

2 BEING

2.1 General on Being

¹The level of being is largely the same as the degree of mechanicalness versus the degree of consciousness. The less conscious and the more asleep, mechanical, we are, the lower our being is; the more conscious, awake, and the less mechanical we are, the higher our being is – for the moment.

²Our being generally appears in how we take things, ourselves, other people, events. Our being always is on a certain level, roughly is on a certain general level, unceasingly moving somewhat above or below this general level. At certain moments we are more awake than usual, at other moments we are more deeply asleep than usual. We need to develop sensitivity and watchfulness to perceive how the level of our being rises and falls from one moment to the next.

³The next step is: not to allow the level of your being to fall mechanically. Strive to keep it on a higher level, with knowledge and effort, with skill acquired through exercise! Even keeping it up for four seconds is something, and better than nothing. Do it, if necessary, millions of times! But never stop striving!

⁴To develop means to develop both your knowledge and your being. Nobody achieves anything by only increasing or deepening his knowledge, for if his being is not improved at the same time, his increased knowledge will harm more than help him and those around him. If his being is improved, however, while his knowledge is increased, then his understanding will grow as well. Understanding is a combined function of knowledge and being.

⁵Knowledge is about what is true and what is false, what is real and what is unreal. Being is about what is good and what is bad, what helps you to progress, and what hinders you. To grow in both knowledge and being is to seek the truth, or reality, as the highest good by striving to be true to what is best in you.

⁶In the symbolic teaching of the ancient schools, the eye stood for knowledge, and the ear, or the heart, stood for being. Just as hearing is older than sight, and the heart is older than the eye, being was given priority over knowledge. In the schools, the work at one's being is the most important work. "Hearing" also meant obeying, that is: obeying the "voice of the silence", the voice of Augoeides. Anyone who in all things obeys the promptings of Augoeides will perfect his being in the most rapid way. These relations should also be observed: knowledge – the matter aspect (the mother); being – the will aspect (the father), understanding – the consciousness aspect (the son, the fruit of the union of the father and the mother).

⁷The practical teaching of the schools affords us a unique tool for our purposeful, expedient, and efficient work at raising the level of our being. The theory supplied by esoterics affords us the understanding that this work is worth doing, makes it clear to us that it is deeply meaningful, shows us that it is our most important striving.

⁸The "true" actually means "being". The Sanskrit word *sat* means "truth", and also "reality" and "being". The words of the prayer *asato mā sad gamaya* are usually translated "lead me from the unreal to the real". But they can be equally correctly translated: "lead me from untruth to truth" or "lead me from not-being (undeveloped being) to (the highest degree of developed) being".

⁹Your being has attracted your life to you. If you desire another life, then you must change your being. The collective being of the nation attracts to it leaders of a certain kind. The collective being of mankind attracts to it wars, epidemics, natural disasters, etc.

2.2 *The Improvement of Being*

¹The improvement of being manifests itself mainly in better, deeper understanding. This increasingly better understanding cannot work with no corn to grind. It must have reality and knowledge as its work material. Therefore, the improvement of being requires that knowledge be increased and that thinking be made more reality-seeking, more fiction- and illusion-repelling.

²In the improvement of being, three main stages can be discerned. 1) In undeveloped man, being is unitary, but it is a weak being. Without thinking, without understanding, he says “I” about everything happening in him, all mechanical reactions, every “like” and “dislike”. 2) In the man who has started working at himself, there is division, a split being. He has begun to tell “I” and “not I” apart, work personality and false personality. But still he says rather often “I” about his own mechanical reactions. His watchfulness has increased and needs to increase even more. 3) In developed man, being is again unitary, but on a quite different, qualitative level than in undeveloped man. He is centred in the most conscious, the most awake part, regards and treats the more mechanical parts as “not I”, “not-self”.

³Our way takes us to unity, but this also means: the qualitative unity of the being of everyone of us. The collectives of world 46 cannot be made up of individuals in whom being is divided and non-qualitative. To enter those collectives, the individual must first unify his being. Only he who has become unity himself can enter unity. Ponder on the meaning of the expression “being of unity”!

⁴When people have succeeded in rousing somewhat more energy, it almost always only is about moving energy between centres. Their total level is unchanged, and their one-sidedness remains, although it expresses itself differently. What it really is about, however, is to increase the total amount of energy in the system, instead of the permanent deficiency achieve a surplus. Using this surplus you can balance your whole being better.

