

THE WAY AND ITS WANDERERS

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Four Series of Essays:
KNOWLEDGE AND BEING
THE WAY AND ITS WANDERERS
WILL, WISDOM, ACTIVITY
SELF-REMEMBRANCE, CONSCIENCE, RIGHT
ATTITUDE

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First Series:
KNOWLEDGE AND BEING
Containing the Essays
Knowledge
Being
Thinking
Understanding
School

1 KNOWLEDGE

1.1 General about Knowledge

¹“Knowledge must become knowledge to the one receiving it.” It is true that knowledge is something in itself, something material, like everything else in existence. This does not necessarily imply, however, that it becomes knowledge to the disciple, that it performs the function of knowledge in his consciousness. To him, it will become knowledge only when he understands it as it is intended to be understood.

²Knowledge consists in the intended relation between the consciousness of the teachers and the disciples.

³You can learn more during half an hour when you are in direct contact with a source of knowledge, no matter under what circumstances this contact is established, than during years of formal study.

⁴You can learn and equip yourself with a potential for knowledge that only later develops into real knowledge.

⁵Knowledge is not only hylozoics and the knowledge of the laws of life, but also an all-round orientation in the physical world. Such an orientation of course must be based on facts.

⁶Esoteric knowledge is not like exoteric knowledge, where everything is on the same level. Esoteric knowledge exists on many different levels, most of which are inaccessible to us human beings in our present state. The level of our being changes constantly, however, so that we can understand something esoteric in the morning, but have lost our understanding again in the evening the same day. We constantly forget what we have learnt, even the most elementary things. Memory and forgetfulness depend on our being. Therefore, we must constantly renew our study and strive to improve our being.

⁷Without the esoteric knowledge of reality and life, people cannot see that their illusions and fictions are unreal. Even for esotericians this unreality can be hard enough to descry. The emotional illusion is an emotional reality, just as the fiction is a mental reality. That is why they are convincing in their intensity, incontrovertible by those who have not seen their inevitable illusoriness and fictitiousness as a matter of principle. Only causal ideas can liberate us from this dependence. Only causal consciousness exposes their deceitfulness since it confronts them with enduring reality. This was what Platon had in mind when calling the ideas the “true being”.

⁸It shall be the task of esoterics to gather as many logical, psychological, and objectively tenable proofs as possible. It shall be the task of esoterics to

weed out all the illusions and fictions collected by mankind during millennia, so that mankind will no longer be deceived but will be able to trust its “authorities”.

⁹Knowledge is possible in the physical world about such things as do not depend on superphysical material reality or superphysical energies for a rational explanation, you might say: everything purely physical. Knowledge is impossible about everything that depends on emotional and mental matter and their pertaining energies for its explanation. Knowledge is possible in the causal world (the world of Platonic ideas), for the reality content of the ideas is an exact representation of permanent reality.

¹⁰Different ideologies (note this: not idiologies) will always exist. There are seven different ways of looking at reality, corresponding to the tasks of the seven departments. However, they are inclusive and not exclusive. They have everything essential and fundamental in common. Each one enables its students to fully understand the differing traits of the other six views. Whenever any world view or life view has an isolating effect, there is something wrong with its conception or presentation.

1.2 Three Characteristics of Knowledge

¹Content is only one of three characteristics of real knowledge. The other two are method and purpose. Using these three characteristics, reassess your assumptions about learning, understanding, insight, certainty, clarity! The criterion whether knowledge is esoteric or not does not pertain to the matter aspect, not even to the consciousness aspect, but to the will aspect. What does that mean? The matter aspect has to do with the object of the study, its content, its material. Thus the fact that you are studying “esoteric stuff” is not the decisive point, because such “study” can be pursued on a very low level: the astrology you find in weekly magazines, interest in previous lives roused by curiosity and self-importance.

²It is not “esoteric teaching” merely because it is about the multitude of worlds, consciousness development, the hierarchy of teachers and helpers. It is esoteric teaching only when information on such superphysical realities is given in such circumstances as may have the effect of raising the consciousness of those receiving it. “Esoteric facts” presented in circumstances where appeal is made to credulity, the thirst for sensations, irresponsibility, and laziness (for example, where the members of the planetary hierarchy are presented as the errand-boys and nannies of mankind) are no esoteric facts, but components of a new belief system, usually of the stupidizing and dogmatizing sort.

³The level of the esoteric study group determines whether it is esoteric study or not. Its level of consciousness must not be too low. However, not

even this is the true criterion determining whether the group is devoted to esoteric study or not. As said, the criterion is in the will aspect alone. That is to say: Does the group, do the members of the group, strive to improve their being, do they try to overcome their weaknesses, to realize their dormant potentials? Is their work in conformity with the overall purpose, with the plan for the evolution of all life?

⁴What has just been said here is connected with the division into hylicians, psychicians, and pneumaticians explained in the paper on BEING.

1.3 The Three Sources of Knowledge

¹There are three sources of knowledge: one's own experience, conclusion by analogy, and dependable authority.

²For man, all the way until he becomes a causal self, it is only in the physical world that his own experience will provide him with certain and dependable knowledge. On account of the chaotic condition of the emotional world, where the emotional thinking of its inhabitants creates objectively observable forms, it is impossible for others than specially trained disciples to judge the content of reality of the experiences that may be had there. In the mental world, any objectivity is precluded to any kinds of selves lower than causal selves.

³Analogy is the foremost esoteric method of conclusion.

⁴Only 45-selves, esoteric masters, are regarded as fully competent authorities in the three worlds of man (47–49). They need never be in error regarding the three aspects of reality in these three worlds.

⁵46-selves are fully competent to judge the matter and consciousness aspects in the three worlds. They are also fully competent to found schools, which nevertheless they do not, of course, unless being commissioned by higher authority. Causal selves are fully competent to judge the matter aspect in the three worlds of man, but not their consciousness and motion aspects, which fact explains some mistakes that causal selves have made in things connected with those two aspects.

1.4 Right View on Knowledge

¹We must not accept anything we do not comprehend or understand. When we have comprehended and inserted the facts into the new system we must construct, it remains for us to liberate ourselves from the misconceptions we have woven into subconscious complexes. And that takes time. It may happen that we in doing this end up in both mental and emotional chaos.

²It has turned out that those who are driven by their instinct saying that

the “truth” must nevertheless be found somewhere, find esoterics in the end. There is a lesson of life to be learnt in this “eternal search”. Only he has a right to the knowledge who does everything to find it. And the man who has pursued the path of seemingly fruitless search has had the training necessary to right insight. The important thing, however, is that you do not get hooked by the first probable system you find but examine them all.

³The individual trained in logic and philosophy does not accept hylozoics because it is without contradictions and unassailable to critique, but because it explains thousands of otherwise inexplicable realities and phenomena in a manner that common sense finds unique. In order to ascertain that, however, it is required that you have mastered the system and then tested its usefulness as an explanatory basis. Such an examination is not made in a jiffy. Usually, it takes several years until you have managed to apply it in all spheres of human experience. In so doing you slowly grow into understanding, as it were, and become more and more convinced. Thus the direct opposite of the process of examining other views, which prove less and less tenable the more time you spend on analysing them.

⁴Even if a theory or a hypothesis agrees with reality, yet it does not become a fact in the individual’s own experience until it has been realized, has been turned into life. It is the experiences the individual has had that turn into latent insights, become integrated and inalienable. Theoretical learning may train the ability of thinking but becomes lost as an insight when the incarnation is over. What we merely “believe” affords no certainty of conviction in lives to come. What we apprehend as evident can appear so because of its logical consistency. We cannot “live on it”, however, if it does not agree with our own unconscious experience system, however charming it may appear to our imagination.

⁵The esoteric axiom, “the initiate knows because he works”, means that knowledge is acquired through experiment and experience. “Initiate” means that there must be some basic preconditions. The law of self-realization is the way of development, the way to insight, understanding, and capacity.

⁶It is by no means as the beginner in esoterics thinks, that esoterics solves all problems, the usual basic error. The individual develops by solving his problems. Esoterics makes it possible for the individual to solve his problems. The significance of esoterics lies in that fact.

⁷Many newly accepted disciples complain that they must “live in darkness”. That is unavoidable, however, until they have acquired causal objective consciousness, are able to study reality and those factors of the past that produce events in the present in many respects extend beyond the present

into the future. The beginner is guided by his esoteric learning (generally the simplest basic system and the knowledge of a few laws of life) as well as by his acquired latent instinct of right action. This makes that experience possible which brings about a constantly increasing insight into, and understanding of, what was previously incomprehensible and which finally leads into that world of ideas where reality extends before his astonished view, the reality of the worlds of man with all the processes of the past.

⁸To become a disciple it is required that you have learnt to see that no individual of the fourth natural kingdom can know anything worth knowing. The trifles of the physical world and physical life and what everybody can ascertain physically may be of some value for everyday life. But that is not what is meant here.

1.5 To Realize the Knowledge

¹To realize the knowledge means to become, step by step, one to whom the knowledge is real. To undeveloped man, knowledge can be just a belief. According as the tools of knowledge, thinking, and understanding are refined, man's conception of the knowledge is transformed as well: from belief to a well thought-out working hypothesis, and from such a working hypothesis to an assurance that is increasingly better founded on his own experience. Being on the verge of becoming a causal self, the individual has left belief and hypothesis behind him, at least where the three worlds of man are concerned. The causal self knows, so for a self of this kind knowledge is real. The causal self has realized the knowledge – at a first stage. The next stage, of course, is that of the 46-self. And so it goes on.

²Even before we become causal selves, before the knowledge is real to us, we can be, live, act, as if the knowledge were real. The more and the better we do so, the more rapidly we approach that state where knowledge will be real to us.

³Knowledge is necessary. But it is practically worthless if the consciousness there is in knowledge does not also manifest its energy aspect.

⁴The knowledge of energies and their utilization is what makes it possible to evolve and, where the individual is concerned, to reach the fifth natural kingdom.

⁵Many difficulties arise because we do not use the energy of our knowledge. All consciousness expressions are simultaneously energy expressions. And if the energies are not released into action, then they must get other outlets, and that will as a rule be detrimental to ourselves in some respect or other. That is one of the reasons why the esoteric knowledge must be kept secret from those who do not know how to put it into action.

1.6 Learning, Knowledge, and Wisdom

¹Learning (information), knowledge, and wisdom must be distinguished. Learning is mere amassed information, data on all sorts of things. These data need not be true, need not agree with reality. Even if they are true, they may be factually insignificant or unessential in some important context. Facts that are in themselves correct may become meaningless or misleading by ending up in a wrong context. Similarly, one erroneous datum among correct facts may distort the whole presentation.

²Learning is nothing bad. It fulfils a function on its level, is important as a step in man's intellectual development. What is perceived as esoteric opposition to and criticism of learning actually is not criticism of learning in itself, only of the tendency to view learning as something which it is not.

³It is often seen that the learned do not understand that there is something beyond learning, something much higher. You must always strive for something that is on a higher level than your present state if you want to progress, also in your own field.

⁴Knowledge is nothing but facts, important facts, put into their correct relations with each other so that they form a context that is essential from the factual point of view. Many contexts, correctly combined into a greater whole, form a system of knowledge. Knowledge is not the same as expanded learning. No expansion of learning, however great, can replace knowledge. Knowledge is superior to learning, not in a quantitative, but in a qualitative respect. What qualitatively distinguishes knowledge from learning is the growth of understanding, the heightening of consciousness.

⁵Wisdom is knowledge expediently applied in action. No more than a mere quantitative increase of learning makes knowledge, no more a mere quantitative increase of knowledge makes wisdom. Just as a qualitative element distinguishes knowledge from learning, such a qualitative element distinguishes wisdom from knowledge. This qualitative element, where wisdom is concerned, is experience worked upon by the individual. It is by trying to apply his knowledge, by making mistakes and learning from them, working on those mistakes, that the individual grows in wisdom.

⁶The Greek word *sophós* is usually translated "wise", so that *sophía* is "wisdom", *philósophos* is "a lover of wisdom", etc. In the ancient Greek society, however, a skilled shoemaker was deemed *sophos* in his profession as much as a teacher of wisdom in his specialty. A more exact translation of *sophos*, therefore, is "skilled in his function", "skilled in action". Thus wisdom is the same as the ability to apply the knowledge, skill in action. Wisdom is practice. Knowledge is mere theory.

⁷Of course, action is not enough. Wisdom is action with quality, the quality of consciousness. Wisdom is the power to realize. There is no wisdom if previously there is no common sense. Without common sense, wisdom cannot find expression.

⁸In esoterics the thesis applies saying that knowledge does not precede experience, but results from it. We learn by living, by making our own experiments in life. The knowledge we have received before experience has quite another significance through experience. Neither does knowledge afford us the power to realize. Man acquires that power by experience, by the endless number of unsuccessful experiences. That is why mistakes are necessary on the path to wisdom. That is also why it is said, *sapere aude*, dare to be wise, because it could equally well be said: dare to make mistakes.

⁹Life-ignorant man lets himself be cast down by failures, blames himself, and loses his trust in self. The man experienced in life knows that mistakes are unavoidable and that he learns the most by making mistakes. He acquires trust in self through his failed attempts, for having made them he knows much more than before. Anyone who does not dare to act for fear of failing often misses valuable opportunities of learning. Many people also fear the criticism of others. Criticism must be taken into account and be used to liberate oneself from the dependence on the opinions of others. Invulnerability is a necessary quality, one of the characteristics of the real human being.

¹⁰Just as there is a process of evolution leading the individual from learning to knowledge, and from knowledge to wisdom, there is a process of devolution befalling individuals and entire groups lest they take care: What became of the wisdom that decayed into knowledge? What became of the knowledge that decayed into learning? What became of the learning that decayed into information?

¹¹Seek wisdom while you possess strength! Otherwise you might lose your strength without finding wisdom.

¹²“He that loveth wisdom loveth life. And they that seek her early shall be filled with joy.”

1.7 The Knowledge is still Esoteric

¹The knowledge does not cease being esoteric because it is publicized. It essentially remains esoteric because its most important part – the doctrine of the will, the teaching on the energies – is still esoteric, because even the publicized part is incomprehensible to most people, because also those who study the publicized part with some understanding penetrate into it gradually, step by step, in a process lasting many years.

²The knowledge essentially remains esoteric. And “esoteric” means “initiatory”, reserved for initiates. Also the manner in which the individual acquires the publicized part of the knowledge is initiatory, is done step by step in a process of increasing understanding. Just as the path of initiations is long and arduous, this process, too, is long and arduous, requires growth of understanding and great efforts. Like the path of initiations, this process presupposes improvement of being, for if the individual does not improve his being, he cannot increase his understanding. Just as the path of initiations is a series of great expansions of consciousness, the process of the acquisition of the knowledge is a series of small expansions of consciousness.

1.8 The Connection of Knowledge and Being

¹It is important to study, from both the individual and the general angle, how being is connected with knowledge. No increase of knowledge in itself improves being. And no improvement of being in itself increases knowledge. But there are many important connections between the increase of knowledge and the improvement of being. All disciples study these connections in two themes: knowledge in being and being in knowledge, that is to say: 1) What in the improvement of our being can we use to increase our knowledge? 2) What in the increase of our knowledge can we use to improve our being?

²The first theme, “knowledge in being”, mainly is about removing obstacles to the reception of the knowledge as it is, not as “I” (false personality, unimproved being) wants it to be. Such obstacles are due to deficiencies or erroneous attitudes in the disciple’s being. Negative reactions to, and negative views of, knowledge arise from illusions and fictions. As the disciple improves his being, he sees them through, eventually understands how they came about. The second theme, “being in knowledge”, mainly is about ways of better understanding those particularly important parts of the knowledge which explain the evolution of consciousness in different scales, from cosmic, solar systemic, and planetary processes down to the individual conditions. Through his study of the laws of life, the law of self-realization and the law of activation in particular, the disciple receives many important ideas about how to work on improving his being. Also his theoretical study of the planetary hierarchy and discipleship, that is: the elder brothers, their work, and the conditions for gradually joining their organization and its work, should eventually afford the disciple a better understanding of, and motivation for, his work on his own being. Also his insight that life – both on a great scale (cosmic, solar systemic, etc.) and on a small scale (himself) – has a deep

meaning affords the disciple a strong driving force for his work to change his own being. That driving force or motivation is absent in those who believe that we live only one life.

³The hylozoic system requires constant reflection, long thoughts, the combination of many ideas. All of this raises the quality of thinking and thus improves being. The study of the laws of life and other subjects of esoteric life view gives occasion to self-examination, self-observation, encouragement to more and better work on oneself, which improves being.

⁴An individual having an undeveloped being must consistently misunderstand esoterics, for example blame the planetary hierarchy for living hidden away from mankind ever since Atlantean times, or make other demands on individuals of higher kingdoms, such as assuming that Augoeides and members of the fifth natural kingdom should be the errand-boys and nannies of humans, assisting them in all sorts of private and egoistic matters. Or conversely, such an individual may be surprised that those who have entered the fifth natural kingdom are anxious to help mankind: “When I reach that far, then I surely will never more have anything to do with this ungrateful mankind.” As if you could reach unity on the path of bitterness, rejection, separation, and lovelessness!

1.9 The First Four Lessons of the Esoterician

¹The first lesson the esoterician has to learn is that all that he has believed, thought, assumed up to now is quite erroneous. It is based on the imaginations of the ignorance of reality and life. Life in the physical world affords no man any possibility of understanding reality beyond that one world. All higher kinds of life are totally different, and what has been speculated on them is thoroughly erroneous. Eventually he must bring himself to see that he knows nothing that is worth knowing. The knowledge of reality can be acquired in the fifth natural kingdom only. Nothing of what was taught in the esoteric knowledge orders by representatives of this fifth kingdom was publicly known before the year 1875. The people who give themselves out to possess a self-acquired knowledge of reality are the victims of their clairvoyance. That must be laid down once and for all.

²The second lesson taught to the esoterician is that the knowledge he receives is intended to make him a suitable instrument for the consciousness development of mankind, for service, not for the satisfaction of his desire for knowledge that confers power.

³The third lesson taught to the esoterician is that the acquisition of knowledge is no child’s play but means work and toil, hard work, unceasing work, never-finished work, that you cannot speed ahead of a development

normally taking million years without a considerable effort.

⁴The fourth lesson is that all knowledge involves responsibility with inevitable consequences for the future and in future lives. This otherwise inaccessible knowledge was not given to us to make us feel important and superior. Having received this undeserved gift we become humble.

1.10 Misconceptions of Beginners

¹“Popularization” and simplification are crutches and supports intended for the beginners’ stage. The understanding obtained through them is much more limited than neophytes generally think. As soon as neophytes begin striving to reach beyond elementary and popular presentations, they can begin to move forward in a serious sense. If such a striving is to be crowned with success, their being must first be improved.

²Exceedingly common is the mistake of confusing the knowledge with the dialectical form it must have to be presentable to human intellects at all. Dialectics, logical, consistent argumentation, definitions of concepts, all of this certainly must be mastered, and nothing of it must remain unclear or unexplained in the disciples’ mind. But sooner or later they will have to grasp the knowledge stripped of the dialectics.

³Neophytes tend to dispute among themselves about various details that are without significance to the desirable total vision, to speculate on matters of which they can know nothing anyway, to demand to know this or that in addition to the great amount of knowledge already conveyed to them. All of this is pointless and obstructive to the development of higher consciousness. They should ask themselves: How have I mastered all this which I have been taught hitherto? Have I mastered even its elements? Has my being improved as much as my knowledge has increased? Am I prepared to pay for all which I demand, and how have I paid hitherto?

⁴Knowledge consists in the intended relation between the consciousness of teachers and disciples. Where lies the fault then, if disciples do not learn? Does it lie with the teacher, with the knowledge, or with the disciples?

⁵It appears that the disciple has to study, not just the teaching, but also himself. He needs to see through what is hindering him from learning, to discover what changes of his attitudes he should make in order to help himself to learn.

⁶Impatience at not receiving more to be learnt must yield to gratitude for having been taught all of this which one nevertheless has received. Irritation at not understanding or not having everything explained to one must yield to contentedness with the lot of knowledge one has received and understanding that one really has received more than one deserves. At all

events, an unimproved being cannot take more.

⁷Trust in life, trust in self, and trust in the law must be acquired by the disciple also where his attitude to the knowledge and study is concerned.

1.11 Selective Study

¹Many of those taking an interest in esoterics study selectively and read selectively. They do not give the whole of the material the attention it requires. They pick out what has a positive emotional impact on them, and drop what has a negative emotional impact on them; focus on what agrees with their established dogmas, what appeals to their emotional thinking and imagination, what stimulates their curiosity, sense of being chosen, self-importance, etc. And what they like or find exciting they commit to memory or seek more and more deeply. These things which they select, however, often are such as they least of all need.

²Proceeding in this manner, they only become more confirmed in their fictions and illusions. Some of these people eventually come to see that “studies” pursued in this manner teach them nothing, take them nowhere. The situation is typical of such self-study as is done without the guidance of a competent teacher. It is indeed a function of the teacher to direct the disciples’ attention to the things they need to learn in order to progress. The things they need are often quite different from the things they desire.

³Generally speaking it might be said that those studying selectively question the teachers’ intention, experience, and wisdom. It should be natural to start from the assumption that the material has to be studied as a whole precisely because the teachers have presented it as a whole, and the teachers are the best judges of what the disciples should study. The disciples, being in the very beginning of their study, cannot possibly understand and judge the purpose of their study, cannot possibly know why they should study those very parts of the material that they are so keen on skipping.

1.12 Some Examples of Selective Reading

¹Some readers of *The Knowledge of Reality* skip or skim the first four sections of the book, to pounce upon the section dealing with the history of European philosophy, because only there do they feel “they are on familiar ground”. However, the first four sections are the very ones essentially containing the knowledge (sections 1, 2, and 4 in particular, as they present the knowledge in the form of a system), whereas the three latter sections do not at all do so to the same extent. Other readers read only the first four sections, and leave the philosophy section unread because, as they say, they “do not understand philosophy”. Although the procedure of the latter group

is better than that of the former, it is nevertheless a mistake. There are many important esoteric insights to be had from the section on philosophy as well, since there Laurency criticizes the mistakes and errors of philosophers from the hylozoic standpoint. It is an excellent pedagogical method to teach the correct views by contrasting them with the erroneous ones. Moreover, this part of the book is one long example of perspective thinking, a faculty which the would-be esoterician should practise.

²“The number of the atoms is not infinite, but so great as to be impossible for man to calculate.” (*The Knowledge of Reality*, 5.11.9) An example, from the section on philosophy, of perspective thinking which contradicts that thinking in absolute opposites and that lack of proportion which typify emotional thinking and lower mentality generally.

³Another example. Some readers consider the essay on Gnostics in *Knowledge of Life One* superfluous. It deals with things that have no bearing on our times, they think. But it does! It describes how, at the last transition from one zodiacal epoch to the next, false doctrines without number, distortions of esoterics, gained ground, and how one such false doctrine, the pseudo-gnostic one, became Christianity. In our times we are, once again, in the midst of such a transition from one zodiacal epoch to the next one. We are faced with a chaos similar to the one prevailing at the last zodiacal transition, occult sects, the new age phenomenon, etc., with many traits in common with the pseudo-gnostic teachings. Thus we can understand our own times better by studying similar epochs in the past.

1.13 *The Purpose of Hylozoics*

¹The purpose of the hylozoic system is to give a comprehensible answer to the question of the meaning and goal of existence, and it is the only system that has given a rational explanation. It has never been intended to be other than a basic world view (not a life view), containing those facts of reality which are fundamental to a correct conception of reality and a necessary understanding of life.

²Hylozoics presents the basic facts necessary to comprehend the three aspects of reality and the structure of the cosmos. It provides the common theoretical basis of the various schools belonging to the seven departments or catering to the needs of people at the mystic and humanist stages. Hylozoics provides the foundation. The various superstructures should be given other names so that a confusion of concepts is avoided, which otherwise is unavoidable. Thus no school has a right to usurp the name of hylozoics. The new schools should take new names and not choose names known from history.

³Hylozoics is the system that provides the best means of expression, the

best terminology, allows the best explanatory method for “exact comprehension” (to the extent that such comprehension can be achieved at all) of cosmic reality to mankind at its present stage of development. It enables a mental clarity that is not possible with any other system. Causal selves, living in the causal world of ideas, can objectively observe material reality and follow the processes of matter in the worlds of man, intuitively experience phenomena in the consciousness aspect, and so they do not need any mental system. Human beings are first selves, however, and no causal selves. And for first selves, the best mental system is the one that enables them to reach the greatest possible mental clarity.

⁴The true knowledge system, due to its agreement with reality, acts like a magnet, making it possible for the esoterician to extract the essentials of all “learning” (the ideas of reality scaled down into mentality and fictionalized in the process) and refining it into true mental ideas (the ideas of common sense).

⁵Hylozoics comes as close to reality as is possible for mankind’s conception of reality in the current eon.

1.14 Hylozoics is a Mental System

¹It would be improper to say that hylozoics is the knowledge of the planetary hierarchy. Hylozoics is a mental system, a system of mental concepts for the first self’s comprehension and understanding of reality. The members of the planetary hierarchy have no use for either system or mentality, since they have acquired both causal (47:1) and essential (46:1) intuition, and intuition apprehends reality directly, without concepts and systems, which distort and limit more than human beings may suspect. It could be said, however, that hylozoics is a mental system of facts that can only be supplied by the planetary hierarchy.

²Hylozoics is not reality, for it must be experienced, and only the causal self can do that. Life alone is reality. The causal self sees, hears, etc. everything in the worlds of man as we see and hear in the physical world. A mental system is a theory, not life, and may become an obstacle to life, if it is turned into an “*idée fixe*”. The causal self needs no concepts. Causal ideas are intuitions, in which the consciousness aspect, the matter aspect, and the energy aspect are live realities. Mental systems thus are substitutes for life, as life cannot be bound by concepts. They are working hypotheses that can never replace experience.

³An unerring mental system can be formed only out of esoteric (causal) facts and ideas, obtained by causal (or higher) selves from the causal world. Omniscience in the worlds of man is not sufficient, since these worlds are built from still higher kinds of matter and energy. In the causal world, there

is more than “clouds of knowable things”, however. Ideas from the worlds of the second self (45:4–47:3) are to be found there as well. And only when we possess that knowledge will it be possible for us to construct the “ideal system”.

⁴The risk of all systems is that they lock consciousness to something that must be abandoned, that is just a theory and easily remains a theory instead of a tool in life. It all depends on how you apply it in life, make experiments and so gain your own experience, for only so you acquire qualities and abilities.

1.15 Hylozoics Makes It Possible to Develop Higher Consciousness

¹By thorough and methodical study of the hylozoic mental system, Occidental disciples can train both perspective and system thinking, and through these higher mental faculties they can acquire causal intuition. Therefore, the study of Oriental symbolism, the purpose of which was to train this intuition, is unnecessary for Westerners. Thus they pursue another path than Easterners to a knowledge that is essentially the same. Having once mastered hylozoics and having acquired the higher mental faculties, Western disciples nevertheless may study the Oriental symbolic teachings, only to have further confirmation of the fact of the unity of the knowledge beyond the multiplicity of forms, and of the superiority of hylozoics as an explanation and a method.

²Hylozoics is that mental system which the most easily develops causal consciousness (intuition) and guides man into the “world of Platonic ideas” where he at last finds “true reality” and can by himself ascertain firm facts. In the causal world, man is for ever freed from the dependence on subjective conceptions and concepts and leads an objective life in an objective reality where errors are non-existent. The emotional and mental worlds disappear, as it were (since they offer no possibility of objective perception and no subjective conceptions agree with the pertaining phenomena), and the physical and causal worlds make up a permanent unity. Then he sees that the physical world is the world most important for man until he has attained the causal world. Then he comprehends what Platon meant by the “world of ideas” and that nobody has been able to grasp his veiled intimations. Emotional illusions and mental fictions have for ever lost their power to seduce and disorient in life. Then man is free from all human ideologies. Since the self does not need a system any more, he no longer thinks it strange that causal selves have such difficulty in shaping mental systems such as mentalists require. But he understands how necessary these ideologically aids are for those at the emotional and mental stages, and he is careful not to deprive people of their ideologies as long as these meet a

need. Without them, emotional and mental consciousness development will not be possible. That is the profound significance of the saying “man cannot live without god”, a symbolic saying that is meaningless to skeptics and other uninitiated people. Man must have something firm for his emotion or thought until he has become a causal self and has entered reality.

1.16 Hylozoics is the Final Synthesis

¹Hylozoics proves to be the final synthesis. It contains everything that has an enduring value in the various views that have appeared in the history of mankind, but in a superior manner. It demonstrates what is rational and tenable in philosophical materialism and idealism, in the theological doctrines of god immanent and god transcendent, in the various political ideologies. At the same time, however, it demonstrates what was limited and limiting, erroneous and misconceived, in all these views, above all because they were exclusive and not inclusive, absolutizing and not relativizing. The error of materialism was that it concentrated exclusively on matter and moreover matter in the lowest world only, the physical world. In hylozoics, matter is demonstrated to be one of three aspects of reality. Subjectivism (self-designated as idealism) was as one-sided as materialism, since it concentrated exclusively on consciousness. Modern physicists accord energy, force, or motion the sovereign position which the old philosophers granted matter or consciousness. However, motion, too, is an aspect of reality together with matter and consciousness. In this manner, just as in many other ways, hylozoics helps people to rise from the one-track thinking that must absolutize each concept, being unable to view them as different aspects of one and the same reality.

²What is revolutionary in the hylozoic teaching is the emphasis on the motion aspect, energy aspect, will aspect. Energy builds the cosmos, keeps aggregates (all the material forms in the cosmos, including all the various kinds of atoms) together, makes development possible. This concerning the relation of the motion aspect to the consciousness aspect. For energy is the source of revelation. The right use of energy solves all problems. Right use is according to the Law and can never come into conflict with the cosmic energies. Right use shows the way and clears the way. Important is the insight that every consciousness expression is at the same time an energy expression which must have its effect. Man produces energy by his consciousness expressions in all his envelopes. Of this he is unaware, and he does not know that if these energies are not given expedient outlets, then they become irrational or harmful (from this arises all disease; true health makes the organism immune to attacks).

