

CHAPTER IX

Study of man as a chemical factory – Food Diagram – Three octaves of food and their development – First stage with one mechanical shock – Second stage with one conscious shock – Third stage with second conscious shock – Relative value of the three foods – Impressions – Self-remembering – Carbon 12 – Laughter – Good and bad impressions – Impressions as different hydrogens – Control of impressions – Work on mi 12 – Centres and their speed – Higher centres and their characteristics – Connection with higher centres – Higher centres and drugs – Telepathy – Necessity to increase the production of higher matters – Energy and the storing of energy – Accumulators – Connection with the big accumulator – Yawning – All work must be concentrated on consciousness.

LAST TIME I GAVE YOU A SCALE of matter in relation to man and the human body. Every level represents a certain density of matter and a certain rate of vibrations, or, as it is called in the system, density of vibrations. The top do represents the smallest possible density of matter and the quickest rate of vibrations. Vibrations get slower and slower descending the scale and come to almost nothing at the end, while the density of matter increases correspondingly and comes to its maximum.

Each of these matters represents a very large range. Now we must study man as a chemical factory and see what role these matters play in the human body. Some of these hydrogens we can study physically or chemically while the presence of others we can determine only psychologically. Thus this table of hydrogens gives us the possibility of studying both physical and psychological manifestations as manifestations of the same order but of different degrees of materiality.

People often ask where man's energy comes from. From this point of view man can be regarded as a chemical factory that receives raw materials from outside and transforms them into other materials of a finer quality.

The three kinds of material which man gets from outside are: the food he eats, the air he inhales and the impressions he receives. Food is always H 768, air is always H 192, but impressions can be very varied. For the beginning of study, for understanding the principle, we take as a standard of impressions H 48. H 48 represents just ordinary colourless impressions without any character. If I see this piece of paper, this is impression 48, nothing more. But actually impressions can be of very good or very bad quality – we will speak about that later.

From these three kinds of material the machine produces all the matters needed for the work of centres. In the ordinary state the human machine works well enough for maintaining its own life, but as a chemical factory it is unsatisfactory, because it consumes everything it produces; it cannot export or store anything. Yet the development of man depends on storing the higher matters produced by his machine. So we must think about ways to increase the production. But before we can think about increasing production we must study the factory from the point of view of waste, for there are many leaking parts in the machines, and if we do not stop these leaks, increased production will only increase the leaks. We have already spoken about the leaks, so, although I will now show you how the factory works, and even how production can be increased, the leaks are not shown in the diagram. But they are all in you, and you must remember that you cannot increase production in your present state, for first of all you must stop all the leaks. After this is done, it will be useful to learn practical ways of improving the work of the factory. This is the principle.

I will show you three stages or three states of this chemical factory: first, how it works in ordinary man 1, 2 and 3, then how it works with one definite kind of effort and, finally, how it works with a second definite kind of effort.

We take the human machine as a three-storied factory. The three stories represent the head,

the middle part of the body and the lower part of the body with the spinal cord.

Food enters the top story and passes to the bottom story as Oxygen 768. In the body it meets with a certain Carbon 192 and, mixing with this Carbon, becomes Nitrogen 384. Nitrogen 384 meets with another Carbon, 96, and with the help of this Carbon changes from Oxygen 384 to Nitrogen 192. It is an ascending octave, so these stages represent the notes *do, re, mi*.

After *mi* there is an interval and the octave cannot develop any further by itself. It is very interesting that up to this point and one step further we can follow its development with the help of ordinary physiological knowledge. When food enters the mouth it meets with several different sorts of saliva and is mixed with them in the process of mastication; then it passes into the stomach and is worked on by gastric juices, which break down sugars, proteins and fats. From there it goes into the intestines and meets with bile, pancreatic and intestinal juices, which transform it into the smallest elements. These go through the wall of the bowel into venous blood, which is taken to the liver, where it meets with other carbons which change it chemically, and so to the heart, which pumps the venous blood to the lungs. Here it is oxygenated by the entry of air and returned to the heart as arterial blood. In this diagram all the various matters present in the body which the food meets with up to *mi* are divided into two categories: Carbon 192 and Carbon 96. Venous blood is *mi* 192 and arterial blood is *fa* 96.

At the point when *mi* 192 cannot develop any further, another kind of food enters – air. It enters as Oxygen 192, meets with a certain Carbon 48 and with its help is transformed into *re* 96, and this production of *re* 96 gives a shock to *mi* 192 of the food octave enabling it to pass to *fa* 96. Beyond this, physiological knowledge cannot go.

Re 96 of the air octave meets a corresponding Carbon and produces *mi* 48; and with the help of the same Carbon *fa* 96 of the food octave transforms into *sol* 48. *Sol* 48 can develop further, but *mi* 48 cannot, so the development of the air octave stops at this point. *Sol* 48 of the food octave passes into *la* 24 and *la* 24 into *si* 12, and stops there.

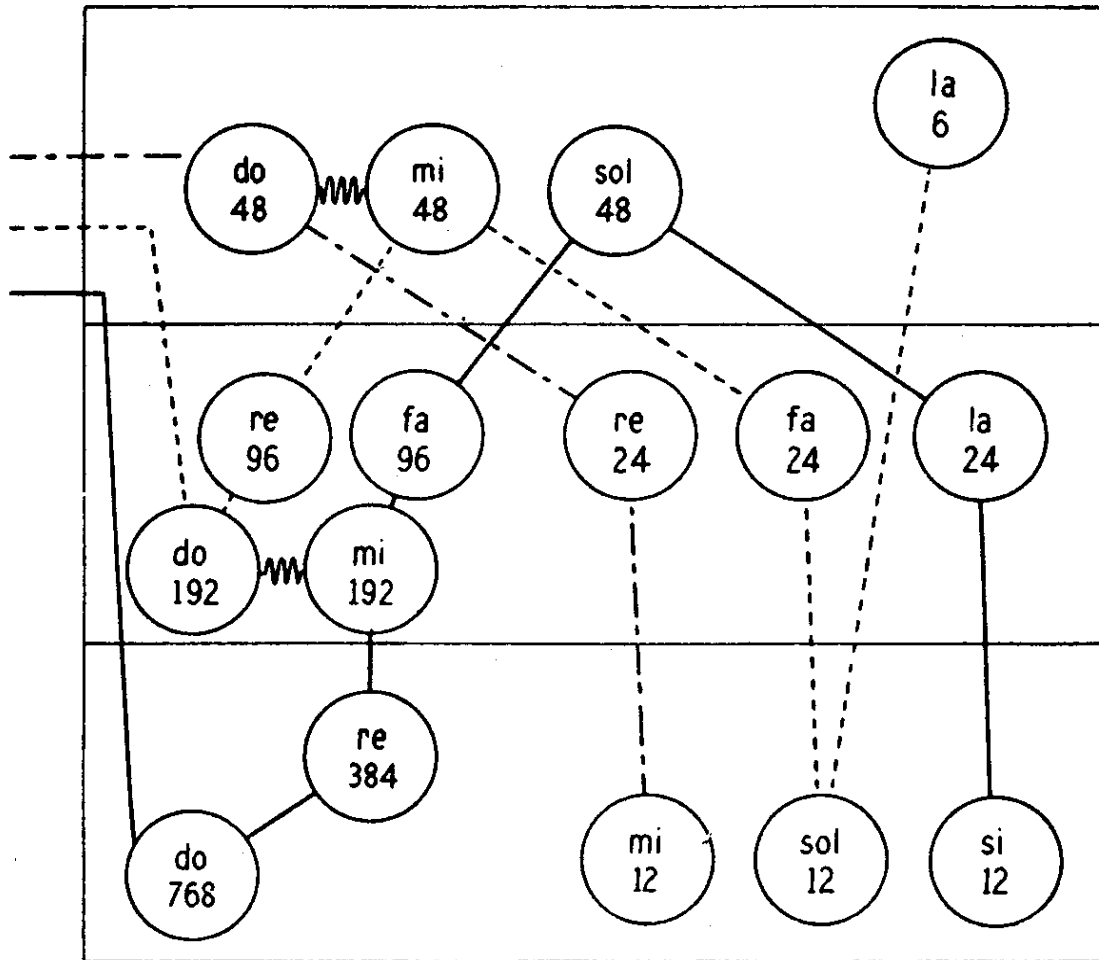
Impressions enter as *do* 48, but cannot develop any further, because at their place of entry there is no Carbon 12 to help them. Nature has not provided it, or rather has not provided enough to produce any considerable effect, so *do* 48 does not transform and the three octaves stop at that.