⁵One of the three centres – physical, emotional, mental – can start to grow and put the other two in action. Then, at best, the other centres can grow, in part by their own force.

⁶In our striving to improve our being there is no sentimentalism or moralism, no thinking in terms of reward. We should strive to attain higher levels, not because it will inspire us with a feeling of our own excellence, not because we desire to stand out as “good” in the eyes of other people, but only because good qualities and abilities are necessary to us in our development, for us to go forward, to reach higher levels of skill, to be better workers, better servers, better soldiers in the army of the Manu.

⁷Not only your organism eats, but also your being eats: good thoughts, good feelings, good impressions. Your being needs good nourishment, just like your organism. Your being has no need of junk food. Your being is harmed by poisons: hatred, anger, envy, self-pity, etc. Your being is nourished by good impressions, your being is strengthened by qualitative efforts. Receive good impressions consciously, with enthusiasm! Reject bad impressions intentionally!

⁸People can understand each other better and better when their knowledge increases and their being improves. People number four understand each other better than people number one, two, and three understand each other. People number five understand each other much better than people number four understand each other.

⁹In the improvement of being the ennoblement of emotionality is of decisive importance. The mere intellectual, dry man cannot develop. Using only mentality you will not reach causal consciousness. The importance of emotionality lies above all in the fact that it supplies the power to act. The highest emotionality is a rouser and carrier of essential (46) consciousness. Emotionality has the highest level in man’s consciousness; in mental consciousness he does not reach as far.

¹⁰Through higher emotionality man acquires many necessary noble qualities. These quali-

ties do not merely make him a better fellow human and make life easier to live for himself, but they are also tools for his further development and his work on three lines. Higher, “noble qualities” are organs of perception and action in connection with higher realities.

¹¹If he does not raise his emotionality, he will easily get stuck in lower emotionality: depression, self-pity, bitterness, etc. Then energy is trapped in his envelopes.

¹²Lower emotional illusions, such as greed, envy, vengefulness, self-pity, vulnerability, etc. are dissolved above all through higher emotionality. It will not be effected as much through mental analysis, even if this may help as well. Mental analysis does not affect emotional will, desire.

¹³The summary of the art of living: tact, duty, and virtue. Tact is active will not to hurt another. Duty is to fulfil one’s task. Virtue is to develop power in the service of good, to wander the middle path between the extremes.

¹⁴Virtue is the activity man can perform when he is self-conscious, awake, present – when the monad is active in the causal envelope. The opposite, vice, is the activity “performed” mechanically by the envelopes when man is not self-conscious, awake, present – when the monad is not active in the causal envelope.

¹⁵The pair of opposites “good – evil” may preferably be replaced with “conscious – not conscious” or “self-conscious – mechanical”. Everybody must ask himself the questions: “Can I be evil consciously, in states of self-consciousness? Can I be good mechanically – in states where I am not conscious?”

¹⁶Faith, hope, and love. Or trust, confidence, and unity.

¹⁷Invulnerability is an absolutely necessary quality. Anyone who is vulnerable, anyone who can be “hurt” gives other people power over him. Invulnerability presupposes physical, emotional, and mental courage.

¹⁸The four pillars, or supporting insights, of invulnerability: 1) The insight that the feeling of being hurt is a feeling, thus an illusion, an automatic and mechanical reaction in some impermanent apparent self. 2) The insight that the feeling of being hurt is not a quality that is helping me to develop consciousness; on the contrary, it is hindering me. 3) The insight that the feeling of being hurt is unnecessary suffering. 4) The insight that the feeling of being hurt is not a state of the true self, or the “soul”. Corollary: I cannot be present, awake, or conscious when I feel hurt.

¹⁹Patañjanli: Cultivating four qualities in the face of other people and their various conditions leads to inner peace and serenity: shared joy (*maitrī*, *mettā*) before their happiness, compassion in their misery, joy in their merits, disregard in the face of their faults.

²⁰Confucius: “Is not he a man of real worth who does not anticipate deceit nor imagine that people will doubt his word, and yet who has immediate perception thereof when present?”

