is like this, but most people keep the door shut and push the images back into the box when they threaten to pop out, such as in dreams and daydreams. Especially people do so who are infected with some preconceived notion of what kind of things should go on in their mind. Often the infectious agent is what is called a *Way*—Gurdjieff, Zen, Christianity, Tantric meditation, whatever. To me, this is a disease, the cause of much unnecessary suffering in the world.

Images such as the above are often irreverent. Here is what DALL-E generated for the suggestion “irreverence for higher beings”:



(Note the suggestive hermaphroditism)

Irreverence can be medicine for the disease. People tend to hate irreverence. Irreverence itself is a form of hate. But conscious Hate is objective and should not be objected to. Hate is one of those emotions that people usually hate, mostly when it is hate of something they are identified with. Objective hate hates what is not free, what limits inner freedom. *Faith of consciousness is freedom*, so quoth Gurdjieff’s literary alter ego Ashiata Shiemash (*Beelzebub’s Tales* p. 361).

Gurdjieff says his way is a way of *conscience*. He describes this (*Beelzebub’s Tales* p. 310) as meaning that “it is necessary to meditate continually on questions not related to the direct manifestations required for ordinary being-existence” and that “Love should predominate always”—a love that is “strictly impartial, that is to say, completely separated from all the other functions.” A love not rooted in egoism, as human love tends to be. It would not be too great a stretch to regard this Love as an expression of Objective hate. *Conscience bites*—“remorse” etymologically means “to bite back.” It has a sting. Like a bee, an iconic representation of Gurdjieff’s way.

Gurdjieff was often stung by remorse. He writes (in *Life is Real, Only Then When 'I Am'*) about using remorse to increase his ability to work. Here is a DALL-E image of “higher beings attacking Gurdjieff with the sting of conscience”:



That reminds me of a vision I had when I was being put under ether as a child.

My way is *No Way*, the *via negativa*—to not resist, to even invite such images. But to say “No” to being sucked in by them. This is the root of Art. It helps a bit if there is some skill, which usually has to be the result of training and practice. Even DALL-E takes practice to get good results. As anyone who has undertaken serious practice knows, while practice itself entails discipline, a temporary shutting of the door to everything else, there come moments when the shut door is flung open and what comes out is *Art*, art-ificial revelation of something beautiful that was not previously known. Eventually there can be not just moments but continuing flow. This is what I long for and love, whether in myself or in another. For example in music, one hears such freely flowing beauty in the works of the “great” composers, and less continuous but real moments of it in almost all music, low as well as high.

As an atheist, what is my Divinity? What is my entelechy? It is the grin of the Cheshire cat, which hangs in the air after the body has disappeared. Like the soul does. The Cheshire Cat is Trickster, like Mullah Nasr Eddin. The Mullah was an actual person, a satirist who lived in 13<sup>th</sup> century Turkey. Now all that remains of him is his snarky stories. Another trickster is Legba, the semi-divine higher being of Vodou religion, who “opens the way.” And then gets out of the way. He himself is usually not very welcome because he leaves chaos in his wake, but he must be invoked first in Vodou ritual, else the other divinities cannot enter. He is close to Ogun, god of iron

and swords and cars and (strangely) computers. They are like an old married couple: Legba makes a mess of things, and Ogun hacks through it, cuts away what needs to be cut away. I feel very close to both of them. A priestess of Candomble once told me I was under the protection of Ogun because I had just driven over 2000 miles of treacherous road. But it was no doubt my Legba who made me undertake such a foolhardy journey.

Here is DALL-E “Cheshire cat with higher beings”:



Where did the higher beings come from? Cheshire is imagining them, of course. All higher beings are imaginal. Legba lets them in.