Think about this diagram and connect it with what has been said earlier, that nature brings man to a certain state and then leaves him to develop himself. Nature gives man possibilities, but does not develop these possibilities. It enables him to live, provides air, for otherwise the first octave could not go on, but the rest he must do himself. The machine is so arranged that air enters at the right moment and in the right consistency and gives a mechanical shock.

It is important to understand that the Food Diagram or the Diagram of Nutrition consists of three stages.

The first stage that I have just described shows how things happen in ordinary normal man: the food octave goes on all the way from *do* 768 to *si* 12; there are three notes of the air octave and one note of the impressions octave. If we want to develop further, we must increase the production of higher matters, and in order to do that we must understand and know how to do it, not only theoretically but in actual fact, because it needs a long time to learn how to use this knowledge and to make the right efforts.

If we know how to bring Carbon 12 to the right place and if we make the necessary effort, the development of the air and impressions octaves goes further. The second stage shows what happens when the right shock has been given. *Do* 48 of the impressions octave is transformed into *re* 24 and *mi* 12. The air octave receives a shock from the impressions octave and *mi* 48 transforms into *fa* 24, *sol* 12 and even a small quantity of *la* 6. You must understand that the air is saturated with higher hydrogens which, in certain cases, can be retained by the organism in the process of breathing. But the amount of higher hydrogens that we can get from the air is very small. This stage represents the work of the human machine with one mechanical and one conscious shock.



The third stage shows what happens when a second conscious shock is given at the right place. The first conscious shock is necessary at *do* 48. The second conscious shock is needed where *mi* 12 of the impressions octave and *si* 12 of the food octave have stopped in their development and cannot go on any further by themselves. Although there are carbons in the organism which would help them to be transformed, they are far away and cannot be reached, so another effort is necessary. If we know its nature and can produce this second conscious shock, *mi* 12 will develop into *fa* 6 and *si* 12 into *do* 6. The effort must begin from *mi* 12, so we must understand what *mi* 12 is psychologically. We can call it our ordinary emotions, that is to say, all strong emotions that we may have. When our emotions reach a certain degree of intensity, there is *mi* 12 in them. But in our present state only our unpleasant emotions actually reach *mi* 12; our ordinary pleasant emotions usually remain 24. It is not that our intense unpleasant emotions actually are *mi* 12, but they are based on it and need it in order to be produced. So the beginning of this second effort and preparation for it is work on negative emotions.

This is the general outline of the work of the human organism and of how this work can be improved. It is important to understand where conscious shocks are necessary, because if you understand this it will help you to understand many other difficulties in the Food Diagram.

You must understand, too, that these three octaves are not of equal force. If you take the force of the food octave, you will see that it gives certain results, certain effects that can be measured. Although the matter taken from air plays a very important part, the air octave represents a very small quantity of hydrogens, whereas the impressions octave is very power-

ful and may have an enormous meaning in relation to self-remembering, states of consciousness, emotions and so on. So we can say that the relationship of the three octaves is not equal, because one has more substance, another less substance.

This is our inner alchemy, the transmutation of base metals into precious metals. But all this alchemy is inside us, not outside.

Q. What causes transformation of food into higher matter?

A. It is mixed with other matters higher than itself and in that way it rises; then it becomes mixed with still higher matters and rises again, and so on. Take it in a simple way.

Q. It never reaches the level of the highest matter it is mixed with?

A. That does not matter. What matters is that it rises, it becomes higher than itself. Higher matters contain more energy, coarser matters contain less. So when they mix, higher hydrogens bring their energy into coarser matters.

Q. Can higher matter be produced by prayer and mental exercises?

A. It is not produced out of nothing, but in man's inner alchemy higher substances are distilled out of other, coarser material which otherwise would remain in a coarse state.

Q. Why is it that the first conscious shock comes from impressions?

A. The shock does not come from impressions, this is not quite the right definition. Impressions are a very important food, and in our ordinary state we are starved of impressions. We have enough impressions, but we cannot digest them.

Q. Do we have to produce Carbon 12, or is it in the organism?

A. Generally a man has enough carbons for ordinary normal life, and there may even be a store of them. It does not mean that we have to produce Carbon 12; we must bring it from one part of the machine to another part – and this means special effort. We will not know we are doing it, but by making this special effort we will be bringing Carbon 12 from one place to another. But, of course, if there is not enough in the body we cannot bring it there. If you have money, you can put it in one pocket or another, but if you have none you cannot – it is quite simple.

Q. Is this special effort the general training in the system?

A. The first conscious shock is self-remembering, together with all you are advised to do from the beginning, that is, self-observation, non-identifying and so on. It is all part of this effort.

Q. What is the second conscious shock which changes the character of the factory?

A. If you like, I can tell you what it is, but it will not help, because it is precisely what we cannot do. It is the transformation of negative emotions into positive emotions. It is possible only with long work on self-remembering, when you can be conscious for a long time, and when higher emotional centre begins to work. This is what brings us to the state of man No. 5, so it is very far from where we are now. *Mi* 12, combined with a special effort, can produce positive emotion.

Q. It seems to me that to produce any useful results in the direction of being more awake it is necessary for both the conscious shocks to be working?