1.17 To Understand Hylozoics

¹It is true that hylozoics has been shaped into a system of mental concepts, and so has been made comprehensible also to principle thinking (47:6). It is not enough to comprehend hylozoics, however. Because its origin is the world of ideas (47:3), so in order to understand it, you must be in contact with the world of ideas.

²Therefore, to understand hylozoics is qualitatively higher than to master the system by comprehending its concepts. You understand hylozoics only when using it you can solve the problem of reality, can rationally explain the meaning and goal of life, can explain countless previously inexplicable facts in the simplest manner. This also means understanding that it cannot be otherwise, being able to see that other systems are erroneous, in what and because of what they are erroneous. Because the refutation of false systems is almost as important as the learning of the right one.

³To anyone able to do this hylozoics has ceased to be a working hypothesis. He can then start to deduct from the system, draw conclusions from the system and ascertain that they agree with reality.

⁴Anyone who has mastered hylozoics (*The Knowledge of Reality* 1.4–1.41) has gained an understanding, not just of the three aspects of reality, but also of mankind's path of development, and he will find that this understanding entails an energy that makes further "revelation" possible, a path of light from clarity to clarity. Having once entered on the right path, you eventually see what steps you should take. There can never be any halt as long as you follow the light you have received.

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 qualities 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.

¹⁹Patañjali: 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, *pneumatics* (*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 over-emphasize 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*Pneumaticians* 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. Pneumaticians are deep in transformation. Hylicians: scanty understanding and still less realization; psychicians: somewhat deepening understanding, but sporadic realization; pneumaticians: 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.

3 THINKING

3.1 Introduction

¹What is thought? Only esoterics can explain what thought is. Thought is a function of mental consciousness. And mentality is in essence as different from emotionality as emotionality is different from physical consciousness. Pure mentality is rare in mankind. Most of what people call thinking is a mixture of emotionality and mentality: imagination, emotional and wishful thinking.

²“Thoughts” are not necessarily thinking, if by “thinking” you mean purposeful, expedient mental activity. The degree of mechanicalness versus the degree of intentionality, the degree of quality (higher or lower activated molecular kinds), the degree of knowledge, the degree of understanding – all of this must be considered. Most simply put: does “it” think in me, or do I think myself?

³Using thought man can develop his consciousness. Emotion cannot do it, at least not without the control of thought. Emotion can have an expedient significance for consciousness development only after thought has been educated and developed.

⁴Many people confuse intelligence and judgement. They are two quite different faculties, however. Judgement presupposes knowledge of facts and experience (a working-up of facts done previously).

⁵The lowest mental, inference thinking (47:7), is attracted to physical life, the lowest but one, principle thinking (47:6), is attracted to emotionality.

⁶Only perspective thinking (47:5) can assert itself as thinking independent of emotionality and come under the influence of causal consciousness (from 47:3). Perspective thinking (47:5) has the advantage that the totally misconstrued mental systems in the two lowest mental regions (47:6,7) are dropped and that common sense, critical reason, does not so easily fall a victim to the constructive urge.

⁷The highest kind of mental consciousness, system thinking (47:4), is strongly influenced by causal consciousness (47:3 and 47:2); working, when fully developed, as a down-scaler of causal ideas. System thinking could also be termed “symbol thinking”. A symbol is a summary of a whole view. Symbol thinking is the mental basic structure of our conception of reality.

⁸When thought is developed, it is gradually transformed into something else, a faculty of a higher kind: causal intuition. Correspondingly, desire is transformed into feeling, and feeling into imagination: they are mentalized.

The transformation of thought into causal intuition is done with the participation of the next higher kind of atomic consciousness: 46. In an analogous manner the transformation of desire into imagination is done with the participation of the next higher higher kind of atomic consciousness: 47.

⁹Thought is closest to self-consciousness: thought is mental, and self-consciousness is causal.

¹⁰The individual must have a motivation, a driving force, to develop his consciousness. This motivation is supplied by momentary experiences of “higher states of consciousness”, actually states of self-consciousness, presence. They are called self-remembrance also because they are unforgettable. Only when he has achieved a contact with a kind of consciousness higher than thought does the individual have a driving force to develop his consciousness and his thought beyond their present limitation.

¹¹The idea of consciousness development: the change of essence, just as in the world of plants a seed changes into an embryo, which in its turn grows into a complete individual. The seed is not, does not even resemble, the fully developed individual, but has nevertheless developed out of it, has been transformed from it.

¹²The development of thought, the transformation of its essence, must have esoterics as its working material, for as thought improves and sharpens, it sees through the ordinary exoteric views, regards them as narrow, seeks something else and higher. The progressive development of thought requires increasingly better material to work at. This process cannot run idle.

¹³Pursued in the right manner, esoteric study develops thought. The right development of thought presupposes esoteric study.

¹⁴For anyone skilled in thinking it is pleasurable to develop his thinking further. To sense how his capability grows in a meaningful way makes him long for more of it. It is the same kind of pleasurable feeling as accompanies the growth of ability in every field: music, sports, learning of handicrafts, etc. Pleasure is a source of energy as long as one does not identify oneself with it.

¹⁵Man’s mental consciousness has but two reality functions: to scale down causal ideas and, as for the rest, to explode the fictions by analysis. Reason cannot produce knowledge. Sense ascertains facts, and reason can only work up the facts ascertained by sense. Sense is an objective consciousness function, reason is a subjective consciousness function.

¹⁶There is physical, emotional, mental, etc. sense. The normal individual has only physical sense. The emotional sense (clairvoyance) of certain people affords them no knowledge of reality, for if that were the case, there would be no need for esoterics, no need for teachers from the fifth natural kingdom. Only causal sense affords a knowledge of that part of reality

which is called the three worlds of man, 47–49, and actually only knowledge of the matter aspect of those worlds. Knowledge of the consciousness aspect in 47–49 requires essential (46) sense; and knowledge of the will aspect, superessential (45) sense.

3.2 *Facts and Fictions*

¹We study facts in four types of contexts: historical, logical, psychological, causal. 1) By a historical context is meant the succession of events in time (but therefore not necessarily their causal connections). 2) A logical context shows how ideas and statements depend on each other. 3) Psychological contexts: actions depend on their motives. 4) Causal contexts show how material effects depend on their causes. The ground–consequence context is a logical one, the cause–effect context a causal one. Only 4) is cause in a material sense. There is very often a mix-up in people’s minds about cause–effect and ground–consequence. (As you see, I avoid the word “reason” here precisely because it is part and parcel of this mix-up.) For instance, if I am out walking in the woods and see smoke rising somewhere far away, I conclude that there must be a fire. My conclusion is a logical context, a connection of the two ideas of “smoke” and “fire”, where “smoke” is the ground and “fire” is the consequence of my reasoning. In the physical world, however, fire is the cause and smoke is the effect. So we see that cause and ground should not be confused. Reasoning, proceeding from ground to consequence, can work both ways: inferring causes from effects or effects from causes. Or, expressed differently: the ground of my reasoning could be a cause or an effect. Physical world causal action, however, is always a one-way process, proceeding only from cause to effect.

²It is not possible to think anything that does not exist. Even a fiction is made up of elements that exist in some kind of reality. A conception is erroneous because it, in whole or in part, reflects other parts of reality than what is assumed. The parts are individually correct, but their union is false, and their combination erroneous. Making this combination, fiction-creating thinking has caused a disharmony in mental matter. Something analogous is not possible for causal thinking, since it mirrors the reality sought for exactly, does not admit of any disharmony. Therefore, an important feature of the work at conquering causal consciousness consists in seeing through, discarding, fictions. Motto: “Let truth and reality rule in my life.”

3.3 *Associative Thinking*

¹Associations are needed as materials for thinking and as a driving force in thinking.

²In hylozoics, associations are explained by the mechanical work

constantly going on in the subconscious, a work in which impressions received are processed and combined into larger units, complexes. A new impression, which is still present in the waking consciousness, can rouse an older impression, which has sunk down into the subconscious, and so bring up into the waking consciousness not only the old impression but also complexes linked with it. The association need not be rational or expedient. The work of complexes is mechanical; they work at whatever they receive.

³It is largely true that the more associations you have, the richer your intellectual life is.

⁴However, mere association is not sufficient for thinking. Uncritical associative thinking, typically proceeding in chains of comparisons or of identifications, is the most common. Real thinking, however, begins only with discrimination: the ability to pick and choose among associations. Real thinking consists in a system of refutation of false and useless associations. In this work, the negative judgement most often proves to be more important than the positive judgement: to establish what a thing is not is more important than to establish what it is.

⁵The whole of this activity, the critical work at associations, is more and more clearly apprehended as a never-ending process, approaching truth rather than attaining it.

3.4 The Relation of Thinking to Language

¹It is easy to forget that vocabulary – the repertory of words – and the repertory of ideas, or of concepts, are two different things. If you do not consider this fact, you will easily, when talking to other people, presuppose that they possess the same concepts as yourself merely because they use the same words as you do. The student of esoterics gives a special import also to words in general use, such as “development”, “mental”, “sense”, “reason”, “spiritual”, “soul”, “realize”, “humanist”, etc. The word “development”, for instance, when used in esoterics has a qualitative meaning, indicates a qualitative change, an improvement that does not involve the matter aspect, but the consciousness aspect, whereas the same word in general usage practically always means a change pure and simple, not a qualitative change, and in addition purely mechanical events in the matter aspect of the physical world. There are, for instance, such expressions in use as “development of disease” and “development of crime”, etc. In the community at large, the word “mental” does not have exactly the same meaning as the one esotericians put into it, but refers to the psyche in a more general sense, as is clear from such words as “mental hospital”, “mental disturbance”, etc. In the esoteric sense, “humanist” means an individual who has attained the humanist or mental stage, whereas in the community at large it has quite

another meaning, in the matter of life view: an agnostic, or skeptic, or anti-metaphysician.

²It is worthwhile to consider the fact that the vocabulary, or repertory of words, is always very limited, whereas the possible repertory of ideas or concepts is unlimited, and also that the meaning of many words changes with time on account of universal and seemingly unstoppable abuse of words.

³Precision of thinking requires precision of expression. “One should tell the truth, but one should not tell all truths.” “Every man can develop, but not all men develop.” (Similar to “Anyone can die tomorrow, but not everyone will die tomorrow.”) “The future can be somewhat predicted, but the future is not predetermined.” “Everybody has a right to his view, but everybody is not right in his view.”

⁴The inversion is also true, with some modification: The endeavour to be precise in your expression helps you to acquire the precision of thought.

3.5 Formatory Thinking

¹Formatory thinking is thinking of a very low quality. If our thinking is very often formatory, we cannot think in a flexible way, in a manner adapted to reality; we cannot see more sides of a matter or a problem, we cannot understand esoteric ideas, we cannot progress. Formatory thinking is a serious obstacle to our development, and in some of us it is the most difficult obstacle.

²Formatory thinking is like just having a glance at something and immediately giving one’s opinion on it. The opposite, which can be called formulating thinking, consists in the slower process of collecting all sorts of things that can be known about something, ranking facts and data according to their importance and probability, weighing arguments against one another, and then building the thought form with a certain care, formulating the expression with a certain precision. Of course there are many different degrees of perfection in formulating thinking, but its most important characteristic is the intentionality of its endeavour.

³Therefore, all who desire to work on themselves should get a clear understanding of what formatory thinking is, not so much through definitions (by intension) as through examples (by extension). You should collect a number of concrete, representative examples of formatory thinking, your own and that of other people.

⁴Among general characteristics of formatory thinking the following three should primarily be mentioned: thinking in absolute opposites (absolutizing thinking), exaggerated belief in definition, simplication of arguments to distortion.

⁵Thinking in absolute opposites, either – or, may sometimes be justified, but mostly is not. Formatory thinking takes a particular delight in finding contradictions in terms of absolute opposites. Formatory thinking starts from that superstition in logic which says that because concepts are absolute, the real things, events, and processes to which the concepts refer must be absolute as well. In real life, however, such conceived absolutes seldom occur, but usually relatives; not warm and cold as absolutes, but warmer and colder, etc.

⁶Typical examples of formatory thinking are seen in objections that beginners may raise to “contradictions” they think they find in school principles: 1) “Are we supposed to remember ourselves or are we supposed to forget ourselves? We are told to do both!?” 2) “We should not do anything until we have understood why, but we should obey rules without understanding why!?” The answers that dissolve formatory thinking are: 1) We *are* supposed to remember ourselves and we *are* supposed to forget ourselves. The “self” intended is not the same in the two cases. The permanent self is not the same as the false apparent selves emanating from the mechanical work of centres. And: 2) There are many different degrees of understanding, and we should have some understanding of rules before we obey them; yet we must obey them before we have fully understood them, and we cannot in fact understand them deeply, their necessity and purpose, until we have obeyed them for quite a long time. It is exactly the same case as with the laws of life: to discover them we must first apply them.

⁷Formatory thinking is keen on establishing connections or identities between things on the basis of similarities which this thinking observes. Differences are at least as important, however, and often more important. Moreover, similarities and differences should not just be counted, but also weighed: some of them are more weighty, others are quite unimportant.

⁸Formatory assurances are such automatically and mechanically accepted assumptions as characterize man’s “thought” and action in unthinking states. “Good will is enough” or “If only the intention is good, the result will be good.” Such assurances must be cherished by those who do not heed resistance, or the second force. However, even students of esoterics, who have some theoretical knowledge of triune forces, forget every now and then to apply their knowledge of them.

⁹The work at raising one’s thinking from the formatory level is performed in many different ways and with many different procedures. In the following, some such ways and procedures will be described.

3.6 *Erroneous and Primitive Thinking*

¹Erroneous conclusions, incorrect jumps in one's argument, of course are very common in uneducated and undeveloped thinking. Examining it more closely, one will find that rather few typical and recurring structural errors in mental construction are involved. When refuting these errors in thinking, the corresponding scheme of fault-tracing or model for refutation can be applied, and these schemes, or models, thus are as many as the rather few types of errors in thinking. Independent thinkers, reflective people, will eventually "discover" and apply these models of refutation by themselves, but generally without having names for them. Such a work can be observed in intelligent and independent-minded children as well.

²The expression, known from the Vedas, *parokshapriyā iva hi devāh*, is usually translated "for the gods seem to love the subtle". But you could as well translate it "for the gods seem to love what is out of sight", since *paroksha* literally means "what is beyond the range of one's eyes", the opposite of *pratyaksha*, "what is before one's eyes". There is something here of general applicability, namely the importance of exercising the opposite of that kind of superficial thinking which can grasp only what is presented to it by sensual direct confrontation. A whole world is upset when in dramatic film sequences is shown how two passenger planes are being crashed into skyscrapers in New York, so that about three thousand people are killed. In another part of the world, namely Iraq, five thousand children, from newborn to five-year-olds, are killed every month through the United Nations sanctions put into effect mainly at the behest of the government of the United States, a merciless and relentless mass murder of innocents that lasted twelve long years.

³It is as important to refute erroneous views as to acquire correct views. You cannot add the new, the correct, you learn to the old, erroneous, and expect the result of this amalgamation to be correct. Newcomers into hylozoics from less exact teachings are, therefore, enjoined to be especially attentive to such things in hylozoics as definitely diverge from what they may have learnt previously. One instance is the definite statement of hylozoics that time and space exist in all worlds, quite contrary to the arbitrary assertion of quasi-occultists to the effect that time and space exist in the physical world only.

⁴The criticism of erroneous conceptions voiced by esoteric teachers and writers in any event is intended only for those who need it in their work at eliminating erroneous "ideas", for those who appreciate the criticism as a valuable and necessary tool. Those who get irritated about the criticism demonstrate thereby that they are unable to use it and that it is not intended

for them. They need not get irritated, no more than when trying clothes they happen to put on a size too large. Moreover, the criticism of esotericians is impersonal: they are interested in the views as such, not in the persons temporarily holding them. The misapprehension of for whom criticism is intended appears to be due to the democratism prevailing with its two basic axioms: 1) everything must exist for everybody or not exist at all, 2) there is nothing beyond what I and my fellows can grasp and accept.

⁵It is interesting to study in other people and also in oneself – afterwards – how the individual rids himself of a misconception that has been firmly established in him. In the beginning, this almost always meets with a strong resistance. The erroneous view is like a parasite in the system of the individual, an alien organism that refuses to go or die. It defends itself, and the individual easily identifies himself with this defence. He may make certain admissions, but yet explain them away as though they were minor errors or mistakes in what is on the whole a correct view. “Only the façade, no supporting pillars. The building stands on a firm foundation.” Then one supporting pillar after the other topples over, and the foundation cracks. The defence turns desperate, pathetic. At last comes the insight, and there is a polar shift, as it were: recently almost everything was correct, the errors were small and few. Now almost everything is wrong, and the right things are unimportant. After this, however, the individual should make an effort not to fall asleep with a new belief that is only a reverse image of the one just abandoned. Therefore, it is important that the individual’s understanding grows in the process, and it is essential to study the mental and emotional mechanisms that made the individual embrace the misconception and defend it for so long.

⁶Using an exclusively numerical or quantitative method one can “establish” countless quite unessential “connections”, for instance that redheads to a lesser extent than dark-haired or blondes study at the university.

⁷It is always a proof of a low degree of intelligence, if you lose sight of the original, prime purpose of an activity. In the worlds of men we often see how this happens to the richest and mightiest organizations.

3.7 Intensional and Extensional Attitudes

¹A better understanding of the difference between intensional and extensional attitudes is desirable. When thinking takes the intensional attitude, it is strongly attached to its previously formed concepts, categories, views, opinions, “ideas”, prejudice, etc., and is disinclined or unable to put these aside to observe reality as it is. Then thinking largely lacks the ability to assimilate new knowledge. New impressions are reinterpreted so that they can be incorporated with old views without

disturbance. The opposite, or extensional attitude, when at its best, is characterized by its ability to check subjective reactions while observing reality, trying to form a clear conception of the new factual condition, the new person, etc. If reality is the territory and our imperfect attempts at perceiving this reality are maps of the territory, then it can be said that the intensional attitude tends to assert the authority of the map against the territory, whereas the extensional attitude is constantly prepared to redraw the map as the knowledge of the territory increases.

²The intensional attitude is particularly prominent in individuals whose principle thinking is overdeveloped at the expense of their common sense and interest in objective reality. Idiologues of all sorts are included here: scientific, philosophical, theological, and political dogmatists. Scientists who reject phenomena that are incompatible with their theories because they “conflict with the laws of nature”. Marxists who assert: “There can be no oppression of people under Socialism, because Socialism is the first and only social system that guarantees man his complete dignity.” In such individuals thinking finally turns into a closed system that has nothing to do with objective reality.

³Things can be explained and defined by intension or by extension. By intension, we seek to find the most exact definition possible, and then we blithely believe that it holds water for all individual cases. By extension, we refrain from attempts at too strong definition, apply more force to description, using examples of what it is about, points to objects, etc. There are many things we can understand excellently by extension, but worse or not at all by intension. Three examples of this are the three aspects of reality: matter, consciousness, and motion. They can be experienced directly, but cannot be defined. It appears that many of our most fundamental concepts are among a category non-definables: matter, motion, change, distance, space, time, segment, number, etc. If we nevertheless try to define, we shall soon end up in intensional circles: “1) What is segment? 2) Segment is distance. 3) But what, then, is distance? 4) ...Umm! Segment...” But it is very easy to draw some segments on a paper and show: “These are segments. This segment is 5 cm, and that one is 10 cm.” The overly logical person has difficulty in digesting the fact that people understand by this method. He appears to believe that the territory cannot possibly be perceived except through a map.

3.8 *Common Sense*

¹Another name of the two higher kinds of mental consciousness (47:4 and 5) is “common sense”. Common sense means not to believe anything or not to believe one knows anything, but to accept only what is part of

one's own experience or, in things that are outside of one's experience, what one comprehends and understands, what is not in conflict with definitively established facts, what agrees with the system of orientation one has critically accepted pending future direct experience. Of course, causal consciousness is "common sense" of an even higher kind than the two kinds of mental consciousness just mentioned.

²The first rule of common sense: Accept nothing without sufficient grounds! If this rule were observed, more than 90 per cent of what mankind has accepted as truth could be eliminated.

³Common sense is what is universal in the experience of all beings in all natural kingdoms. The domain of reality of our experience is widened in every higher world and higher kingdom. However, there is nothing in the higher that can ever controvert what is universal in the lower. The universal is what is common to all in the entire cosmos.

⁴Objective reality, the three aspects of reality, or of life, cannot be explained away by any philosophy, and it is the basis of the universal. What has been constructed on this objective basis through objectively and definitively established facts is universal as well. Subjective consciousness is objectively correct when it is in agreement with objective reality and this in each world separately.

3.9 Perspective

¹What was yesterday a ruling dogma, today is an exploded error. This truth is understood by most people. But why do they not draw the conclusion from it that what is today a ruling dogma will tomorrow be an exploded error? They do not draw that conclusion because they do not think in a perspectivist way.

²One of the particular methods used by perspective thinking is the active work at the multi-valuedness of words, thus the fact that "one and the same word" has many meanings. One example is such work at the word "money" expressing at least four different concepts.

³Consider the following statements: 1) "I want this money paid into my account." 2) "I always have money on me when going out." 3) "A surplus of money causes inflation." 4) "Money is the root of all evil."

⁴Does the word "money" mean the same in the four statements? In examples 1–3, there is reference to money on three increasingly higher levels of abstraction: Money₁ is a definite, concrete cash amount in a certain concrete situation (a definite time and place, etc.). Money₂ is an indefinite cash amount in a recurrent typical situation. Money₃ is all money used in society, cash, credits, debts, etc. In its turn, money₃ is multivalued, for it is uncertain whether what is meant is the totality of means of payment, or their

purchasing power, or both. Money₄ is not money at all in any of the senses 1–3, but is a metaphor of the desire for everything that money can buy.

⁵It is part of discrimination to keep apart: 1) the thing, 2) the word or words denoting it, 3) the concept (thought content) of the word. The thing is not the word, the word is not the concept, the concept is not the thing. But all three have a mutual relation.

3.10 To Overcome Thinking in Opposites

¹Two-valued thinking views everything in terms of contradictory, absolute, opposites: non-identity – identity. Many-valued thinking applies the gamut: contradictory opposite – contrary opposite – complementarity – unity – identity. Contrary opposites are such opposites as appear absolute on a small scale, but enter (are subsumed) into a common concept on a larger scale (have a common ground): for example, the concepts of white and black are both subsumed into the concept of colour.

²Two or more mutually contradictory statements can both or all be right, each one within its sphere of application, but not outside of it. It may be a case of different statements limiting or determining each other, describing different aspects of one and the same thing, describing different functions of one and the same thing, different actors with different functions in one and the same group. Everything must be seen in its context, in its relations with other things, in its relativity. This is the meaning of relative thinking, also called perspective thinking.

³Apparently or nominally opposite things may work together. An author writes a book that critically examines how power is wielded in society. A psychiatrist is interested and wants to order the book from a certain bookseller supplying “alternative literature”. He refuses to order the book, however, and as she asks in astonishment “why?”, he answers: “You don’t need that book.” He also refuses to give her the publisher’s phone number. This really sparks her interest, and of course she obtains the book in another way, reads it, and contacts the author. A life-long friendship with a fruitful co-operation ensues between them. The bookseller (now deceased) was, of course, a third part in their co-operation, although he never knew it.

⁴“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”, words that are attributed to Jesus of the Gospels, therefore should not be thought of as mere expressive of a noble feeling that makes you a better person, but as an exhortation describing a deeper reality that already exists in the relations between people.

⁵A higher kind of thinking is characterized, among other things, by combining “contradictions” into a higher unity, or, put more exactly: the contradictions which the lower thinking believed it found were seen as

mere apparent by the higher thinking.

⁶One example: esoterics teaches us that we should forget ourselves and remember ourselves. To a lower kind of thinking this implies an insoluble contradiction, until the insight will dawn that the “self” spoken of is not one and the same: mechanical consciousness functions (“I am angry”, “I am sad”, “I am upset”) and the self-consciousness of the permanent self.

⁷Another example: esoterics rejects the common belief in god – the belief in the angry, vengeful, and jealous god of the Old Testament – and therefore ignorant critics call esoterics atheist. Instead, esoterics teaches that every living creature is divine, potentially or actually, and so it is really more theistic than the ordinary belief in god.

⁸A third example: we are enjoined to help spreading esoterics, and at the same time we are given various warnings and dissuasions invoking the immaturity of people, the risk of abuse and distortion. Both standpoints are simultaneously right and afford each other a limited applicability: Spread, but discriminately! Hold back, but discriminately! In this case discrimination holds the key to the paradox.

⁹A fourth example, also concerning the spread of esoterics: It is said that every disciple who has reached beyond the beginner’s stage must help in the work of spreading the knowledge. At the same time it is said that very few people are ripe for receiving the knowledge. The contradiction that some people believe they find in these two statements is dissolved applying the following insight: It is indeed true that the knowledge cannot be the possession of everybody, cannot even be the possession of many. But we must make every effort to give it to as many people as possible. The spread of esoteric ideas is limited by the nature of the ideas themselves and by people’s inertia and inability to understand these ideas. But it must not be limited by *our* inertia.

¹⁰We should try to raise our thinking from the level where it automatically views things in terms of 0 or 100 per cent, black or white, identity or non-identity, to that higher level where thinking observes relations. A typical question of the level of thinking in identity and non-identity: “Is the consciousness of the heart centre the same as essential (46) consciousness?” The answer might be: “All centres in man’s envelopes of incarnation have in themselves only mechanical consciousness, not self-consciousness. Essential (46) consciousness is constant self-consciousness with simultaneous group consciousness. Thus the consciousness of the heart centre is not the same as essential consciousness. When the monad has once acquired essential consciousness, however, this will find expression through the heart centre. Therefore, there is a definite relation between the heart centre and essential consciousness. But note this:

relation, not identity.”

¹¹In esoterics there is much talk about the importance of being flexible in one’s thinking, of reaching higher levels of thinking, etc. Even merely thinking the thought that there are more flexible ways of thinking, that there are kinds of thinking that are qualitatively higher, makes it easier to acquire this higher kind of thinking.

¹²Something that is at first seen as being absolutely opposed to something else sometimes is later seen as being the former’s greater or essential context. For instance, representatives of religion are sometimes hostile to esoterics. With time, they will see that what is essential in religions is contained in esoterics. If the *Bhagavadgītā* expresses the heart and essence of Hinduism (which no Hindu will contest), then the esoterician, too, will agree that this book contains many important esoteric truths and on no single point is at variance with esoterics. All esoteric students are exhorted to make a close study of the *Bhagavadgītā*, for there is much to be learnt from it, such as: “To action alone hast thou a right and never at all to its fruits; let not the fruits of action be thy motive; neither let there be in thee any attachment to inaction.” The *Bhagavadgītā*, II:47 (Prof. Radhakrishnan’s translation).

3.11 Reflection

¹Reflection is a real penetration of the object. This requires time, quiet, the suppression of superficial associations, energy. This is actually nothing less than “meditation”.

²To live reflectingly means to initiate thinking on certain questions oneself, the opposite of being forced to think through circumstances; to draw thinking away from certain things and to bring it close to other things, to raise the level in the direction of the more general; to draw conclusions about important things one has learnt, not to complain that esoteric teaching is too abstract.

³To live reflectingly means, among other things, that you are so prepared in your thought that you will never be surprised by anything. So it will be because you have already contemplated all contingencies. Then you will never take the future for granted. The ancients always said of the future: “God willing.” They were prepared to die at any moment. They had no fear of death, for they knew: “Where I am, death is not; where death is, I am not.” The man who does not often reflect on his own death is already dead. Every day you should live in the awareness that this day could be your last. To live reflectingly is to live constantly with the seriousness of life before your eyes.

⁴By our mechanical, non-reflecting thinking, we constantly make lots of assumptions. Then we base our actions on our assumption that those

assumptions are correct, are reality, and we are astonished when reality proves to be quite different. Observe your unconscious assumptions! Then the assumptions behind the assumptions!

⁵Very often we take unchangingness for granted, assuming that conditions are always the same, that things and states will last. The law of change rules everything in our world, however.

⁶Always beneficial exercises include: distinguishing between what you know and what you do not know, things necessary and unnecessary, essential and unessential, fruitful and fruitless, harmless and harmful, imperishable and perishable.

⁷It is a good rule saying that for every idea you receive from another think one yourself.

3.12 Hindrances are in Habit and Forgetfulness

¹When those who have studied esoterics for a long time do not use perspective thinking or formulating thinking, they certainly cannot blame it on inability or deficient consciousness development. Because if they understand esoterics at all, they must have activated this kind of thinking to some degree, and have used it in their study. No, in their case it is less a matter of inability and more one of the power of habit and of forgetfulness. Habit, mechanicality, certainly is expedient where activity in physical (black) centres is concerned; it is hardly possible, for instance, when driving a car to perform all motions intentionally, as functions of the king of spades. In emotional and mental centres (red centres), however, habits, mechanical patterns are just obstructive and destructive. Formatory thinking thus is allowing mechanical habit patterns in the thinking function – which can never benefit us. Formulating thinking is to take part in the thinking function with a higher degree of presence, with intentionality – which must always benefit us.

²Forgetfulness is connected with the general level of our being. If we are too often in too low parts of centres, too small parts of ourselves, then we simply do not remember any important esoteric fact, any fact essential to our work on ourselves. Then large parts of our day may roll on while we live in forgetfulness. Forgetfulness is an aspect of our sleep. In a certain school they made no difference between forgetfulness and sleep, but used one and the same word for these two related states.

3.13 Some Examples of Tools of Thinking

¹Let a statement have the general form $A = B$. A may be a certain person or group, B = some characteristic of the person or group; his or their profession, for instance. $A = B$. “K. is a therapist.” Unproblematic?

Perhaps not. What must be heeded here, where formatory thinking is concerned, is that it has a strong, mechanical, and unconscious tendency to make everything it “processes” absolute. A equals “K. and no one but K. B equals therapist and nothing but therapist”. You may believe that such “thinking” does not occur in yourself merely because you see its limitation once your attention has been directed to it. But the point is not how clearly and precisely you are thinking once your attention has been directed to the process, but the interesting question is: how often do you think with attention and how often does it just roll on unconsciously, mechanically, and in a formatory way?

