

Unusual Brightness and Related Phenomena

A Plain-Language Guide to Chapter 9 of
Treatment with Autogenic Neutralization
Wolfgang Luthe, *Autogenic Therapy Vol. VI* (1973)
Adapted for the general reader

This document is a plain-language rendering of Chapter 9 of Luthe's *Treatment with Autogenic Neutralization*. All session transcript material, tables, and case examples are preserved verbatim from the original. The explanatory text has been rewritten for accessibility while remaining faithful to Luthe's clinical observations.

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Glossary

Terms included in this glossary are italicised on their first appearance in the main body of the text.

Autogenic — Self-generated; arising from within. In the context of autogenic therapy and neutralization, the term refers specifically to processes that are initiated, directed, and regulated by the brain's own self-organising systems, rather than by external therapeutic intervention, instruction or interpretation.

The brain is not a passive recipient of experience. It is an active, self-regulating system with powerful inbuilt drives towards equilibrium and functional health. Modern neuroscience recognises several overlapping mechanisms through which the brain continuously works to restore and maintain its own balance: **homeostasis**, the moment-to-moment regulation of physiological stability; **neuroplasticity**, the brain's lifelong capacity to reorganise its own structure and connectivity in response to experience; and the activity of the **default mode network**, which processes and consolidates experience during rest and inwardly-directed states.

When these self-regulatory systems are given adequate conditions — relaxation, passivity, non-interference, sufficient time — they tend spontaneously to engage with accumulated unresolved material and move it towards resolution. This is the autogenic process: not something imposed on the brain from outside, but something the brain does when the obstacles to its own self-curative activity are removed.

The word **autogenic** distinguishes this approach from therapist-directed methods, in which the clinician's interventions, interpretations, and suggestions guide the process. In autogenic work the therapist's role is to create and protect the conditions and context for self-regulation, not to direct its content. The brain, given the opportunity, knows what needs processing, in what order, and at what depth.

Stroboscopic stimulation, given the right supportive context, is consistent with this autogenic principle. The homeostatic intelligence of the brain makes use of the amplification that the strobe provides, recruiting it to augment oscillations that have become deficient and to rebalance those that have become excessive. Stroboscopic stimulation, in this sense, does not impose a correction from outside; it empowers the brain's intrinsic self-regulatory processes to perform a resynchronization and reset into greater functional harmony which they were already striving for. The strobe does not direct the process — the brain does. The stimulation is autogenic in its effect even when its origin is external, because what it activates is the brain's own drive towards equilibrium.

Autogenic neutralization — The overall self-regulatory process by which the brain, given the right conditions, identifies, processes, and resolves its own backlog of disturbing psychological and physiological material. The brain directs this process according to its own priorities and timing. Autogenic abreaction was the original therapeutic method for facilitating it, and has now been superseded by EMDR which essentially is autogenic abreaction plus eye movements.

Autogenic abreaction — A specific technique for facilitating autogenic neutralization, developed by Wolfgang Luthé. The person lies passively, maintains an attitude of non-interference ("passive acceptance"), and describes aloud with a running commentary whatever the brain spontaneously produces — images, sensations, emotions, movements. The brain is given freedom to pursue its own program of processing and resolution without direction or interruption. Abreaction is used here with its original meaning of 'reprocessing' or 'working through' rather than implying catharsis.

Autogenic pendulation — The rhythmic movement between opposing states that characterises brain-directed processing during autogenic neutralization. As the brain works through disturbing material, it tends to swing between extremes — darkness and light, aggression and tenderness, horror and peace, victim and aggressor — rather than approaching the material directly or continuously. Each swing reduces the charge held at either pole, gradually drawing the dynamic towards a stable middle ground just as a pendulum eventually settles at the midpoint. The endpoint of this process — neutralization — echoes the chemical

sense of the word: just as an acid and alkali interact until neither dominates and equilibrium is reached, the brain oscillates between opposing states until both lose their disturbing force and neutral balance is attained.

Thematic — Relating to a particular theme or topic that the brain is currently working on. A theme might be a traumatic event, a recurring fear, an unresolved relationship, or any other piece of disturbing material the brain has selected for processing. "Thematic" simply points to the content being worked through at a given moment.

Progression — In Luthe's framework, progression refers to the brain moving towards increasingly complex, coherent, and reality-close elaborations of a theme — working at a deeper and more differentiated level of processing. It does not refer to the emotional content becoming more positive, but to the processing itself becoming more sophisticated.