A. Yes, to produce complete results certainly both shocks must be given, but when the first shock is sufficiently strong it already produces certain results. But, as a matter of fact, they generally work together, because from the very beginning we must learn not to express negative emotions, and this is already work on the second conscious shock. The first shock is in the nature of self-remembering, and then it produces struggle with negative emotions, so after some time one actually works on both. The more result you get in one, the more you have to work on the other. This explains another principle we meet with in the system – that the more one does, the more is expected of one. It is the same in the Food Diagram – the more one tries to work on self-remembering, the more one must be able to control negative emotions, with the idea of being able in the future to transform negative emotions into positive emotions. But this is very far, because one has to have a great deal of material created

for self-remembering. All the same, the two shocks are connected and, in a way, the one cannot work without the other.

Q. Does the word ‘shock’ in connection with the diagrams mean the same thing as shocks in ordinary life?

A. Shocks connected with the Food Diagram must come from you – it is your own action. It is necessary to know the moment and remember to give shocks. And they must be very carefully given, for only the right kind of shock will help in those particular octaves, otherwise they will branch off.

Q. Can you give a practical example?

A. Practical examples are in the Food Diagram. You must try to find analogous things in your own actions. The first shock is provided by nature where air comes in. But at the second interval no shock is provided by nature and it must be provided by self-remembering. Also at the third interval no shock is provided and it must be given in exactly the way we have been speaking about – by transforming negative emotions into positive, produced by non-identification.

The first conscious shock prepares for the second and the second prepares for the first. It is all simultaneous, you do not finish one and pass to the other.

Q. Are shocks necessarily unpleasant?

A. They necessitate effort, but they are not necessarily unpleasant. On the contrary, at the moment of this effort, with the entry of new energy, one may be very pleasantly surprised.

Q. Can the effort to control attention act as the first conscious shock, and does it bring Carbon 12 to *do* 48?

A. No, it is not enough. There must be self-remembering: actually, self-remembering connected with self-observation – two activities. This is what makes consciousness. One tries to be more conscious of oneself and of one’s surroundings – of everything.

Q. Could we hear more about what Carbon 12 is? Where does it come from?

A. Carbon 12 may have many different manifestations, but generally we speak about it in relation to impressions. It is probably some energy of the emotional centre. But the important thing is not the source. What is important is how to bring it. What it is and where it comes from does not matter, because we cannot see it, we do not know where this place is. Normally Carbon 12 comes from the emotional centre, and Hydrogen 12 is the matter with which the emotional centre should work. Impressions come in as Oxygen 48 and can be transformed into Nitrogen 24 only with the help of Carbon 12, but it happens that exactly at the place where impressions can be assimilated there is no Carbon 12, or only a little. So we must bring it there by a special effort, and this effort is self-remembering and self-observation. So the method is important, not the source. Intensified observation brought about by self-remembering always has an emotional element. When you remember yourself you bring Carbon 12 to the right place and it can transform impressions.

I speak in this language because you asked your question in this language, but it can be observed psychologically. Impressions come in and you do not feel them, which means that they come and do not go on. But you can make an effort to remember yourself, and then you begin to notice things. This means that impressions have become 24. Absence of Carbon 12 at the necessary place means that we are not emotional enough. By self-remembering we bring an emotional element to that particular place.

Q. Are the two other Carbons at *mi* 48 and *sol* 48 the same?

A. I think there is a little difference at *mi* 48, although they all have an emotional element. At *sol* 48 the same Carbon works as at *do* 48, but at *mi* 48 it may be instinctive-emotional. It is quite possible that *mi* 48 works through Carbon 12 from the instinctive centre which is always there.

Q. What does *mi* 48 represent?

A. This too is arterial blood. It is a recognized fact that blood can be of very different kinds. It can be established physiologically that in different parts of the body blood has different qualities. Chemically it can also be established that its action is different, but what the difference is, science cannot tell. For instance, muscles are fed on blood 96, but brain cells are fed on blood 24, and some nerve cells are fed on blood 12 and even 6.

Q. Do you mean that there is a chemical difference in the blood feeding muscles and brain?

A. It cannot be established, although it is known that there is a certain difference. Generally the presence of certain matters is recognized by their effect, but they themselves cannot be separated chemically. Science does not know the history of the blood stream: at each point it gives certain things and receives certain things. Before it reaches one or another organ it is one kind of blood, when it leaves it, it is different.

Q. When one has a moment of awareness, does it lead to any immediate alteration in the blood?

A. Yes it does, but that depends on how deep it is and how long. If it is one second, it produces certain alterations corresponding to one second; if it is half an hour, that is another thing.

Q. Can you notice even the result of one second?

A. Sometimes you can, if it is sufficiently deep. You can notice the result in the sense that you see more, that ordinary sensations become more emotional. But short moments of self-awareness, just on the surface, do not produce much effect, whereas if it is sufficiently deep and long you will have impressions that you will never forget afterwards.

Q. What hydrogen is thought?

A. It can be very different, just as blood is different. It begins with 48 and can go up to 6.

Q. Can thought count as impressions?

A. Yes, but the amount of impressions coming from inside is limited; but the amount of impressions coming from outside is unlimited.

Q. Is everything in the first stage of the Food Diagram entirely mechanical?

A. Certainly it is all mechanical; it is a cosmic arrangement. Man's organism works according to this general scheme, if he does no work on himself and does not try to change his state of consciousness.

Q. In ordinary state one makes no use of impressions?

A. Very little. In this diagram it is impossible to show the small quantity that gets transformed, so we say that impressions octave goes no further. But some pass on, although not enough for development.

Q. As we are now, are all impressions on the same level?

A. Oh no. Impressions can be very varied. In the Food Diagram we take them as H 48 because that represents the great majority of impressions. They are, so to speak, indifferent impressions – maybe of one kind, maybe of another; but by themselves they produce no effect. Yet at the same time they are food. They reach us as 48, and in our ordinary state they do not go further. Man would not be able to live in these conditions. But there are some impressions 24 – not as many as 48 but a certain quantity of them; and in very rare cases there may be impressions 12 and even 6, but these are exceptional. They do not enter into this diagram because they transform themselves. If they come as 24 they may easily be transformed into 12 and maybe further. But they come in a very small quantity

In ordinary man, who is not learning to remember himself, some of these ordinary impressions 48 are also transformed, but in quite a different way. They are developed further, or helped to develop further, by reactions of a certain kind – for instance, by laughter. Laughter, in the sense of humour, plays a very important part in connection with impressions – again remember that I said in an ordinary man. With the help of laughter many impressions 48 are transformed into 24. But this is only because it is necessary for life, for we could not

live without impressions. You remember I said that our chemical factory works only for itself. It produces all kinds of very precious materials, but it spends them all on its own existence. It has nothing in reserve and nothing with which to develop itself. So if man wants to change and become different, if he wants to awaken his hidden possibilities, he cannot rely on the mechanical means of production; he must look for conscious means. But man's organism is such a wonderful invention that everything is taken into consideration, everything has its own key, so to speak. A function that looks useless, such as laughter, helps to transform certain impressions which otherwise would be lost. If there were no laughter or humour on our level, this level would be even lower than it is now

It can be said that for a man on the ordinary level who does not try to understand what self-remembering means, or who never heard of it, laughter fulfils a certain definite function in the organism. It replaces self-remembering in a very small, insufficient way, since it helps quite dull, uninteresting impressions to pass further and become vivid. This is the chief function of laughter. Of course, there are many different kinds of laughter, some quite useless.