²Nāgārjuna’s four categories save us from compulsory thinking in “either yes or no”: 1) Yes. 2) No. 3) Both yes and no. 4) Neither yes nor no. The fourth category may mean: “I do not commit myself to this question”, “the question is irrelevant to me”, “the question is wrongly put”, “the question starts from a wrong assumption”. Examples of questions to which 4) is the answer: “Have you stopped beating your wife/taking bribes/boozing?”

³A tool of thinking that helps us to abandon a useless thinking in two absolute opposites is “discerning the third pole”. For example, in the middle ages the Church introduced the doctrine of purgatory as a “third pole” between the two absolutes of heaven and hell. Likewise you always need to find the third force dissolving the deadlock between two mutually opposed forces. Pythagoras introduced the teaching of the three aspects of reality, so doing away with the absolute opposition of “spirit and matter”.

⁴Another tool of thinking is understanding of gradients. By gradient is meant a phenomenon or a process which increases or decreases according to some definite scale, in time, etc. Our very understanding is an example of a gradient. One really cannot speak of “real understanding”, only of increasingly better understanding on increasingly higher levels, thus the gradient of understanding. The corresponding can be said of such realities as consciousness, the work on three lines, the study of the knowledge, the improvement of being.

⁵Asymmetrical relations must be noticed wherever they occur. Such relations can be expressed in the general form: “If A is contained in (or follows from) B, it does not necessarily mean that B is contained in (or follows from) A.” For instance, this obtains in many causal relations: Suppose that from cause A necessarily follows effect B. It does not follow from this, however, that effect B always must have cause A, for it may have another cause. Therefore: If cause A always yields effect B, this nevertheless does not exclude the possibility of cause C yielding effect B. The concrete example given in the book *The Explanation* was the follow-

ing: A very delicate piece of china unfailingly cracks if you wash it up in too hot water. But if the china lies there cracked, it does not necessarily mean that someone has washed it up in too hot water.

3.14 Causal Consciousness

¹Causal consciousness exists, albeit in small doses, also at lower stages, the stage of culture being the lowest. Understanding of esoterics presupposes some causal consciousness. Thus it is not a matter of some “all-or-nothing-condition”, as if all causal consciousness were acquired at the causal stage and there were no causal consciousness at all before that. Thus one should strive to enhance the degree of causal consciousness in one’s everyday life. Causal of course means “being connected with causes”. Anyone who strives to apprehend causes, grounds, and purposes approaches causal consciousness more than the one who does not strive in this manner. One seeks to make clear: How did this view arise? etc.

²The most important work for the acquisition of causal consciousness is the effort to be self-conscious as often as possible and to endeavour to activate higher emotional consciousness through meditation on the essential qualities and unselfish service, and to activate higher mental consciousness through one’s study of esoterics and one’s effort to grasp the esoteric teaching as exactly as possible.

³For those at lower stages and those walking the slog jog-trot through millions of years towards higher states, the exactness of their views is not very important. That is why they can learn something also through illusions and fictions, those “false gods” without which men cannot live. However, for those who have tired of following along with the large, grey mass, for those choosing the path of rapid evolution, exactness in details is of the utmost importance, and they are particularly keen on eliminating illusions and fictions. And that is the quickest path to causal consciousness.

4 UNDERSTANDING

4.1 Introduction: Some Thoughts on What Characterizes Esoterics

¹Why is certain knowledge esoteric? We have heard the three usual explanations: the knowledge must be protected from abuse, protected from distortion, and the carriers of the knowledge must be protected from persecution. But there is a fourth explanation as well: esoterics essentially remains esoteric even if it is publicized, since in the current age the overwhelming majority of people cannot understand it and do not care for it.

²Esoterics consists of three parts: world view (hylozoics), life view (knowledge of the laws), and application (the method of consciousness development, the simultaneous work at knowledge and being, the work on three lines). These three parts are connected with the three aspects of reality: the world view is principally bound up with the matter aspect, the life view with the consciousness aspect, and application with the will or force aspect. Just as reality is always a unity of the three aspects, and none of the three can exist without the other two, esoterics cannot possibly exist, be studied or practised in only one of the three parts; disciples must devote themselves to all three parts, they must not neglect any one of them.

³Esoterics differs entirely from the exoteric disciplines studied in the ordinary systems of education. In these disciplines, everything is taken on the same everyday level of consciousness, it being presumed that all normally intelligent people will be able to assimilate them, provided they devote sufficient time and energy to their study.

⁴In contrast, esoterics is a “state-specific discipline”. This means that one and the same text, one and the same teaching, has a different content to different readers and receivers, or the same reader and receiver at different times, depending on the actual states of consciousness of these individuals. A receiver may at first grasp the teaching given him very imperfectly, only to understand it as it was intended to be understood twenty years later. A reader may understand a text in the morning, only to have lost his understanding in the evening, since he is always in different states of consciousness, and esoteric truths are perceived differently in different states. It follows from this that in order to absorb fundamentals of esoteric knowledge, you must read essential esoteric texts many times during many years. Esoterics is a life-long study, an ever-recurring study of texts that you “are never done with”. It is the direct opposite of such university courses the material of which students rush through in order to pass their exams, whereupon they soon forget it all.

4.2 *Esoterics is the Qualitative Viewpoint*

¹Esoterics is the qualitative viewpoint, not the quantitative viewpoint reigning in our times. Questions of quantity are about what and who are bigger and more, questions of quality are about what and who are better, possess a higher degree of conformity to purpose, or finality. The esoteric world view (hylozoics) is qualitative: describes a series of realities of ever higher kinds, qualitatively higher worlds to be attained by the monads. The ever higher kingdoms of ever higher worlds are higher in a qualitative sense, since they constitute higher stages in the realization of the meaning of existence, are increasingly better aligned with the all-embracing cosmic purpose, cosmic finality. That this is so is connected with the fact that the kinds of consciousness and kinds of will that are possible and are acquired in those worlds and kingdoms enable individuals and collectives to have an increasingly better understanding and equip them with increasingly better tools for this realization. In the most simple formulation: The higher the world and kingdom, the better the individuals and collectives work for what is best for the whole. The esoteric life view is qualitative: it is concerned with issues of how the monads are to learn how to obey laws of life, laws of finality, in ever better ways (with increasingly better understanding). Therefore, esoteric thinking must be qualitative, must start from quality. This implies a constant, unflagging effort of raising oneself out of the mechanical and automatic tendency of undeveloped man to think quantitatively in everything.

²One example of the difference between quantitative and qualitative thinking. Quantitative thinking has a tendency to view things in categories of “everything or nothing”, “all or none”. It disregards the fact that a certain quality may exist, a certain qualitative force may operate, even though not “all individuals” or even the “majority” participate. For this qualitative factor to assert itself with force, it is sufficient that “local dominance” or “local concentration” is achieved. A certain bucket contains nothing but lingonberries, and it does so regardless of the fact that not all the lingonberries growing in the wood enter into it. The *quality* here is in principle lingonberries and nothing but lingonberries (not bilberries, not cloudberry, etc.). The *quantity* is negligible compared to the totality of lingonberries of our particular wood, all woods. A similar reasoning is valid when discussing the influence wielded by various human groups, the appearance of schools in mankind, etc.

4.3 Insights that May Lead Us to Esoterics

¹Some insights have existed in us before we came in contact with esoterics. Sometimes they were clearly formulated, but more often than not they were non-verbalized “inklings” or “assurances”. Some of these are:

²1) There is an invisible reality which is much bigger and more important than the visible one.

³2) The reality we know, the “visible world” or “earthly existence”, is only a preparation of this “other” and “higher”. Death is not the end, but the beginning of a new existence.

⁴3) Ordinary human thinking, conventional science, can only exceptionally establish causes. Therefore, there must be some higher knowledge which comprises the causes of all things.

⁵4) Things are what they are quite regardless of our knowledge or ignorance of them, our right or wrong ideas of them.

⁶5) On the whole, everything has a meaning. This does not imply, however, that everything that happens, even the least significant event, has a meaning.

⁷6) There are things that are in themselves right, good, true, regardless of the views people hold on them, public opinion, what “everybody knows”, and the dictates of those in power.

⁸7) Justice will finally prevail. Justice is done, if not in this world, then in another world.

⁹8) There is no such thing as a “free gift”. Everything must be paid for some time.

¹⁰9) There are superhuman, wise, and good intelligences.

4.4 Some Reminders about Esoteric Studies

¹Anyone studying esoterics must constantly remember that there is immensely much he cannot understand and that the ideas he forms of such things are often grossly erroneous. This is not to say that he should not try to understand. Only by trying to understand, and necessarily misunderstanding, will he finally approach understanding. Just as there is no other path to success than the one going through failures, there is no other path to understanding than the one going through mistaken views. According to the law of self-realization, the individual himself must see through his own misconceptions. This will afford him the truly deep understanding. Only when, through your own understanding, you have seen why, on what grounds, your misconceptions were erroneous will you understand and appreciate the knowledge of reality.

²Another important insight is the fact that we raise the lower and drag

down the higher to our own level. In so doing we view existence in a false scale, compressed, and the more compressed the further away something is from us, just as large objects appear small when seen from afar. We read about superhuman and divine levels of consciousness and of will and treat them in our thought and speech as though they were familiar to us merely because we have names for them, names to which we have eventually become “used”. We should consider the fact that to undeveloped man both causal (47:1-3) and essential (46) consciousness are incomprehensible, and to developed man in any case superessentiality (45) is incomprehensible. The right scale is actually the opposite of compressed: the further away from us a higher consciousness is, the greater are the distances between levels and stages. It is a greater distance in capacity between 45 and 46 than between 46 and 47, a greater distance between 44 and 45 than between 45 and 46, etc. Or to use fourth way terms: there is a considerably greater distance between man number 5 and man number 4 than between man number 4 and man number 1, 2, and 3 (the three last mentioned taken as one group at the same stage).

³To the disciple in his own process, understanding appears to be “everything” in the beginning. This is connected with the fact that the intellectualist exaggerates the importance of thought, and disregards the ability of doing, and also with the fact that the seeker is shifting the focus of his interests in life away from the matter aspect (possessions, position, status, etc.) to the consciousness aspect (experience, relationships, understanding, etc.). With time, however, the disciple will understand that realization, too, is important, then “equally important”, and finally the “only essential thing”, so that understanding will appear only as the necessary preparatory work for realization. Understanding is connected with the consciousness aspect, realization with the will aspect. And the consciousness aspect (the second triad) dominates during aspirantship and the earlier part of discipleship; the will aspect (the third triad), during the latter part of discipleship and on the path of initiations.

⁴Beginners in esoterics usually believe that their “spiritual” experiences, states they achieve during meditation and such things, are those higher kinds of consciousness and powers which they read of in esoteric literature. A similar case is that of the yogis, who read their own experiences into the descriptions made by Patañjali in *Yogasūtras*. However, no non-initiate can determine his own states of consciousness, and also an initiated disciple must be aided in this work by his teacher: Under the guidance of his teacher he undergoes all kinds of experiences, which his teacher will explain. Thanks to the teacher’s explanation, the disciple will subsequently be able to “place” these experiences, know to which kinds and states of consciousness they belong and (equally important!) to which kinds etc.

they do not belong, their names, conditions, etc. That it must be done in this manner is logic pure and simple: No one who has not already walked the path can know its stations and stages, and the teacher walks the path anew, from beginning to end, with each new disciple he takes. But the uninitiated hold erroneous beliefs in these matters not only because their logic is weak, but also because their wishful thinking is strong.

⁵Anyone who starts studying esoterics on his own is wise in not demanding to comprehend what he reads at once, for this is impossible. The right method is to read the book through many times attentively. Then you will find that you understand more at each new reading, until finally everything has been clarified. You should allow some time to pass after each reading in order to give the unconscious the time to do its work, which facilitates comprehension.

⁶How many times do you need to read an esoteric book? You need to read it many times over also because you constantly change your state of consciousness, you apprehend what you read differently in different states and only in your highest states apprehend correctly what the text intends to tell you. In other words: a certain statement, a certain paragraph in the text may have a meaning that passes you in usual states. This meaning may be clear to you only at the twentieth reading, and it may be important to the understanding of the whole. Then perhaps you will forget that you had this insight, perhaps you must reconquer it at the thirty-fifth reading. The condition mentioned explains why nobody can say of basic esoteric works: "I have read that book. Now I want to read something else."

⁷You should also, when reading, ask yourself: "Who is reading now?" which is connected with the insight saying "I am not one, I am many."

4.5 Esoteric Thinking

¹The logical method of thinking starts from concepts as such. It views concepts as isolated, as self-sufficient, and as having a given and fixed import. The psychological method of thinking uses concepts only as temporary supports in its effort to perceive reality behind or beyond concepts. The psychological method of thinking perceives that the things of reality are all connected, have an inner link – the direct opposite of the tendency of the logical method of thinking to view things as isolated from one another. Furthermore, the psychological method of thinking sees that things have an inner meaning, an insight that as a matter of principle is alien to the logical method of thinking.

²Esoterics views things from above, makes explanations start from the higher, looks at processes from their end, their goal. That is also the reason why the disciple is always wrong when trying to judge the actions or non-

actions of his teacher. The teacher knows the end, the goal, the purpose; but the disciple does not know.

³Esoterics has regard for the ideas existing in higher worlds, not for their imperfect, more or less failed expressions in lower worlds. For instance, an esoterician speaks about “school”, almost never about “esoteric school”, because school is originally an esoteric organization (the Atlantean temple schools where the rishis, or the members of the higher priesthood, were teachers), and so “esoteric” is an unnecessary addition. The esoterician views profane, exoteric schools as distorted manifestations of the idea in lower worlds. In esoterics, it is always a matter of viewing things from above downwards.

⁴It is necessary to think in different scales. Many things are true on a large scale which are not true on a smaller scale, and vice versa. For example, “Everything that happens has a meaning” is true on a large scale: every manifestation of a monad in the cosmos has a meaning. “Everything that happens has a meaning” is not true on a small scale: somebody has a toothache, happens to run his big toe into a table leg, has lost his eye glasses – accidental happenings without a meaning and without connection to cosmic purposes.

4.6 What Esoterics is not

¹In order to understand what esoterics is one must also understand what it is not: it is not mysticism, not religion, not sentimentalism, not moralism, not academic study.

²The mystic is passive and not self-determined, makes himself dependent on “guidance” and receives it not knowing what entities (“guides”) are involved. The esoterician is active and self-determined, walks the path of initiations which is incompatible with such passivity and obedience to unknown entities. The mystic lacks mental control, drowns in emotional ecstasy, falls prey to his clairvoyance and mediumism – all of which temporarily makes higher intellectual development impossible. On the other hand, the endeavour of the esoterician agrees with that of the mystic in respect of ennoblement of emotionality. The esoterician learns how to use emotional dynamics, however, not to be used by it, as the mystic does.

³The esoterician is not religious in a proper sense, but he has a religious attitude: reverence for the sacred, for higher beings, views existence from above, strives for “reconnection” (which is what the word “religion” means) with the divine. He has respect for the original truths of the universalistic religions, but is skeptical of the later additions and distortions made by the clergy. He has an understanding of the symbolic content of the “sacred writings”, but rejects dogmas, literalism, and fanaticism. If he

performs rites, he always knows why he does so.

⁴Esoterics is understanding of the laws of life working implacably and justly, which is the direct opposite of human sentimentality and moralism. Some people say: “I don’t want to believe in that horrid karma doctrine. The Christian teaching of the forgiveness of sins and saving grace is much more sympathetic.” As if life and laws conformed to what they believe! This subjectivism, this attitude of making individual or collective arbitrariness their guiding principle, is what destroys people’s instinct of reality and prevents them from arriving at an understanding of esoterics.

⁵Esoterics is not academic study. Such study is pursued on a level where, in principle, everything is accessible to all, everything is supposed to be comprehensible to all. Then that level is as might be expected. Esoterics is the direct opposite of this: its truths are to be found lying in “layers upon layers”, so that at the beginning of your study you must prepared to comprehend just a very small part of it and always the most superficial and least essential parts first.

⁶The academia is controlled by dogmatists who set definite limits to research, prescribe what reality is supposed to look like, and persecute those who dare to exercise some independent thinking. Not one scientific discipline is free from dogmatism. Dogmatism rests on a multitude of unproven and unprovable prerequisites which must not be questioned and which distort the students’ thinking from their first term at the university. Academic dogmatism is reinforced and exacerbated by the tyrannical influence on thinking wielded by diverse lobby groups who establish the temporarily ruling politically correct “truths” and strictly watch lest lapses and deviations from them are made.

4.7 *The Inner Emancipation of the Esoterician*

¹The esoterician must be emancipated from the ruling spirit of the times, the *zeitgeist* of his age, and the ideologies of those in power; must have set his thinking free from the religion holding sway in his society. In the ancient schools they were taught not to believe, and they were taught this in the first degree already. In their external life, they could pay respect to the ruling religion – in order not to run into trouble with the mundane powers – but they were no believers in that religion. On the contrary, they had seen it through. The criticism of Christianity voiced by such esoteric authors as Blavatsky, Besant, Leadbeater, and Laurency should be regarded as in complete harmony with school principles, for at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Christianity was the religion controlling all thinking in the West, the religion having tyrannical claims on the inner life of people and possessing the keys to the prison (in a symbolic and a literal

sense). Today, at the beginning of the 21st century, the Christian Church has no such influence or power anymore. Nobody is fired from his job or put into jail for saying in public that he does not believe in some Christian dogma. Present-day esoteric students, therefore, must direct their critical eye to other tyrannies of thought that are stronger in our times and in our part of the world, such as the belief in the so-called Holocaust which is enforced by many governments, so that they jail or fine people who merely express their doubts about this event (or myth) in public.

²Craig Murray: “As a rule of thumb, if the government wants you to know it, it probably isn’t true.”

³The esoterician can never be a fanatic or an intolerant person. He has acquired an insight telling him that people are at different stages of development, and this must entail tolerance. The fanatic wants to force his opinion on other people, not comprehending that understanding has to grow from within. The intolerant person, who is upset when people do not think as he does, is a deplorable and ridiculous phenomenon. It should be added that you are not a fanatic because you are consistent in your own private life. You have a perfect right to be however unwavering and firm in your views as long as you do not desire to force other people to embrace them – there goes the dividing-line which the fanatic can never understand and respect. Neither does tolerance imply that you “accept everything”. You may very well have definite, negative views on lots of things, also generally accepted “truths”, and yet not in the least wish to force your views on other people.

⁴The esoterician does not at all want to convert occultists or new age people to esoterics. On the contrary, he views occultism and the new age ideologies as inevitable phenomena in our mankind, where the great majority are at the emotional stage and do not possess any latent understanding of esoterics, so that they must distort all esoteric truths they happen to come across.

4.8 Being Serious in Your Esoteric Study

¹Question: Is there any simple rule of thumb that you might use to decide whether yourself or somebody else is serious about their esoteric study and are capable of having success on the path of esoterics?

²Answer: Yes, there is. Serious people are prepared to begin at the beginning, to take one step at a time, not to skip “those things that are only for beginners”, pouncing at once at the “advanced stuff”.

³The factor which most of all favours this undesirable tendency is vanity. That is why most systems stress humility. Humility is not so much a virtue as a quality which the disciple needs in order to be able to learn.

⁴Success in your study comes from your ability to learn, and is irresistible. Nothing may stand as an obstacle between you and the knowledge, if you are ripe for it. This implies that anything, even the least essential thing, may stand as an obstacle between you and the knowledge, if you are not ripe for it.

⁵Therefore, the teacher makes himself or the knowledge – or both – difficult of access in various ways. In so doing he protects the unworthy and unready from contacting a knowledge that could only harm them. In contrast, the worthy and ready cannot under any circumstances be put off except temporarily. Half-awake junior disciples, therefore, do a disservice to the teacher and the teaching when trying to attract the unripe to the teaching or begging the unwilling to stay on by glossing over unsympathetic traits in the teacher or the teaching, “sugar-coating the bitter pills”, etc.

4.9 Esoterics Cannot Become a Mass Movement

¹Esoterics cannot become a mass movement, but must for a long time be reserved for rather small circles of people. These circles do not proselytize in the society in which they exist, but co-opt only those who have independently found their way to the right literature, assimilated its content, and then searched for like-minded people.

²One of the grounds why esoterics cannot become a mass movement is the material nature of the knowledge. Everything has the three aspects – matter, consciousness, and motion (force) – and this is true of the knowledge as well. A reality idea (in contrast to fictions and illusions) is a molecule of causal matter, possibly involved into mental matter. In order to understand esoterics, you must have a sufficient number of such causal molecules in your causal envelope, you must have activated them and, if you are to grasp them by your mental thinking, you must have involved them into mental molecules. This is the material side of the process. The consciousness side is that you incorporate reality ideas with your thinking, work actively at the knowledge, through study, reflection, meditation. Few people, relatively speaking, have done this. The result is that there is a limited number of such activated causal molecules, so that the ones that do exist cannot be distributed among too many people. If the individual has only a few such causal molecules, then his understanding of esoterics will be very deficient, and one result of such a condition is the new age phenomenon. Therefore, it is better that a limited number of individuals receive quite many causal molecules, so that they can reach a sufficiently deep understanding of esoterics that will enable them to apply the knowledge in an expedient way.

³Mass “thinking” is alien to the esoterician. Mass “thinking” is not even thinking. As in all other things, the issue of the degree of intentionality, purposiveness, takes the top priority.

4.10 Motives of Esoteric Study

¹Many different motives may impel people to start studying esoterics. Some of these motives are better, that is: in better conformity with the purpose. Other motives are worse. The student must see through the latter in order to abandon them, the sooner the better. To seek the knowledge for its own sake is good, to seek it in order to be more useful to one’s fellow human beings by its aid, is even better. Esoteric study must not for any long time be used as a self-therapy. Therapeutic needs may for some people be an entrance into the study. There are many such entrances that can work as such but not much more: a comfort to anyone who mourns the loss of a dear one through death is an example. There are many such things as may do a certain service at the beginner’s stage, but not at all at intermediate stages, and which are outright hindrances at higher stages.

²Esoterics must not be viewed instrumentally, must not be exploited for purposes that are alien to it. Some people have tried to exploit esoteric knowledge for other purposes than the furthering of consciousness development. It is true that pursuing esoteric study you might acquire a greater general ability which can be useful to you in work life, in business life, etc. But if this is the case, it must be a quite unintended side-effect and must not under any circumstances be an essential motive, something intentionally strived for.

³In the equipment of the beginner there must be something more than curiosity and the urge of acquisition, which is camouflaged greed. There must be something deeper and also the ability to forgo, the ability to let go of something already acquired. Curiosity and the urge of acquisition are among the most mechanical manifestations in man, have nothing whatever to do with higher consciousness. Curiosity is irresponsible, mechanical thirst for sensations which is found also in animals such as cats, dogs, monkeys, etc. To many people curiosity and the desire to know come first, and spirituality comes next. But the inverse order must prevail. The desire and search for knowledge is, at best, an intentional will to expand one’s consciousness.

⁴If your esoteric study is conditioned by greed, then it is more greed than esoterics. If it is conditioned by fear (fear of death, for instance), then it is more fear than esoterics. If it is conditioned by vanity (to bask in other people’s admiration, for instance), then it is more vanity than esoterics. The wrong attitudes mentioned are based on the misconception that “the object ennobles the study”. It does not. That misconception is a typical formatory

one or, to use the gnostic term, a hyllic one.

⁵Early in his esoteric study, the disciple is taught the difference between person and thing, the individual and the general, curiosity and the desire to know. Later he is taught the equally important distinction between the desire to learn and the aspiration to insight. Curiosity deals with personal and individual matters, and is typically emotional. The desire to know rises above personal and individual things, is directed to the impersonal, superindividual, and general, and is typically mental. However, the desire to know often degenerates into some sort of craze for intellectual possessions, a hunger for more and more facts without consideration of their usefulness for the consciousness development of the individual or the collective. Aspiration to true insight rises above the desire to know just as the desire to know rises above curiosity. The aspiration to insight can be a manifestation of incipient causal consciousness.

4.11 Understanding of Different Esoteric Systems

¹In a school, the teaching usually starts from a definite system which all the disciples must assimilate, so that they master it. Normally, this should not take more than two years. Disciples shall not put questions to the teacher or senior disciples until they have thoroughly mastered the material and pondered upon it. They are taught to put whatever is not clear to them aside for the moment to return to it – over and over again until it is finally clear. The clarity and insight they gain must be the fruit of their own work. They must pay for these fruits with their own efforts.

²At the same time – from their first day in the school – they are set to work at their being. They are instructed to observe how their being improves and their understanding of the knowledge increases as well. They are taught to observe, at every moment, the temporary and somewhat more enduring changes of their own being and to delay their attempts at understanding difficult things till they reach better states. There is trust in life in this: the path lies there before me and I am walking it, life has a meaning and I am realizing it. Trust in self: I have all the higher and better states potentially, and I shall some time reach them. Trust in the Law: everything will come in due time, according to the manner in which the laws of life work, but until then I must be patient. This includes the understanding that one's own consciousness expressions are not manifestations of some unitary, unchanging essence, some permanent "self", but emanate from small, transient apparent selves; furthermore that non-transformed man always thinks, feels, acts, and tries to understand from a very small part of himself and that he insists on calling this small part "I" and "me". The understanding that he may possess in such small parts of himself is much

more limited than he can possibly suspect.

³Two or more systems can be taught in the school, with different applications and without confusion, just as people learn several languages which they then use in different circumstances, not mixing them. Hylozoics is such a system, a theoretical one. Vedānta is another theoretical system. Gudjiev's and Ouspensky's teaching is a more practical system, just as yoga is a more practical system. The gnostic school used hylozoics as theory and hermetics as practice. It is not the intention that you should "translate" the terms of the one system into those of the other. Such efforts almost always are formatory. You should strive to understand every system from within itself. You can understand hylozoics in a purely intellectual way; you can understand the fourth way teaching by observing yourself and others and by working at the exercises given you.

⁴You can understand hylozoic terms such as "physical self", "emotional self", "mental self", and "causal self" by acquiring the corresponding concepts, which you do by understanding their places in the general system. You can understand fourth way terms such as "man number one", "man number two", "man number three", and "man number four" by pondering on the descriptions given and then observing yourself and other people. You make a big mistake, however, if you take "man number one" as "physical self", "man number two" as "emotional self", "man number three" as "mental self", etc. It is a typical instance of formatory thinking: jumping to a conclusion on the basis of minimal study, scanty understanding, and mechanical identification without reflection.

⁵Even if in some individual cases these identifications may be correct, there is a principal difference between them which is clear from at least two facts: 1) "physical self", "emotional self", and "mental self" refer to three definite stages of development, whereas "man number one", "man number two", and "man number three" as a matter of principle do not refer to distinct lower and higher stages but to people at essentially the same stage. 2) We cannot ascertain in the concrete case whether George is a physical self, Kathy is an emotional self, and Andrew is a mental self. However, we can ascertain that Kathy is a woman number one, George is a man number two, and Andrew is a man number three. In this appear the theoretical nature and language of hylozoics, and the more practical nature and language of the fourth way. The difference between theory and practice is connected also with the difference in the scales on which we observe phenomena in reality and life. Theory has to do with a larger scale where we can see the meaning of great wholes of which we are parts but about which we cannot ascertain facts. Practice has to do with everyday life and our work in it, a scale where we can ascertain facts. Both scales are needed.

(It is simplistic to speak as if there were only two scales. Actually there are many scales in each system.)

⁶The formatory nature of equalizing “physical self” with “man number one”, etc. lies in the fact that thinking is content here to pay attention to merely two external, formal similarities between two modes of division, but does not consider essential differences. Similarities: 1) there is a tripartite division, and 2) this tripartite division concerns man’s three basic kinds of consciousness functions – physical, emotional, and mental. To formatory thinking, these two formal similarities settle the matter. Formulating, reflective thinking goes many steps further, however, asking, for instance: Is this equalizing incorrect? Are there facts speaking against it? And it finds that such is indeed the case: physical selves should be at the stage of barbarism and thus cannot be interested in esoterics. Man (or woman) number one, however, may very well be a mental self – and it is not difficult to find in esoteric groups people number one who have prominent intellectual powers. Likewise there are people number three who are not mental selves, who do not display intellectual powers above the average, and in fact such people number three make up the majority.

⁷Formatory thinking is described principally as a mechanical preliminary simple sorting of things according to external, formal similarities.

⁸Another example of formatory thinking in esoteric studies: A man who had been studying Indian philosophy and then took an interest in hylozoics stated that the “three aspects” of vedānta – *sat*, *chit*, and *ānanda* – were the same as the three aspects of reality taught in hylozoics. But even if vedānta teaches three basic modes of existence (in the absolute or *brahman*), it does not follow from this that these three are the same as the matter, consciousness, and motion of hylozoics. Actually, only *chit* – which is consciousness – is an exact counterpart. *Sat* means “existence”, “being”, and *ānanda* means “bliss”. Evidently, vedānta lacks here the two concepts of “matter” and “motion”, and so it is impossible to say that the two systems teach the same “three aspects”. Anyone saying so has understood neither vedānta nor hylozoics.

4.12 Esoteric Study Enjoins Responsibility

¹During the last one hundred years and more we have received more esoteric knowledge than even the planetary hierarchy considered possible, and this concerning both world view and life view. Already there is more esoteric knowledge than mankind needs to rationally orient itself in existence, to have a comprehensible system, quite sufficient for an esoteric world view necessary for self-realization.

²The question is how fit for life this knowledge has made us, how much

art of living, wisdom of life, ability to apply the knowledge we have acquired.

³The purpose is not that we shall try to procure knowledge of things of which we have absolutely no use in the worlds of man. We have received esoteric knowledge to be able to lead rational lives in the physical world, not to lose ourselves in speculations which are always (repeat: always) abortive. We have received the knowledge to develop our consciousness in an expedient manner, not to burden ourselves with useless learning. There is endless learning we do not need to live right. Consciousness development is the meaning of life for us to be able to help in the work in higher kingdoms at the processes of manifestation.

⁴It is part of discipleship that the individual selects what he needs for his activity and does not concern himself with theoretical learning that only becomes a burden and is basically incomprehensible. There are esoteric facts for all developmental stages – emotional, mental, causal, essential – publicized to spare those who are at these stages time-consuming research-work and to set the teachers free to do other tasks. All nowadays publicized knowledge thus is not for everybody. Surveying all this (corresponding to the different degrees of esoteric knowledge orders, adapted to the various stages of conception and practical realization), everybody must select what he needs from what he does not need.