Regression — In Luthe's framework, regression refers to the brain temporarily stepping back to a simpler, more fragmented level of processing. This is a normal part of the brain's own rhythm and should not be confused with the psychoanalytic use of the term, where regression means reverting to an earlier stage of development or a younger psychological state. Luthe's regression carries no defensive connotation — it is simply the downswing in an oscillating cycle that the brain uses to advance neutralization progressively.

Introduction

Visual phenomena during autogenic abreaction may vary from elementary levels of imagery (e.g. phosphenes, colours, patterns) to highly differentiated and complex cinerama-type productions. Research into the brain-directed processes of *autogenic neutralization* has revealed that visual imagery undergoes significant changes in both colour and brightness as brain disturbances are progressively neutralized. Visual phenomena provide valuable insights into the brain's progress through stages in the neutralization of functional brain-disturbance. In particular the brightness of projected imagery seems to provide clinically useful indications of treatment progress.

A prominent feature observed during *autogenic abreaction* is the gradual transformation of perceived colours. In the initial stages of the abreactive process, individuals typically experience darker, more sombre colours. However, as the process advances and brain disturbances begin to be neutralized, the visual field becomes progressively lighter and more varied. By the terminal phase, when the stage of brain-directed termination has been reached, the colours seen by the individual are notably brighter compared to the early stages.

However, this trajectory is not generally linear. Brightness tends to increase during phases of *thematic progression*, when the brain is advancing towards more complex, coherent processing of disturbing material. When the brain encounters internal resistance, or when particularly difficult material is being processed — themes such as aggression, death, or severe anxiety — a phase of thematic *regression* may follow, in which processing temporarily steps back to a simpler, more fragmented level. The visual field tends to darken during these regressive phases. Brightness can therefore function as a running indicator of where in the progression-regression cycle of *autogenic pendulation* a session currently sits.

Higher levels of brightness tend to appear when the brain is moving in a positive direction — and they play a particular role during the middle part of a session, when the brain has made satisfactory progress in neutralizing specific areas of disturbance and is prepared to shift its focus, an increase in brightness is often noted. This heightened brightness indicates a positive brain-directed termination of the preceding phase, and signals a readiness to move forward onto the next topic of neutralization. Preceding such thematic shifts, there may be a brief interlude characterized by light, pleasant, or neutral colours accompanied by increased brightness. These interjected phases are often experienced as calming and recuperative. The positive nature

of these phases appears to foster a favourable psychophysiological state, potentially preparing for or facilitating engagement with the subsequent topic of neutralization.

In summary, visual phenomena—specifically changes in colour and brightness—serve as important indicators of the brain's progress during autogenic abreaction. Lighter and brighter imagery generally signals the successful processing of disturbing material, while darker shades may suggest resistance or incomplete neutralization. These shifts, particularly in brightness, provide valuable insights into the brain's processing of disturbing material and its self-regulatory progression towards a state of balance and self-normalization.

TABLE 12. Phases of Intense Brightness during Autogenic Abreaction
(100 Psychosomatic and Neurotic Patients)

Phases of Brightness during Autogenic Abreaction	Total Per Cent	A Bright Colour Phase Per Cent	B Bright Light Phase Per Cent	C Very Bright Light Phase Per Cent
Patients who described phases of brightness	20	20	12	5
Patients who never observed phases of brightness	80	—	—	—

Quite distinct from these commonly encountered interjected phases of medium to advanced brightness levels are rarer phases of **unusually intense brightness**. These occur in only about 20% of patients undergoing autogenic abreaction. Luthe distinguishes three levels within this phenomenon of unusually intense brightness: the **Bright Colour Phase**, the **Bright Light Phase**, and the **Very Bright Light Phase**. The Very Bright Light Phase is typically characterized by the perception of "pure light," often described as intense sunlight or blinding light, devoid of structural, chromatic, or dynamic components. In contrast, the Bright Light and Bright Colour Phases may incorporate minor structural, chromatic, and dynamic features. While the intensity of brightness serves as the primary factor in this classification, further differentiation among these phases can be observed in their spatial components, feeling tone, psychophysiological reactions, and the nature of the preceding or subsequent neutralization dynamics.