2.3 Not-Doing

¹Before we can learn how to do, we must learn how to not-do.

²Not-doing is not the same as inactivity, laziness, lack of initiative. Not-doing is an active state on a higher level of consciousness. It means allowing a higher insight, a higher energy the opportunity to work in us and through us. At the same time seeing that “it was not me who acted”. I allowed something to act through me – an essential difference.

³Do not ask: “What shall we do to grow in being?” Ask instead: “What shall we not-do? What shall we let go? What shall we let calm down? What shall we hold back – to allow our being to grow in quality, to allow what is best in our essence to appear?” When personality is calmed down, much becomes possible that otherwise never got a chance. When the inner babble falls silent, we can hear; and when we hear, we can obey.

⁴The most important not-doing is not being identified with our mechanical states.

⁵To refrain from unnecessary talk is of course an important not-doing. In itself, it is not talk

that harms or hinders us, however, but the state of identification that accompanies talk almost without exception. To speak with intention, consciously, is something quite different and very rare. Mechanical talk turns into identification also because we lie so much, talk about things we do not know as if we knew, lie about ourselves and other people. Also we exaggerate and use too strong words, and all these things reinforce our state of identification.

⁶Confucius: “The men of old were reserved in speech out of shame lest they should come short in deed.”

2.4 The Positivization of Emotion

¹The truth, the knowledge – of reality and of oneself – always contains much that frightens, disturbs, and unsettles lower emotional thinking. Therefore, the individual’s emotionality must be ennobled, positivized, before he will be able to receive esoteric knowledge without harm to himself. This emotional positivity performs its important service as an aiding, raising, strengthening factor, but largely is without significance for the conception of reality.

²Positive, higher emotionality strives after loving understanding of our fellow human beings, strives to see the best in everybody and wants to disregard the worse sides. It refrains from judging and moralizing on the characters and actions of people, since it has seen more deeply, understood that faults are universally human, are connected with definite lower stages of development, and are eliminated by the individual himself at higher stages, or are forced upon the individual through his bad reaping.

³Love is not sentimentality, is not even a feeling of the ordinary kind. Love is a higher state, an aspect of consciousness. Liberated from sentimentality, love rather manifests itself as will, unifying will without reference to one’s own self.

⁴The most important result of emotional positivization: the creation of new values, a new centre of gravity in man, so that he instinctively turns away from envy, slander, gossip, suspicion, self-justification, etc.

⁵Your own work against negative emotions begins with your decision not to say “I” of them, not to justify them, not to excuse them, not to glorify them.

⁶“Let the dead bury their dead” means: drop all negative, demolishing criticism.

⁷Using mental insights you can see the emptiness of emotional illusions. The example given here is envy. Envy is belief in appearances, a sort of blindness. I envy someone his apparent causes for happiness, but I do not know his secret sorrows. I desire what I regard as another person’s benefits, but I do not see to what extent they are illusory, what he has been made to pay for them in the form of duties, encumbrances, sufferings of various kinds. Many people are unhappy behind the smiling mask of prosperity. Do I envy all of this, the whole situation of the man in question? Of course not. And this demonstrates the illusoriness of envy, since no man possesses only the happiness he is showing, but also the misery he is concealing. Also hatred is blindness, the belief that there are people who only have faults and failings, who have no merits, who are altogether evil, wicked, and wretched – and so are worth being hated.

⁸We cannot judge a person justly, because the qualities in which he is superior to us escape us. We see only what we possess ourselves in an actual or latent state. The higher escapes us, is part of the “esoteric”.

⁹Confucius. “When you see a man of worth, think how to rise to his level. When you see an unworthy man, then look within and examine yourself.”

¹⁰It is absolutely necessary to put aside fear. A man who is afraid, for example of those who wield power in this world, has his view of reality distorted when he dare not say what he thinks and out of fear that his tongue will slip and reveal a “wrong” thought he finally dare not even think. If such is his condition, he will cling to those in power, accept their dictates and views. A fearful man cannot be a good man. He cannot act right, as duty commands him.