⁵Many people are content that esoterics has liberated them from the current theological and philosophical views and afforded them an explanation of the phenomena of life. If subsequently they put the knowledge on the shelf and go on living their lives as usual, unconcerned about these problems, then they have never seen what is meant by responsibility for others. Along with knowledge goes responsibility for the right use of knowledge, and this is particularly true of the esoteric knowledge. We have not received it to sleep better or to develop rapidly in an egoistic sense. According to the Law, much is demanded of anyone who has received much. Anyone who does not apply the knowledge as best he can makes a mistake. Evil arises in two ways: when you do the wrong thing and also when you know the right thing and can do it but nevertheless desist. As Pythagoras said once: “He who walks the path exists not for himself, but for others.” If we will not use the knowledge right, then we have no right to it. If we will not develop our consciousness and understanding of reality and help others to the same, then we shall lose those opportunities in lives to come. There are many former initiates who do not renew their contact with the knowledge and many seekers who do not find it, even are unable to understand it.

4.13 Comprehension, Understanding, and Realization

¹To comprehend is to clearly grasp concepts. To comprehend the hylozoic teaching of the three aspects of existence, for instance, is to clearly grasp what is meant by matter, consciousness, and motion. To understand hylozoics is something quite different and much more. It is to have mastered the system so that, using it, you can explain what was previously inexplicable to you in a rational and unitary manner. It is to see that it cannot be otherwise, to be able to apply this insight in more and more contexts, to be able to draw conclusions which subsequently prove correct.

²Comprehension may work at one detail at a time, not paying much attention to other details. In contrast, understanding does not start from any detail, but from the whole, and apprehends the part or detail through its position in this whole. The more clearly you apprehend the relations between the whole and its parts, the more view-points from which you see them (the more scales on which you see them), the better you understand and the better you remember what you have learned. Anyone who understands has tried to realize it as well.

³You can comprehend esoterics using principle thinking (47:6). Understanding it, however, is something quite different and presupposes perspective thinking (47:5) and at least some contact with causal consciousness (47:3). Perspective thinking is a thinking of a higher quality, the first qualitative kind (as seen from below) that is able to apprehend down-scaled causal ideas. Quite a few people have developed some perspective thinking within a limited sphere of their own knowledge and experience. Esoteric study presupposes and, pursued right, entails the improvement, expansion, and intensification of this faculty of perspective thinking.

⁴Illusions keep people in the emotional world; and fictions, in the mental world. Esoterics gives you access to the causal world. It is only in the causal world, the world of Platonic ideas, that the individual is able to think in accordance with reality, excepting physical learning in the physical world, based on definitive facts without hypotheses.

⁵The causal world, the world of Platonic ideas, is the “truly being”. As a subjective consciousness content the idea “agrees” with reality. As an objective material causal reality it is the cause of the lower worlds.

⁶Understanding is a revealing energy that makes realization possible. In a deeper sense understanding means an increase of your participation in the cosmic total consciousness.

5 SCHOOL

5.1 What Characterizes a School

¹There are schools because there is a way, which people can walk to higher states, higher worlds, higher kingdoms. A school teaches, a school shows the way. People cannot find the way by themselves. It is the state of human beings that they can be shown the way but they cannot find it by themselves. School is an organization whose purpose is to guide people definitely in the direction of evolution.

²The way does not begin on the same level as ordinary life. One has to go up higher to reach it. This means that one climbs up this staircase which represents the difference in levels between ordinary life and the way. This means that the level of our understanding, our ordinary thinking, even our ordinary feelings have to be changed.

³The most important characteristic of a school is that it is an organization for the transmission to a certain number of prepared people of knowledge coming from higher intellect. A school exists not only to teach people, but also to show them how to improve their being. The teacher exists not only to give information, but above all to show his disciples how to use their thought power.

⁴From the first day at school disciples are taught to go forward on the path of knowledge and on the path of being at the same time. They study their mechanicalness and struggle against it, against mechanical manifestations, against unnecessary talk, against imagination, against the expression of negative emotions, against daydreaming, against sleep and forgetfulness. In making a step on the path of knowledge they must make a step on the path of being. The principles of school work, all the demands made upon them, all help them to study their being and to work to change it.

⁵The school is characterized by its teaching disciples how to introduce three forces in their work, how to work on three lines.

⁶Work on the first line is work on oneself: observation of oneself, study of the knowledge and trying to change at least the most mechanical manifestations of oneself. This is the most important line.

⁷Work on the second line is cooperation between many people who all work on the first line. One cannot work by oneself only. In collaboration with other people, there is produced a certain friction, inconvenience, there are certain conflicts – these difficulties should be welcomed as opportunities of solving problems by applying school methods: higher degree of attention, of consciousness.

⁸Work on the third line is work for the school, for the organization.

⁹For anyone working on all three lines the organization will be a school. But for other people, who work on one line only, or on two lines, it will not be a school.

¹⁰Another very important fact is the selection of students. Only people of a certain preparation and a certain level of understanding are admitted to a real school. A school cannot be open to all, it cannot be open to many.

¹¹The level of a school depends on the level of being of the people who study in this school, and their level depends on the level of their being.

¹²A school, in the full sense of the term “school”, must consist of at least two degrees, that is, it must have two levels in it. On the lower level, men 1, 2 and 3 learn to become men 4, acquire the knowledge and make the efforts that help them in this transformation. On the higher level, men 4 learn to become men 5.

¹³There is an enormous difference between man 4 and man 5. Man 4 is a man who has acquired a permanent centre of gravity, but in everything else he is an ordinary man. This centre of gravity has the effect that he does not abandon the work, does not leave the way, except for short times and occasionally. Man 5 is very different. He already has unity, a permanent “I”, the third state of consciousness. This means that he is awake, he can always remember himself when he needs it and that the higher emotional centre is working in him, which affords him many new powers.

5.2 How a School Arises

¹The allegory of the prison teaches us that only those who have escaped from it know how to do it and only those are able to teach prisoners how to escape. This means that a school must start or continue from another school. The knowledge can have value only if it comes from a higher intellect. A school cannot be started without knowledge coming from men of a higher intellect. Ordinary people cannot come together and decide to found a school. A school can be organized only according to a certain definite plan worked out and since long ago. There can be nothing arbitrary and improvised in schools.

5.3 Preparation for Entrance in School

¹Schools are of very different levels depending on the preparation of the pupils and the development of their being. The higher the level of the school, the greater the demands made upon the students. But even in schools of the lowest degree, the beginning of school-work already means a certain preparation. One cannot pass straight from the absurdity of ordinary life to school. Even if a school does all that is possible to give a man

something, if he is not prepared, if he does not know how to take it, it cannot be given.

²If there are sufficient people with a preparation, then there can be a school. But being prepared is not simply coming to lectures and accepting what one hears.

³To be prepared means first of all to be ready to work on the level not only of knowledge, but also of being that the school supposes for beginners. One must have seen one's situation, know what one cannot do by oneself, see that one needs help, and many other things. To be prepared means that one must already know oneself to a certain extent; one must know one's aim; one must know the value of one's decisions; one must have stopped lying to oneself to a certain extent; one must be able to be sincere with oneself.

⁴Besides, one can enter a school only when one has given up, or is prepared to give up, a certain amount of self-will. Self-will is the chief obstacle to entering a school, because a school means not only learning but also discipline. And some people may find discipline boring, or unnecessary.

⁵Pupils are tested almost continuously, not only before they enter the school, but also during their stay there.

5.4 Principles of School Work

¹Many things are necessary in an organization, understanding first of all, and effort.

²The first principle of the work is that efforts give results proportionate to understanding. The more you understand, the better the results can be. Before you begin to work, you must know what to understand and how to get the right understanding.

³This means that there is something one has to overcome in order to understand, and in order to understand more one has to overcome something else. In school you get help not to deceive yourself and it can be explained to you why you do not understand.

⁴In the beginning all depends on the intellect. The intellect must be educated, it must awaken. Later it will depend on emotion.

⁵Real work must be work on being, but work on being requires understanding of the aims, conditions, and methods of the work.

⁶There are no imposed obligations. Obligations come from work. The more one does, the more obligations one has. If one does nothing, nothing is asked of one.

⁷It is necessary to work according to school discipline, school rules. The observance of school discipline must be based on understanding. If one

does not understand a rule, one should ask for an explanation, so that one understands.

⁸One must not believe anything, one should try to verify everything. Important parts of the teaching on man's psychology can be verified through observation of oneself and others. Other parts – those concerning superhuman, planetary, solar systemic, and cosmic facts – cannot be verified by us. But we need not embrace even them with belief, but can assume them as elements in a working hypothesis that we consider for the time being. Through its analogies in reality that is knowable to human beings, this hypothesis will prove the more probable the better we understand it.

⁹In school work, one must not do anything until one understands why one does it and for what purpose.

¹⁰If one does not know what to do, one can always ask for advice from the teacher or senior disciples. But if one asks and receives an advice, one has to accept and follow it. More often than not, one does not receive any advice, and this on at least three grounds: 1) One must at any cost learn to stand on one's own feet. 2) One has a right to the good sowing coming out of one's own right decision and right action, and those who are older in the work do not want to deprive one of that right. 3) Giving advice is serious business: thoughtlessly receiving advice and not acting upon it violates a school principle, and those who are older in the work take care lest they contribute to creating such a situation. An example of not-doing.

¹¹A very important principle is that a person cannot study alone, and this is so on several grounds. The first ground is very simple and self-evident: nobody can have a teacher all to himself. If there is someone who can teach, he will not devote his time to one person. Another ground is that if one works alone, or tries to, one cannot put someone else in one's place, and at a certain moment this becomes quite necessary in order to pass to the next degree of knowledge and being. A man can rise to the next level only by putting another man in his place.

¹²The principle of "putting another man in one's place" must not be misunderstood. It does not mean that one individual transmits these ideas to another. Individuals cannot do it, and it cannot be demanded of them, because individual work can only refer to oneself. Putting people in one's place is school work, that is, the joint efforts of all the people belonging to the school. All school work is organized with this purpose in view, the different branches of the work all pursue the same end: to put new people in the place occupied by the people who are there at present and in this way to help them rise to higher steps. Everyone should think like this: Just as those who are older in the work have helped us who are younger, so we

must prepare to help those who are still younger, those who have come in recently – also with a view to make it possible for the older ones to move along.

¹³The school does not guarantee anything. An ordinary university, where only knowledge and instruction are given, can guarantee its students a certain amount of knowledge, but even that only if they work as they have been told. But regarding the improvement of being which the school can also help in effecting, no guarantee is possible, but everything depends on the disciples' own understanding and effort, which may be on different levels in different individuals.

¹⁴Those who work in a school strive to feel that they are the school, parts of it, that it is not anything separate from them. They see that the work, continuation, and well-being of the school are their business. Therefore, everyone thinks about this work, tries to understand its demands, considers the progress of the work a personal matter, does not put it off to the future in some faint hope that “others will take care of it”.

¹⁵You must have your own aim and it must coincide with the aim of the school, it must enter into it. The first aim of everyone who is interested in the work is to study himself and find what must be changed. Only when certain things are changed does one become ready for active work. The work cannot be theoretical, each of these ideas must become practical. Some things one can discover by oneself. Some other things one can understand only if one is shown them, but not otherwise. And there is a third kind of things which one cannot understand in one's present state. It is necessary to know about these gradations.

¹⁶One principle in the work is that time is counted. For every person certain demands are made. If you have been only one month in the work, the demands are small. Next month they grow, after six months they are bigger, after a year still bigger. If someone considers that he has the right to be on the level of the first month after being in the work for some years, he cannot come up to the demands. Demands always grow, but if you work, if you grow, you will be on the level of the demands.

¹⁷In the following there will be more said on certain definite school principles concerning payment, rules, discipline, not speaking to outsiders, work on three lines.

5.5 Payment

¹In the work the first condition is understanding what one wants to gain and how much one is prepared to pay for it, because one has to pay for everything. Sometimes one wants things without seeing what it involves and how much there is to pay. Payment means first of all being able to

meet demands.

²Payment is necessary not to the school but to the people themselves. Nobody can get anything that he does not pay for. If one has knowledge, one cannot give it to another person, for only if he pays for it can the other person have it. What one can get is proportionate to what one is prepared to pay.

³All too often we want to get something for nothing, and that is why we have nothing. If we really decided to go for this kind of knowledge – or even for quite a small thing – and we went for it regardless of everything else, we would get it.

⁴First you make the effort to study and understand the things you hear. Effort is not yet payment in itself, but it creates the possibility of payment, for it educates work personality, and only it can pay. False personality cannot pay. Payment always means a certain effort, a certain “doing”, different from what you would do “naturally” – that is: mechanically.

⁵Payment, in the true sense of the word “payment”, must be useful not only to you but to others as well – to the school. But if you are not useful to yourself, you cannot be useful to the school either. A school loses by giving out its knowledge to people who do not pay back to the school.

⁶When you understand what the work is about and what it needs to go on, you will find ways of doing something useful. Attitude depends on yourself and on your understanding. Opportunity depends on circumstances.

⁷Only if you work on yourself will you be able to pay. When one strives to attain something in the work, one gets only as much as one pays for. It is a law, the law of equilibrium.

⁸Payment is sacrifice, but you have to sacrifice only imaginary things. In the work one acquires new, real values and loses imaginary values.

5.6 Rules

¹One of the most important things in every kind of school is the idea of rules. If there are no rules, or if people do not understand the importance of rules, there is no school work and no school. All rules are for self-remembering, although they also have a purpose in themselves. Rules are not for convenience, they are not for comfort – they are for inconvenience and discomfort, and in that way they help self-remembering.

²If people knew what to do without rules, rules would not be necessary. At the same time, rules are also a kind of education, because by obeying rules people create force in themselves. Rules are difficult to obey. But by remembering, understanding, and obeying rules you accumulate conscious energy. That is chiefly why rules are made. Each rule has many objects.

³The observance of rules must not start from attempts at shirking

responsibility or desiring to stay from irrelevant motives such as liking to be with the other disciples and desiring their support, help, appreciation, and company, or being the victim of other such thinking based on rewards.

⁴There is really only one rule, or one principle – that one must not do anything unnecessary. The fact that we cannot “do” in the right sense of “doing, is because we do so many unnecessary things. Therefore, we must first learn to “not-do”, not to do anything unnecessary. It may take a long time, but this is the way to learn.

⁵One cannot describe rules or give a catalogue of them, but one can understand rules. Besides, emotional development needs discipline. Nothing develops the emotional centre so much as giving up self-will. Rules are connected with the idea of conduct. When we become men 5 our conduct will be perfect compared to what it is now. But we are not men 5, so we must have rules. If we remember rules, understand, and follow them, our conduct will be consistent and will lead in a definite direction. It will no longer be the erratic conduct of men 1, 2, and 3.

5.7 Discipline

¹All the four ways need discipline. This explains why one cannot work by oneself. One cannot create discipline by oneself. If one understands this work, then discipline takes the form that one does not decide for oneself but works according to instructions. It takes a long time to acquire will, for self-will has to be overcome first. In the meantime the will of the school holds sway.

²Study of discipline is connected with the second line of work. Without understanding school discipline one cannot have inner discipline. There are people who could do good work and who fail because they lack discipline. Yet change of being is possible only with school work and school discipline. For a certain period of time one must have it, and then, later, one can work by oneself. Discipline is connected with rules. Rules are the conditions on which people are accepted and given knowledge in a school. Keeping these rules or conditions is their first payment, and their first test.

³There can be no rules on the first and the third lines. There you must do what you can, there must be initiative, work must be free.

⁴On the second line, however, there must be discipline. On the second line you must be able to forget your own interests, your own likes and dislikes.

⁵One example of discipline is that one must surrender one’s decisions in questions connected with work in the school, one must remember why one is doing it and what one is doing. For instance, in remembering rules, one must surrender a considerable part of one’s own judgment and simply

remember them. Why? Because one sees that one does not understand enough. When one does understand, there will be no need to remember rules. Therefore, surrender does not mean blind sacrifice, and it is necessary only in connection with schoolwork, not outside schoolwork.

⁶One can learn to be free only by obeying more laws. There are many reasons for this. One reason is that we are too lenient with ourselves. If we set ourselves a task, after some time we begin to make excuses for not doing it. And then we deceive ourselves too much.

⁷The way to acquire will is to put oneself under a certain discipline and not try to escape. People use in the work the same methods they use in life – they adapt. They try to make work as comfortable, or as little uncomfortable as possible, and in that way they lose what the work can give. You cannot adapt to the work; you have to work in actual fact.

5.8 Not to Speak to Outsiders

¹It is a principle of school work not to give ideas to anyone without discrimination, but on the contrary to give them only on certain conditions which safeguard them from being distorted. It is a very important function of a school to prevent these ideas from being distorted.

²Therefore, there is a rule for beginners that they should not talk to people outside about what they are being taught. People begin to see the importance of this rule only when their friends insist on their talking and they no longer want to talk. This rule is to help people who have good intentions, but still know too little to convey it right to others. If they nevertheless try, they convey, not the knowledge, but their own misconception of it. Besides, they have not yet enough discrimination to decide to which people they can talk and to which they cannot talk.

³Another reason for this rule is that it is a test, an exercise of will, an exercise of memory and understanding. You participate in the teaching of the school on certain conditions. The first condition is that you must not talk, and you must remember it. This helps you to self-remember, because it goes against all mechanical habits. Our ordinary habit is to talk without discrimination. But in relation to these ideas we must use discrimination.

⁴Besides, all the parts of the knowledge are connected with each other, so that in order to explain one thing you have to explain another, and so on. You will soon experience that your whole attempt is meaningless. Then perhaps you are ripe for the following conclusion: If it actually were possible to convey the knowledge in this manner to unprepared people, then no schools would be needed; but since schools exist, the knowledge must be taught through them only.

⁵For us many things are facts, or at least should be facts. If you tell them

to people who have not even begun to seriously study them, for them it will be something like belief, which they will either accept or reject, usually without examination. It is not the purpose of the school, however, to produce more believers or skeptics. It is impossible to convey these ideas sufficiently clearly to people who just hear about them but do not study them during long time and repeatedly, do not reflect on them. The understanding, clarity, insight you have gained is the fruit of precisely such work. The work you put in was the necessary payment – thus you were not given the insight, but you bought it. You cannot convey your understanding when talking to unprepared people. That is what all beginners believe, however, when they forget the principle of payment just as they forget all other principles.

⁶Only when you are able to keep silent, keep something to yourself, only then can you accumulate more knowledge or material. Anyone who talks to other people about his own insights, his experiences, wastes valuable energy without benefiting anyone. The inner emptiness one feels afterwards comes from this loss of energy.

5.9 Who Needs a School?

¹Schools are not necessary at all for the vast majority of people. They are necessary only to those who have already seen the inadequacy of knowledge collected by the ordinary mind and who have experienced that, by themselves, with their own strength they can neither solve the problems which surround them nor find the right way. Only such people are capable of overcoming the difficulties connected with school work, and only for them are schools necessary.

²One and the same organization can be a school for certain individuals, but not for others. One and the same school can be on different levels depending on the people who enter into it. Three persons can be in a school. To one it may be a school on a certain level, to another a school on another level, and to the third person no school at all. It all depends on how deep into it one is. It is required that one works and remembers one's aim.

³Sometimes it is asked why schools do not wield a greater influence in and on the world. But schools can work only through people who take an interest in them on their own accord. If people are not interested, schools can do nothing about it. Schools cannot use violence.

5.10 Why School is Necessary

¹Nobody can work alone. However, not even a group of people who decide to work by themselves will achieve anything without a school, since they do not know where they are heading or what they should do.

²If you try to understand all the difficulties you have to overcome to develop without a school, you will see that without method, and without help, you will not go forward – you will remain what you are, or rather you will go down, for nothing remains in the same state, and if you do not develop, you decay. In life, in ordinary conditions, everything goes down, or one capacity may develop at the expense of another. The development of all necessary qualities requires a school, for system and method are necessary.

³Schools are necessary on many grounds: to transmit higher knowledge, to help people to develop their being in the right way, to safeguard that esoteric ideas are not misunderstood and distorted.

⁴Schools are necessary because the knowledge which comes from beings of higher intellect can be transmitted only to a very limited number of people simultaneously and that it is necessary to observe a whole series of definite conditions, without which knowledge cannot be transmitted correctly. The transmission of knowledge demands efforts both on the part of him who receives it and on the part of him who gives it. The organization facilitates these efforts or makes them possible. These conditions cannot come about by themselves.

⁵These conditions are connected with the necessity of a simultaneous development of knowledge and being. The development of one without a corresponding development of the other gives wrong results. Schools are necessary to prevent such one-sided development and the undesirable results connected with it.

⁶Right development of being is impossible without schools, because those who wish to walk the way cannot walk it alone. What was just said is expressed on a certain scale. On a smaller scale it can be said that they cannot look after themselves, they cannot be sufficiently strict or firm to themselves. They cannot remember things at the right time, they will forget or they will make things easy for themselves. They have a tendency to forget the most elementary things they have learnt. Even what they have understood they forget, if they do not constantly return to it. It is the task of the school, the teacher, and the older disciples to keep check and remind. If it were possible to work by oneself, schools would be a waste of time and systems would not be necessary. But since schools and systems exist, it means that it is impossible without them.

⁷The school studies possibilities of the development of inner qualities in man. It starts from the idea that not all the qualities can develop equally. In order that certain qualities should develop, other qualities have to be restrained and some others have to be eliminated. In schools they have a certain knowledge about which qualities can and which cannot develop,

which qualities should and which should not be developed, which conditions are good, how to restrain certain qualities, how to develop other qualities.

⁸The development of being requires that many people work in the same direction according to school principles and methods. What one man cannot do, many people working together can do. People need to meet, so that those who know and understand more can help those who know and understand less, and they must discuss the work, exchange experience. Anyone who tries to work alone will certainly fail. He will forget what he has learnt, since there are so many forces within us that things simply vanish from memory. Therefore: only the combined work of many people can produce the necessary results.

⁹Experience shows that in order to get what is possible from these ideas a certain organization is necessary, organization of groups of people not only for discussing things but also for concerted work that is organized and started. When people work together at anything for the sake of experience, they begin to see in themselves and in other people different things which they do not notice when they just discuss. Discussion is one thing and work is another. So in all schools there exist different kinds of organized work, and people can always find what will suit them without unnecessary sacrifices, because sacrifices are not expected.

¹⁰In schools certain sharp corners are smoothed out. People learn how to adapt to one another, and this is generally very useful. When one is surrounded by mirrors, one can see oneself in every person.

¹¹One purpose of schools is to counteract the misunderstanding, distortion, and abuse of esoteric ideas. With the best intentions people distort ideas – this being directed at those who still believe in “good will”. People who are interested in esoteric ideas but do not come in contact with any school, nevertheless continue to think, they have problems in their understanding, ask themselves questions and try to find answers to them. For instance, one of the usual forms of distortion by people who work by themselves or in separate groups is that they invariably take some kind of explanation as a principle, ascribe a general import to something that was given only as an example.

¹²It does not necessarily benefit the school if its ideas are spread among people. The ideas must be spread in the right form to people who are somewhat prepared to receive them. One must not think that it is sufficient to spread the ideas in a certain form or language for them to be apprehended correctly. The same words are apprehended differently by different people. There also must be people who can explain the ideas, correct misunderstandings of them, and this is done in schools. If it were sufficient

to spread the ideas, why would schools be needed? The words, the terms will spread by themselves, but the ideas will be misunderstood and distorted outside schools.

¹³The ideas can reach the right people, that is, people who can not only *take*, but also *give*, only if they are given to a large number of people. If the ideas are limited to a small group, they will never reach the right people. Small groups, if they think that they can keep the ideas to themselves, will distort and spoil them. Distortion can be avoided only if the work grows and if many people know about it. Small groups, limited and unchanging, will always make their own additions to the work. So the more the work grows, the more each individual can get from it. Another reason why schools cannot exist on too small a scale is that only a certain number of people gives the variety of types required for successful work.

5.11 *Work on Three Lines*

¹All events, all processes in the world obey the law of seven, the law of octaves. A certain event increases or decreases, goes through intervals or gaps, departs from its original direction, changes its character. In each octave there are two intervals or gaps, the one between *mi* and *fa*, and the other between *si* and *do*. The gap is a point of weakness, where accidents are particularly apt to occur, accidents mechanically altering the direction of the movement or work. In octaves of human activity, weakness means that attention becomes weaker, consciousness becomes weaker. If the work is allowed to pass a number of such gaps and mechanically to depart in each one of them, it will eventually change beyond recognition, miss the goal completely. Certainly this is what is constantly seen in the community outside schools in the domains of religious, social, political movements, etc.

²There are ascending and descending octaves. School work should be regarded as an ascending octave, ascending also in a qualitative sense.

³The law of seven applied to school work is the principle of work on three lines. School work uses many cosmic ideas, and three lines of work is a special arrangement intended to safeguard the right direction of the work and to make it successful.

⁴The principle of three lines is that the three octaves must go on simultaneously and parallel to one another, but they do not all begin at the same time, and so their inevitable gaps most often do not coincide. This means that when one line reaches an interval in its octave, another line may be strong and so come in to help the first line over its interval. For instance, when in one's individual work on the first line one comes to a gap, one's work on the second or the third line may be going well and help one to pass

the gap in one's individual work. Or, on the contrary, the individual work may be going well and so help one to pass a gap in work on the second line or the third line.

⁵In order to pass through such a gap in such a way that the character of the work on the line does not change, it is necessary to know how to fill the gap. And you fill it with the attention and consciousness you summon in work on the other two lines.

⁶If I work only on one line, or on two lines, the direction will change. If I work on three lines, or three octaves, one line will help another to pass the interval. So if I want to guarantee the direction of the work in a straight line to the intended goal, I must work on three lines simultaneously. If a man is equally energetic on all three lines, it leads him out of many accidental happenings.

⁷Naturally, the first line begins first. In the first line of work you think of what you want to get, what you want to know, what you want to be, how to change old habits of thinking, old habits of feeling.

⁸In the work on the first line you *take* – knowledge, ideas, help. This line concerns only yourself, it is entirely egocentric. On the second line one must not only take but also *give* – communicate knowledge and ideas, serve as an example, help one's fellows in the common work. This line concerns people in the work, so on this line one works half for oneself and half for other people. The work on the third line takes on different aspects for different people.

⁹First one must work on acquiring knowledge, material, practice. Then, when one has got a certain amount, one begins to work with other people in such a way that one person is useful to another and helps another. On the second line, because of a certain special organization, one is in a position to work for other people, not only for oneself. And later one may understand in which way one may be useful to the school. It is all a question of understanding. On the third line you work for the school only, not for yourself.

¹⁰You enter the second line of work in this way: these groups have been going on for some time, and there were people and groups before you. One of the principles of school work is that you can get instruction and advice not only from the teacher but also from people who have been studying before you came, perhaps for many years. Their experience is very important for you, because the teacher seldom gives his time to an individual disciple, and he never does so in cases where disciples can, and so must, help each other. Disciples who have been long in the work must complete for the younger ones what the teacher gives, and the younger ones must learn how to use it, how to profit by the experience of the older ones,

how to receive what they are able to give.

¹¹When you begin to understand that it is impossible to work alone, that it is only because of these other people that you yourself can work, that will be understanding, but it will not be work on the second line yet. You must understand that the people you meet in the work are as necessary for you as the knowledge itself.

¹²On the third line one thinks of the work in general, about the school or the organization as a whole. One thinks about what is useful, what is necessary for the school, what the school needs, so the third line concerns the whole idea of school and all the present and the future of the work. Only when a man thinks about this and understands it will the first two lines produce their full effect. This is how school work is arranged and this is why three lines are necessary – one can get the full benefit of the work only if one works on all three lines.

¹³If we connect the three lines of work with the idea of right and wrong, then we see that all that helps the first line, that is, one's personal work, is right. But on the second line you cannot have it all to yourself. You have to think of other people in the work, you have to learn not only to understand but also to explain, you must give something to others. And you will soon see that you can understand certain things only by explaining them to others. The circle becomes larger, right and wrong become bigger. The third line already relates to the outside world, and good and bad become what helps or hinders the existence and work of the whole school, so the circle grows still larger. This is the way to think about it.

¹⁴The study and understanding of the three lines is one of the foremost principles of school work. There is much that can become clear to you when you apply the idea of the three lines. And applying the idea means working on the three lines in fact. This is knowledge and understanding that you obtain by doing. You can never understand it in theory only.

¹⁵It is necessary to understand what the word "work" means in the fourth way sense. If somebody asks a question at a lecture, and it happens to help others to understand, it is not work on the second line. Work is not something that happens, unintentionally, accidentally. Work is always intentional, is always a line of efforts leading towards a certain definite goal. Not one effort, but a connected line of efforts, an uninterrupted line of efforts.

¹⁶There is a tie between all who work, and everybody who works creates this tie.

¹⁷Already in the work on the first line, your understanding of the work on the third line can grow. On the first line you study yourself and the knowledge. The better you do this, the better will be your picture of the

whole. And the whole is all the ideas of the knowledge and the principles of school work. This includes every possibility to be found in the work. So the deeper your study is, the better will be your understanding of what enters into school work. In this way, understanding will grow eventually. On the first line you must be very practical and think about what you can gain. If you feel that you are not free, that you are asleep, maybe you will want to be free, to awake, and so you will work to gain that. On the third line, you think about the work, about the whole organization. There, the organization must be the foremost subject of your study, the idea of the organization, the needs of the organization, the forms of the organization. Then you will see that the organization is your business, not someone else's business. Everybody must take part in it, when they can. Nobody is asked to do what he cannot, but everybody must think about it and understand it. What is important on the third line is not so much actual doing as thinking about it. You cannot leave to other people to think about it for you. One line cannot exist without the other two. One line or two lines are not work. There can be no school work on one line. School work *means* work on three lines.

¹⁸First of all understanding is necessary, and to understand is already work. If enough people think about the work as a whole and understand it, it is possible to continue. Then, with right understanding, it will be right development. But you cannot expect someone else to go on putting understanding and energy into it for you.

¹⁹If you arrive at an understanding of the third line, then it will be the third line for you. Everything depends on your attitude and your possibilities. If you see that it is necessary to do something for the work of the school, and if you are able to do it, then it will be work on the third line.