TABLE 13. Phases of Brightness — Descriptive and Experiential Differences
(Based on 100 Phases of Brightness Described by 20 Psychosomatic and Neurotic Patients)
+ = consistently present (+) = variably present — = absent

Descriptive and Experiential Variables	Bright Colour Phase	Bright Light Phase	Very Bright Light Phase
Intensity of brightness			
(a) Very bright light ("a lot of light," "extraordinary," "tremendous amount of light," "blinding light")	—	(+)	+
(b) Bright light ("like a huge illuminated mirror," "bright, sparkling like diamonds")	(+)	+	—
(c) Bright colour ("golden light," "quite white with rose and a tinge of yellow," "light blue, but very bright")	+	—	—
Spatial component			
(a) Boundless, empty space ("huge bright space," "bright sky without horizon," "void")	(+)	(+)	+
(b) Certain limits implied	+	(+)	—

("like a bright, sparkling surface of a lake," "like a brightly illuminated mirror," "like very light clouds")			
Dynamic component			
(a) Without particular dynamic features	(+)	(+)	+
(b) Certain dynamic features	(+)	(+)	—
Structural component			
(a) Without structure, emptiness	—	(+)	+
(b) Structural component implied ("like sparkling diamonds," "very light, like clouds or vapor")	+	(+)	—
Chromatic component			
(a) Pure light	—	(+)	+
(b) coloured light	+	(+)	—
(c) Bright colours (light blue, gold, silver rose, light yellow)	+	(+)	—
Feeling component (during)			
(a) Euphoric	—	(+)	(+)
(b) Very impressive ("extraordinary," "tremendous")	—	(+)	+
(c) Feeling of liberation	(+)	(+)	+
(d) Agreeable feelings	+	+	+
(e) Feeling of expansion of consciousness	—	(+)	(+)
Feeling component (after)			
(a) Feeling of "liberation"	(+)	(+)	+
(b) Feeling of calmness	+	+	+
(c) Feeling full of energy	(+)	(+)	+
Psychophysiological component			
(a) Feeling of warmth	(+)	(+)	(+)
(b) Feeling of relaxation	+	+	—
(c) Feeling of heaviness	(+)	(+)	(+)
Brain-directed component			
(a) After advanced neutralisation of particularly disturbing material has been reached	(+)	(+)	+
(b) As terminal elaborations of certain areas of thematic neutralisation (i.e., during central abreactive phase or terminal phase)	+	(+)	(+)

Note on the tables: The distinction between the three brightness categories is tentative. Individual patients vary in their perceptual sensitivity and descriptive accuracy, so not every case will fit neatly into one category. Tables 12 and 13 should be regarded as a general orientation rather than a rigid classification.

1. Bright Colour Phase

The Bright Colour Phase represents a distinct and advanced stage of visual hallucination experienced during processes of autogenic neutralization. It is characterised by a very high level of brightness combined with colour and structural elements. These visionary features permeating the bright light experience make it a unique and enriching experience for patients progressing through brain-directed processes of autogenic neutralization.

Unlike the purely luminous quality of the Very Bright Light Phase, a Bright Colour Phase retains chromatic texture: tones of light yellow, rose, pale blue, purple, silver, or gold appear in what is otherwise a predominantly white or luminous visual field. There may be dynamic qualities too — streaming light, firework-like bursts, or the impression of bright moving reflectors. These elements introduce a sense of movement and energy into the visual field, adding to the phase's vibrancy.

Unlike the Very Bright Light Phase, which is often described as a void or boundless space, the Bright Colour Phase tends to involve spatial limitations. Patients may describe imagery such as "reflecting clouds" or the "surface of a lake," which provides a more structured spatial context for the brightness.

Structural components are a defining feature of this phase. Unlike the abstract, formless light of the Very Bright Light Phase, patients frequently report seeing structures like "a mass of sparkling diamonds" or "clouds illuminated by the sun." These elements contribute to the richness of the visionary experience and provide a luminous multidimensional framework for the perceived brightness.

The psychological and physiological effects of the Bright Colour Phase are noteworthy. The feeling component is invariably agreeable, characterized by calm, recuperation, and a sense of awe and wonder. However, these feelings are generally less pronounced than those experienced during Very Bright Light Phases, and feelings of expanded consciousness are exceptional. Patient descriptions typically begin with comments on the sudden onset of brightness, followed by general statements of well-being such as "feeling better," "feeling very well," or "feeling quite relaxed and comfortable." Some patients may also report sensations of generalized warmth or heaviness in their limbs.