2.5 Waking Up

¹We have an inner mechanism by which we can momentarily shut off the robot with its non-stop babble, and wake up. This mechanism is like a muscle that has to be flexed. But since we are robot-like, we have got used to letting the muscle be flexed by external events only. Such ones happen too seldom, however. Depending on them is like thinking you could live on money you find in the street. Therefore method, discipline, school are necessary – that is: an ordered process in which you learn how to train your muscle in a systematic way, and use it by your will. When we are able to flex the muscle intentionally, we have a feeling of control, power over our situation, freedom, joy. It is not a matter of equipping our ordinary consciousness with a new function, but of our temporary activity on a higher level of consciousness.

²In states of being awake you often have a strong sense of meaning, hope, and confidence, an insight telling you that it is worthwhile to make these efforts. The insight: “Oh, yes! This state exists! In me too! How could I forget?!” The problem is that you will too soon relapse into your ordinary robot consciousness where you forget that you ever experienced this or keep anything of it.

³In states of heightened wakefulness you have insights of a special kind, for instance the insight that there are countless possibilities, that we have tried just a small number of them which we have arbitrarily selected; the insight that our conception is immensely limited, that all our views are partial and fragmented views; the insight that our conception is very superficial; the insight about connections and relationships, that all things are connected and that it is only in our conception that they are not.

⁴Wide-awakeness is the result of a temporary heightening of consciousness. Soon this heightening will be lost. The important thing is to create conditions of its retrieval, over and over again.

⁵When you observe people’s mechanicalness and wake up, you are filled with compassion for this emptiness. Only compassion remains when the senseless babble has ceased.

⁶The more awake man is, the more he sees his responsibility.

2.6 Personal Difficulties

¹Everyone has his particular difficulties, his own problems to solve in the one right way. They come up again and again until they have been solved in the right way. Having those problems and solving them is the only way in which our individual character can develop. The ignorance of life, complaining of those difficulties, does not see their function and necessity.

²Our difficulties show us our ignorance and our impotence, but also the path we must walk to the knowledge and power that will solve the problems. It is not enough to “understand”, but we must use the energy of understanding.

³Every human being has something definite that is hindering him from working in the right way. Everyone must find this something and work to weaken it, not to defend it or try to justify it.

⁴All difficulties you may meet in your personal work can be roughly divided into three groups: negative emotions, imagination – negative imagination in particular – formatory thinking. Some people have great difficulty with negative emotions, but not so much trouble with negative imagination or formatory thinking, whereas others are hindered mainly by their formatory thinking. Everyone has to find out what is his personal problem in this respect.

⁵Negative imagination, that is: unreal conceptions created by fear and worry (for example that oneself or some loved one is going to die or going to be ill) is the “second nature” of many people. If you are in the thrall of such a condition, you must essentially eliminate it before you can go forward. In some people, the current of negative imagination is strong and

seemingly impossible to stop. Long work, endeavour to keep oneself awake, present, will finally weaken it. You can learn how to stand beside with your thought, letting negative imagination “run its programme”, but not identify yourself with it – then it will be made much weaker.

⁶Everyone should form a very clear idea of what formatory thinking is, not by definitions (intensional method), but by examples (extensional method). Thus everyone should everywhere observe expressions of formatory thinking, collect these examples, making notes of them in writing and in memory, make their own reflections on how perspective thinking would have tackled the matter instead. Doing such work you will eventually arrive at a clear understanding how deficient and unreliable formatory thinking is and how necessary formulating, or perspective, thinking is. It is true that “only causal selves are able to think” (Laurency, *The Way of Man*, 9.41.4), but it is a long way to go, and perspective thinking is a necessary station on that way.

2.7 *Sleep and Forgetfulness in Everyday Life*

¹We live all the time in a very small part of ourselves, and constantly take this little part to be our “I”, saying “I” of this small, ever-changing part. We see this truth at once every time we hear it, and forget it as fast again.

²Man’s everyday “consciousness”, that is: his habitual mechanical state, tends to pessimism and despondency, doubt of the meaning of existence, because it looks at things too closely. It is like pressing your face close to the picture, trying to see what it represents. But you can descry the purpose only when you have a certain perspective, when you look at the picture from some distance. That is why you must rise somewhat above things. “Elevation of the mind” is a rather exact expression.