²⁰The whole work is arranged in such a way that you cannot get anything from the first line if you do not work on the second line and third line. On the first line you can get certain results, but after a while you come to a stop if you do not work on the other two lines.

²¹It is too easy to speak about the development of consciousness, about the work on three lines in general and abstract terms, as if it did not concern ourselves. But it is necessary to have your own personal picture of these lines: first of yourself acquiring knowledge, new ideas, discarding wrong ideas which you have accepted in the past and which contradict more recent insights, studying yourself, studying the knowledge, attempting to remember yourself and many other things. You make efforts to formulate your aim: distinctly, in everyday terms, and with your own words. All of this is work on the first line.

²²On the second line the chief difficulty in the beginning is working not

on your own initiative. You are told to do this or that, and you want to be free, you do not want to do it, you do not like it, or you do not like the people with whom you have to work. You may think you can do whatever you have to do better in your own way; you may not like the conditions, and so on. All of this is self-assertion, which you must learn how to overcome.

²³On the third line your own initiative comes in once more. In the beginning it is sufficient to understand what *can* be given, not what *you can* give, that is, to know what is useful and necessary for the work without relation to yourself. So before you can put “I” into it, you must understand what can be done in general, what the work needs. Only later can you put “I” into it. It is not as important what a person actually does as what he thinks. If he thinks and feels right, opportunity may come. He may not have the opportunity to do anything today, but circumstances may change and opportunity may present itself. But if he does not care about this side of things, if he does not understand it and does not think right about it, he deprives himself of the possibility to gain what he wants to gain.

²⁴In relation to the third line it is very important to understand why this work exists and how to help it. The idea is to establish a school, that is, to work according to school rules and school principles, first studying these rules and principles and then applying them in practice. Many conditions are necessary for that. One of these conditions is that people are necessary. There are people who are prepared, who are capable of developing these ideas, but they do not know them. So it is necessary to find them, find the right kind of people and give them these ideas. But in order to do that one must first understand these ideas oneself.

²⁵When one begins to understand the work on the third line practically, then this marks a definite stage in the work. In the school we receive certain knowledge. But what do we give in return? In which way do we help the school?

Second Series:
THE WAY AND ITS WANDERERS
Containing the Essays
The Way
The Wanderers
Insight
Discrimination
Realization

THE WAY

6.1 Introduction

¹The way of self-realization is the way of arduous work from ignorance to omniscience, from inability and impotence to omnipotence, from bondage to freedom. The way to the truth is the way of your own knowledge of life through experiencing reality. The individual must wander each single step of the way himself. No one can walk it for him.

²We must put up with the fact that our wandering is done in darkness, that we see a few steps ahead at the utmost.

³Courage comes from knowing the way. That is why the black ones try to blot out the knowledge of the way and so discourage people.

⁴From below the way appears as a long series of renunciations, abnegations, sacrifices. From above it appears as a long series of liberations, emancipations, awakenings.

⁵The esoteric saying, "Before a man can walk the way, he must have become the way himself", means that the man, by acquiring the qualities and abilities (all such ones consisting of molecules or atoms with their respective kinds of consciousness and energy), builds his ladder to higher regions and worlds also in material respect. In his envelopes, lower molecular kinds are successively replaced by higher ones, until the envelopes finally consist of nothing but atoms. Then the envelopes can be dispensed with and, as need arises, be formed automatically anew. This requires sovereignty in the atomic kind.

⁶The information on discipleship is intended as an elementary introduction only, not as stimulation for anyone to imagine himself into states which can only bring him disappointment. We have all of us a long way yet to go. The very future possibility, however, shows us the way that everybody will tread sometime. This knowledge facilitates orientation towards a goal worth striving after. Knowing the requirements is very valuable knowledge.

6.2 Steady on the Way

¹The individual has attained a definite and important stage in his wandering of the way when he has acquired a "permanent centre of gravity". This means that among the many conflicting impulses within his personality, the different "roles", a definite striving has crystallized which makes his life take a clear direction: towards self-realization, towards the realization of the goal, towards the gaining of discipleship. As a rule, he has by then found a mission in his life connected with this striving.

²This stage is characterized by the fact that the individual does not leave the way except for short times, so that he can always reconnect to his wandering and his work. Before the individual has reached this definite stage, which is also called “man number 4”, he will display more or less manifest tendencies to flitting about. In man number 4, the purposive walking of the way has superseded erring to and fro.

³“Those who engage themselves in the occult sciences must either reach the goal or perish. Once fairly started on the way to the great knowledge, to doubt is to risk insanity; to come to a dead stop is to fall; to recede is to tumble backward, heading into an abyss.” (Pythagoras)

6.3 *The Way is the Way of Trials, the Way of Tests*

¹The way is the way of trials, the way is the way of tests. At no station of the way do the trials and tests come to an end. It might seem as though the 45-self had passed his final test, because he has received the master’s degree. However, even greater tests await him on his way to becoming a 44-self. And so it will go on all the way up to the highest cosmic kingdom.

²It is very common that aspirants look upon tests and opportunities as two different things and, moreover, tests as “negative” and opportunities as “positive”: the former are such things as are “demanded from one”, whereas the latter are such things as are “given to one”. This erroneous view is one of the countless illusions of the first self, the untransformed self, the “acquisition complex”, to be precise, whose motto could be said to be “it is more blessed to receive than to give”. Each test to which the teacher or a senior disciple subjects the aspirant also is an opportunity: he may show what he is able to do, he is faced with the possibility of being more closely attached to the teacher’s work, he is given an offer or an opportunity to have some more training in the difficult art of service.

³The important thing is not to look too far away so that you do not perceive what is under your very nose: offers, opportunities that do not return, tests given you without your knowing it.

⁴Many people fail in the tests given them because they easily believe that they need not be tested (!) or they believe they know what tests look like or when they come or expect to be warned of them. But if the people tested knew or were warned of the tests, then they would be no tests – mere common sense should tell them that.

⁵Neither do tests resemble the ideas that sentimental thinking holds of them. You will not be “passed” because you are such a “good person”, so saintly, mild, such a “bright soul”, forgo this desire or that, etc. ad infinitum. Tests exclusively concern qualities that are essential for work, decisions and actions that demonstrate reliability, power of endurance,

responsibility, efficiency and exactness in the performance of tasks, etc.

⁶If people could see how they harm themselves and others by their half-hearted decisions and unfulfilled undertakings! It is better not to decide, not to undertake something than to decide or undertake and then leave it half-done or undone.

⁷Most aspirants and disciples think they are being tried beyond their powers. That is a false view. They do not use their true sources of power. The tension they ought to live in from day to day is very weak and does not require their all.

⁸The way is objective. It is what it is independent of our views, expectations, more or less erroneous ideas of it. It is not for us to make demands or lay down conditions of the way and our wandering of it. On the contrary it is for us, as soon as we have reached the insight, to perceive the demands and conditions of the way itself, and to perceive them as clearly and as undistortedly as is possible on our level.

6.4 The Way is the Way of Schools

¹A way without schools is no way. Truth is no wayless land, and the way is the way of schools.

²Schools differ somewhat in their focus and orientation as to the basic esoteric theme of “identification and liberation”. “Southern” schools emphasize identification with the higher, “union with the godhead”. “Northern” schools stress liberation from the lower. Naturally, this should not be taken in an absolute sense. Of course, also “northern” schools teach their pupils how to strive after union with the divine collectives of higher kingdoms. There is no ranking into higher and lower between the two categories, and “northern” and “southern” should not be understood in a literal, a geographic sense.

³The initiative in founding an esoteric school cannot come from a human being, not even from an advanced human being, a senior disciple or a causal self. The initiative can come only from the leaders and teachers of the planetary hierarchy, and only as a partial realization of hierarchic plans which are unknown to outsiders. As esoterics nowadays is made accessible exoterically in certain respects, we must regrettably expect that immature people study it and imagine all sorts of things about themselves, of course that they are in contact with the hierarchy and – even worse – have been commissioned by it to found esoteric schools. Such fake schools have already appeared in a number of countries, also in Sweden. They will all fail and disappear, since they do not have the necessary contact with and guidance from the hierarchy and also since they lack the necessary three: “the right time, the right place, the right people”. Moreover, they are bereft

of certain other characteristics, which only genuine schools founded and guided by the planetary hierarchy can possess and which only initiates above a certain degree discern.

⁴Each genuine school lives as long as it is led by teachers who can expound the teaching also in its most obscure, most abstruse parts, and who can guide the pupils at the most trying, the most thorny stages of the way. Many a time in the past it happened that a school died because the hierophant did not find a worthy successor among his disciples. The hierophant considered that it was better to let the school die with him than to let it live on with an imperfect teaching and a less than excellent leadership. “Why let the body live on, if the spirit has already departed?” could have been his motto. That is a lesson and a warning to our times as well. It is better to disband an organization than to see it bungle its purpose.

⁵The school is a down-scaling in the worlds of man of one of the ray groups (ashrams) of the planetary hierarchy; and the study group, in its turn, is a down-scaling of the school. Down-scaling always means limitation, deterioration, loss of quality, for it is impossible to bring down a formative energy from a higher reality to a lower one without essential qualities being lost. It is the main responsibility of the teachers and senior disciples to see to it that, when being scaled down, the original ideas and principles are maintained as pure and as little distorted as possible. This responsibility then endures and demonstrates in the continuous efforts on the part of the teachers and senior disciples to counteract deviations from the originally given ideas and principles, to prevent decay and degeneration.

⁶In the ray groups of the hierarchy there are no such deviations, no decay, and no degeneration. These groups basically exist in world 46 and are under the constant control by a 44-self, seconded by 45-selves and 46-selves, and this control guarantees an immutable hierarchic quality. In contrast, schools decay as time goes by, and study groups decay even faster. This is inevitable in the “worlds of decay”, as the mental, emotional, and physical worlds are called in the old parlance of the schools.

⁷The fact that decay is inevitable does not mean, however, that the pupils of the schools and the members of the groups should not try to counteract it as best they can. They do so by being watchful of certain undesirable tendencies in themselves, tendencies that go against the right work of the school. This presupposes will and ability of self-observation, honesty, and will to liberation. Those who often observe themselves, are honest about the bad things they see then, and want to make efforts to eliminate it: they are the people who are serious about self-realization and can go forward.

⁸Among undesirable tendencies the following ones may be mentioned: impatience, ignorance, sentimentality, and intellectualism.

⁹Impatience with what “little” one has received and desire to “have” more are aspects of the acquisitive tendency, greed. This is one of the most characteristic traits of untransformed man. In human life, everything revolves around what can be “had”, “got”, or “acquired”, preferably as cheap as possible, and this forms the basis of buying and selling. On the esoteric way, however, it is not about having and receiving, but about giving: of serving rather than being served. It is not primarily about acquiring, but of discarding, ridding oneself: of restricting views, erroneous attitudes, illusions and fictions. Before you can “have” more, you must show yourself deserving of what you have already “got” by using it right.

¹⁰Ignorance, or rather, the inability and unwillingness to learn and constantly re-learn, makes the individual replace the search for knowledge with anything else: dogmatism, fanaticism, the ideologies of power (political correctness), the games and pastimes of social life (“look at me, please me, reward me”).

¹¹Sentimentality is the power of solar plexus energies over the energies of the heart, the dominance of illusionism over true love. The difference is seen in the quality of understanding: sentimentality makes everything superficial, whereas true love from the heart makes perception deeper.

¹²Intellectualism is the recourse taken by the lower mentality to throw off responsibility to realize the teaching by revelling in theories that have no important connection with, or application in, life. Its characteristic trait is the lack of perspective, of proportion, of sense of what is essential, its myopic occupation with details, inability to see wholes, deeper connections, and true causes.

¹³All of this is counteracted in the most efficient way by earnestly adopting the serving attitude.

¹⁴The teachers and their closest associates, their senior disciples, make the best possible selection of people to be taught at the right time and in the right place. Later on one or more of these three factors may deteriorate: people no longer are the right ones, the time or the place no longer is right. Then the original conditions no longer prevail. Then the teachers and senior disciples have withdrawn their force from the activity. The latter can still endure for a long time after, but in a manifestly degenerate form. It often proves impossible to revive such a form. At a certain early stage it may still be possible – by making people break with erroneous habit patterns they have adopted contrary to rules originally given, by having such people as can be reconnected enter new groups. To those who have become used to the wrong situation, such a revival may appear as a deviation from, a distortion of the “true doctrine”, but in that case this is due to their ignorance of the history of their own community, of the ideas

and principles that originally guided it.

¹⁵The fact that schools inevitably decay has the result that the teachers from the “inner side of life” found new schools with cyclical regularity. In doing this they start from the principle of “the right time, the right place, and the right people”, complemented by the principles of the right material (the study, the exercises, and the work they put before their disciples), the right direction (possible after the explanations given by the teachers of how the material is to be understood), and the right purpose (the intention and goal of the activity of the school, which are connected with the particular hierarchic ray group, one of the seven, under which it sorts).

6.5 The Way is the Way of Initiations

¹The way of initiations is essentially the way of insights, or of revelations. The inexperienced neophyte is constantly receiving revelations and recording what he regards as most unusual intuitions. What is really happening is that he is becoming aware of causal (47:3) knowledge. To the initiate, however, the intuition means essential (46:4-7) knowledge of the plan of the planetary government and the working out of this plan both from the short range and the long range angle. The insight which is afforded at initiation is given to the causal consciousness, is recorded by the highest mentality (47:4), and is later, sometimes much later, transferred to the brain.

²Initiation is not primarily about the union of the first self with the second self, or, more correctly, the subordination of the first self to the second self, for the disciple has to accomplish this largely by his own work. On the contrary, initiation is about the gradual integration of the incipient third self with the first self and the second self, the latter two being viewed as a unity. Just as the consciousness aspect dominates in the second self, so the will aspect holds sway in the third self. Just as to the disciple in the beginning of the way of initiation the consciousness aspect appears to be the most important one, so the will aspect appears to be the important one to the initiate: the will as a life of self-sacrifice, insight into the plan and service according to the plan.

6.6 The Initiatic Way and the Mystic Way

¹The general public cannot distinguish between esoterics and mysticism. Neither are the learned able to do this, as they gather what they believe they know of the subject from books rather than they listen to people who have a personal experience of either the esoteric or the mystic way. Also those who the most eagerly deny the reality of the things of which esoterics speaks, that is: the religious exoterists, refuse to see that there is anything

”supersensuous” beyond their own sphere. Esotericians certainly must take part of the blame for this confusion to the extent that they have not clarified the big and essential differences that separate esoterics and mysticism. Thus it is quite erroneous to say that “the esoterician is a practical mystic”. It is certainly not enough for the mystic merely to be more active in the physical world to wander the esoteric way all of a sudden.

²The esoteric way is the way of initiations, which the mystic way is not. The esoteric way is the initiatic way, and this about says it all. The esoterician prepares for initiation, submits to the discipline, the rules necessary for this. This implies a methodical process, whereas mysticism lacks a method.

³Mysticism is passive, whereas the way of initiations is active. This means that in mysticism, the individual limits himself to merely receiving whatever occurs to him and as it occurs to him, having himself no say in the matter. And herein lies the principal danger in being “open” to all influences whatever their source. Moreover, the mystic seldom possesses the doctrinal, theoretical preparation that would enable him to exercise a qualitative discrimination regarding these influences. On the way of initiations, however, the individual himself has the initiative in that realization which he will pursue methodically and under a rigorous and unrelenting control and which normally will carry him beyond the limits of mere individual and human possibilities. This is necessarily the starting point of all aspiration to realization on the initiatic way. In contrast, the mystic way is confined to what is individual and human. The mystic can later leave mysticism, become an esoterician and an initiate, but the esoterician cannot revert to mysticism.

⁴Those wandering the esoteric way are divided into three classes or degrees: aspirants, disciples, and initiates. This division, too, demonstrates that esoterics is not mysticism, because it also indicates how individuals are able to work at the higher mental and the causal – kinds of consciousness which the mystic does not strive to acquire. Generally, aspirants are to be found in the lower mental (47:6), but strive to activate the higher mental (47:5, later 4) more and more. Disciples must have already activated this higher mentality and nowadays endeavour to activate the causal (47:3, later 47:2). By initiates are meant those who have passed the third initiation and thus are causally self-conscious (initiates of the lowest two degrees are classed among disciples).

⁵The so-called stage of the mystic begins on the higher levels of 48:3, when attraction has grown so strong that “reason” (47:6,7) is no more able to wield any control.

⁶To the mystic, the art of living is the essential thing. Others, more

mentally inclined, want above all knowledge of reality, so that, knowing the real meaning of existence, they can decide what to think, to say, and to do.

⁷This is the root of the old controversy between the mystic (emotionalist) and the esoterician (mentalist). The mystic thinks that man's reason cannot explain existence, which, it is true, it cannot. The esoterician knows this, but then is not content with the ability of human reason to ascertain superphysical facts, but seeks that higher reason which can achieve a contact with the world of Platonic ideas, the causal world. Until he has acquired that higher reason, he will accept no other superphysical facts than those received from the planetary hierarchy. Proof that alleged facts really are facts he gets from their having their given places in the Pythagorean hylozoic mental system, and their being the simplest and most general explanations of previously inexplicable realities.

⁸The mystic can, though in rare cases, achieve a momentary contact with the essential world (46) and have a foretaste of its bliss, but he cannot apprehend anything in that world, since he lacks the intuition of the causal consciousness, which is a prerequisite.

⁹The mystic, having not activated consciousness in the third mental molecular kind (47:5) but having succeeded in activating consciousness in the highest two emotional molecular kinds (48:2,3), is incapable of mentally controlling his emotional imagination, and so will drown in the ocean of consciousness.

¹⁰The mystic is filled with peace and serene harmony, being free from fear, anxiety, worries and concerns. He thinks that if man is unhappy, it just demonstrates that he excludes himself from unity.

¹¹To the individual caught by the attractions of mysticism, self-realization appears simple, the ideal within his reach, the goal easily attained. However, the periods of ecstasy are followed by others, in which depressions set in with feelings of impotence before recognized tasks, problems appear insoluble, things strived for seem out of reach. Add to this the fact that bad sowing, which the individual could not have reaped on lower levels without harm to himself, must now be reaped.

¹²The esoterician, who wanders the initiatic way, has the stage of the mystic behind him, not before him. He "recognizes himself" in the mystic and quite understands mysticism, which implies that he acknowledges its priceless values but also its inevitable limitation. Everything valuable in mysticism – the experience of unity, the devotion to god, the one-pointed aspiration – exists in esoterics as well, and there it has been put into its right perspective and has been substantiated with rational ideas and knowledge of reality.

6.7 *The First, Preparatory Stage of the Way*

¹According to Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras*, the first, preparatory stage of the way (*kriyā yoga*) is devoted to activities of three kinds: exercises in self-discipline, self-study of recommended scriptures, and devotion to god. This is directly applicable to esoteric students today, just as everything else in Patañjali (the planetary hierarchy considers that the *Yoga Sūtras* should be used as a manual of consciousness development for at least eight thousand years more). Constant exercise in self-discipline and intensive study of the extant esoteric literature are self-evident things that need no further explanation. The student's devotion to god is directed at first at Augoeides, who is always the first teacher. The second self is the "god" of the first self, and Augoeides is a second self. As the esoterician comes increasingly under the influence of the second self, subsequently to become himself increasingly a second self, he will need a third self at whom to direct his devotion to god. What is the most natural for the hylozoician, the modern Pythagorean, is of course to direct this devotion at Pythagoras, who is nowadays a member of the sixth natural kingdom, or the first divine kingdom, a third self, thus a divine being. He is right now preparing to become a 43-self and to take over the management of the entire planetary hierarchy, when Christos–Maitreya leaves our planet to continue his interstellar consciousness expansion.

6.8 *Discipleship*

¹The transition to the fifth kingdom implies that the monad, hitherto centred in the first triad, moves to the second triad. This process is effected during a series of incarnations, in which the monad centres into one after the other of the three units of the second triad: as a causal self in the mental atom (47:1), as an essential self in 46:1, and as a superessential self in 45:4 (nowadays in 45:1 of the third triad). The number of incarnations required for this depends on the individual's conscious purpose, stamina, and will to unity.

²Originally the transition implied that the monad in the first triad mental molecule (47:4) passed, via the inmost centre of the causal envelope, to the second triad mental atom (47:1), in the process becoming a second self after having been a first self. The planetary hierarchy considers that achieving this without the guidance of a teacher from the hierarchy is not impossible in theory, but has no precedent. The pertaining processes for the activation of higher consciousness and will require such a methodical approach that the individual attempting this without the guidance of a competent teacher cannot avoid making serious mistakes with catastrophic

consequences. Thus without the help of the planetary hierarchy, no man can become a second self.

³Therefore, in order to know and to be able to do, a man must first become a disciple of the planetary hierarchy: that is the only way. The theoretical knowledge we have received from the hierarchy is the necessary basis for a correct world view and life view. In order to realize it practically, however, immensely more is required: to acquire the consciousness of the second self, to become a second self. The method of the definitive activation of the second self's consciousness is always worked out individually by the esoteric teacher. The teacher, proceeding as assigned by the planetary hierarchy, supplies both the method and the energies that are necessary to the ascension.

⁴The minimum requirement for acceptance is that the individual, after his incarnation as a saint (in which he acquired consciousness in the highest emotional molecular kind, 48:2), has acquired perspective consciousness (47:5) and devotes his life to the service of mankind and of evolution. He has seen through the illusions of power, glory, and wealth, has seen that man is unable to solve the problems of reality (as the philosophers believe they can), has seen that science is enormously limited also in physical respect (since it knows nothing about the etheric envelope and its four molecular kinds). By his service to others than himself he shows that he possesses the conditions of acquiring the consciousness of community, essential consciousness (46), and entering into group consciousness.

⁵The requirements for discipleship are constantly tightened up according as the human élite (individuals at the stage of humanity) increase in numbers and also acquire esoteric knowledge and thereby an enormously widened understanding of life.

⁶One result of the more stringent requirements for discipleship and advancement within the planetary hierarchy is that it is not so much a matter of becoming a causal self, an essential self (46), a superessential self (45), as of becoming a second self and then a third self. The object is to conquer all three kinds of consciousness in the second triad and third triad. Even if for the time being this must be done in stages, it is reckoned that these follow one another so closely that all three consciousnesses are living realities from the beginning, that there are "percentages" of all three even at the first step. It is obvious that this increases the demands on the individual as well as on his Augoeides and Protogonos, and the teachers of the planetary hierarchy.

⁷The teacher does not promise his disciples either quick results or the development of remarkable powers. The results achieved by disciples entirely depend on themselves: their patience, their exactness in details, the

discipline they are prepared to impose on themselves and their self-forgetfulness. The disciples are urged to leave results out of account and to work without identification and fixation (what was formerly called “attachment”), for they cannot know exactly what goals their teacher has made for them. The disciples are urged also to refrain from that constant self-analysis which is such a characteristic trait of introverted, mystically inclined Westerners.

6.9 Discipleship is Group Life

¹Before 1920 discipleship was a personal affair between a teacher in the fifth natural kingdom and a select individual in the fourth kingdom. After 1920 it is a relation between a 45-self and a group of individuals. Thus the condition of discipleship is group community. Everybody in the group is in telepathic rapport with all the others. The purpose of the group is not primarily consciousness development, which rather is an automatic procedure, but some sort of concerted work for mankind.

²Formerly, the transition from the fourth to the fifth natural kingdom was an individual process. One after another had reached perspective consciousness (47:5), so that he could be taught how to acquire causal consciousness (47:3). However, nowadays (from 1925 on) so many clans at the stage of humanity incarnate that individual treatment is no more possible. Therefore, the requirements for discipleship have been tightened up, so that the transition of the individuals to the essential world (46) is done in groups. This means that they must jointly contribute to the forming of an essential group-soul in the essential world. This also has the advantage that they complement the emotional, mental, and causal qualities of one another, so that the individuals get a stability that none of them is able to acquire by himself. Thanks to this group-soul they can more easily join the essential collective. Thus the disciples must, in the physical world already, find “their group”, in which criticism is non-existent, all help each other to develop, all feel that they are “one soul” (precisely what essential “love” means). This also implies a collective consciousness of the group in which everybody knows what the others think and feel.

6.10 The Group

¹The planetary hierarchy achieves its effects in the physical world through the power of its unified, conscious thinking. This is a lesson for us, too, if we want to be disciples of the planetary hierarchy. A consciously thinking, co-operating group achieves many times more than the members composing it would do individually.

²Therefore, the first goal is to weld together the group and unify it, so

that each member of it can work in close mental union and co-operation with all the others. Group unity is the first effort of every esoteric group as it is in the planetary hierarchy itself.

³It is the intention that the different groups shall in time learn how to cooperate in the great departmental group (ray group) to which they all belong. The planetary hierarchy is made up of seven such great groups.

⁴The aim of the group is to function as a unity in such a way that nothing in it can arouse such purely human qualities as separatism, personal isolation, and selfish seeking. Unselfish people are not very rare. Unselfish groups are very rare.

⁵Four faculties mainly characterize the group work to be done and also should distinguish the disciples to be selected for training: receptivity to impressions of higher kinds, impersonality, incipient causal consciousness, and mental polarization. In this connection there is no mention of idealistic aspiration, unselfishness, and will to serve. This is not because the latter faculties are supposed to be unessential but, on the contrary, because they are of fundamental importance, so that they must exist in all esotericians as self-evident pre-conditions.

6.11 Integration

¹In esoterics there is mention of “integration”, which has reference to several different kinds of processes. Common to them all is that the individual by means of a higher envelope learns how to control all the lower ones. We may speak of the integration of the first self, the causal self, the essential self (46-self), etc.

²The integration of the first self is that process in which the individual learns how to control consciousness and energy in his emotional and physical envelopes. To do this you must be a mental self. It is particularly important to control the emotional envelope. In doing so it is not a matter of killing out emotions or refusing them attention. It is required to be able to control these energies and to use them in the right way. In the integrated first self, there is a direct connection between mental consciousness and the brain. The individual cannot acquire second self consciousness until he has become an integrated first self.

³The integration of the causal self is that process in which the causal envelope penetrates the envelopes of incarnation more and more until the individual has become a causal self. In the causal self, there is a direct connection between causal-mental consciousness and the brain.

⁴The integration of the essential self is done partially in the corresponding manner. In the essential self, there is an unbroken connection between the second triad and the brain.

6.12 *Some Conditions of Discipleship*

¹Even that aspirant, who has reached so far that he cannot for any great length of time lay aside his decision purposefully to strive for discipleship, often lacks that courage which is one of the most important conditions of success.

²He must have courage to decide to tread the way, to break with his past and everything which that implies in terms of personal interests, habits, people's altered attitudes, to sacrifice it all for the one essential thing. Even if the disciple would stand alone, he has got no time to feel this, for he has got no time to think of himself.

³Discipleship is a personal relation to the planetary hierarchy and to an esoteric group. You keep silent about personal relations. You never testify to yourself. In addition you always keep silent about your intentions, about your plans. To betray plans is in all too many cases sufficient to thwart them. That is a thing which only "initiates" understand. You do not betray confidences, unless you are a traitor, everybody's secret enemy. Anyone who has not learnt the art of keeping silent, of judging what may, can, or must be said, is still far from discipleship. You quite simply never answer questions concerning your own and other people's personal relations. These are no concern of others. You could fill entire libraries with descriptions of all the evil that gossip has caused.

⁴"Watchful silence" means much more than what superficial thinking imagines. It means that the disciple lets the automatic "babble" of the envelopes of incarnation fall silent and in the stillness so obtained pays concentrated attention to subtler, fainter impressions, which otherwise (usually) pass him by, for example allusions and unexpressed suggestions from the teacher, the silence and not-doing of senior disciples.

⁵If you are to be accepted as a disciple you must long before that have shown your willingness to serve mankind. Every accepted disciple thus has been a server of life during many incarnations. It is only when discipleship proves to be the factor that enables the individual to serve even better that the question comes up to the supervising authorities. If also the qualities and abilities required for a more rapid consciousness development are there, then the individual will undergo particular tests that show his stability.

⁶The disciple is supposed to be familiar with the esoteric world view (the matter aspect of existence), so that he can be wholly concentrated on the consciousness aspect of existence.

⁷In order to become a causal self you must have acquired knowledge of, and have learnt to control, the matters and energies of the physical,

emotional, and mental worlds. It should not be difficult to see that at mankind's present stage of development, or rather stage of ignorance, some incarnations' energetic work under the guidance of an experienced teacher is required even for mental selves. It is not worthwhile to embark upon the venture on your own. The wisest thing a man can do is to become a willing tool of the individuals of the fifth kingdom by applying, to the measure of his ability, the laws of life, particularly the laws of freedom, unity, self, and activation.

⁸The condition is an unbounded confidence in the teacher; trust in the fact that he knows and is able and does what he may without being asked. Then it all depends on the disciple himself. Extremely few disciples use all their possibilities and opportunities, and the number of incarnations depends on this.

⁹That obedience which the teacher must exact from his disciple is no violation of his free-will. Obedience means that the disciple carefully follows the instructions he receives in order to profit by the necessary methods for acquisition of higher kinds of consciousness. Anyone who does not want to obey will learn nothing and cannot be helped by the teacher.

6.13 Right Attitude

¹Formerly, when all esoteric teaching was given exclusively in secret schools and was differentiated in degrees the various doctrinal contents of which were carefully separated, there was no risk that disciples would prematurely be cognizant of teachings for which they were not yet ripe. In our times, when esoterics has been partially publicized, there is a great risk that readers of this literature believe that everything said is for everybody and for themselves, that they must practise things for which they are not ready by far, for example try to liberate themselves from such things as they need for their self-realization on the levels where they are. That principal rule can be given that no one should seek liberation from something that he perceives as a real need, but only when he realizes it to be a burden of which he willingly rids himself. Liberation, renunciation, is not a good thing in itself. Too early renunciation may be a serious mistake.