The Bright Colour Phase typically lasts between 10 to 90 seconds. As the phase progresses, it often transitions to other colours or more elaborate visionary elements that gradually reduce the intensity of brightness. This phase may serve as a preparatory stage for a thematic shift and a new sequence of brain-directed neutralization, indicating the brain's readiness to engage with another thematic issue.

The occurrence of the Bright Colour Phase is frequently associated with significant developments in brain-directed termination processes, heralding the end of a session. Its transient yet impactful nature highlights its role in facilitating psychophysiological balance and progress during processes of autogenic neutralization.

Case 58: A 48-year-old priest (anxiety reaction, multiple phobic and psychophysiological reactions, ecclesiogenic syndrome)

After about 70 minutes largely devoted to neutralisation of ecclesiogenic anxiety (e.g., sufferings in hell, tortures by devils, burning in the eternal fire), a Bright Colour Phase of about 60 seconds occurred. This was preceded by an intense feeling of electricity which lasted for about 20 seconds.

"Eh, I feel as if a current is passing through my body ... and now it is all yellow ... a stream of bright yellow as if coming from a reflector in the left lower corner ... ohhh, this is really beautiful ... a very bright yellow light ... almost golden ... it seems as if the light is coming from the left lower corner ... it is as if some sort of resistance has been blown up in my brain ... like a sudden eruption ... it has changed, now it is coming from the right lower corner ... now there are shades of purple ... well I think a sort of wall was overcome, I think this was in the making during the last two days...."

Case 59: A 37-year-old businessman (anxiety reaction, mild to moderate depressive reaction, mild hypertension)

After a prolonged central abreactive phase with difficult and distressing dynamics of neutralisation focusing on material related to his father's death, terminal elaborations are associated with a Bright Colour Phase which is followed by a feeling of expanded consciousness.

"Ah, I don't know it looks like, a pearl ... lot of colours, starburst-like fireworks, but all in gold shimmer ... bursts on the top left-hand corner washing over me ... the bursts of golden light are still washing down ... yes ... now I seem to have a fairly large area of consciousness ... they are sort of merging, from both sides ... like sort of spheres ... I seem to have a fairly expanded consciousness ... not as big as I have had at one time or another ... but it's quite large with a lot of shimmering in dark void...."

Case 60: A 28-year-old housewife (anxiety reaction, multiple phobic and psychophysiological reactions, ecclesiogenic syndrome)

A Bright Colour Phase is interjected after about 65 minutes of cinerama-pattern neutralisation ranging from ecclesiogenic anxiety material related to the patient's first confession (age 5) to tortures in hell and identification with the devil.

"Now I see only the claws ... I see the legs with the claws ... and that makes me think of the legs of my parent's bed ... they were like this ... ah, I am fed up ... the visual field is almost white ... now it is just white ... quite white ... I feel quite warm, particularly my face ... nothing particular is coming up ... now the visual field is gray-white ... rather gray ... there still is nothing new ... now there is a little orange in the center ... nothing particular ... now I see the fire of hell again ... and there ... I see myself in there, myself, it's really myself who is in the fire ... I see my hair burning, I see how I am ... I am burning up, I ... I ... I..."

Case 61: A 27-year-old female social worker (anxiety reaction, moderate depression, situational stress reaction, hyperthyroidism)

The brain engages briefly in the neutralisation of material related to the patient's (virgo intacta) affective deprivation. The transition to lighter colours — the Bright Colour Phase — after the crying spell indicates that the brain does not intend to continue this theme, but is about to change the topic of neutralisation.

"Now I see the inside of the theater ... I see the screen with some colours ... some blue ... it seems to be very black inside the theater ... now on the screen there's a landscape with snow ... in front of me I see a boy and a girl ... the girl leans her head ... on the boy's shoulder ... and him, he passed his arm around her back ... they stay like that without budging for a long time ... I think that I'd also like to have someone on whom I could lean my head ... and to stay like that ... without budging ... [sobs] ... now I don't see anything definite ... it's as if everything lit up ... it's white with a bit of pink and yellow ... it looks vaporous...."

2. Bright Light Phase

The Bright Light Phase is brighter than the Bright Colour Phase and, in some cases, approaches the almost-blinding intensity of the Very Bright Light Phase. However, it typically retains at least some structural, chromatic, or dynamic elements — minimal as these may be.