What I just said about laughter and humour refers only to ordinary centres, in higher centres it is no longer useful. It means that a certain impression falls simultaneously on the positive and negative parts of a centre and this produces a feeling of exhilaration. It helps to see the other side, increases the capacity of seeing things. But in higher centres there is no need for it. In higher centres we see things not as contradictions, not as opposed to one another, but we see them as they are.

Q. Laughter seems to have a physiological effect.

A. Yes, maybe a contradictory impression that cannot be harmonized produces a tension, and laughter relaxes it.

Impressions 48 enter constantly. As I have said, a certain amount changes mechanically but the greater amount remains unchanged. They can be changed by our becoming conscious, or trying to become conscious. If we are more awake, our impressions become more vivid.

Impressions based on or requiring only Hydrogen 48 are impressions we almost miss or notice very little. An impression that attracts attention and leaves a trace already passes to 24. If you try to analyse your past and write down what you actually remember of some particular episode in it, you will see how little you do remember. This is a better way to study the material of impressions.

Q. Is an impression anything I get through the medium of the five senses?

A. An impression is the smallest unit of thought, sensation or emotion.

Q. I cannot understand how impressions can be food?

A. Taking in impressions means that a certain energy comes in with them. All energy that you receive is food. The food you eat is coarse material, air is finer, impressions are the finest and the most important food. Man cannot live a single moment without impressions. Even when he is unconscious there are impressions.

Q. Are some impressions good and others bad in themselves, or are they what you make them?

A. Some impressions may be bad in themselves; I do not know how impressions can be good in themselves, because if one is asleep the best impressions will produce nothing. So even if impressions are good in themselves, in order to benefit from them, it is necessary to be more awake. But bad impressions can come in sleep, there is nothing to stop them.

Q. I really meant impressions that are pleasant or unpleasant.

A. Many pleasant impressions may be quite bad. Try to understand one thing: impressions can be classified by hydrogens. Every impression is a certain hydrogen. We have spoken of impressions 48, but there may be much higher impressions. On the other hand impressions can belong also to the lower hydrogens of the third scale, down to the lowest. The most important thing in the division of matters in the hydrogen table is that it shows where each

hydrogen comes from. Suppose you have a certain hydrogen to think about. Looking for its position in the table of hydrogens you can see that it has a definite place: it may come from the interval between the Absolute and the sun, or perhaps from a little above the sun, or from below the earth, between the earth and the moon, and so on. This possibility of placing hydrogens is an enormous advantage. At present you cannot appreciate the significance of the fact that in every matter we can know not only its density but also the level it comes from – its place in the whole scheme of things. Our science has no approach to this yet and does not realize that matters are different by reason of the place they come from. You must understand that H 12 has an enormous advantage over, say, H 1536, so an impression that comes from 12 is one kind of impression, and an impression that comes from below the earth, say from the moon, is of quite a different kind. One is light matter, full of quick vibrations, the other consists of slow, harmful vibrations. So if you find that an impression is heavy, unpleasant – it is difficult to find the right adjective to describe it – you can tell by this very fact that it comes from some low part of the Ray of Creation. Things that make you angry, make you hate people, or give you a taste of coarseness or violence, all these impressions come from low worlds.

Q. Are we, in normal circumstances, in a position to receive the impressions we need?

A. It depends on what you call ‘normal circumstances’. In normal circumstances in the sense of existence, we have enough, otherwise we would die. Since we do not die, it proves that we receive enough. But we are not satisfied with that. We speak about awakening and development, and here a cosmic fact comes to our aid. We cannot improve our food, because it is the only food we can eat. We cannot improve air, because it is the only kind of air we can breathe. But we can improve impressions. This is our only chance. How can we do that? Not by travelling, or going to the theatre, or something like that, but simply by awaking, or trying to awake.

Q. Is it possible to receive higher hydrogens in our present state?

A. It depends on what your present state is and on how much you have. It is like alchemy; you can make gold only if you have a certain amount of gold. Higher hydrogens have magnetic properties, they attract other higher hydrogens. If we have very little, that can attract only very small quantities, corresponding to what we have. But if we have more, we can get more. Remember the sentence in the New Testament which says that it shall be taken from those who have not and given to those who have. It refers to this.

Q. Can you accept or reject impressions just as you can eat one thing rather than another?

A. You can use some impressions and not others, if you have a certain control, but that requires a certain degree of awakening and a certain training. The more you remember yourself, the more control you will have. If you remember yourself sufficiently, you can stop certain impressions, you can isolate yourself – they will come, but they will not penetrate. And there are other impressions to which you can open yourself and they will come without delay. It is all based on self-remembering.

Q. If an impression tends to cause a certain reaction and that reaction is prevented, is that injurious?

A. All impressions must produce some reaction, but you can control these reactions according to the general balance of your work, the tendencies of your life and so on. Any control and experience in this must be connected with work on the lines of this system, and then it cannot be injurious. Nothing connected with self-remembering can be injurious.

Q. At first the effort to remember oneself seems to reduce impressions.

A. They cannot be reduced, they can only be increased if it is self-remembering. If it is thinking about self-remembering, it may appear to diminish certain impressions.

Q. Can you tell us more about different kinds of impressions?

A. You can know much more by observation than by asking questions, because you yourself

know what attracts you more, what attracts you less, what repels you, and soon. There are many subjective things: one person is attracted to one thing, another is repelled by the same thing. Certain impressions go to the intellectual centre, others to the emotional centre, yet others to the moving or instinctive centre. Some of them you like more, others less. This is all material for observation. Each centre has its own apparatus for receiving impressions, but they often become mixed. Sometimes the intellectual or the emotional centre tries to receive impressions intended for another centre, but each of them is meant to have separate impressions. For instance, the impression of smell cannot be received by the intellectual centre – it is received by the instinctive centre.

Impressions are easier to analyse than food. People can persuade you that something is good food and sell it in a tin, and then you find that you cannot eat it; but by observation, by comparing, sometimes by talk with other people you can understand which impressions belong to higher levels and which to lower.

Q. Are the impressions we must not admit the ones which give rise to negative emotions?

A. You can define it like that, only sometimes they do not immediately give rise to negative emotions.

Q. Even if you can distinguish between one kind of impressions and another, I do not see how you can accept or reject them?

A. By being awake. If you are asleep, you cannot. But when you are awake, maybe not at once, for it needs certain work – one time you are conquered by wrong impressions, another time you are conquered, then the third time you manage to isolate yourself. But before that it is necessary to know what kinds of wrong impressions affect you, and then you can find special methods for isolating yourself.