³Everyday “consciousness” contains an implicit assumption that life does not have a meaning, and this triggers the mechanism of sleep. Concentration fails when there is nothing interesting to be seen anyway, the connection between the centres is weakened so that understanding, too, is reduced. Instead there enters a low energy state characterized by down-heartedness, boredom, dullness. It is precisely there you must try to remember – remember that there is a possibility of something entirely different: meaning, consciousness, insight, other states, and then also make the effort from within your being to induce a higher state. It is difficult. But it is possible.

⁴Most of us live habitually on a too low energy level. It is low because we live in very small parts of ourselves, babbling and mutually bickering parts that are much more easily charged with negative than with positive emotionality. It is not so much a matter of strong negative feelings, but the more of a petty, grey, and dull habitual state, a “background radiation” of vague worries, small and big concerns, irritation, half-conscious repetition of the vexations arising from dealings with other people during the last two days, self-justifications and “speeches in one’s defence” in a seemingly endless and unstoppable current. All of this is lying heavily on our essence, hindering impressions of higher quality from reaching it. In such states we need to direct our thought and will to higher “things”, make efforts from within our being, so that we become more awake and then keep more awake. Wakefulness supplies an addition of energy that makes it easier to keep a higher state.

⁵It is very important to remember that no inner states endure. You find no difficulty in understanding this truth when you are in an intellectual “I” of a certain quality, such as, for instance, when at quiet moments you ponder on the knowledge, meditate on its teachings. But whenever you end up in a state of despondency, anxiety, desperation, pessimism, you are in an “emotional I” of a low quality, and such an apparent self can know nothing of these insights. They have vanished completely, and you are mechanically convinced that what you are experiencing right now will last to the end of eternity. Low emotional “I”s revel in such

macabre exaggerations. It is precisely at such moments you should try to bring forth the better “I”s, the higher levels in you, the parts of your being that know more and understand better. This is very difficult, but it is not impossible. You must begin by doing it in better states, often and on a regular basis. Subsequently you will manage to do it in somewhat worse states, and in so doing raise them at once. Gradually you will succeed in raising yourself from lower and worse states. However, it cannot be done except through constant “exercise and non-identification”, as both Krishna (*Bhagavad-Gītā*, VI, 35) and Patañjali (*Yoga Sūtras*, I, 12) emphasize.

⁶According to Gautama the Buddha, the apparent selves (the constantly changing small “I”s that you mistake to be yourself, calling them “I”) are principally characterized by being: 1) impermanent, 2) empty, 3) full of suffering, 4) not having the nature of a true self or an enduring “soul”. “Empty” means “lacking a qualitative content”, “lacking a content of qualities that can pass on to the causal being and be made permanent in it”, lacking a content of qualities that benefit or enter into the development of consciousness.

⁷Hesitation between two qualitatively different aims is a sign of sleep and of incomplete understanding. When hesitating, when in doubt, you should not make important decisions. Instead you should remember that there are other “I”s, other states that are more awake and have a greater understanding, a better valuation. Bring forth or wait for a better state, and make the decision then! We always forget that we have the possibility of better states, and we constantly omit to create them using our will.

2.8 The Struggle against Sleep

¹The illusions of the unity of our being and our self-consciousness are immensely strong. They must be fought through the opposite insights: “I am not one, I am many” and “I am not conscious, but I can become conscious through knowledge and effort.”

²You will never be able to achieve the qualitative unity of your being as long as you believe mechanically that you are a unity already. The insight, “I am not one, I am many”, must become alive in you, must permeate you. The same is true of self-consciousness: You will never be able to acquire it as long as you unreflectingly, automatically, and mechanically believe that you have it already.

³You must fight “yourself”, that is to say: the more mechanical, sleeping parts of yourself; distance yourself from them, dislike them, despise them, loathe them, see them as ridiculous, laughable, subhuman – all of this is good, for it separates you from them. You must never justify, excuse, or glorify them. But neither can you deny your responsibility for them.

⁴Whenever you are confronted with the truths, “I am not one, I am many”, and “I am not conscious, but I can become conscious”, the important thing is to move on from the consciousness aspect to the will aspect, from mere insight to realization, thus also to create a state of self-consciousness and presence.

⁵We have very great potential powers within us. The limitation which we call “human nature” is merely apparent. The fact that it is apparent and not real is due to a certain kind of laziness – a laziness that has so firmly established itself in us that it has become much stronger and much more central than habits. It has become a mechanism.