When spatial limits are still perceived, they are generally less marked than in a Bright Colour Phase. Patients often report a more open or expansive visual field, suggesting a reduction in the sense of boundaries or confinement.

Psychologically, the Bright Light Phase tends to produce effects similar to the Bright Colour Phase but less intense than those observed in the Very Bright Light Phase. While the experience is typically very positive, it may not evoke the profound feelings of awe, liberation and numinous encounter that accompany the more advanced phase of clear light. In some cases, the psychological impact may be muted, especially when the phase is of short duration. Patients may feel a sense of relief or accomplishment as they move through this stage.

The Bright Light Phase is most commonly observed during the central and terminal stages of the abreactive process. It frequently follows the successful neutralization of difficult or recurring thematic areas, serving as a marker of significant progress. The occurrence of this phase often signals that the brain has resolved key disturbances and is moving toward deeper levels of neutralization and stabilization.

The after-effects of the Bright Light Phase are positive although they tend to be of shorter duration and less pronounced than those associated with the Very Bright Light Phase. There seems to some extent to be a dose-dependent relationship between the intensity of the heightened luminosity and its psychological impact. Patients typically report feeling calm and unburdened after experiencing a Bright Light Phase, and the phase plays an important role in facilitating the overall brain-directed therapeutic process, contributing to the ongoing neutralization of emotional and psychological disturbances.

In summary, the Bright Light Phase represents an intermediate stage in the spectrum of brightness-related visual hallucinations, marked by its intense brightness and minimal visual features. While its psychological effects are generally less intense and shorter-lived than those of the Very Bright Light Phase, it remains an important marker of progress in resolving difficult thematic areas.

Case 62: A 33-year-old nurse (posttraumatic reaction, moderate depression)

Towards the end of a prolonged and very difficult autogenic abreaction which almost exclusively focused on neutralisation of a car accident (multiple injuries, prolonged loss of consciousness, several weeks' hospitalisation), the patient experienced a profoundly relaxing and calming phase of brightness. During her next appointment one week later, she remarked that she had felt extremely well, "almost better than before the accident."

"Ah, well ... now I see a lot ... I see like clouds ... you know like above the clouds ... a lot ... a ... well, like reflecting light ... ah ... many, many clouds, they are ... the light is sort of reflected ... ah, that's beautiful ... that would be nice ... the clouds are white...."

Case 63: A 29-year-old housewife (anxiety reaction)

After prolonged engagement in violent aggression against (a) her pious mother (identified with Christ) and (b) her younger sister, a Bright Colour Phase develops into a Bright Light Phase. A peaceful reunion with her mother is interjected, and in a symbolically related gesture the patient removes Christ from his cross to take him into her arms.

"And I bang her head against the staircase, she is bloody all over, I think she is dead ... now I see her when she was small, about two years old ... I see her in a bathing suit which I liked very much ... now it is all yellow, very bright yellow ... bright yellow ... still the same ... and there are a few white clouds in the yellow ... now it is white ... the entire visual field is white, luminous white ... oh, a very pleasant white ... very luminous white ... quite bright ... glittering white ... it is still white ... and now I am with mother, I am with mother, just we two, I am with mother ... quite peaceful ... and again the visual field became white ... very pale white ... pale white ... pale white ... still white ... it is brighter now, a luminous white ... luminous white ... luminous white, quite bright ... it is still white ... very light white ... pale bright white ... like very pleasant white light ... still the same ... and now it all disappeared ... there is nothing ... I see Christ on the cross ... always the same Christ ... and I take his left arm off, and remove the crown of thorns ... and the right arm ... his right arm ... his right arm ... and I take him into my arms..." (thematic shift).

Case 64: A 36-year-old housewife (anxiety reaction, multiple phobic and psychophysiological reactions)

Towards the end of a prolonged autogenic abreaction with advanced neutralisation of a train-car collision from which the patient emerged with multiple fractures and other injuries, a very brief Bright Light Phase occurs.

"I am waiting for the train ... maybe I'm waiting for something else, I say that it's for the train ... I don't know, maybe something is still going to come, a rhinoceros or an elephant, in any case it's big ... nothing is happening ... I'm sitting there waiting ... I'm in the sun ... now the sun is blinding me ... I have a lot of sunlight in my eyes, and I don't see anything else ... I'm trying to see, I am waiting ... nothing is happening, I'm sitting there...."