Q. You mean that if you observe you can avoid those impressions which make you negative?

A. I did not speak about things that make you negative, but about bad impressions. You change the meaning. I spoke about impressions themselves. As to what can make you negative, that depends on your state. In a certain state anything can make you negative, even the best thing in the world.

Q. Could one stop having impressions if one wanted to?

A. No, certainly not. You cannot stop impressions altogether, but, as I said, you can keep off undesirable impressions and attract to yourself another kind of impressions, for we must already understand that certain impressions we must not admit. There are many wrong impressions which may spoil one's whole life if one admits them for a sufficiently long time, or if one has the habit of looking for certain bad impressions. For instance, people stand in the street looking at a street accident, and then talk about it until the next accident. These people collect wrong impressions. People who gather all kinds of scandal, people who see something wrong in everything – they also collect wrong impressions. You have to think not so much about choosing the right impressions as about isolating yourself from wrong impressions. Only by doing this will you have a certain control. If you try to choose right impressions, you will only deceive yourself. So, although you cannot bring desirable impressions to yourself, you can, even from the very beginning, learn to control them by isolating yourself from certain kinds of wrong impressions.

Again you must remember that, in order to control impressions, you must already awake to a certain extent. If you are asleep, you cannot control anything. In order to control quite simple, obvious things you must awake and practise, because if you are accustomed to impressions of a certain kind which are wrong for you, it will take some time. One 'I' will know that it is necessary to isolate yourself, but maybe ten other 'I's will like these impressions.

Q. Is the impression that a creation of objective art can produce an example of higher impression?

A. It depends entirely on you and your state. If you are in intellectual centre, it may produce no impression; if you are in moving centre, it will produce still less, but if you are in emotional centre, it can produce an impression.

Q. Does each hydrogen determine the activity of which one is capable?

A. This is formatory. Try to think along the lines that are given. We are speaking about impressions. You do not understand it, and yet you try to bring in more. It means that your mouth is full of food and you try to put in more and choke yourself. Swallow first.

Q. That is what I find so difficult – I never really follow.

A. It *must* be difficult; all work is difficult. Nothing is easy in the work, but you can get something *because* it is difficult. If it were easy, you would get nothing.

Q. How is it that man, as he is, is able to appreciate the high hydrogens that must be in B influences?

A. Man's centres are made for work with very high hydrogens and for receiving very high impressions. He may not receive them, he may live on lower impressions, but he is capable of receiving very fine impressions and he gets these from B influences.

Q. Then why is it that some people are born like that and some are not?

A. People are different, they are not made on the same pattern, besides, there may be many defects due to degeneration, diseases, pathological states. All normal people must be able to receive these impressions, but first they must be normal.

Q. When hydrogens are transmitted from higher worlds to lower, are they made lower?

A. No, they can be transmitted in a pure form. The question is, can you receive them? They can only be received by certain parts of centres.

Q. Can you receive them and then debase them?

A. If one part of you receives high influences and another part low influences, this may create an explosion.

Q. Can we in time observe which hydrogen is which?

A. To a certain extent you can. After a certain time of observation you will know the difference, for example, between emotions 24 and 12, or between impressions 48 – tasteless things – and impressions 24. But you must understand that each hydrogen shown in the Table is a *do* and between it and the next hydrogen there is a whole octave, so there is an enormous distance between one hydrogen and another. To understand the principle we create standards for thinking – we cannot begin by studying the whole scale in detail.

Q. What is the point at which the possibility of further transformation of the three octaves of food exist?

A. As I said, the possibility of further transformation exists at the point where impressions enter the body as do 48, but ordinarily fail to develop for lack of Carbon12 at the place of entry. In mechanical functioning, the entry to impressions by the senses immediately gives rise to associative thinking or imagination on the level of H 48, or to emotional reactions of a more or less instinctive nature.

Very occasionally – in times of emotional stimulation or danger, for instance – it may happen that Carbon 12 is brought to the point of entry of impressions. Everything is then related to the emotional state, and man has the impression that all he sees is extraordinarily vivid, new and significant. But in ordinary man such experiences are accidental, they lead nowhere and are quickly overlaid with imagination. The emotional condition which gives rise to them passes, and is replaced by an impulse or desire leading in a quite different direction. Such experiences in an ordinary man are disconnected and have nothing to do with the intentional development of consciousness.

With the attempt to self-remember many new sensations begin to awaken in man, particularly sensations connected with his own existence and his relation to the surrounding world. And these in turn may give rise to the realization of the different influences playing

upon him and to the possibility of choosing between them.

Q. How do you know when emotional centre is working with H 12?

A. After a time you will know by a different taste. It is the same as knowing the difference between thinking about eating and actually eating. With a certain practice of self-observation we can distinguish each of these manifestations and put labels on them. In the ordinary way we recognize differences in emotions – one is more emotional or less emotional. Observing with a certain purpose we shall see how this or that emotion must correspond to a certain density. Only you must not begin with H 12 for it is very unusual. When we know its taste we will never mistake anything else for it.

Q. Must we draw a distinction between impressions and the things which produce them?

A. Yes, a drum is different from the sound of the drum, so you cannot say that the moment you hear it the drum enters into your being. So if you want to take it theoretically, you must separate them. But for what purpose? What is important now is to understand that if we do not remember ourselves we are open to impressions which may be very low on the scale of hydrogens.

Q. But the hydrogen varies according to which centre the impression is made on?

A. A hydrogen means a certain matter. How can it differ by being in one room or another? I have explained already that each centre is adapted to work with a certain hydrogen. One centre needs a lower, another a higher hydrogen. If it uses a wrong hydrogen, that produces wrong work in one or another sense, depending on which hydrogen is used and how it is used.

Usually centres try to steal better energy, but sometimes they work on worse energy, try to be lazy. Sometimes instinctive centre tries to work on energy 48, for instance; this leads to very bad work and one becomes ill. Often illness is the result of that.

Q. Can one control that?

A. To some extent. It has to do with negative emotion. Energy can be distracted from the right places and put in the wrong places by negative emotion. As long as one cannot control negative emotions one cannot control anything else as regards instinctive centre. There is only one way of saving energy and many ways of wasting it.

Q. Do vivid impressions use a different energy from faint ones?

A. Not use, they bring energy. If you have vivid impressions it means that certain hydrogens enter into you. Receiving impressions means getting a certain matter into yourself.

Q. When one has a very high impression, why does it often make such a devastating effect?

A. If a really high impression produces a devastating effect, it means that we are in a very bad state; all the machine works wrong, all centres use wrong hydrogens, we are too asleep, have too many buffers. It should not produce such an effect in a normal machine. Higher impressions should produce not a devastating but a liberating effect.

Q. What is the relation between *si* 12, *mi* 12 and *sol* 12?

A. You will understand this later. If you like, I can say that *mi* 12 refers to the emotional centre, *sol* 12 to the instinctive centre and *si* 12 to the sex centre. We can work only on *mi* 12. We have too little of *si* 12, and *sol* 12 passes higher to a very small amount of H 6 which, though it is so small, keeps the higher centres alive.