²Before there is any prospect for the individual to embark with success on his process of liberation, he must have seen through many illusions and realized their uselessness in life or hostility to life (their lack of "life-value", as the philosophers would call it). Still mankind has not seen the deceitfulness of its emotional illusions and mental fictions. Wealth (belongings), glory (fame), and power with their concomitant elixir of life, hatred, are the incentives of mankind. The individual must have acquired sufficient

experience of life (attained that level) to see that human life, at the present developmental stage of mankind, is not anything to be desired. He must have seen human ignorance of life and his own inability, must be able “to sell all that he has and buy the pearl of great price” (the pearl of the wisdom of life). He must have acquired that instinct of life (the result of the experience of thousands of incarnations), which tells him that “this” cannot be the meaning and goal of life. He will then become a seeker and remain one until he finally finds the “right way”.

³According to the planetary hierarchy, the serving attitude to life is the easiest, safest, quickest way to the fifth natural kingdom. All kingdoms capable of it have as their foremost task of life serving those at lower stages of development, so that they will be able to reach higher stages. Without such help there would be no evolution, or evolution would take tremendously longer time. “He who gives shall receive.” Those who serve mankind unselfishly are given more and more opportunities to do so. Service itself develops all requisite qualities and abilities, liberates from emotional illusions and mental fictions.

⁴A remark by Pythagoras is of paramount importance for all who purposely strive to reach the next higher kingdom: “He who is on the way exists not for himself, but for others.”

6.14 Hindrances on the Way

¹The most serious hindrances to discipleship are bad sowing not yet reaped and insufficient percentages of necessary qualities, which can be numerous. How many incarnations the aspirant will need in order to become accepted as a disciple is impossible to say. And if the disciple will reach his goal within twelve to seven incarnations, then he has worked well indeed. A comfort for the disciple, however, is that his incarnations can be taken in rapid succession: seven incarnations within seven hundred years.

²Unless the disciple acts upon the proffered instruction and has confidence in the teacher’s intention, all that the teacher may say or do is of small usefulness. It then serves only to increase responsibility, great already, with its attendant liabilities: the knowledge and the spiritual energy (45:4–47:3) wield a pressure on the disciple and become dangers if not used right.

³Their constant looking for results and for phenomena has hindered many would-be disciples in their wandering on the way.

6.15 *The Teaching Does Not Live Unused*

¹There are such people as study esoterics but refrain from attempts at wandering the way. This is a misunderstanding, because esoterics can never be only a theory, but must always be practice as well. Just as it is impossible to wander the way without studying esoterics, so it is impossible to study esoterics without simultaneously wandering the way. It is quite another thing, however, that the intensity of both theoretical study and practice differs between individuals. From of old three categories are distinguished: the “soft”, the “average”, and the “excessive”.

²The erroneous view that you can pursue esoterics as a theory only, not bothering about applying the teaching in life, is a typical modern phenomenon, because some such idea could never have arisen in the times when esoterics was restricted to the initiates of the knowledge orders. Nowadays, however, when esoterics has been publicized and is “freely accessible to all”, it must be expected that immature people embark on this study. Because maturity manifests itself in the preparedness to apply in practice what one has learnt.

³In fact, the esoteric theory, hylozoics, is a “non-detachable” part of the esoteric way, and even the theoretical study is subject to laws and rules precisely like the wandering of the way in other respects. And these laws and rules cannot be transgressed with impunity.

⁴Therefore, those who are eager to spread information about esoterics, should be on their guard against people who are attracted to esoterics as a theoretical study only, out of curiosity, out of fascination with hidden powers, out of a desire to obtain methods of improving their lives in a material and egoistic sense, but who do not demonstrate any great interest in applying the knowledge in unselfish work and service.

⁵There are also such people as study esoterics intensively and somehow in the right spirit, but who nevertheless do not make any real efforts to realize the teaching, because, as they say, they “do not feel worthy or ready” to call themselves aspirants. This is at best unwarranted and unnecessary humility, but usually just the pretext of laziness and listlessness to be spared unpleasant exertions.

7 THE WANDERERS

7.1 Introduction

¹By the term “wanderer” are meant all those who intentionally progress on the way to the fifth natural kingdom. They are all united by their knowledge of the way, their awareness of the goal, their work for self-realization, their service to their fellow men, and their realization of the significance of the group and of the laws governing it. It is true that this knowledge and awareness, this work and service, and this realization are of very different quality in the individuals according to the distance they have travelled on the way. What they all need, however, is knowledge of what is required of them for their next stage, what hindrances they have to overcome within themselves. In the following, a material is presented to all those who know that they are such wanderers and want to move ahead – no matter the cost.

²The term “wanderer” also denotes those monads who did not causalize on Earth, but who have arrived from other planets. Often these individuals possess a latent understanding of esoteric truths, having learnt them on other planets, where esoteric schools are not forced to lead such obscure lives as they do on Earth, but on the contrary have a central function in human societies and so wield a strong influence on people. These wanderers usually have a strong sense of alienation when faced with all the perverseness there is in human life on this our globe. They have an instinctive certainty telling them that the knowledge must exist somewhere, and so they seek it until they find it.

7.2 Wrong Attitudes to the Study

¹The disciple has the task, not of scaling down the knowledge to his level, but of raising his own level, so that he is able to receive the knowledge with the import the teacher afforded it. In this connection recall Goethe’s definition of culture (or education, in German: *Bildung*): “The capacity to receive something in the spirit in which it was said.”

²Three ways or kinds of learning:

³The way of the slave: He who memorizes a material and may follow it slavishly. He may regard himself as a student or even as a scholar.

⁴The way of the scholar: He accumulates material according to his own desire and may subject it to criticism in the manner in which he has been suggested by authorities to believe to be right.

⁵The way of the wise man: He is able to extract from the material the

real facts it contains. He derives no pleasure from memorizing or from praise for his good memory. He studies only what is of importance for him and his task, not what others have drilled him to consider important. In so doing he finds material of the most valuable content, which comes from the truth and guides him back to it.

⁶Much of what the teacher says the disciple deems obvious, “so obvious that it need not even be said”. Here the disciple is in error. What the teacher says must be obvious to him at the moment it is being said or soon afterwards. If not, he has received the teaching too early, and so it remains for him to have that experience in the light of which what was said will be obvious. There are two truths that go unheeded by the disciple in this process. First: it was not obvious to him before the teacher said it, and thus there is a big difference between before and after. Second: the disciple is not a unitary being (if he were, he would not need discipleship); he “is not one, but many”; and the personality that understands the teaching to be right is soon enough changed for other personalities that do not. In particular, when he is in the world outside the school, he “is someone else”, one who in his doing and talking to other people shows that he has forgotten what he learnt. The teacher’s teaching does not aim at making him understand and see only in the teaching situation, where the disciple is in his work personality, but in all situations and above all in “ordinary reality”.

⁷Generally, the efforts esoteric students make to understand the teaching are too weak. That being the case, they deny themselves a deeper, more comprehensive understanding. The weakness of effort shows in the fact that they ask too little, ask without thinking, ask the wrong questions, or formulate their questions in a vague, unclear manner. When questions are not formulated clearly, the teacher has to extract out of the student, step by step, what he is actually getting at. Students need to put more effort in asking more and asking better. Intellectual laziness never was a path to knowledge and understanding.

⁸When something in the teaching strikes you as being correct, you need not think much about it. Most people concentrate on whatever they agree with, and that is why they do not learn as much as they otherwise would. However, when something in the teaching strikes us as being strange or even unacceptable, we should pay especial attention to it, reflect upon it with great care. Because it almost always means that a true lesson has struck against some prejudice of ours, which tries to beat it back and so keep us in our self-made prison of thought.

⁹In this connection, prejudice keeps its original meaning of “judgements passed before examination”. Nowadays, to many people the word “prejudice” has degenerated into meaning “view which I or my group do not

like”. This is true in particular of so-called cultural radicals.

¹⁰Pupil: “Why am I still confused, although I have studied for so long?”
Teacher: “Because you do not seek intellectual clarity and order.” Pupil:
“But that is precisely what I am doing!” Teacher: “No. Intellectual clarity
and order is the inevitable result, if studies are pursued in the proper
manner.” You have to study the knowledge according to its own principles,
just like in practical life you have to wander the way as it lies there. If you
study in a selective manner, picking out whatever fascinates you in a
shallow way, skipping the ‘boring stuff’, the result must be confusion. If
you then persist in doing so, confusion turns into a habit and finally your
second nature. The condition actually resembles that of certain chronically
ill people who have become so used to their illness, so adapted themselves
to it, that they really do not want to be well.”

¹¹Attraction to esoteric study may be a good thing as a motive power, but
is insufficient in itself. Many people believe that their interest or desire is
preparation enough. They hear about a teaching, and what they hear attracts
them. They assume that they must contact this teaching at once. What they
assume here is that they can learn at once, and in the manner and in the
order they decide themselves.

¹²To perceive one’s own nothingness is valuable. To revel in emotions of
one’s own insignificance, uselessness, etc., is a cheap but useless form of
self-gratification.

¹³All wishes and desires do not go against the will to learn, but some do.

¹⁴People want continuity, what they call “order”, that is to say, things
they recognize. However, this desire easily stifles the will to learn.

¹⁵Discipleship cannot be a remedy for loneliness.

7.3 *Success in Study*

¹Question: Is there any rule-of-thumb way of telling whether oneself or
another person is serious in his esoteric study and can be successful in the
esoteric way?

²Answer: Yes, there is. Serious people are prepared to start at the
beginning and take a step at a time, not skipping the “elementary stuff” to
pounce on the “advanced things” at once.

³The factor most of all favouring this undesirable tendency is vanity.
That is why most systems stress humility. It is not a virtue as much as it is a
quality the disciple needs in order to be able to learn.

⁴Progress in study comes through capacity to learn, and is irresistible.
Nothing can stand as an obstacle between you and the knowledge, if you
are ripe for it. This also means that anything, even the least essential thing,
can stand as an obstacle between you and the knowledge, if you are not

ripe for it.

⁵Therefore, the teacher makes himself or the knowledge – or both – difficult of access in various ways. In so doing he protects the unworthy and the unripe from contacting a knowledge which could only harm them. The worthy and the ripe, on the other hand, cannot under any circumstances be repelled but temporarily. Therefore, half-awake junior disciples do the teacher and the teaching a disservice by trying to attract the unripe to the teaching or to keep the unwilling by smoothing over unsympathetic aspects of the teacher or teaching, “sugar-coating the bitter pills”, etc.

7.4 The Disciple's Attitude to the Teacher

¹What the student takes as attractive or even the teacher makes appear attractive perhaps is not at all intended to be so. What attracts the student to the teaching or the teacher may be such things as the teacher has put there as an indicator by which he tests the suitability or unsuitability of the disciples.

²To those who tend to get irritated about traits of the teacher's personality, mode of presentation, style, etc., it may be pointed out that it is the task of the teacher to be at the service of those who are able to learn, not to be a nice or pleasant person to those who primarily seek what is nice and pleasant.

7.5 Criticism

¹Enduring the criticism of others may be part of doing good to them. Think: “Let them have their criticism, what concern is it of mine?” How about improving the quality of criticism, so that it can be more useful? Most so-called criticism is so bad that even undesirable things are not criticised efficiently.

²“The evil of another person can be averted; there is no escape from one's own.”

³According to an old observation, criticism has to go through three stages. The first stage: It is impossible, fraud, delusion, etc. The second stage: It is possible, true, and right, but it is unimportant. The third stage: It is important, but we knew this all the time. Then criticism can stop.

7.6 Criticism of Teachers

¹Esoteric teachers, appearing in public, are always criticised, blamed, accused of the most terrible things of which contemporary people can conceive, trumpeted as the worst among fools and miscreants. So it has always been, and so it will remain until a leading portion of mankind has

reached the higher mental stage.

²Some disciples are very upset about such criticism, try to defend the teacher and counter the criticism. This is not only a waste of energy and time, but also quite erroneous action. The teacher does not in the least concern himself with those who from injudicious zeal try to defend him before the moralists. On the contrary, it may happen that he pulls his weight, “putting some more wood on the fire”. H.P. Blavatsky was a teacher of that category. Criticism from without is a tool, which such a teacher will use in his work with people. If he is a real teacher, he makes the most of any situation, using it to teach by it. If some of his disciples flee like scared rabbits when criticism is raging, returning crestfallen when it is dead calm again, then they have been put to the test without their knowing it, and thanks to this the teacher knows more about them than he knew before. Eruptions of public criticism against the teacher are like the storms in early autumn. They shake the apple-tree, so that the rotten fruit falls to the ground, while the fresh and good fruit remains in the tree.

³Criticism from without never does any harm. Criticism from within, from a disciple, always harms, and the disciple himself most of all. It may be useful only in so far as it demonstrates the disciple’s immaturity, bad judgement, and general lack of civility. Therefore the teacher can use such a disciple as a warning example for some time, before he dismisses him from the teaching.

7.7 The Disciple Needs to Study Himself

¹Knowledge consists in the intended relation between the teacher’s consciousness and the disciples’ consciousness. Where, then, lies the fault, if the disciples do not learn? Does it lie with the teacher, the knowledge, or the disciples?

²It appears that the disciple needs to study not only the teaching, but also himself. He needs to see through what is hindering him from learning, discover which changes of his attitudes he needs to make to help himself to learn.

7.8 Some Themes for the Study of Oneself

¹Here follow twenty themes for the study of oneself.

²1. Any kind of study may start with the student’s demand for attention. However the study starts, it must not continue in that manner.

³2. Study the assumptions behind your actions. Then study the assumptions behind your assumptions.

⁴3. “Why did I do that?” may be a good question to ask. But you could also ask the question, and sometimes it is even more important: “How

otherwise could I have done it?"

⁵⁴ You have come a long way, but you do not know how long. You have a long way to go, but you do not know how long.

⁶⁵ Compared to some, you have advanced. Compared to others, you have not progressed at all. Neither is truer than the other.

⁷⁶ If your desire for "good" is based on greed, it is not good, but greed.

⁸⁷ Exercise power by means of kindness, and you may be causing more damage than you could by strictness. Neither is right in itself.

⁹⁸ Anyone who knows must discharge a function. Anyone who does not, cannot arrogate one to himself; he can only try to do so.

¹⁰⁹ Do not try to be humble; learn humility.

¹¹¹⁰ Assume that you are part-hypocrite and part heedless, and you will not be far wrong.

¹²¹¹ To copy a virtue in another is more copying than it is virtue. Try to learn what that virtue is based upon.

¹³¹² No practice exists in isolation.

¹⁴¹³ If you seek a teacher, try to become a real student. If you want to be a student, try to find a real teacher.

¹⁵¹⁴ The more often you do a thing, the more likely you are to do it again. There is no certainty that you will gain anything else from repetition than a likelihood of further repetition.

¹⁶¹⁵ At first, you are not worthy of the insignia and external marks of the disciple. Later you do not need them. Finally you may need them for the sake of others.

¹⁷¹⁶ If you cannot laugh frequently and genuinely, you have no "soul".

¹⁸¹⁷ When a belief becomes more than an instrument, you are lost. You remain lost until you learn what "belief" is really for.

¹⁹¹⁸ When a teacher or senior disciple shows interest in your material welfare, you may be pleased. But it is often because you are not ready for any other help than this.

²⁰¹⁹ When someone asks for you to help in doing something, you perhaps imagine that it is because he cannot do it without your aid. Perhaps he is a disciple who wants to help you by connecting you with this work.

²¹²⁰ If you are lazy, count yourself lucky if someone points this out, giving you a chance to improve. Laziness is always your own fault. It is the sign that a man has persevered in uselessness for too long.

²²The above points 1–20 are in fact exercises in outwitting the false personality, which thrives on giving itself small rewards.

²³The false personality says: "Give me what I desire!" The true essence says: "Give me what I need!"

²⁴The false personality places itself between the study and the in-

dividual's essence whose growth is the true purpose of the study.

7.9 The Teacher is Needed – There is no Practice without a Teacher

¹Some higher faculties and modes of perception may certainly ripen in a person who works alone, but the individual as a harmonious whole cannot ripen alone, because the wanderer does not know in which direction he is to walk. If he starts wandering in this state of ignorance, he cannot know where he is headed. Every step he takes may remove him further from the goal. In the beginning, too, he inevitably is at the mercy of his own weaknesses. Should he succeed in developing certain powers, those weaknesses are intensified as well. In consequence of this, he grows weaker, not stronger. This is true of everyone. The difference, where an accepted disciple is concerned, is that the teacher has undertaken to protect the disciple from certain aspects of the latter's own weakness.

²In old esoteric writings, non-transformed man is likened to an animal possessing faculties it cannot yet use right. "The more animal" a man is, the less he understands the role of the teacher. The teacher may appear to him as a hunter who wants to force him into a cage. He makes mechanical, instinctive resistance to the teacher's attempts at imparting knowledge to him.

³You are attracted to a certain teacher principally because of an intuitive perception of spiritual kinship, a perception that generally is not fully conscious. The esoterically ignorant may put forward their explanations invoking so-called rational factors, but they are of secondary importance.

7.10 Tasks of the Teacher

¹Understanding goes from universals to particulars, from the greater to the lesser, from the higher to the lower, from the whole to its parts. The corresponding is true of the teacher's ability to teach and guide. He is able to, since only the one who has walked the way in its full length can guide another one on it. He alone can survey it all, see it from the beginning to the end and from the end to the beginning.

²The teacher has the task of opening up the consciousness of the disciple, so that the latter can be receptive to higher impressions. To become receptive the disciple must see how much of his ordinary thinking is clogged with simplistic patterns and erroneous assumptions. Until he has had these insights, he cannot really understand.

³The teacher has the task of being himself, of radiating his being. Therefore, there is in the teacher no division into a public and a private personality. Such a person as shows one face in the classroom and another face at home cannot be an esoteric teacher. This oneness rules his inner being. His external behaviour may change, but his inner personality is

unitary.

⁴The teacher teaches with all his being. To make the disciple see that he has a fault that is hindering him, the teacher may behave as though he had this fault himself. In so doing he applies the old psychological insight that it is easier to see the faults of other people than those of oneself.

⁵Of particular importance is that part of the teacher's teaching which has the function of setting the disciple free from such beliefs as are part and parcel of his cultural background, the creeds and lies that any human society has established and given its official sanction. Truth cannot be built in a consciousness that in any essential respect is dominated by beliefs and lies. It sometimes may happen, when the teacher tries to set him free from such a belief, that the disciples gets into such a state of shock that he will be unfit for study for a certain time. But that only means that this was a necessary experience for the disciple.

⁶The teacher strives to supply his disciples with a rich and diversified material, which in all its parts is designed for one single purpose: to develop consciousness. One part of this material appears constructive. Another part seems destructive, but that is a superficial view. It would be better to say that it is reconstructive, since the old must be pulled down before the new can be built. Everything in due proportion is a secret skill of the teacher.

⁷Therefore, the teacher performs many tasks, or functions. Being a guide, he leads the way, but the disciple must walk it himself. Being a philosopher, he loves wisdom, which is what the word "philosophy" originally means. However, this love of his means action, not revelling in egoistic emotions. Emancipated from sentimentality, love rather manifests itself as will, not as emotion. It is unifying energy without reference to one's self.

⁸The teacher is the necessary link between the disciple and the goal. He embodies and symbolizes both the work itself, of which he is a product, and the continuity of the system, the tradition, or the chain of teachers. Just as the officer for all practical purposes symbolizes to the private soldier the government and its aims, so the teacher symbolizes the entire planetary hierarchy.

⁹The old saw, "the craftsman is hidden in his workshop", means that the teacher is one with the work.

¹⁰The teacher has the task of provoking experiences that enable the disciple to receive higher impressions, higher knowledge. His task is not only that of conveying information.

¹¹The teacher has the task of communicating truth and reality. He has to reduce, not increase, the effect of his own personality, in favour of content. The teacher has not the task of being a psychotherapist. But he is there to

give protection and guidance.

¹²The teacher is kind to some people seeking him and strict to others. Those who are the objects of his kindness feel flattered and deem themselves special elects. They should not, however. The real state of affairs is the opposite and is connected with what the teacher can give. To people who cannot learn the teacher can give his kindness only. People who can learn, however, must sometimes be given a more definite, a firmer guidance, and this they may mistake for strictness.

¹³The teacher tests the suitability of a disciple by finding out whether he can set aside the fixation upon a certain technique, person, or school, and make himself open to receive a comprehensive teaching.

7.11 The Personality of the Teacher

¹The fact that ordinary man plays various social roles has become such a deeply rooted phenomenon in the present civilization that it has become generally accepted and is not looked upon as a bad thing. From the esoteric point of view, however, it is human immaturity.

²The actor who becomes one with his part cannot be an esoteric teacher. The professional man who is carried away by his official role so that he has another personality during office hours cannot be an esoteric teacher. The function of the teacher cannot be performed by anyone who is temporarily obsessed by playing a part.

³The esoteric teacher cannot be a world-renowned figure who attracts millions of followers. The degree of awakening he has attained is perceptible only to anyone who is awakened himself. Like a radio receiver man can pick up only what comes within his frequency range. The man who is fascinated and impressed by the personality of the teacher is incapable of using this impression for an expedient purpose. Man in development can only faintly descry the qualities and abilities belonging to the stage above his own. The teacher may even shut off the greater part of his radiation where the disciple is concerned, for the disciple does not need it, cannot use it. The bat is helped by a faint light only; sunlight would blind it.

⁴Thus the teacher must be a unitary person. However, the inner unity of his personality does not correspond to the notions of the spiritual ideal man held by superficial moralism. The calm, immutable personality, the reserved, awe-inspiring type who never displays agitation, cannot be a teacher. For what is static, immutable is the opposite of what is alive, and is useless in a life sense. Through exercise an individual may have reached such a condition, but in so doing has actually deprived himself of resources of expression by which he could reach other people. Then he has restricted, not enlarged, his field of activity and sphere of influence. Just as everything

else, qualities and abilities are valuable to the extent that they enable man to achieve something. Nothing is an end in itself. Impassivity can be a tool, but nothing more. And like all tools it is useful only in situations where it is expedient.

7.12 The Teacher is Independent of Moral Fictionalism

¹To demonstrate the uselessness of moralism to his pupils, the teacher may do and say things that shock the pupils, such things as they have been hypnotized to regard as morally reprehensible. In so doing the teacher wants to point out to the pupils that what shocks them is not evil in itself, but their conventional, illusory view of evil. "What upsets people are not things but views on things."

²Senior disciples may adopt similar patterns of behaviour, but then for other purposes. In this case their aim is to set themselves free from remaining illusions such as the demand for being liked, esteemed, appreciated in society. It is a necessary process to make oneself completely indifferent to, and uninfluenced by, moral illusionism, and there are many valuable qualities that can be acquired only after this has been done.

7.13 The Group

¹Question: It is rather the rule than the exception that esoteric study and work groups are not efficient, that they fail in their task, and disband rather soon. Could something be said about what the causes of this inefficiency are and, conversely, what the characteristics of efficient esoteric groups are?

²Answer: Groups are inefficient in so far as they are made up of inefficient people. Such people are not prepared for work above all; they come to the meetings ill-prepared, if they come at all; they allow social needs to gain the upper hand; demand consideration; bring false personality into the group (by "false personality" is meant everything in the individual's personality that cannot further his consciousness development, can only hinder it; negative emotions, for example). Groups that are dominated by such individuals will soon disband, since the serious-minded members leave it.

³Conversely, groups are efficient in so far as they are made up of efficient people. Such people put the work in the centre of attention; view the group activity, including the meetings, as a commitment; make constant efforts from within their being; show each other due, but not too great and misdirected, consideration; leave false personality outside.

⁴The great peril in a study group is that it decays so as to become a miniature tribe or family, a cult and an outer frame in which people seek

and find satisfactions for their social needs, such as company, acceptance, support, attention, appreciation, recognition, rewards, self-assertion, playing social games, etc. in infinitum. To counteract such tendencies, the leader of the group takes measures with the effect of reducing social features and personality factors and emphasizing the work done by the group and without which it would lack a *raison d'être*.

⁵The work of the group is in many respects an experiment: in esoteric common sense, intuition, and discrimination; in impersonality; in readiness to try and fail; in freedom to choose and reject; in observation and application of techniques.

⁶Only the voluntary merging of individuals and groups motivated by common interest and aim is of value.

⁷People can benefit from group work only to the extent to which they have overcome the four: ingratitude in good fortune, impatience in ill fortune, discontent with their lot, hesitation in serving their fellow men.

7.14 Esoteric Leaders

¹Spiritual leaders must be able to stand alone, and they are always able to do so if they have the capacity for love. They must not let themselves be hindered by those who cannot keep up with the pace. Leaders must have a goal, a sense of proportion, be able to think clearly, possess humility and the ability of adaptation, feel sympathy for everybody within the sphere of their activity, avoid pedantry.

²Leaders must count on being blamed for failures of co-workers, on being attacked by all who expect too much, by those who are unable to see and understand, by all critics of all kinds who agitate public opinion.

³The leaders in the esoteric groups are automatically those who have the best orientation in esoterics. They give no orders, not even advice, to others in the groups, and they do not assert their own opinion. Their task is to supply facts and to help those who want information in order to orient themselves better and to form their own opinion. There are no dictators in higher kingdoms. There are always those who know more and are better able, but they give no instructions, just help those who desire clarity about how things are. The planetary ruler himself governs through his supreme insight and ability to clarify his greater knowledge of the Law, and he does not resort to the language of force.

7.15 Service

¹Discipleship means hard work, pioneering and guiding work. Many aspirants fail, since they fail to do the best they can do, fail to say what should be said, fail to do the work assigned by the circumstances.

²There are two levels of human service, a lower and a higher one. On the lower level, man does what he can. On the higher level, he does what the need indicates. Then, of course, there is the level where he does what he derives pleasure from, but that is not service.

³People without insight, “idealists” for example, must constantly work at their own projects on account of two traits that true esoteric workers do not have: fixation and ignorance of the real results of their action.

⁴Fixation always prevails when the man does not use the idea as an instrument, but the idea so to speak uses the man mechanically. “We are being played with by our own toys.” There are physical, emotional, and mental toys.

⁵You are not a unitary being, you are not one. You are “many”. One part of you says, “I want to learn how to serve”, whereas another part says, “I can serve now”.

⁶“Anyone who knows must discharge a function.” Therefore, if you do not discharge a function, it means that you do not know.

⁷“He is our disciple who does our work.”

7.16 *The Aspirant*

¹It is only when the individual enters reality and frees himself from emotional illusoriness and mental fictitiousness that he gets into contact with his superconscious and is more controlled by this than by his subconscious. It takes many lives before the subconscious has lost its power and the constantly recurring choice between lower and higher ceases. When it has ceased, man is an aspirant to the fifth natural kingdom.

²One thing which the aspirant must expect is complete and total disparagement. He must be absolutely indifferent to people’s recognition, appreciation, understanding; absolutely invulnerable in all respects. He must be able to see how others forge ahead of him, not just in all human spheres but also in the planetary hierarchy, which is a greater test. He must be totally indifferent to such experiences as when others gain glory and wealth from his own work.

³The two greatest shortcomings in most aspirants are perhaps their lack of courage to dare and their psychological misjudgement of people.

⁴The most serious liability of the average aspirant is sloth or slowness.

⁵The aspirant to discipleship (as all esotericians are, even if they are unaware of it) must expect three particular strains. The first one is strain in his relation to the people about him (his family, friends, work). There is a constant tension in always keeping an unshaken balance between necessary adaptation and refusal to compromise. The second strain is in relation to Augoeides. This implies a constant attention to hints, “impressions”, also

energies, which otherwise will pass him by unobservedly. The third strain concerns the individual's circumstances and tasks as a social being, his contribution to development.

⁶Eager aspirants and junior disciples, those in particular who have the first ray ruling in some one of their envelopes, are keen on pursuing some "project" of their own within the framework of the esoteric work. Their urge to action is good in itself, but should be given a better direction. They have to learn to perceive what kind of work, what "projects" are the most needed right now from the viewpoint of the teachers and the school.

⁷It is commonly seen that energetic aspirants and junior disciples throw themselves headlong into tasks, driven more by emotional enthusiasm than by mental consideration. They should meditate on the fact that by such "unenlightened" action they have not greater prospects of success in their ventures than ordinary people. That is not the manner in which to demonstrate that they have studied and taken a special interest in the consciousness aspect or the "manifestation of cosmic intelligence in mankind".

⁸All these eager and energetic people have much to gain by carefully studying the "science of preparation", the decisive importance of intelligent preparation. Therefore: the better you have prepared a certain work, the higher the quality of consciousness, of knowledge you put to use in it, the better it will be. Furthermore: Never make decisions when in a state of doubt, uncertainty, in a lower degree of consciousness. Always make the important decisions in moments of consciousness and presence of yourself. Never make important decisions in situations forced upon you by circumstances (pushy people, etc.), but rather postpone them till later, when you will be able to take a calm overview of the situation.

⁹A faculty that the majority of aspirants should make efforts to develop is that of exact perception. Ordinary, untransformed man has not learnt how to observe things, and even less how to observe exactly. Anyone paying attention enough may experience this daily, for example by listening how people report what they have heard or read. Usually they mix their own mechanical views, conclusions, expectations into their observations, so that the result is something quite different from what was there objectively. In other words: Between the observed things and the observing consciousness there is "normally" a "fog" of collective and individual fictions and illusions. This "fog" explains why witnesses always disagree. The inability of exact, objective perception is a serious hindrance to all kinds of work, especially esoteric work, and must be overcome by anyone who wishes to be really efficient, anyone who wishes to learn how to do.

7.17 *The Disciple*

¹No disciple declares or even hints to an outsider that he is a disciple. No disciple identifies anyone else as a disciple. Disciples recognize one another without words and so need no outer declarations or signs. Those who “appoint” themselves or others disciples thus are deceivers and reveal themselves as such by their chatter to those who know.

²In the new age, discipleship is not so much about the individual disciple’s perfection as about the group’s increasing efficiency in its work.

³The faults and failings of disciples are individually not important to the teacher except in so far as they lower the vibratory capacity of the group.

⁴The teacher: “Watch with care your thoughts about each other, and kill out at once all suspicion, all criticism and seek to hold each other unwaveringly in the light of love. You have no idea of the potency of such an effort or of its power to release each other’s bonds and to lift the group to an exceedingly high place. By the pure light of love for each other, you can draw nearer to me and to the teachers on the inner side of life.”

⁵One basic quality is required: a persevering earnestness which nothing will deter.

⁶For the disciple there is no retiring from the world.

⁷A master is made through the achieving of mastery and not through obedience to any person.