3. Very Bright Light Phase

The Very Bright Light Phase represents the most intense and transformative of the visionary experiences occurring during processes of autogenic neutralization. Marked by an extraordinary intensity of clear, almost blinding light, this phase signifies a profound breakthrough in the brain's therapeutic process. Its rarity and unexpected onset make it a pivotal moment in the course of therapy, often bringing about significant psychological and physiological shifts.

The defining characteristic of the Very Bright Light Phase is the overwhelming presence of "pure light," which is described as having "extraordinary intensity" and an "almost blinding" quality. Unlike earlier phases, there are no structural, chromatic, or dynamic elements; the visual experience is entirely dominated by pure light. This creates a sense of vastness and clarity, allowing the light to be experienced in its fullest, most direct form.

The spatial experience during this phase is often described in terms of boundlessness or void. Patients frequently report seeing "a sky without horizon," or "a huge empty space filled with very bright light." The lack of spatial limitations enhances the intensity of the light, creating a sense of infinite expansiveness, as though the patient is immersed in an boundless field of radiant energy.

The Very Bright Light Phase tends to arrive without warning after prolonged and particularly demanding sequences of inner work, when patients have successfully worked through severely disturbing material — the processing of accident trauma, confrontation with death, severely distressing childhood material — or after extended periods of emotional release, such as repeated and prolonged crying spells or visioning the fulfilment of a deeply held wish. The phase's appearance often marks a turning point in the therapy, signaling that the brain has made significant progress in resolving deep-seated disturbances.

The onset of the Very Bright Light Phase is often surprising for patients but is invariably accompanied by positive psychological effects. Patients describe feelings of liberation, as if they have been unburdened from the weight of their inner conflicts. This sense of release is often accompanied by sensations of renewal, deep satisfaction, and profound calmness. Many report experiencing a recuperative state, with feelings of warmth spreading throughout their body shortly after the phase ends. This warmth, which is generalized and intense, enhances the overall sense of recovery and healing.

The Very Bright Light Phase typically lasts between 10 and 90 seconds, after which the intensity of the light begins to diminish. As the phase progresses, the pure light gradually gives way to less bright colours, often accompanied by the reappearance of structural and dynamic elements. This transition marks the beginning of the next stage of the abreactive process, where the brain resumes its work of neutralization and elaboration.

This phase is more commonly observed during the later parts of the central abreactive period rather than in the final stages of the session. Its appearance is typically followed by a re-engagement with the same or a new area of neutralization, allowing the patient to continue processing unresolved material. The Very Bright Light Phase serves as a moment of profound clarity and resolution, after which the brain is often able to move forward with renewed focus and energy.

The after-effects of the Very Bright Light Phase are notably long-lasting and positive. Patients often experience a significant increase in positive dynamic features, such as enhanced energy, initiative, and self-reliance. This phase also facilitates the ongoing process of neutralization, making it easier for the brain to engage with and resolve conflicts which were previously blocked or insurmountable. Many patients report improvements in their overall outlook, including greater goal-directed planning and an enhanced sense of

purpose. These lasting effects highlight the Very Bright Light Phase as a crucial moment of transformation within the broader therapeutic framework of the brain-directed process of autogenic neutralization.

Case 65: A 40-year-old male teacher (anxiety reaction)

At the age of 23 this patient received a kick in the occipital area while playing as a goalkeeper, resulting in three days' loss of consciousness. After 43 autogenic abreactions marked by incoherent thematic elaborations, prolonged drowsiness, sleep-like states, speech distortions, periodic headaches, and many sensory and body-image distortions characteristic of severe head trauma, a Very Bright Light Phase occurred. It was directly followed by elaborations whose pattern and positively oriented psychedelic nature were in sharp contrast to the patient's previous autogenic abreactions. After this development he felt particularly well and a more positively oriented outlook in general was noted during the following period.