Q. What is the characteristic of *mi* 12? How to recognize it?

A. As I have already explained, it is the energy behind negative emotions. It does not mean that all negative emotions reach the intensity of H 12, but they can reach it, and intense negative emotions burn *mi* 12.

Q. Why does one need to study the food factory? Does it hold an important place in the system?

A. A very important place. Again, it depends on what you want. If you want to know yourself with the idea of improving the work of your machine, you must know everything about yourself that is important; and knowing how your machine works and what materials it

receives is very important because, with the help of these diagrams, you can understand what you are doing; otherwise, even if you try to do something, you will not know.

Q. It is difficult to see where the third force enters in the Food Diagram. Is it just the result of the other two?

A. Very often it looks like result, but if you think one minute you will see that it is not like that. Take the process of digestion. All the stages of the process are continually going on in the organism. Suppose one is not actually eating at a given moment, but the third and fourth triads of the digestive process are in action; this means that a certain amount of what you call 'result', which is the third force, is already there, for if it were not there, perhaps things which look in the diagram as if they precede that stage, would not happen. It is necessary to understand that not only carbons but also nitrogens must be there. We cannot determine the moment when the Food Diagram begins. It begins when one is born, or soon after, and then it goes on throughout life. For example, it is well known in ordinary physiology that certain processes in the mouth happen in the way they do because certain other processes in the stomach happen in a certain way. It is all connected and what looks like result is very often the cause.

Well, as I said, what is important to understand first is that this Table of Hydrogens shows from which layer of hydrogens each matter comes. With the help of this Table you can see that all the hydrogens in our body, what we eat, what we drink, the air we inhale, all our impressions and many other things, all come from different layers of matter in the Ray of Creation. In this way we can see the relation of every action, every thought, every function to a certain part of the universe governed by its own laws. We think it is all on earth, but although things happen on earth their origin is not on earth – it may be above or below the earth. And this is what the Table of Hydrogens shows.

Energies or matters existing in the outside world can only be understood or assimilated by man in so far as he already has corresponding hydrogens in himself. Thus in order to become receptive to the higher matters or influences he has to produce in himself sufficient corresponding hydrogens to set his higher centres working.

From this point of view self-study becomes the study of the working of different energies in oneself; of their present wastage in useless and harmful functions, and their possible accumulation for the purpose of self-development.

The Study of hydrogens and their relation to one another also helps us to understand centres and their different speeds. Intellectual centre works with H 48, moving and instinctive centres with H 24, emotional centre should work with H 12, but it never receives the right fuel and never works as it should. If we could make it work faster, it would make a great difference to our perceptions and other faculties.

Q. I do not understand about the speed of emotions. How can it be measured?

A. By realizing how many different feelings can pass in you during one thought or during one swing of the pendulum.

Q. By speed of emotions do you mean the time between the cause and effect of an emotion?

A. No, it is the quantity of impressions. You put it objectively, but it is subjective; it means that in one thought one can have thousands of emotions.

Q. The rate varies according to the degree of consciousness?

A. Your observation will vary according to the degree of consciousness, but the fact will remain the same. But, as I said, the emotional centre in us does not work with its proper speed, because mostly only the moving parts of it work; and when a centre works with the moving part its speed is much slower, whereas when it works with the intellectual part it is much quicker.

Q. If we use the emotional centre at its highest speed, can we have positive emotions?

A. Then we become connected with higher centres and can have positive emotions. But we

must be conscious first, because it can happen only when we have a sufficiently complete control over consciousness.

Q. The Food Diagram shows that there is very high matter in man as he is. How does it show itself?

A. Without higher matters man would not be able to live. The soul, which consists of higher hydrogens, must be fed. Essence must be fed. Even personality must be fed, although personality lives on something different. As I said, higher hydrogens can be extracted from air, but impressions – special, purified impressions – can give much more. The human organism is built on cosmic principles, so quantity is very important.

Q. To me diagrams are only knowledge – I do not get any understanding out of them that helps me to struggle.

A. They cannot help with struggling, but they can help your thinking. Even now, in this initial form, diagrams can help you to solve many of your troubles and problems. They can serve as a formula to find your position in regard to them. They may not give an answer, but they will give you knowledge about where and how you can look for an answer. This is the real meaning of diagrams. They speak in a language that you learn a little ahead. We will be able really to use this language only when we are able to use higher centres. Suppose you get control over higher emotional centre. With knowledge of the diagrams you will be able to interpret many of the new feelings, sensations, ideas that will come to your mind, and transfer this interpretation to the ordinary mind. Without diagrams you will not be able to do it. They are the intermediate language which will connect the language of the higher emotional centre with our ordinary centres. At the same time this language is a kind of ladder by which we can climb from ordinary thinking to the thinking of higher emotional centre.

Q. In our present condition, do higher centres function, or merely lie idle?

A. There are three different theories about this. One is that they function and that we could not live without their functioning, but that they are not connected with ordinary centres because of the enormous difference of speed; that it is necessary to eliminate from the ordinary centres all the wrong functions and bring them to their highest possible speed, which can happen only when we pass to another level of consciousness. The second explanation is that higher centres are latent; they are fully developed, but they do not work as they should. The third is that they do not work because there is no fuel for them; that the hydrogens which can serve as fuel for them can be produced only in another state of consciousness. They are in a state of sleep, but when we produce enough material for them they will awake. All these explanations are right, and they all come to the same thing. We have to become conscious and control our lower centres in order to bring them to their best possible state. Then there will be no difficulty in making contact with higher centres, because even in our present state, very occasionally, very rarely, we have glimpses of higher states – at least some people have. So the important thing for us to realize is that higher centres will not keep us waiting when we awake. The thing is to awake and pass to another level of consciousness; then higher emotional and, later, higher mental centre, will respond at once.

If higher centres were working in us as we are now, we would be in a bad way. We would just be conscious machines without a possibility of being anything else, because will can only be created by effort. We are such as we are in order to become different. We are very unsatisfactory, but, because of that, we can become stronger and more conscious. If we were connected with higher centres in our present state, we would go mad. Such a connection would be a great danger so long as we can have negative emotions. For this reason there are automatic brakes in the machine making the connection impossible. First we must prepare lower centres and change the state of our consciousness.

Q. Have higher centres characteristics which we may regard as extraordinary?

A. Yes. For instance what is called magic may be the manifestation of a world of a higher

plane on a lower plane. Suppose higher emotional centre manifests itself on a lower level – it will be a miracle.

It is very necessary to understand the relation in which higher centres stand to lower centres. In our state the intellectual and the emotional principles are sharply divided, but in higher centres this difference disappears. Then the higher emotional centre does not use words – words are too clumsy, too difficult to operate with, and besides their meaning changes even in one generation and a thousand years produces a complete change of meaning. This is why we do not understand the New Testament – there is no similar meaning of some of the words now, so we cannot even guess what they meant then.