⁶Go against “yourself” – your most inveterate habits, tendencies, your character, your “firmness”, your “principles” – if only for a day, and you demonstrate that you can become different. What we are speaking about here is only “clothes”. And your clothes are not more beautiful or cleaner than those of other people.

⁷Like what “it” does not like! “It” is false personality, the sum total of everything in you that cannot develop. As long as you go on mechanically saying “I don’t like” this or that, “I don’t like” this or that person, your being has not improved, you are still one of the crowd, one of those who neither can nor want to develop. Instead, welcome everything that

displeases false personality! It cannot be pleased with anything that lessens its power, it cannot like the efforts you make in the direction of evolution. Take it as a reminder to make an effort from within your being, to remember yourself!

⁸Whatever agitates people are not things, but opinions about things. People make those opinions “their own”, identify themselves with them. Hence their agitation. Opinions are seldom important, are almost never based on real things, take up valuable space in our attention, space that ought to be filled instead with work for consciousness, knowledge, insight, understanding. In particular, the opinions of “the many” can be left aside.

⁹It is possible to create a better state using one’s will. It is possible to suddenly make oneself conscious in the middle of a meaningless, destructive process, and to say: “No, stop it! I drop this.” And do so. Most often we cannot “do”. But this is truly to do. Anyone who says it cannot be done, has never really tried.

¹⁰We are not responsible for thoughts that sneak into us, as it were. But responsibility arises at the very moment we make them our own, dwell on them, identify ourselves with them, accept them, incorporate them with our “process”. There is always a point where we best can stop this process of making them our own.

2.9 SOME NOTES ON BEING AND SCHOOL WORK

¹School work can be described as work on three lines and as work at increasing one’s knowledge and improving one’s being. The work on three lines cannot in any way be separated from the work at knowledge and being. It is only in the work on three lines that knowledge can be increased and being be improved, and it is only if knowledge increases and being improves that work on the three lines can become successful. Or expressed differently: the method of increasing one’s knowledge and improving one’s being assigned by the schools is the work on the three lines. In actuality, all these endeavours form one undivided and indivisible unity: It is only mental conceptual thinking that, in order to grasp at all what it is about, needs to make this division into “knowledge”, “being”, “work for oneself”, “cooperation with others”, “work for the school”. To causal consciousness (47:1-3) and, in particular, to essential consciousness (46:1-7), all these “separate things” are one indivisible reality. Conclusion: Having carefully studied and once comprehended what is meant by “knowledge”, “being”, “work on the first line”, etc., the pupils of the school are assigned the task of processing these concepts in their thinking so as to synthesize them into one functional, organic unity, build them into one long thought. Then they can begin to understand school work. Subsequently they will understand their own role in it even better.

²Thus you cannot increase your knowledge alone – as though it were a matter of renovating one room in your house: “This year we can afford to do one of the bedrooms. Next year we’ll take another bedroom, and then the living room.” You must simultaneously increase your knowledge, polish your thinking, fight your weaknesses, work on three lines.

³The level of your being changes constantly, from one moment to the next, rises a little or much, falls a little or much. At a certain moment you understand a little more or a little less than you did just a while ago – this shows clearly how being changes. Having once received the knowledge of this fact and having learnt the methods of doing it, there is nothing hindering us from raising the level of our being at any moment, nothing at all save temporary forgetfulness and lack of energy. But also forgetting less and having more energy for work come as you improve your being.

⁴Improving your being is school work. It is true that such an improvement can be achieved outside of schools, but then it is usually done on a worse basis of knowledge, accompanied by all kinds of illusions and fictions, conditioned by sentimentality and thinking in terms of reward, influenced by the surrounding, sleeping community with its valuations, the “spirit of the times”. Then improvement is done less consciously, less skilfully, and because of that less

efficiently and always combined with great risks of erroneous development.

⁵The improvement of being is studied from many different sides. Only a few of them will be mentioned here:

⁶1) To what extent do *I* (work personality) *use* different functions and sub-functions as expedient tools for my development, and to what extent do I allow these functions to take over and *use me*? The improvement of being presupposes that the condition first mentioned increases and the condition last mentioned decreases. Examples of sub-functions are different higher and lower kinds of thinking, different tools for thinking. Just as the intellectual function has many sub-functions, the emotional function, too, has many sub-functions.