⁸The disciple develops through adapting his life to the requirements of discipleship as far as is reasonably possible, not through adapting the requirements to his life. Flexibility within certain limits is always needed but that flexibility must not be set in motion by any first self inertia or mental questioning.

⁹There is always a need for humility. This involves a sense of right proportion, a balanced point of view, a dispassionate attitude, truthful recognition of merits as well as demerits. True humility is based on fact, on vision, and on time pressures.

¹⁰To become a disciple you must first of all have acquired so much experience of life that you can look upon life and people as the teacher does. This presupposes some knowledge of life.

¹¹To be able to become a disciple, the disciple must renounce his self-centredness, stop wanting to be someone, feeling important, superior, wanting to assert himself, wanting to be seen and recognized by others. Anyone who has seen the insufficiency of man, of the resources of the first self, is grateful for the opportunity of being a tool for a second self. Before you can become a second self, however, you must have been a tool for a second self, and such ones exist only in the planetary hierarchy. It is true

that all first selves become second selves some time, but that normally presupposes a process of evolution that takes millions of years. Anyone who wants to speed that process up for himself can do so only by learning from a second self how to become one himself. And that means discipleship. Above all it means that the one who sets his mind on becoming a second self must cease being a first self. This has been said before in so many different ways. This is what true religion has tried to teach people with such pitiable results. The second self is a collective self and has ceased being a separate self. What remains of the first self in the second self is the very self-identity, nothing more. Besides, the second self is nothing but a server of life. Where the monad is concerned, the entire continued evolution is about being a disciple of members of ever higher kingdoms. In that sense, all higher life is a continuous discipleship lasting until the monad has reached its final goal.

¹²That individual who has definitively dedicated his life (with his future incarnations) to the service of evolution has relations to three kinds of groups: an “inner” group with which he is in telepathic rapport and an “outer” group made up of all those whom he is able to benefit in some way or other. The third group is the planetary hierarchy. By having opportunities of being informed of the hierarchy’s plans, he discovers what contribution he may make himself. Without that knowledge, he will seldom find his place, the best one where the need and his own capacity are concerned (he is unaware of both more often than not).

¹³No one can be an initiate without constantly expanding and deepening his understanding, unceasingly gathering new knowledge that must be transmuted into practical wisdom, esoteric facts that must take their appropriate place in the life-service of the initiate, new expanses of consciousness being included with the fields of normal experience and expression, whereupon they become the ground for further expansion.

¹⁴A group of disciples being prepared for initiation has to develop and manifest four qualities and abilities in particular: 1) the overcoming of sentimentality in relations between the members of the group, such as liking some members more and other members less; 2) the annihilation of selfish desires which may hamper the work of the group in some way (such as demands for attention, rewards, recognition, etc.) – unselfish people are not rare, unselfish groups are very rare; 3) the ability to work as a hierarchy in a reduced scale through applying the principle of “unity in diversity”; 4) the ability to be silent, implying much more than the mere abstention from unnecessary talk, such as the non-expression of many unsuitable and unnecessary, mechanical personality reactions.

8 INSIGHT

8.1 Courage

¹The first thing the prospective disciple is enjoined to do is: study courage, so as to more and more put aside fear.

²Courage comes to anyone who knows the way. Fear comes from not knowing the way, from having forgotten the way, from having been lured to depart from the way.

³Our fear bears on the form alone, not on the individual, the self, which never has anything to fear. We fear only as long as we are dependent on the form, on our envelopes, on the matter aspect. When we see that the self is not its envelopes, we see that the self has nothing to fear. We fear as long as we identify ourselves with the form, think we are our envelopes. And something of this identification always remains until we have become causal selves, liberated from the first self.

⁴Slander and persecution should not be feared, but on the contrary popularity should be feared. This must be constantly repeated, for also those who should know better let themselves be influenced by the views of the masses.

⁵If you are slandered and persecuted when doing your work for the general good, for the good of mankind, for the coming world, then keep your head up! In that manner they have previously slandered and persecuted all true benefactors of mankind without a single exception.

8.2 Knowledge

¹The logic of a deeper insight often seems illogical to the simpler logic of ignorance.

²Knowledge affords insight, which is the discrimination of the sense of reality in matters that concern knowledge. Insight manifests itself in the correct prediction and the faultless technical application.

³He who has knowledge of the laws of life has true insight and understanding of life.

⁴Knowledge is connected with the factual world existing in the present, and concerns the accumulation of learning through the ages. It is closely connected with memory and the remembrance of insights once had, the conscious reacquisition of everything stored in the causal envelope during many incarnations. This is related primarily to the knowledge petals of the causal lotus and mental consciousness. Knowledge is that which brings about an effective working relation between this outermost tier of petals,

mental consciousness, and the brain. The factor that is enduring in knowledge is its power to relate the past to the present and thus produce an expedient life in the physical world.

8.3 *Certainty*

¹Is man so tortured by his uncertainty that he rather prefers mere plausible certainty? He needs to feel certainty, which is an illusion, since in fact we live in uncertainty (and most people in fear), as we cannot look into the future. Also the skeptic is certain in his skepticism.

²Esoteric students have received more than they need in order not to fall victims to the speculations of life ignorance as to world view and life view. They have received knowledge of the essential laws of life so that they should be able to solve their own problems of life. It is not the intention to give us rules of conduct for all conceivable situations of life. That would make us robots instead of conscious beings. We develop by solving the problems of life that are among the tasks of mankind to solve. Consciousness development is no process of thoughtlessness. We are to develop our reason and our power of judgement by applying the knowledge of reality we have received. Everybody has to solve his problems as best he can. This does not exclude our analysing our individual problems with a person who is more experienced in life. The crucial decision, however, is our responsibility, whether we like it or not. We have no right to blame others.

³We have received sufficient esoteric facts to get a correct vision of existence, of the meaning of life, to form a rational and expedient world view; more facts than we have any use for, shall ever be able to apply. The mania for speculation is abortive, hinders us from leading rational lives of service. Our recurrent question when faced with all manner of speculation should be “do I need this for living?”

8.4 *Wisdom*

¹Wisdom is the hallmark of the initiate, and this he possesses even if his practical knowledge of mundane details – historical, geographical, economic, and cultural – may leave much to be desired. The disciples within a teacher’s group can provide him with what human knowledge he may require. An esoteric teacher always knows where to go for knowledge. Wisdom is revealed through ideas against which very frequently much mundane learning powerfully militates. Wisdom perceives inherent capacities and capabilities to express qualities belonging to the second self (45:4–47:3).

8.5 *Understanding*

¹In the early stages of his training, the disciple is quite unable to grasp the extent of his own understanding, because the consciousness of the mental envelope knows far more than the brain is capable of recording. Later, when he has become an initiate and can identify himself with causal consciousness, this will record his insights consciously, and then far more and more deeply than mental consciousness is able to register. Therefore, the disciple is asked to refrain from trying to gauge his capacity to understand, and instead simply to ponder and reflect upon what he has been taught.

8.6 *Hindrances to Insight*

¹There are two tendencies in men's thinking, both equally ruinous: the tendency to credulity and the tendency to dogmatization. Credulity brings about the acceptance of almost any kind of folly. Dogmatization is the greatest obstacle to consciousness development. The dogmas of theology are based on so-called historical facts, which are false facts. The dogmas of philosophy are mental misconstructions, and still philosophers have not succeeded in solving any one of the basic problems of reality. The dogmas of science are ephemeral hypotheses, which are taught at schools and universities as valid knowledge and all too often determine the thinking of a whole generation.

8.7 *Special Insights to be Gained When Studying Hylozoics*

¹It is seen that also those who have studied hylozoics for a long time seldom make the efforts to draw the many important consequences from the basic propositions and axioms, simultaneously as they eagerly try to acquire new knowledge. However, more important than stuffing oneself with new "spiritual food" is "chewing and digesting" what one has already received. Those people could be advised to: 1) gather the basic hylozoic propositions and axioms; 2) combine them into groups of two, three, or four as they connect quite naturally; 3) see which new ideas can be obtained through these combinations. Here is an example. We combine the following two propositions: "All things are in contact with each other" and "Everything has some import, some meaning", which in its turn means that "everything tells something about itself" The result: "Everything tells something about everything else." This is the rational basis of all divination and answers the question, for example: "How can ordinary playing cards that you put on the table tell something about myself or some other

person?” It is quite another matter that the ability to perceive what “everything tells” is developed differently in different individuals.

²A similar intellectual exercise is that of seeing how certain hylozoic facts are necessarily inferred from other facts, so that the latter are the necessary logical basis of the former. Here is an example. The fact that the planetary hierarchy exists as an organization of monads who belong to the fifth natural kingdom and who work unselfishly for the consciousness development of the lower four natural kingdoms is necessarily inferred from the following basic hylozoic facts: 1) our cosmos is already a perfect organization, which implies that all the natural kingdoms and divine kingdoms of the cosmos are already organized. 2) These natural kingdoms and divine kingdoms are made up of monads who have all reached the kingdoms where they are now through developing their consciousness. 3) It is only by applying laws of life that monads can accomplish this consciousness development to reach ever higher natural kingdoms and divine kingdoms. 4) One of these laws of life, which the monads cannot omit to apply if they want to reach higher kingdoms, is the law of unity, which precisely says that the way to higher consciousness goes through sacrifice and service. Consequently, the planetary hierarchy must exist and perform precisely the work it performs: serving the lower natural kingdoms in their consciousness development. Those monads who are the members of the planetary hierarchy cannot have reached that stage, and cannot reach higher stages either, without having applied, and going on applying, the law of unity in relation to all lower natural kingdoms.

8.8 Insights Necessary to Aspirantship

¹We human beings are imperfect, full of faults and failings. Else we would be supermen or divine beings. It is no use concentrating on our faults and grieving over blunders we have made. We can learn from them instead.

²Man is not incurably evil. But he appears to be, since he has cultivated hatred, has judged and condemned, seen nothing but faults and failings and thereby has strengthened those tendencies. If he had sought to discover the potentials for good, then it would have looked different. Man shares in the cosmic total consciousness and thus has the prerequisites of sharing in the cosmic divinity. But he must do something to achieve this. Evolution means working to become better and also helping others to become better.

³If you have once seen the meaning of life – to acquire ever higher material envelopes with their ever higher kinds of consciousness –, then you understand why the ancients spoke about the illusions of life: the attachment to the lower as if it were the only reality when in fact the higher

is a higher kind of reality and the highest cosmic kingdom is the goal of life. The very process of evolution consists in a series of liberations from the lower as conditions of transition to the higher. Life-ignorant man feels “renunciation” as a sacrifice, whereas the man who has knowledge of reality senses it as a heartening token of the fact that he is done with this lower and may trade it in for something immensely more valuable. Evolution appears from below as a series of sacrifices and from above as a series of gains. Sacrifice, renunciation, liberation, elimination is the same process and the condition of further acquisition of consciousness.

⁴No forms of life endure. Material forms of all kinds are perishable and can always be assailed, from without and from within. The monad alone is unassailable and invulnerable. People talk of “taking lives”. But that is impossible, for the monad is eternal, immortal, indestructible, and nothing is more certain than the fact that everybody will some time become a highest cosmic self. The law of destiny guarantees that.

⁵It is a totally wrong conception of life that we incarnate in order to be happy and that the meaning of life is amusement and enjoyment. Happiness is the result of a right attitude to life and is something that man must acquire himself by service and striving to unity. Most people have so much bad sowing to reap that happiness appears to be out of their reach and most often may be compared to the oasis in the desert to be wandered.

⁶As long as the very form of life is regarded as essential, so long that experience of life is lost which the form could else afford. The attention is wrongly directed: to the matter aspect instead of the consciousness aspect. If the monad as a first self saw this, then it would become a second self incomparably more quickly.

⁷We must want to live and want to live to serve evolution, mankind, and unity. There is no death, just the putting off of worn-out envelopes of incarnation. Life is an unbroken continuity, if we see it from the view-point of reincarnation and know that the new life actually begins where the old life ended. (We are born in the same sun sign and in the same rising sign we “died” in, with our causal chain unbroken; a fact we shall find when, as causal selves, we can trace the chain of reincarnation. It is an unbroken life; symbolically spoken, a five-hundred-years life, where each day is a new incarnation.

⁸A man does not attain freedom from “karma” by abstaining from action, nor does he attain perfection merely by renouncing desires. For no one can remain without acting even for a moment; everyone is made to act helplessly by the impulses born of nature. Therefore we are called to a life of action, action for the general good.

⁹Energy follows thought according to the measure of the power and

quality of thought, not according to the measure of the object of thought.

¹⁰The monad in the triad envelope (the lesser causal envelope, the “personality”) uses mental consciousness mainly in two ways: 1) as a tool for the observation and control of the different kinds of consciousness of the first self; 2) as a tool for the transmission of causal consciousness to mental consciousness, so that the latter can pass it on to the brain.

¹¹The training given to aspirants concerns the dual use of mental consciousness, the nature of energy, the plan of consciousness evolution in all natural kingdoms, the purpose of mankind’s life and development, modes and methods of developing human consciousness.

¹²Whether the aspirant was ready to be accepted as a disciple was previously a purely individual matter, whereas today it is a question of whether the group of which the aspirant is a member is ready to be accepted.

¹³The first self has three goals: to discover unity, to acquire knowledge of reality, to win the will to realize. Having these insights and powers we can become fit tools of the planetary hierarchy and become disciples.

¹⁴There are no shortcuts to the second self. The individual must himself have solved the problems of the first self, mastered the consciousness and energies of his envelopes of incarnation, by theory and experiment have seen that illusions and fictions are untenable. In that case it is no use for you to believe you can do it, to believe you have already done it. All such beliefs are illusions until you have definitively become a second self. To the very last the first self is a first self anyhow. There is something lacking anyway.

8.9 *Ideas*

¹Ideas are instruments for comprehending reality. Just as the richness of life consists in relations, so the richness of thinking consists in ideas. We must have ideas. We need as many as we can get. We can never get too many of them. With each new idea we have a greater prospect of understanding a world that is extremely hard to comprehend. The more ideas we have, the more we see and discover. People will remain hostile to knowledge until they come to see that each new idea only increases our insight and understanding, our power of judgement and of orientation.

²If we do not have any rational ideas, then we have irrational ideas. The less ideas we have, the more certain it is that we are slaves to them. Without knowing it, most people are victims of their all too few and primitive ideas. The more ideas we have, the freer we are, the greater our possibility of choosing between different ideas.

³Reality can accord with an idea but seldom or never with the so-called

logical consequences of the idea, unless ideas are developed from those envelopes of ideas into which they have been previously wrapped up. Whenever we begin theorizing, we leave the firm ground of reality. That does not prevent us theorizing. But it should prevent us fanaticizing.

⁴Usually we attach too great an importance to conceptions once acquired, which are soon superseded by more expedient or more rational ones in the striving for ever greater exactness and clarity in the seemingly endless process of intellectual development.

⁵Ideas can sometimes be dangerous to uncritical people, who do not realize their relativity, or to idea fanatics, who exaggerate the importance of ideas. In the idea-cultured people, who have worked through the idea material of our culture, as it were, each idea acquires the limited importance due to it. Thereby man has become a master of ideas. Then ideas are not any longer causes of unrest, but afford the calm that any clear survey will give.

8.10 The Disciples' Work at Ideas

¹When the disciple, working through the antahkarana, has apprehended a causal idea (47:3 or 47:2), he must consciously bring it down to the higher mental (47:4,5); only there can it be "clothed in a form", be formulated into a conceptual system, a system idea or perspective idea. These higher mental constructions are not conceivable to the masses at the stage of civilization. It is only the further concretization down to the level of principle thinking (47:6) that makes the idea generally conceivable, but then it usually has to be divided into several connected mental concepts. An analogy: with four-dimensional vision all the areas of the three-dimensional cube can be seen simultaneously; with three-dimensional vision all of them cannot be seen simultaneously, but only in succession as the cube is turned around; in two-dimensional representation all the areas can be shown simultaneously, but not in their spatial connectedness. This analogy intends to show that scaling down, or dimensional reduction, always brings about a reduction of apprehension and representation.

²The aspirant to discipleship strives to grasp mental ideas in 47:5 and 47:4 and to apply the knowledge gained to his daily life with understanding. The disciple – by disciple is meant also the initiate of the first and the second degree – endeavours to grasp the causal ideas in 47:3 and 47:2 and to apply in a practical manner his understanding of how causes in the causal world produce effects in the lower worlds. The initiates of the third and fourth degree apply their understanding of forces in the mental, causal, and essential (46) worlds and their ability to use them in their work at implementing the purpose of the planetary government.

³The differences and limits between the three categories are not as clear

and fast as the presentation above might suggest. Life is flux and motion, and there are many levels to be covered at each of the three stages. The presentation of initiations given here is intended to emphasize certain important facts and counteract certain prevalent misconceptions. The presentations of initiations previously given by occult sects are mixtures of facts and imagination, being products of the emotional thinking of the lower mentality, therefore have a crystallizing and distorting effect and serve to stimulate spiritual selfishness and isolation as well as emotional curiosity at the sacrifice of mental insight.

8.11 *Symbolic Hints*

¹Esoteric teachers give particularly important teaching in the form of symbolic hints the import of which disciples should try to descry by their intuition. Formerly the teacher used to say to the disciples when giving such a hint: "Here is a hint. Meditate upon it!" Nowadays, the teachers do not proceed in this way, but they give very important hints without particularly pointing them out. Then it will be up to the disciples to perceive, not only the import of the hint, but also that it is a hint. In this case symbolic hint means an utterance that, on the face of it, seems to have a definite import, but when studied more deeply is seen to mean something more and much more important. A key to the correct interpretation of a hint lies in its association with the idea of direction.

8.12 *The Reception of Insights by the Disciple*

¹Hitherto in the past, insights have come to disciples unexpectedly and without plan. In the new age, disciples will increasingly apply special methods of meditation to hasten the process of receiving insights and revelations. Disciples will learn how to work consciously and knowingly to receive more light and in so doing save much time for themselves and their teachers.

²Every new insight has to be mastered in four respects: 1) The mental, causal, esoteric, hierarchical, and second-self-related *facts* represented by the insight. Every insight has its own form in the worlds of the solar system, which are all worlds making up the cosmic physical world. 2) The *meaning* which the facts and the forms veil and hide and which the seeing one must search. 3) The *effect* which the insight is intended to have in the disciple's or initiate's life, service, and relations to his companions and teacher. 4) The *seed thought* which lies in the insight, the potential of prompting the next insight in the endless series of revelations.

³Revelation, insight is not received for nothing but has to be bought: with mental, emotional, and physical work.

8.13 *The Disciple Receives the Insight in Three Stages*

¹The disciple receives the insight or revelation in three stages, which are called “penetration”, “reorientation”, and “manifestation”.

²*Penetration* means that the disciple pierces through the illusions of the emotional world and the fictions of the mental world to reach the consciousness of the second triad and thereby to reach increasing clarity about the plan for mankind. Every disciple who does this and reaches insight then spreads the light he has received to others, contributes to dissipating illusions and fictions for his fellow men.

³*Reorientation*. Having once dissolved illusions and fictions, the disciple suddenly realizes that he has done this and takes a firm stand where he is correctly oriented towards the vision, or to word it otherwise, towards the planetary government. The disciple now is within the range of action of the hierarchy, whether he is on the periphery of the hierarchy or at its centre, and so he definitely participates in the hierarchic effort. That effort is not primarily directed towards mankind, but towards the planetary government, the supreme centre of our planet. The planetary hierarchy orients itself towards mankind only in so far as mankind itself demands guidance and help. However, the entire hierarchy is constantly oriented towards perceiving the will of the planetary government. Just as the disciple at an early stage has to reorient himself in such a manner that he establishes right relations to his fellow human beings, so the more advanced disciple, walking the way of the initiations, has to reorient himself in such a manner that he establishes right relations to the planetary hierarchy and becomes simultaneously conscious of the planetary government. Reorientation always is about focussed effort.

⁴*Manifestation*. Having worked through the first two stages – penetration and reorientation – the initiate has reached a certain degree of insight into the plan and the will of the planetary government. As a result of this he now strives to manifest and express as much of this insight as he can. He thus becomes an outpost of the hierarchy and a transmitter of its light energy.

8.14 *Insights Necessary for Discipleship*

¹Whatever is found in the worlds of the envelopes of incarnation exists only to enable the self to acquire knowledge of reality in these worlds and to acquire qualities and abilities possible there. The disciple must cling to nothing of this and regard nothing of it as so valuable that he cannot bear to lose it. He must be able to give up everything hindering him without a sense of loss.

²The disciple's attention is called to the fact that he devotes too much time to his first self. The second self is his next goal, and its interests he should try to understand and cultivate as far as possible. If the first self does not want to become a tool of its second self (Augoeides), then it "is standing in the way". It is true that the individual is now and then liberated from his first self (his envelopes of incarnation) but has little benefit from it, since the monad in its first triad in the causal envelope only produces a new first self, equally unsuccessful. The new envelopes are "copied" from qualities and abilities of the first triad and as a rule correspond to its level of development.

³The newer kind of meditation, which the planetary hierarchy teaches its disciples, is designed to make disciples turn their attention away from their personal problems, abandon the intensive earlier focus on the relation of the disciple and the teacher. The increasing fusion of the group and its service is the basis of this newer kind of meditation, not the individual's relations and personal aspiration. The earlier individualism too easily degenerated into spiritual selfishness and separateness.

⁴In order to become a second self you must "sacrifice" your first self with everything which this implies, with its content of numerous unnecessary "needs", theories, misconceptions of practically everything, all manner of wishes. By forgetting yourself, forgetting your development, living for mankind, evolution, and unity, you acquire automatically all the requisite qualities and abilities, and eventually ever higher kinds of consciousness.

⁵The teacher says to the disciple: "I shall be satisfied if you forget both yourself and me in the work for others."

⁶The teachers have experience of such disciples as they must protect themselves from: namely such disciples as are (even though unwittingly) spiritually selfish and too eager for knowledge and evolutionary energies. They also have experience of others who are too cautious about their own development. Some disciples overdo and others underdo things.

⁷The disciple allows everyone to hold his opinion. It is not his business to force his knowledge on other people. If he chances upon seekers who are still seeking and want to have knowledge, he may account for his view on life, but he will go no further than that.

⁸Disciples have no privileges. In addition to their own burden they have to carry those of others (physical, emotional, mental ones), being glad and grateful for it. They have their allotted share in the various human diseases and disabilities. Those who believe differently are in error, as usual. But then of course: there are compensations, though the ignorant of life would not appreciate them.

⁹The disciple puts up with even so-called intolerable circumstances, which cannot be changed and which generally are prolonged by inner resistance and revolt. He goes on living without concern despite all adverse conditions.

¹⁰When being daily disillusioned the humanist has a natural tendency to be amazed at the self-blindness and selfishness of men, finding it useless to do something to help them. The disciple is taught that all this and even more should just incite him to renew his efforts and that it is not his business to decide whether his work seems wasted or whether he is fighting for a lost cause. He knows he is a tool of those who know and understand.

¹¹By trying we create the conditions of ultimate success. The disciple who asks himself whether it is possible for him to do a certain thing always receives the answer: try! Without trying you will never succeed. And each failure guides you a bit forward. Everybody fails sometimes (even those in higher kingdoms) and always calculates with that risk.

¹²The disciple serves in all the ways he can, first and foremost where he best can serve, independent of how big or small it is. He never asks whether his work is of any importance, makes any difference, whether it seems wasted. He does his share, then the result must be what it will be. He is a server and does his job in the service of his master, and the result will be his “employer’s” business. The habitual question “if it is of any use” is not for him to answer. It is no concern of his.

¹³A disciple never speaks of himself. This has been said countless times and it seems never to be heeded or constantly be forgotten. He carries it so far that he does not even notice such things as concern his first self, which he wants to forget. Anyone who cannot forget himself is unfit for discipleship.

¹⁴One consequence of this, too, is that the disciple takes no interest in other people’s first selves and their doings unless this enables him to help them. This is imperative. This also definitively eliminates everything in the way of curiosity, gossip, negative criticism (though not unbiased analysis for understanding). The private lives of other people are taboo.

¹⁵One of D.K.’s disciples exclaimed to himself, “Now I know all I need to know, one day I shall realize it as well.” The teacher (who always knows what his disciples think in matters of life) answered in a letter: “Heard what you said. And inevitably it will be so; but the question is, when? And that is only up to you.”

¹⁶The tension the disciple is living in consists in attention to, and expectation of, the experiences and lessons of the new day in preparedness for all contingencies. This is no physical tension, which would tire and exhaust him, but mental attention combined with the joy of learning.

¹⁷The disciple is mostly thrown back upon himself and his group. He receives materials to work on, facts, hints, but it is up to him to use this in the right manner. Being aware of his limitation, of what remains to be conquered (46 of 49 different kinds of world consciousness), of the tasks which he apprehends as his own and which he seldom performs with the success he hoped, he also experiences the path of life with its heights and abysses. Using his knowledge of mankind he cherishes no illusions as to his own contribution. Trust in the Law and in the wisdom there is in higher worlds are required for walking the narrow, steep path of discipleship. Those who believe they are ready to walk it fail in their entrance examinations.

¹⁸The disciples of the world are the intermediaries between the hierarchy and mankind. They are the immediate products of human endeavour. They set the pace for human development, and they are therefore closely en rapport with the consciousness of mankind.

¹⁹The teachers of the hierarchy are trained in the art of observation. They always stand ready to make the needed changes in their mode of teaching as soon as human consciousness outgrows the old presentations of the ever-needed truths. The disciples indicate the need to their teachers, whereupon the latter initiate the required changes.

²⁰It is the destiny of the initiate to bring the new truths and the new, expanded presentations of esoterics to people. In this activity the initiate is working under the law of destiny. This law affects the different departmental groups of the hierarchy and the hierarchy as a whole. This law of destiny has been active ever since the hierarchy was founded on Earth and is the result of the committed, dedicated service which characterizes the hierarchy. It is a sevenfold law, for it works with modifications in accord with the seven departments of the hierarchy. Unlike the law of reaping it has no negative manifestations (such as bad reaping), since it is exclusively the result of the work of unselfishly motivated, self-conscious beings.

²¹Ever more the emphasis is put on what disciples can do for mankind and the lower natural kingdoms, and ever less on what the hierarchy can do for their disciples.

²²Also a disciple can fall a victim to both illusoriness and fictitiousness, to authorities in the emotional world, so discipleship in no way means infallibility.

²³Also a disciple has a right to guess if he says that it is a guess and nothing he knows. If others take his guesswork to be truth, then it is no fault of his. Where the guesser is concerned, it indicates his deficient contact with Augoeides.

²⁴The disciple eventually learns to see his total ignorance of life, learns to see how little he can comprehend and understand. That is a thing which mankind has yet not seen, and before it does so everybody's consciousness is not up to much. The disciple must be prepared to be at school and relearn, rethink about everything he believes he knows and understands, liberate himself from his emotional illusions and mental fictions. That appears a Sisyphean work to him. It will be done, however, even if it takes incarnations to do it.

²⁵"Joy gives strength." That is an esoteric axiom, which the disciple of the planetary hierarchy has to work into his daily meditation.

²⁶The disciple is taught that he is well taken care of, so that he need not worry. Augoeides, who represents the law of destiny, sees to it that he will have the necessary experiences. The authorities of reaping perform their tasks. The planetary hierarchy watches over him with all its resources. He need not think of himself, his own development, his relations to all those guardian powers. Anyone who lives for others, to serve and to help, develops automatically all the requisite qualities. He receives the knowledge he needs to do his tasks in the esoteric group he belongs to, receives the requisite information from a member of the planetary hierarchy.

²⁷The disciple is exhorted to remember, "in his hours of great trial", that "his soul watches over him and that his soul is one with all souls, that to the soul there is neither light nor darkness, only existence and love. There is no separation, only identification with the heart of all love (the essential world, world 46). The more you love, the more love (essential molecules) you receive to give."

8.15 The Training of Disciples before Initiation: from Mental to Causal Consciousness

¹The primary task of the teacher is to aid the disciple to develop the causal intuition and at the same time to keep the mental perception in an active and wholesome state. This the teacher does first of all by enabling him to correctly apprehend and to correctly judge the relation between the causal and the mental.

²The first thing the disciple in preparation for initiation has to learn is to distinguish causal ideas (47:2 and 47:3) and higher mental ideas (47:4 and 47:5). The practical importance of this distinction lies in the fact that causal ideas are infallible reality ideas, whereas mental ideas, even those of the highest kind (47:4), are fictions and at best only dimensional reductions (and so to a certain extent distortions) of causal ideas.

³What the disciple at early stages takes for causal intuitions usually are

higher mental ideas: at first 47:5, later 47:4. These higher mental ideas, which the disciple is dealing with and believes to be causal ideas, are merely the broad, general, and inclusive conceptions which the gradually developing human intelligence itself has been able to formulate and which the foremost thinkers of the race grasp with facility but which seem as amazing revelations to the beginner at esoterics.

⁴After many errors the disciple finally sees that he cannot on his own determine to which kinds of consciousness his insights and revelations belong, but that he must be taught this step by step by his teacher. Only the teacher, who has himself traversed the way in its full length, can know all its stations and stages. Once again the principal rule in esoterics: you must make the effort to view things from above, not from below.

8.16 The Training of Disciples before Initiation: Acquisition of Six Special Faculties

¹In the past, the training of disciples before initiation mostly aimed at contact with causal consciousness and entrance into the teacher's ray group ("ashram"). Nowadays, it is more aimed at the development of six special faculties: 1) the faculty of insight into planetary relations, 2) the faculty of intelligent watchfulness, 3) the faculty of orientation towards mankind, 4) the faculty of registering impressions of higher kinds, 5) the faculty of evocation of the will, 6) the faculty of sensing what is imminent.

²The faculty of insight into planetary relations reaches beyond the endeavour of past times to establish a relation to Augoeides, to the teacher in the planetary hierarchy, and to the teacher's ray group. The faculty of establishing relations is expanded and deepened in four directions: upwards into the fifth natural kingdom, downwards into the subhuman kingdoms, outwards to mankind, and inwards to the "inner god", Augoeides.

³The faculty of intelligent watchfulness implies a constant directed attention to events and circumstances in everyday life. This awakens both the will and the awareness of destiny.