"I am floating in a pool of water ... it is like a swimming pool, the water is green and it is very sunny ... and the pool gets longer and rounder and the surface becomes a sphere and this sphere has now an intensive green colour ... and it hangs up in space, and I am orbiting around the sphere and I am only aware of my eyes and not my body ... it's like a synthesis of seeing ... and I see fantastic and rich colours ... I sort of feel an enormous intensity of sense of colour ... and now it becomes paler and paler, the whole scene gets weaker and weaker ... it is almost white ... very luminous white ... and this increases in intensity, it's extremely brilliant white, like a scene in the North, it's so brilliant ... very bright ... it is as if I have an extremely luminous screen in front of me ... and it is just my sense of seeing which is there, my body does not exist and if I exist I am invisible ... but I can see ... I can turn around completely and don't see anything of my body ... I just see ... now I travel in a fantastic kind of situation ... I feel very well ... extremely secure ... the absence of the body has something to do with vulnerability ... there is nothing which can be done to me because I don't have one body ... that's why I feel so well ... it's my head which exists with all its sense ... it's impossible to describe ... I operate on the basis of my thoughts, one thought is one reality not my head ... my head does not exist because my body does not exist ... I am in space but I am... I am travelling in a world of fantasy because I can not well evoke or create these fantastic scenes, beautiful ... and very quickly I can change from one subject to the other ... my mind is powerful enough to create these images... I can do funny things ... I see a painting ... I am inside the painting... I am a part of the content of the painting ... and this is giving me the capability... as if I am part of content of painting ... I am watching from inside out ... fantastic landscapes and beautiful gardens ... so rich and beautiful in colors it's very difficult to describe ... Victorian in character and very modern at the same time ... it's like a sort of science fiction ... as if I have a telescopic mind ... I can focus on details and can bring things closer to me and quickly examine details ... strange ... strange power of seeing ... I enjoy it tremendously ... oh boy ... and everything is really, aesthetically speaking ... very beautiful ... if I only could describe it in standard words, it's of the best taste and quality and everything is in its right place and in right composition and color and it's loaded at the same time ... this is tremendous ... I see some strange creatures and there is nothing frightening about it ... they are kinds of crossbreeds between birds and sea horses ... kind of very rich in form, very dignified, nobody acts ... I mean nothing is ... I can see ... nothing is reacting towards me ... I don't exist ... no shadow ... I am like a spirit ... I feel like a sort of powerful person because of this power I have... but I can't do anything with my power because I cannot communicate this, I have no physical form and I am not accounted for ... I can only be myself ... I can't share those experiences ... an interesting feeling ... I can't communicate I can't utter a word, I can only think and see ... my mind becomes part of things ... I am seeing through ... fantastic, complicated, most advanced mechanical devices ... hmmm... well I am going through all kinds of funny feelings, of past experiences and variations of this and it's extremely vast, I can feel roundness, and squareness ... and I feel as I move through, from one part to the other, I can feel the difference... now I am, I am the mind and I see time in a contemporary context ... I made a fantastic trip inside the machine and I am but ... I could feel like the thickness or thinness of wires ... now I am out and I can see people but they don't see me ... I am only mind and I am a spirit ... I see all kinds of funny things, people walking in the street ... they are all blue ... I see ... I am the mind ... now I see little people with white heads and full of anxiety and they are under a grid ... as if they are standing there ... and they are waiting for something ... they look funny and so equal ... now a few quick scenes of sexual activity, between men and women ... but I sort of can reach out for them, I can displace myself, it's my quality of sense of seeing ... I can bring in different directions of seeing or close them up ... so I can pick at will the direction of the activity of my mind ... I can see any kind of activity, killing, screaming ... anything ... I can do it ... I can imagine most complicated situations ... I can have very vivid presentations of what I want ... now I see a girl sticking a piece of broom handle into the ass of another one ... I can see small children picking flowers, and I can see crucifixion in case I wish ... but not on a cross but in X shape, legs pulled apart... I can see crucifixion with nails, and most horrible things... I can possibly do it... the most corny thing, the sexual things, very easy ... everything ... and I can evoke these things and it does not affect me... and I can see what is going on in other people's mind, and I can at