⁷2) How often, how much, and how well do I think of my aims and work at them?

⁸3) To what extent am I an example for those who are younger in the work?

⁹4) How often and how much do I see myself? How often do I see my buffers? How often do I stop mechanical expressions of my chief feature? How often do I have moments of conscience?

¹⁰5) How well do I know my most prominent kind of laziness? And how often do I occult it?

¹¹6) How often do I observe my forgetfulness and sleep in the work? And how grateful am I when my forgetfulness and sleep are pointed out to me?

¹²In all questions concerning being one must ask the questions “what is a better being?” and “what is a worse being?” Below some few examples are given. Everyone can expand the list with his own examples.

¹³1) It is a better being to remember oneself three times a day than to remember oneself two times a day.

¹⁴2) It is a better being to remember oneself for five minutes than to remember oneself for five seconds.

¹⁵3) It is a better being to remember oneself as one is pondering on cosmic ideas than to remember oneself as a mere statement, devoid of thought: “I did not remember myself”.

¹⁶4) It is a better being to remember oneself in a situation where one is together with people who are ignorant of the work, during outer stress, in everyday work life, when one is tempted to show negative emotions, than to remember oneself when alone, at a quiet moment one decides oneself and can prepare for by meditation.

¹⁷5) It is a better being to show consideration than to demand consideration.

¹⁸6) It is a better being to think well of people than to suspect them of evil.

¹⁹7) It is a better being to seek causes of one’s hindrances in oneself than to seek them in other people.

²⁰8) It is a better being to constantly remember one’s aims, and a worse being never or seldom to think of them.

²¹9) It is a better being often and deeply to think of work on the third line, and a worse being never or seldom to think of it.

²²10) It is a better being often and deeply to think of the purpose of the school, and a worse being never or seldom to think of it.

²³11) It is a better being to be clear about what kind of “man” one is (that is: man number one, two, or three) and to see oneself immediately after mechanically expressing this kind of “man”, and a worse being not to be clear about what one is and so not to see oneself when being it.

²⁴12) It is a better being through study and intellectual effort to picture oneself as one would be, if one were a man number four, and a worse being not to do this work.

²⁵13) It is a better being often and repeatedly to have moments of conscience, and a worse

being seldom or never to have it.

²⁶14) It is a better being constantly and repeatedly to make efforts to improve by study, work, and discipline, and a worse being seldom or never to do it.

²⁷15) It is a better being to remember school rules and obey them, and a worse being to forget school rules and break them.

²⁸16) It is a better being, having broken a school rule, to do metania, and a worse being not to do it, forget, excuse, or explain it away.

²⁹In a school, pupils are at the very outset, and then repeatedly, asked to observe their tendency to make assumptions mechanically and automatically about things and conditions of which they know nothing and often even cannot know anything, and then as mechanically and automatically act on these assumptions as if they were factual and real. An example: one day in a certain school, the disciples were served stew and wheat for lunch, in two pots with lids on, which the cook left for them in the kitchen. Removing the lid from the stew pot only, and assuming that the other pot contained stew as well, the first group of pupils to arrive emptied the stew pot, leaving all the wheat, but no stew, to the second group.

³⁰In the beginning, their two greatest deficiencies perhaps are their lack of courage and their psychological misjudgement of people.

³¹As you know, esoterics is summed up in the four words *know*, *will*, *dare*, and *be silent*. The fact that three of them have to do with being, and only one with knowledge, gives an intimation as to what is emphasized in schools. Three measures of being for each measure of knowledge.

³²A group of people who desire to improve their being must have made an agreement to the effect that if anyone of them is asleep, anyone else who is awake may shake up the one sleeping. But such an agreement requires sincerity. It is quite impossible that anyone who sincerely wants to work at himself could be insulted or offended at such a reminder. Because either he was not awake when he was shaken up – and then he has any reason to be grateful for the reminder, for such was the agreement. Or he is awake – and then he cannot be offended, for you are not offended in a state of being awake, but on the contrary he rejoices that someone actually made an effort to wake up a fellow human being. Then he sees the good will, the good purpose, even if it was unnecessary in this particular case. Then he rejoices that another person besides himself was awake. Anyone who is awake rejoices at the wakefulness of others.