The higher mental centre is still quicker and does not use even allegorical forms, as higher emotional centre does. We can say that it uses symbolical forms. It gives the possibility of long thought. It is all in us, but we cannot use it, because we work with a very slow machine. Higher centres do not reach us – the gap is too great between them and ordinary centres. The difference of speed is so enormous that ordinary centres do not hear higher centres. They have many important functions about which we do not know, but we cannot use them as minds – they are too quick and we are too sleepy. So if we get a connection with higher mental centre, it simply leaves a blank.

Q. Are there negative emotions in higher emotional centre?

A. In higher centres there are no positive and negative parts and, as I said, there is no division between intellectual and emotional. Higher emotional centre is only called emotional. On higher levels what is emotional is also intellectual and what is intellectual is emotional. Work of higher centres is very different from work of ordinary centres. We can sometimes observe this work and the different taste of it in moments of self-consciousness, when we become temporarily connected with higher emotional centre.

Q. Cannot drugs put us in touch with higher centres?

A. The idea of drugs is not new; drugs were used in ancient and mediaeval times – in ancient Mysteries, in magic and so on. It was found that interesting states result from a clever use of drugs. But the system objects to drugs. The use of drugs does not give good results because drugs cannot affect consciousness, they cannot add consciousness. By stupefying lower centres they can put us into contact with higher centres; but it would be of no use to us, because we can remember only as much as we have consciousness. Since we have no consciousness, connection with higher centres will only result in dreams or in unconsciousness.

All these trance states sometimes described in books constitute a very dangerous road. Bringing oneself into a trance is connected with creation of imagination in higher emotional centre, and this is a blind alley. If you are there, you cannot get out and cannot get any further. Our idea is to control imagination; if, instead, you transform it by certain methods into imagination in higher emotional centre, you get bliss, happiness, but, after all, it is only sleep on a higher level. Real development must go by two lines: development of consciousness and development of centres.

Besides, such experiments are usually disappointing because as a rule people use up in the first experiment all the material they have for consciousness. The same thing can be said of all stupefying, mechanical, self-hypnotizing methods; they give the same results as drugs – they put ordinary centres to sleep but cannot increase consciousness. But when consciousness is developed, higher centres will present no difficulty. Higher emotional centre is supposed to work in the third state of consciousness and higher mental in the fourth.

Q. Do you think there is anything in telepathy?

A. For men 1, 2 and 3 it does not exist at all; it is imagination. But men of a much higher development control forces which can produce so-called telepathy, because it is a function of the higher emotional centre. If one can, even temporarily, control higher emotional centre, one can produce telepathic effects. But ordinary mind and ordinary emotions cannot do it.

Q. I wonder by what process Jesus was able to expel devils and whether anything in the system could be used for similar purpose. Has it anything to do with higher centres?

A. Jesus probably dealt with big devils. We have to begin with small devils – a kind of vivisection – until we are able to deal with big devils.

I said earlier that so long as certain negative emotions exist in us, higher centres cannot work and should not work, for it would be a disaster. In ordinary books on theosophy one finds the idea that many things are hidden because they are dangerous. But in reality the danger is not in ideas but in the distortion of ideas. People may become dangerous if they hear something and begin to apply it in a wrong sense. One can use the forces of higher centres to strengthen one's negative side.

Q. Can one damage higher centres?

A. One can, by sleeping too much I mean not in the physical sense, but by being always asleep and irresponsible. Then, little by little, the possibility of their awakening is destroyed.

You see, all the time, from different sides, we come to the conclusion that man does not work well. We hear about higher centres, and at the same time we are told that we are not connected with them, that they do not work for us or, if they do, we know nothing about their work. We realize that our ordinary mind is not sufficient for dealing with the problems we want to solve. There are many things we want to know, but our mind cannot do anything about it. This simple diagram, and other diagrams we study in this system, show us how to study ourselves, how to improve and what to improve in ourselves. But no improvement is possible until we stop leaks, for it is no use increasing the production of energy if there are leaks everywhere.

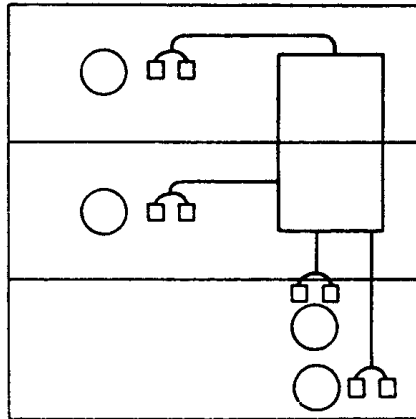
Q. How can we stop leaks?

A. By self-remembering. It is necessary to develop consciousness, and this will bring with it the possibility of using better organs of perception and cognition. Without higher centres we cannot do much, and this is why a philosophical approach is not much use. It can invent certain theories and then it stops. It does not develop the higher centres which alone can understand the ideas fully. Philosophy does not touch them.

Q. You stress the importance of preserving energy. Does each centre have its own storehouse of energy?

A. Yes. I will show you how to begin to think about this. We will take the human machine from the point of view of centres. It is the same machine. Energy created in the organism is kept in a certain big accumulator which is connected with two small accumulators placed near each centre.

Supposing man begins to think and uses the energy of one of the small accumulators of the intellectual centre. The energy in the accumulator gets lower and lower, and when it is at its lowest he gets tired. Then he makes an effort, or has a short rest, or yawns, and becomes connected with the second small accumulator. It is very interesting that yawning is a special help provided by nature for passing from one accumulator to another. He goes on thinking and drawing energy from the second accumulator, is again tired, yawns, or lights a cigarette, and becomes connected again with the first small accumulator. But that accumulator may be only half filled and is quickly exhausted. He becomes connected once more with the second, which is only a quarter filled, and so it goes on until time may come when both accumulators are empty. If at that moment a man makes a special effort of the right kind he may become connected directly with the big accumulator. This is one explanation of miracles, for he will then have an enormous supply of energy. But this needs a very great effort – not an ordinary effort. If he exhausts the big accumulator he dies, but generally he falls asleep or becomes unconscious long before that, so there is no danger. In ordinary life this connection with the big accumulator sometimes happens in extraordinary circumstances, such as moments of extreme danger.



This is why there is this system of small accumulators. If one could be easily connected with the big accumulator one might, for example, never stop being angry for a week, and then one would die. So generally one does not become connected with the big accumulator until one has control over negative emotions. Emotions are stronger than other functions, so if one were to get into a negative emotion and had unlimited energy it would be too dangerous.

Q. Can sufficient energy be stored in small accumulators?

A. For ordinary work, for ordinary life it is sufficient, but sometimes people who are habitually tired use only half the accumulator and already say that they are too exhausted and cannot do anything. In actual fact, so long as there is anything in the small accumulators, we have no right to be tired. That is why physical efforts are useful. We are afraid of being tired. Of course, we could have much more energy than we have if we did not waste it on negative emotions and other useless things.