will focus at opposite poles ... it's a funny experience ... if I want I can be in Roman times ... I can if I wish apply a telemind and be sitting near a pilot in a plane and seconds later I can be on an Egyptian boat ... there is nothing which is out of reach ... I can see the most fantastic girl, and I can see them making love ... I can only think of a situation and I can see it ...and no barriers ... not the slightest sense of inhibition ... I can evoke the most intimate scenes of human nature ... misery ... happiness ... my images are very crisp and clear and colorful ... if only this could be taped somehow ... it's fantastic, an enlarged telemind ..hmm ... I can walk in Paris right now and I can sense the whole being of Paris, the smell, people movement, the Metro, everything I want... I can pick a girl in a group, in a crowd, and I can undress her and she keeps walking naked, and I can make clothes invisible and I can do this with everybody ... and the feeling of security is fantastic ... I can do all those things and they don't know ... because I am apparently only with my mind... I don't know if I even have eyes ... I can use all senses in an abstract sense ... I can see anything I want, war scenes, driving ... my first lovemaking ... my father and mother, my schooltimes ... before the war ... I can recall scenes which I couldn't recall otherwise ... I had an accident sliding on a bannister and I got a tremendous splinter in my ass ... I can see my father, he brought me some beautiful toys, a racing car, I could disassemble ... and a motor boat, walking along a river and launching the boat ... that was in 1937 ... fantastic... and the guy who forced me to suck his goddam prick in the concentration camp... I can jump from one scene to the other... oh boy... it's fantastic... .”

Case 66: A 40-year-old male teacher (posttraumatic reaction)

During an advanced part of the central abreactive phase, after largely difficult and disagreeable dynamics of neutralisation, a Very Bright Light Phase with characteristic features (very high degree of brightness, qualities of liberation, agreeable feeling tone, feeling of warmth, advanced thematic neutralisation with subsequent thematic shift) is described.

“Like clouds that whirl around ... and that balloon is turning and turning ... nobody in it ... now it moves into ... like huge ... it is like big space ... big bright space ... there is a lot of light ... it is almost blinding ... tremendous ... very nice ... big bright space, no horizon ... nothing below ... just blue space ... now it is moving away ... away very fast, very fast ... it disappeared ... now it appears again from below ... it is still like an endless blue space ... there is less light ... now it is more like a blue sky ... I feel quite warm ... now it changes...” (thematic shift).

Case 67: A 28-year-old businessman (anxiety reaction)

Towards the end of a thematically very demanding and prolonged central abreactive period during which one briefer Bright Light Phase had already occurred, the patient experienced a feeling of generalised warmth, felt relieved and “liberated,” and enjoyed a state of unusual well-being.

“Now it is full of light, it is much brighter than the one I had before, that was less bright ... now it is really bright ... it is as if ... it has a greater intensity ... the entire visual field is very bright....”

Case 68: A 38-year-old priest (anxiety reaction, reactive depression, multiple psychophysiological reactions, hypercholesterolaemia)

In the course of a symbolic (cineraama-type) battle between St. George and the dragon, St. George was fatally wounded and died. The dragon was then transformed into a hunting dog, and the patient walks through a poorly illuminated forest, guided by the dog.

“Now suddenly it become very light ... a very strong light and I am dressed in white ... the dog is running in front of me ... and I don't need the dog anymore to guide me ... I can see everything myself ... it is very light ... too much light ... it is very bright, almost blinding ... it hurts my eyes, I have to protect my eyes against the light ... and I look around ... everything is magnificent ... an open field in the middle of the woods ... the trees form a wide circle around the field ... the field is like an island in the forest ... I can hear the birds singing ... and I have the feeling it is a beautiful morning ... a deep feeling of hope ... I feel that something has changed ... something is going to happen....”

During a later session, another Very Bright Light Phase developed:

“I am on skis, and I begin to climb up the mountains ... I am going slowly in a zigzag course ... and I walk faster ... and the zigzag path changes into a nebulous sort of runway ... and I am projected like a rocket up to the top ... and I can see far far into the distance ... there are snow-covered mountains all around ...

and now it becomes very bright ... a very intensive white light, and I am blinded by the light, I cannot keep my eyes open, because the light is too strong ... still very bright ... and it reflects on the snow ... it is really of blinding intensity ... now it is less bright ... there is more shadow and I can look at the light and the white snow ... I can see very far ... and I start going downhill ... it is going quite fast ... and I am at the foot of the mountain ... I am still on my skis and I look around ... and suddenly there is a girl at my side ... she is also on skis ... and I embrace the girl and we hug each other ... and kiss each other ... and we are floating up into the blue-sky....”

This document presents Chapter 9 of Wolfgang Luthe, *Treatment with Autogenic Neutralization, Autogenic Therapy Vol. VI*, Grune & Stratton, 1973. The plain-language rendering is prepared for the Strobonaut project (strobonaut.com) to illustrate the therapeutic significance of unusual brightness phenomena encountered during altered-state inner work.