³³In schools they apply a division of disciples into three basic higher and lower groups, each one of which can be further divided into three. Like everything else in schools, this division mirrors conditions that are the natural order on greater (cosmic, solar systemic, planetary) scales. Such a condition on a greater scale which is at once obvious is the division of monads from the human kingdom on into first selves, second selves, and third selves. And just as the entire group of first selves can be divided into three lesser groups – physical selves, emotional selves, and mental selves, and the entire group of second selves can be divided into causal selves, essential (46) selves, and superessential (45) selves – there are corresponding divisions in the schools. Of course such divisions have to do with the three aspects and their successive down-scalings: the first self is the particular expression of the matter aspect; the second self, of the consciousness aspect; and the third self, of the will aspect. The same condition down-scaled within the group of the first selves: the physical self is a particular manifestation of the matter aspect; the emotional self, of the consciousness aspect; and the mental self, of the will aspect.

³⁴Among the gnosticians, for instance, the lowest group were called *hylicians* (*hylikoi*); the middle group, *psychicians* (*psychikoi*); and the highest group, *pneumaticians* (*pneumatikoi*) –

from the Greek words denoting matter, *hyle*; soul, *psyche*; and spirit, *pneuma*. This division recurs in greater and smaller scales.

³⁵*Hylicians* are those who in their thinking are still characterized by the views received from the surrounding society: they “think” in a mechanical-quantitative way, according to the matter aspect, and find it very difficult to receive and apply the teaching of the school. They very easily forget what they are being taught, remember it selectively, or distort it. Strictly speaking, it cannot be said that they are in a school in any qualitative sense. They are “present in body, but absent in spirit”. However, we must all more or less begin as hylicians, so we are forgiven for being such ones – but not indefinitely.

³⁶*Psychicians* are those who above all orient themselves to the consciousness aspect. They are interested in the teaching, and make serious efforts to understand it. Their understanding is better than that of hylicians, but it largely remains a theory. Psychicians have a tendency to overemphasize the consciousness aspect at the expense of the will aspect, as if it were enough to have understanding and realization could wait. They also have a tendency to exaggerate the importance of their own experiences, and they easily add sentimental views, such as that of the decisive importance of “good will”. They still pay too much attention to mechanical patterns of their untransformed being: self-pity, fear, reward, the attention and appreciation of other people. Psychicians have started to transform, but in thoughtless talk they demonstrate that most of it is still mere theory.

³⁷*Pneumatics* have gained a deep understanding of the importance of realization. They have discovered the will aspect and conceive of it as particularly connected with insightful realization of purposes introduced from higher sources. They do not believe, as psychicians do, in “consciousness alone”, and they are quite uninterested in the psychicians’ coddling of the mechanical expressions of their envelopes of incarnation. They have found an exhaustless source of power within themselves. They have found the way to the “quiet place within”, can go there whenever they need to fill themselves with energy for realization, and in so doing have made themselves independent of the need of being cheered up through other people’s encouragement, attention, rewards, etc. They work very hard on themselves. They do not believe in “tiredness” and “fear”. They have understood their responsibility, seen that they must exert themselves to the utmost, pay back, that the days of laziness, procrastination, and neglect are over now and beyond recall. In their work, they do not believe in “good will”, but know that they are responsible for achieving perfect results.

³⁸To sum up: Hylicians have scarcely begun transforming their being. Psychicians have begun but only on a small scale. Pneumatics are deep in transformation. Hylicians: scanty understanding and still less realization; psychicians: somewhat deepening understanding, but sporadic realization; pneumatics: very deep understanding and increasing realization.

³⁹Somewhat simplified the basic tendencies of their understanding can be described thus: When a hylician hears about a school, he thinks of a building with a number of rooms, etc., and it is quite sufficient for him to be in it: to him that is the same as being in a school (the matter aspect). When a psychician hears about a school, he thinks of company, friendship, support from other people, fascinating knowledge, wonderful experiences, “service” that makes you “feel good”, to “be in a school” is to satisfy your “spiritual hunger”. When a pneumatician thinks of a school, he envisages an organization entering into a much larger organization on a higher level, this one in an organization on a still higher level, all of them fulfilling cosmic, solar systemic, and planetary purposes, and he thinks of how he could make his contribution to the realization of these purposes in the most efficient way possible.