Q. To remember oneself one has to have energy?

A. No, that does not enter here, because for this we always have energy. It is not energy that is lacking; it is understanding, knowing how to do it, and a certain laziness which prevents us from self-remembering.

Q. I want to ask about the big accumulator. I do not understand that practically.

A. Efforts! Efforts! The more efforts you make, the more energy you can get. Without efforts you cannot get energy. Even if it is in you, it may be in the wrong place. Do not think about it theoretically; think simply that you have much energy in you that you never use, and you must make more efforts to use it.

Q. What I meant to ask about was what unlocks the energy in the big accumulator and how does it get its energy?

A. That is exactly what I said. Do not think about the big accumulator; think about yourself. Sometimes you must begin with small efforts. If you do not make small efforts, you will never be able to make big efforts. It is quite right that energy is necessary, but the energy is in us. We have enough energy, at least in the beginning, and if we use it for work it is not lost but comes back. If you lose energy on negative emotions, for instance, or on mechanical actions, mechanical thinking, then it is lost. But if you use energy for struggling with mechanicalness you get it back. This is how energy is accumulated.

Q. Can you tell me about the process by which attention is renewed when one controls it?

A. In this case attention depends on the amount of spare energy: if you have energy in reserve, attention will work, if you have no spare energy, it will be exhausted very quickly. So it depends on the amount of energy, and your reserve of energy depends on how you use it. If you waste it on unnecessary things, then at the moment you need it you will find that you have none. But if you can save it on every possible occasion and use only the necessary amount for every kind of work you are doing, then you will have results. This is why we have to start from the very beginning to struggle with the things that waste it. They must be studied,

and studied first of all.

Q. Does a person who works in a more balanced way use each accumulator properly?

A. Yes, by training one can do an enormous amount of work, but if a man without training starts doing the same work he will use too much energy on quite simple movements and will use his accumulators in a wrong way. If you want to think more scientifically about it, you must realize that training, taken in an ordinary sense, prepares accumulators for working rightly. Actually, although I put only two accumulators near each centre, there are a great many more. Each centre is surrounded by accumulators.

Q. Does switching over from one accumulator to another need a moment of consciousness?

A. No, it is automatic. Instinctive centre knows how to do it and can work quite well, without our being conscious. Consciousness may be necessary for special work in connection with the big accumulator. When we want something extraordinary, something that cannot be got in the ordinary way, it is necessary to invent new methods.

Q. Does the principle of accumulators apply to the ordinary mechanical energy we are using all the time?

A. Certainly. Everything is mechanical. Energy is just fuel.

Q. Then one type of energy is not higher or lower than another?

A. Yes, taken in the sense of hydrogens it can be higher or lower. Different centres use different energy, but fundamentally it is one. You have seen in the Food Diagram how energy is created. There are many variations of hydrogens used for different organs and accumulators.

Q. Can you say that this special adaptation of energy is made in the body?

A. Yes, but at the same time centres have a great tendency to use wrong energy; so this must be kept in mind. But the question of how to make more energy is one thing and the question of how it makes itself, how it 'happens', is another. It is better to divide these things.

Q. If one is tired, and suddenly receives a lot of impressions and as a result of it tiredness goes, is it because one gets energy from them?

A. It is more complicated than that. With new impressions one becomes more awake, and so connections with the big accumulator begin to work better. Direct impressions are not yet energy ready for use; they must be distilled and mixed with other things to produce energy. Impressions that come are undigested food. All the three kinds of food must be digested and mixed in right proportions. But impressions can awake you. When energy in the body reaches a certain pressure, it begins to attract energy from its surroundings.

Q. If one travels, does one get more impressions?

A. The capacity for receiving impressions remains the same.

Q. When a man yawns, does he connect with the other accumulator?

A. Not every time, for one can yawn from imitation. Besides, yawning is pumping energy, it is not necessarily switching over, although a really good yawn may produce a switch over when necessary.

Q. When you say yawning is a pump, where is the energy pumped from?

A. From the organism. It is so arranged that every function has the necessary energy everywhere. There are so many accumulators that it is sufficient to know the principle that there are accumulators. Energy is distributed in the machine in a very complicated way and passes from one accumulator to another, is diluted, concentrated and so on.

Q. Do the small accumulators get filled from the large one during sleep at night?

A. They are refilled constantly. But the big accumulator is refilled during sleep with the energy derived from the three kinds of food. All energies are kept in the big accumulator, either mixed or in a higher form. When a demand comes, a corresponding hydrogen is sent. If energy is produced, it is stored in the big accumulator. If more is produced than is necessary for life, it can be stored in many places.

Q. Can energy be conserved by means of silence?

A. Sometimes, but if you are silent all the time you may lose more energy in silence than in talk. That is why the first principle in this system is discrimination – there are no general rules.

Q. Is it possible eventually to come in contact with the big accumulator?

A. Yes, it is possible, but we are not even on the first step; it may be possible, say, on the twenty-second step, so there are twenty-one steps to climb before we can do that. What can be done now has all been explained – you must try to remember yourself, not identify, try not to express negative emotions and so on. These are the things with which we can start.

Q. Does the energy required for self-remembering come from proper working of centres?

A. Yes, certainly; when all centres work wrongly there can be no accumulation of energy. But this is not sufficient. It is necessary to increase the amount of energy, and it can be increased only by efforts – small efforts, such as struggle with habits, self-observation, trying to control attention and so on. Everyone has some particular efforts he can make; the efforts of one person may be no good for another, or too easy, or impossible.

Q. What regulates the amount of energy that goes into the accumulators of each centre?

A. Habitual work. Sometimes they cannot be filled, sometimes they refuse to be filled, and sometimes they do not need to be filled. There are many reasons for this, and you cannot control it. But by making efforts, or by remembering yourself, you increase the possibility of control.

Q. Has the big accumulator a large capacity, and is it quickly recharged?

A. It depends. It may be half empty, or filled with bad energy, or it may be full but we do not use it. It is important to understand that there is a big store of energy in the big accumulator, much of which we never use – it remains dead capital.

Q. If one is more conscious, can one draw more energy?

A. Yes, but a special training is also necessary. If we know how to connect with the big accumulator we can produce quite different results.

Q. How quickly can it be learnt?

A. I cannot say, it depends on how you study and work. In our attitude to the system there may be a destructive element that can destroy the result of our work. If one has a right attitude to oneself and to the work, without a destructive element, then it can be attained.

Q. Does it all depend on consciousness?

A. All work is really concentrated on consciousness. In work on centres we only try to stop definitely wrong work. There are no exercises to increase the work of centres: all the work is on consciousness. When consciousness is increased, centres will adapt. But wrong work of centres must be stopped, for if we remained abnormal and became conscious, our centres would go mad – they would not be able to stand it. But it cannot happen – one cannot become conscious unconsciously. People often ask: what does one gain by becoming conscious? This is because they do not know what the result of consciousness is. When we are conscious we become connected with higher centres and then the whole picture changes.

The above text constitutes Chapter IX of *The Fourth Way* by P. D. Ouspensky.