⁴The faculty of orientation towards mankind. Sleeping, mechanical man's occupation with himself must be superseded by awakening, conscious man's living interest in the needs of other people, the consciousness development of other people.

⁵The faculty of registering impressions of higher kinds is sensitivity of a higher kind, not of the psychic (emotional) kind, but of the causal kind, and later, of even higher kinds: the promptings and inspirations of Augoeides, inspiration that radiates from the esoteric teacher and his ray group.

⁶The faculty of evocation of the will, which does not mean personal purposefulness, determination, or self-will, but the ability to perceive, ever

so faintly, the plan of the planetary government, concretized to what one is able to do oneself, and then do it, whatever it costs as for personal sacrifice, without hesitation and without fear.

⁷The faculty of sensing what is imminent. This does not concern what is imminent in individuals or groups, in mankind or on Earth. What is meant is what is imminent in the ideas of the world of ideas which must be realized sooner or later.

⁸These faculties can be developed by disciples, if their focus and their orientation are right.

8.17 The Appearance of the Will Aspect

¹The tightening up of the requirements for discipleship and initiation is closely connected with the increasingly definite appearance of the will aspect in man and with the ever stronger outpouring of energies from the third triad. This manifests itself in human striving after unity, human cooperation, and related activities.

²The will is not, as many believe, a forceful expression of intention, not a fixed determination to do this or that. The will is fundamentally an expression of the law of sacrifice. Under this law, the monad recognizes its responsibility, identifies itself with the whole, and learns the esoteric significance of “having nothing (sacrificing everything) and yet possessing all things”.

³The will is fundamentally an aspect or an expression of the law of sacrifice. Because the will, as understood by the initiate, is essentially a faculty belonging to the third self, the faculty, characterized by fixed determination, of identification with the will or purpose of the planetary ruler. It is the highest expression of divinity which the initiate finally manifests before entering cosmic expansion.

⁴The planetary ruler made a sacrifice when he decided to enter the form of this planet of ours. This decision of his was rooted in his will to function as the saviour of our planet. Therefore, the planetary ruler is the prototype of all world saviours. On his tiny scale, each initiate, too, must learn to function as a saviour and thus express the law of sacrifice through will governed by reason and not simply through impulsive love. Sacrifice must not be regarded as a giving up, but rather as a taking over.

⁵This sacrifice by the planetary ruler was imperative owing to his ability to identify himself in full consciousness with the consciousness aspect of all monads making up the planetary collective. Therefore, he took over this task, sentencing himself to stay for as long as may be needed, “acting as the sun and light of the planet until ‘the day be with us’ and the night of pralaya descends upon his finished task.”

⁶Under this law of sacrifice, the lord of the world always remains on our planet, working behind the scenes, unknown by all the “seeds” he came to save, until such time as they have reached the stage of flowering forth as perfectly conscious beings and, in their turn, become saviours. Then they will know him to exist.

⁷Likewise, the initiate has to learn to work behind the scenes, unknown, unrecognized, and unacclaimed. He must sacrifice his separate self to enter the “group self”, the circle of initiates belonging to his ray group. He assumes the needed activities and brings about the required changes, but he receives no reward save the reward of knowing that he has helped fellow wanderers somewhat onward on the same way as he is wandering himself.

⁸The understanding of sacrifice in the sense of taking over, becoming one with the task and the work, is important to all disciples as a goal and as a vision.

8.18 The Initiate Knows Because He Works

¹The teacher: “I am seeking here to divorce your minds from the *idée fixe* that the initiate works because he knows. I would reverse the statement and say he knows because he works. There is no point of attainment at which the initiator says to the initiate: ‘Now you know, and therefore you can work.’ Rather it is: Now you serve and work, and in so doing you are embarked upon a new and difficult voyage of discovery; you will discover reality progressively and arrive at whole areas of expression because you serve. Resulting from this service, certain powers and energies will manifest themselves, and your ability to use them will indicate to you, to your fellow initiates, and to the world that you are a worker, fully conscious on the inner side of life.”

²By the “inner side of life” is meant either the mental world, the causal world, or the essential (46) world. The disciple at the early stages up to the third initiation works in the mental world. After the third initiation, he works consciously in the causal world, until he is advanced enough to work in the essential (46) world. (The old esoteric terms of those three worlds were: the world of meaning, the world of causes, and the world of being, respectively.) What is said here of those three worlds should not be taken in an exclusive sense: the causal self works in both the causal world and the mental world and realizes in the physical world. The essential self (46-self) works in all the worlds mentioned and adds to this work the capacity for work in the essential world as well. Without the capacity for work also in the lower worlds, the initiates would not be able to reach mankind on its own levels.

9 DISCRIMINATION

9.1 General about the Faculty of Discrimination

¹Every kind of matter, every kind of consciousness, makes it possible to acquire a discriminative principle that subsequently cannot be lost: in physical reality, discrimination between objectivity and subjectivity; in emotional reality, between harmony and discord; in mental reality, between identity and non-identity. In vibrational respect everything can be said to consist of vibrations. Every kind of matter, aggregate, condition of matter, has its peculiar vibration. Harmony, unison, concord becomes understanding. Dissonance divides. The emotional principle has an undreamt-of significance. It is the basis of the conception of all true art (which becomes possible only at the stage of culture), the understanding of everything refining, ennobling, the ability to distinguish in many respects between what is genuine and spurious, true and false.

²There are three kinds of discrimination: discrimination between the self and the environing world (including other individuals), discrimination between the self and its envelopes (between self-consciousness in the causal envelope and the consciousness of the envelopes of incarnation), discrimination between self-consciousness in the second triad and in the third triad. The first kind of discrimination is universally developed and has reached a fairly high stage of evolution. The second faculty is found only in a small minority of mankind, the mystics, the esotericians, the advanced thinkers of the race. The third faculty is possessed only by perfect second selves (45-selves, esoteric masters, initiates of the fifth degree), who are extremely few as yet. In all these expansions, the discriminative faculty of intelligence is utilized.

³The separative instinct of man has been the nursery for the development of man's discrimination. The faculty of discrimination balances the striving for unity when this is pushed too far and is not expedient. Only the voluntary merging of individuals and groups motivated by common interest and aim is of value. Such a merging is seen only in the final part of the human evolution. It is incident upon an earlier stage of intense self-assertion and intense self-realization.

⁴In the reality of exoterists, the most important discrimination is that between things and persons, between views and those holding the views. Something may be factually correct, even if the Devil says so. It may be factually wrong, even if God Almighty says so.

⁵In the reality of esotericians, the most important discrimination is that between the first self and the second self, the monad in its envelopes of

incarnation and the monad in the causal envelope, false personality and permanent individuality.

⁶Real thinking begins with the ability to distinguish, to differentiate, to discriminate, to keep main issue and side issues apart.

⁷Always useful exercises include: to distinguish between higher and lower (ideas, ideals, and principles), essentials and non-essentials, harmless things and harmful ones, imperishable things and perishable ones, immortal things and mortal ones, necessary things and unnecessary ones, needs and desires, quality and quantity, what you know and what you do not know.

⁸You must learn to distinguish between the individual's envelopes and his self. Anybody who does that helps the individual's *Augoeides* in his endeavour.

⁹It is important to learn to tell the difference between the knowledge of the first self and the wisdom of the second self. Thereby you also learn to distinguish between the energies of the first self and those of the second self. Anyone who has done this has solved the basic problem of life, a problem that the individual must solve himself.

¹⁰By our unchecked habit of absolutizing instead of relativizing we counteract what we must learn: the sense of proportion, a sense that is included in perspective consciousness. Every situation always contains something unique and so requires a special application. Like principles rules may orient us. But they must be applied with discrimination, be modified, suited to each particular case, and that is what loving understanding will help us to do.

9.2 *How Esoterics is Distorted*

¹The following discussion is not concerned with those intentional distortions of which the enemies of the knowledge are guilty, but only the unintentional ones usually made by beginners and immature people.

²Such distortions can be roughly sorted into six categories. Of course, boundaries between them are fluid, so that some certain distortion can be classed among the one or the other category. But even if this division is sketchy, yet it is useful for students as a first instrument of orientation. For it is essential to know not only what is correct, but also what is erroneous, and the acquisition of reality ideas is not more important than the elimination of illusions and fictions from one's own consciousness.

³1. Distortions due to wishful thinking.

⁴2. Distortions due to emotional thinking.

⁵3. Distortions due to the illusions of sentimentality and moralism.

⁶4. Distortions due to confusion with fictions of exoteric life (the views

of profane science, the certitudes of physicalism, etc.)

⁷⁵ Distortions due to formatory (undeveloped, too primitive) thinking.

⁸⁶ Distortions due to misinterpretation of esoteric symbols.

⁹¹ *Distortions due to wishful thinking.* Examples:

^{10a} The belief that the “high feelings” you experience when reading about higher (superhuman) states of consciousness are those higher states of consciousness.

^{11b} The belief that you choose to incarnate as that person, with those parents, in that environment, etc. In reality, this privilege of choosing can be claimed, at the utmost, only by very advanced members of the human kingdom.

^{12c} The belief that higher beings can arbitrarily relieve you of bad reaping (“karma”), that such higher beings exist to run errands for you or do you favours in egoistic matters of all kinds. Augoeides helps you to sell your house at the best price.

^{13d} The belief that the human kingdom can be covered in just a few incarnations, or, at any event, that I can do it, and that I have only a few incarnations left or even no one left, that this life is my last one as a human being, because “I feel I have finished”.

¹⁴² *Distortions due to emotional thinking.* Emotional thinking is characterized by its inability to apprehend the mental contents of concepts, but rather chiefly attributes to them a positive or negative emotional charge, so that they are conceived of as “good” or “bad”. Examples of this:

^{15a} Seventh ray is good, sixth ray is bad, because seventh ray represents “what is new”, whereas sixth ray stands for “what is old”.

^{16b} Principle thinking is bad, perspective thinking is good. However, for many people who have not yet reached up to principle thinking, this being their next goal must be very good. And perspective thinking is too remote for them to be really good.

¹⁷ Other expressions of emotional thinking are projections of individual emotional reactions on to higher beings, thus attributing to them feelings of the kind cherished by the person himself. Example:

^{18c} “Why should the planetary hierarchy be interested in helping mankind? Anyway, when I reach those levels, I will not help this ungrateful mankind.”

¹⁹ Emotional thinking tends to personalize everything, bring it down to the human level. Example:

^{20d} “It is hard to believe that the Law is above the gods. Even if hylozoics does not recognize it, there probably is a supreme god who made the Law.”

²¹3. *Distortions due to the illusions of sentimentality and moralism.*

²²a) The sentimental notion that discipleship is something you are “given as a reward”, because you are such a “good and noble” person.

²³b) The sentimental notion that serving people means giving them everything they desire.

²⁴c) The moralistic notion that the planetary hierarchy after Atlantis withdrew from mankind to “punish” it or because it was “cross” with mankind.

²⁵d) The moralistic notion that the esoteric teachers (the “masters”) are very interested in the faults and failings of aspirants, judge and assess them on the basis of those shortcomings.

²⁶4. *Distortions that are due to confusion of esoterics with the fictions of exoteric life (physicalism). Examples:*

²⁷a) The belief that the genetic inheritance determines the personality, capabilities, talents, understanding, etc. – as though esoteric students had suddenly forgotten what they have learnt about the fact of reincarnation.

²⁸b) Reasoning about “male” and “female”, in a human sense, in relation to causal and higher consciousness, discipleship, the planetary hierarchy, and other such superhuman realities.

²⁹c) The categorization of man as an “animal” merely because he has an animal body. In doing so they disregard the decisive difference, namely that man possesses an envelope that is immortal in the human kingdom, the causal envelope, which enables him to be self-conscious, whereas no animal has such an envelope.

³⁰d) The confusion of esoteric teaching on the advent of the “Lords of the Flame” to Earth with notions of space visitors of the ordinary UFO popular kind.

³¹5. *Distortions that are due to formatory thinking. Examples:*

³²a) “Energy follows thought” is interpreted so as to mean that even the least anxiety vibrations can cause full-blown disasters. Such a conception demonstrates that a sense of proportion is lacking.

³³b) The fact of evolution, true in a very large scale, is interpreted so as to mean that there is a constant progress, also in the smallest scale: “Every day, in every way, better and better”.

³⁴c) The notion that you could “stand in the way” of karma, that the person in question “must be allowed to suffer”, or that “I have a right to this knowledge since I have come in contact with it”.

³⁵d) The inability to understand that there must be such people as know something that I do not know and even cannot know. (Unconscious and

mechanical conviction that one's own level is the highest possible level of knowledge and understanding.) This inability is demonstrated in such questions as: "How can we know that there are 49 atomic kinds?" etc.

³⁶6. *Distortions that are due to misinterpretation of esoteric symbols.*

Examples:

³⁷a) Misinterpretation of the esoteric symbol of "twin souls" into the belief that "human souls" are paired together in a more or less erotic sense.

³⁸b) Misinterpretation of the esoteric symbol "know thyself" into the belief that self-knowledge is possible for man.

³⁹c) Misinterpretation of the esoteric symbol of "purification" (which simply meant consciousness development) into the belief that it is about "clean living" and that this is the meaning of life, thus the notion that the mere overcoming of certain bodily desires makes you at once fit to be a disciple, etc.

⁴⁰d) Misinterpretation of the esoteric symbol of the "promised land" (which has reference to the higher worlds and kingdoms attained by the monad in evolution, through initiations) into the belief that a certain physical territory is to be conquered using guile and violence.

9.3 Confusion of the Psychic and Spiritual

¹The confusion and mix-up of the psychic with the spiritual is one of the most important characteristics of quasi-occultism and of new age teachings in particular. By "psychic" esoterics means what belongs exclusively to the first self's kinds of consciousness, thus emotionality and mentality. By "spiritual" are meant the second self's three kinds of consciousness: causal (47:1-3), essential (46), and superessential (45). It is necessary to uphold the distinction between psychic and spiritual for practical reasons above all: as regards the orientation of aspirants and disciples and what they should give priority in their work at their own consciousness development. The esoterician should not strive to acquire psychic powers such as clairvoyance and astral projection, because such faculties usually become hindrances to the acquisition of higher mental and of causal consciousness. The fascination at the exhaustless imaginative creations of the emotional world reinforces the power of illusions over consciousness.

9.4 Erroneous Perception and Erroneous Conception

¹In the *Yoga Sūtras*, Patañjali distinguishes between two kinds of error, which could be called in English "erroneous perception" and "erroneous conception". Erroneous perception (Sanskrit: *viparyaya*) is a subjective misperception in the observation of objective reality, such as when in

darkness you believe you see a snake lying curled on the ground, whereas in reality it is a piece of rope. Erroneous conception (*vikalpa*) is “knowledge of mere words which are devoid of a factual content”.

²Examples of erroneous conceptions: theological, philosophical, scientific, political fictions. A few examples of erroneous conceptions in theology: the god of the Christians who is above all laws, and who arbitrarily punishes and rewards people; sin as a crime against god who is an infinite being and who consequently exacts an infinite punishment in eternal hell. *The Knowledge of Reality* by Laurency affords us many examples of erroneous conceptions in philosophy, such as the theses that reality conforms to our concepts, that consciousness cannot “pass” to the object. As an example of political fiction may be cited the pair of opposites, “reactionary – progressive”, which has no conceptual content in accord with laws of nature or laws of life.

9.5 Subjectivism

¹Laurency: “Subjectivism in regard to the matter aspect is so ingrained in human thought that it can scarcely be elucidated in too many contexts.” A few such elucidations are made below.

²There is a typical subjectivistic constant error in how scientists approach phenomena and facts that do not conform to prevailing hypotheses. They assert that superphysical realities, factors, energies, etc. are “improbable”. Now “probable” only means “what you may reasonably expect on the basis of what you already know”. In other words: an explanation or a hypothesis is more probable the better it conforms to established views. And since they have chosen to remain ignorant of superphysical realities, explanations starting from those realities must always be “improbable”. They do not see that their reasoning runs in a circle: “We cannot believe anything that is part of what we cannot believe.” It is like fishing in the lake without having baited your hook, and then proclaim: “There is no fish in the lake.”

³Those who make comparative studies of religion are astonished that among widely different peoples in all times there are to be found descriptions of a “higher reality” that agree on important points. They have tried to explain this by what they call “intercultural influences”. In other words, it is only a matter of echoing and copying in an endless chain from individual to individual, and from people to people. Thus Romanian historian of religions Mircea Eliade explains the “sacred number seven”, occurring in all nations, as a borrowing or influence from Babylonia.

⁴These scholars do not realize that the simplest and most natural explanation is the objective existence of a higher reality, which of course is

the same for all, independent of cultural background, and this reality is what mystics have contacted and described in similar terms.

⁵It is remarkable that scholars cannot try this explanation even as a hypothesis. But they have for so long been occupied with mere subjective things, mere opinions without counterparts in reality, that they seem to have quite lost the sense of the existence of an objective reality “out there” and “in here”, common to us all.

⁶Such hypotheses of borrowings of views between cultures as the only factor tell us more about the scholars themselves than about the cultures they believe they understand.

⁷In an article in the Swedish daily *Dagens Nyheter* (9th April, 1981), Tor Ragnar Gerholm declared: “Anyone can consult a statistical yearbook to easily convince himself that the world’s assets of non-renewable energy raw materials, metals, and industrial minerals have never been greater than they are now.” In writing this, this physics professor, fellow of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, and fellow of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences evidently mixed up two different things: 1) the objectively existing non-renewable natural resources, which of course can never increase but must constantly decrease as mankind extracts them, and 2) mankind’s collective subjective conception of quantities available for extraction such as they are indicated in various publications.

⁸The rejection of the “ether hypothesis” by scientists is an instance of subjectivism. At first they formed conceptions of the ether where they assumed it had certain qualities, such as producing an “ether wind”, etc. Later, when in the experiments they made they could not establish those qualities, they concluded that “the ether does not exist”. They did not see that the ether could exist nevertheless, although having other qualities than the assumed ones. Naïvely they started from the assumption that subjective conception equals objective reality.

⁹Axiom: It is possible to formulate hypotheses without number on every unknown, yet-to-be-discovered thing. However many of these hypotheses can be exploded without therefore refuting the existence of this unknown thing.

9.6 *The Aspirant Need See Through His Subjectivism*

¹Our teachers say that it is very characteristic of aspirants in general that they form definite conceptions of the teacher, the teaching, the work, the tests, etc. in advance, and then try to lay down conditions of their discipleship on the basis of these conceptions. Instead they need to empty themselves of all preconceived opinions on all such things of which they cannot know anything essential. The information about discipleship they

have obtained through theoretical study affords them just an elementary orientation, as such barely adequate. Reality is, as usual, something quite different.

²When aspirants learn that the disciple is characterized by his service to mankind and work for mankind, many of them jump to the conclusion that they can start doing such service and work at once, and then do it in accord with their own views and wishes. In such a case they have not asked themselves questions such as: What needs to be done? What are the most important tasks to be done, as seen from the objective viewpoint and quite apart from considerations of “me” and “mine”? What tasks are seeking their doers rather than doers seeking their tasks? What kind of preparation is required in the doers of the tasks, if they are to be successful?

³Having found esoterics and having seen its priceless value for himself, the aspirant desires to share it with others to help them in their walking the path of life. In itself, the desire of spreading the knowledge is good thing. If he has not yet a clear conception of it, however, there is a big risk that he will not spread the knowledge, but rather his own misconception of it, if he talks to other people about it. And if those other people have not undergone the preparation he should have received himself, then misconception is unavoidable. Then a subjectivistic distortion in giver and receiver is the result. Just referring interested people to books is a more secure way, after all. Many aspirants who are eager to spread the knowledge have experienced that “people prefer listening to me telling them things than reading a book”. But if the interest of those people is not strong enough to make them read a book, when it is offered them, then they clearly are not ripe to receive the knowledge. In such a case the aspirant has proved too eager to “recruit” quantity without quality. Esoterics shall not have anything to do with the “reign of quantity”, however.

⁴Yet another expression of subjectivism is apparent in the attitude taken by some aspirants and disciples to opportunities offered them. It is very often seen that they let such valuable possibilities pass them by, as if they would soon come back. Their arbitrary assumption that favourable opportunities will come back without end seldom corresponds to objective reality. Even if a similar opportunity may appear later on, it is a bad thing to have let this wrong attitude start establishing itself in their consciousness: the belief that you may turn down offers with impunity. That wrong attitude becomes a weak spot. According to the law of repetition, it will be a little easier the next time to miss such an opportunity. Finally, you are hopelessly behind, so that you are unable to keep up with the ever accelerating pace of evolution. All of these are aspects of the subjectivistic tendency in certain individuals to prescribe the conditions and rules of

discipleship. Instead, those individuals should heed the warning, “an opportunity missed will not return”.

9.7 The Aspirant’s Work at Overcoming Formatory Thinking

¹In many aspirants, formatory thinking – that primitive, too mechanical thinking – is their truly serious hindrance. If your mentality is strongly characterized by formatory thinking, you cannot advance, you cannot conceive esoteric ideas correctly. Such aspirants should make it their top priority to eliminate their formatory thinking.

²The process of eliminating this inefficient thinking is undergone in three stages. First you work at gaining an ever deeper, ever better understanding of what formatory thinking is, how it manifests itself, and simultaneously a deepening understanding of its opposite – perspective thinking – and its manifestations. This is not done merely by pondering theories and definitions of formatory and perspective thinking, but by studying the many examples given of the one and the other kind of thinking.

³Then, guided by these examples, you make your own observations in other people and in yourself. Usually it is easier to see this in others than in oneself. You observe the expressions of formatory thinking and those of perspective thinking, however rare the latter. You collect those observations, studying recurrent patterns.

⁴Finally you make efforts to catch yourself in situations when you think in a formatory way; then you check yourself, withdraw your failed thought-form, and refashion it into a more perspectivistic one.

⁵In such work it is especially suitable to ponder on all such esoteric facts as must be conceived with perspective thinking, such facts as cannot be conceived with formatory thinking, since then they would appear as sheer self-contradictions, paradoxes. One example:

⁶“The way to the fifth natural kingdom is open only to a small number of people.” “The way to the fifth natural kingdom is open to all people.” Both statements are correct, and the simultaneous affirmation of them involves no contradiction. The apparent contradiction is dissolved through the insight that the first statement is correct with respect to a short perspective of time (the current eon), whereas the second statement has reference to a much longer perspective (including several future eons).

⁷In esoterics you are taught to “forget yourself” as well as to “remember yourself”. To formatory thinking this implies an unsolvable contradiction. The contradiction is dissolved through the insight that the “self” referred to in the first case is not the same as the one referred to in the second case; generally it is about the opposition between the dominant first self (the

“personality”) and the awakening second self (the “soul”).

⁸By considering the three – the right time, the right place, and the right people – it is possible in many cases to avoid falling into the traps of formatory thinking. Something can be “both right and wrong”; that is to say: largely right, but the time may be wrong, or the place, or the people. Also the problem that many beginners in esoterics set themselves by asking “how can they possibly know that?” is dissolved through the insight about the “right people”; that is to say: you should not thoughtlessly assume that either all people must be able to know it or no one, but that there are “right people” who may know something that I (or my peers) cannot know (yet).

9.8 Discrimination as to Your Own Status

¹Occultists commonly misjudge their stage of development. Merely because they have acquired a theoretical learning about various stages of development and managed to put on a pattern of behaviour matching a higher stage, they believe they are somebody they have no prospects of being within the next few incarnations. When in a new incarnation (prior to remembrance anew) they are put to the test, they fail as they do not have the support of a theoretical learning. Most of them either overrate or underrate their prospects (the latter more seldom).

²The individual’s misjudgement of his level sometimes depends on the fact that in previous incarnations he one-sidedly acquired certain abilities belonging to a higher level but failed to develop others, equally necessary ones. Frequently there is also too great a distance between learning and ability of self-realization.

³If occultists did not let themselves be blinded by the consciousness aspect and (as many of them do) imagined they possessed cosmic consciousness but if, on the contrary, they understood that in evolution the will aspect keeps pace with the consciousness aspect, they would perhaps sober up. Those who possess cosmic consciousness are not merely omniscient within the solar system but also omnipotent. Occultists may well think they are omniscient. It is certainly somewhat harder to imagine you are omnipotent in the same worlds, if you have a wee bit of reason left.

⁴It is infinitely valuable for the esoterician to know where the limits are to the knowledge, understanding, and ability possible for the individual at his various stages of development.

⁵If he is in doubt about his status, he might get some guidance from his answer to the question what he could possibly do under trying conditions.

9.9 *The Aspirant's Discrimination*

¹The aspirant to discipleship is taught how to distinguish between himself as a first self (the “personality”) and the incipient second self (the “soul”). A good lead-off is learning how to distinguish between persons and things, or causes; the esoteric cause, the cause of the knowledge. He is taught to disregard the personality of his fellow man as far as possible, and to try to perceive his “soul”. This budding aspiration and incipient tendency are hampered by everything in the surrounding society that attracts attention to what is personal, what is too personal and too individual, what is without contact with the “soul”. The aspirant is taught that all human judgements that originate from or are based on the personality are erroneous and misleading, always in some respect. He may just consider how little truth there is in all that which the public “knows” of esoteric personalities.

²In their enthusiasm, beginners in esoterics often want to share their recently acquired learning with family members, friends, and acquaintances. To their disappointment, perhaps annoyance, they will experience that they cannot convey their insight, understanding, joy; that, on the contrary, the more eagerly they proselytize, the more they bore their audience stiff. They need to learn patience, tolerance, and trust in law. They need to learn understanding of understanding: realize the fact that understanding must be allowed to grow at the individual's own pace, that it is better having a small amount of knowledge that you really understand than a great quantity of learning that you have accepted superficially like a belief without grasping its true significance. In the urge to force the knowledge on all and everyone there is a certain measure of intolerance: the propagandist cannot quite tolerate that other people do not know what he knows, do not think as he thinks. Trust in law includes the insight that, in accord with the law, the knowledge cannot be withheld from anyone who in truth is ripe to receive it, that no one can be “overlooked” by the powers of destiny.

³That you are tolerant does not mean that you consider all views equally right. But it means that you fully respect the right of other people to hold their own views, however crazy you think they are. That all people have the right to hold their own views does not imply that all those views are equally correct or right. Equal right to hold views does not mean equally right views.

⁴An agnostic attitude (thus rather doubt than belief) is of real value to the beginner and protects him from the snares of the world illusion and the lower psychic faculties.

⁵The speculations of theologians, philosophers, and occultists are typical of such first self fictions as become downright obstacles to the individual attempting to acquire the consciousness of the second self (so-called intuition, of three main kinds). The monad in the first triad seriously hinders itself if it believes it can solve the problems of world view and life view on its own, like Nietzsche imagining himself to become a superman or like Rosicrucian order AMORC and Martinus fantasizing about acquiring cosmic consciousness. Only the man who thinks in accord with reality can reach the consciousness of higher worlds.

9.10 The Disciple's Discrimination

¹The disciple learns how to assess things and people quite impersonally and matter-of-factly. Such assessment is a condition of right conception and possibility to help people. There is much he does not need to know or to have any idea of at all. This, too, demonstrates his power of discrimination.

²The constant discrimination between the self and its envelopes is one of the methods of liberation from the envelopes and from the interests of the envelopes in their worlds. The self in the causal envelope is independent of the mental, emotional, and physical envelopes. These lower envelopes are indeed detached on the conclusion of every incarnation. If they have held the self captive, then the self will have to incarnate until it has learnt to live in the world of causal ideas. The lower worlds are called the worlds of appearance, for when being in them the self just sees the effects of unknown causes. In the causal world the self sees the causes of those effects. Only then does the self know that it has knowledge of reality. Then the self sees also the meaning of life, sees that all are on the way leading to the same goal and, therefore, that all are fellow wanderers on the way, that it is the task of all to help one another: that holding the life view of unity and acting on it is the quickest way of reaching the goal. All this has been said before, expressed in innumerable ways. Only now it is living insight.

³It is essential that all disciples devote themselves to meditation, regular and daily meditation, meditation in the esoteric and not mystic sense. The difference between esoteric and mystic meditation appears primarily in four respects: 1) the domain: esoteric meditation is both emotional and mental, not merely emotional as the mystic one; also it does not deal with those problems which typically beset the religious mystic and which are connected with theological fictionalism, such as salvation, grace, atonement, etc. but with problems connected with the esoteric knowledge and school and group work; 2) the direction: esoteric meditation proceeds "from above down", brings down the superconscious into the waking conscious-

ness of the physical brain; mystic meditation proceeds “from below up”, so that the individual generally is lost in the superconscious and therefore does not bring down any recollection into the physical brain; 3) the degree of purpose, or practicality; 4) the degree of self-determination.

9.11 Esoteric Discrimination: General

¹The esoteric knowledge alone enables man to orient himself in the world of consciousness. The limits of consciousness are marked by the different envelopes and by the different molecular kinds in the envelopes. The self cannot be conscious except in its envelopes and in the molecular consciousnesses it has itself activated. This is not contradicted by the fact that the self is in addition able sporadically to contact consciousness of higher kinds than the ones it has activated or for which it even has envelopes. Such a contact, which is made possible by the fact that all the higher atomic kinds are always involved into the lower ones, does not entail any consciousness conceivable to the self.

²It counts as an esoteric axiom that only a higher kind of consciousness can clearly see the limitation of a lower consciousness. Only the second self (45:4–47:3) can see the limitation of the first self (47:4–49:7). Only the third self (43:4–45:3) can see the limitation of the second self. Only a cosmic self (at least a self in the second divine kingdom, 36–42) can see the limitation of the third self. And so on. The gist of what is said here is that nobody knows his own limitation until he is informed about it by a higher self.

³How difficult it is to acquire true knowledge of reality and not to make mistakes in this respect is clear from the fact that even members of the fifth natural kingdom always check their ideas with members of the sixth kingdom. The first self cannot acquire the knowledge of reality, which is a fact that cannot be too strongly emphasized. No fourth kingdom individual can judge the reality content of his learning correctly.

⁴Only the causal self can interpret the symbols correctly. The symbols are reproductions of the mental forms that mental consciousness shapes in mental matter consciously or unconsciously. It is true that mentality can understand their meaning. But it is unable to determine whether the symbols are fully exact and thus truly correctly render the realities intended.

9.12 Esoteric Discrimination: the First Self and the Second Self

¹As long as the monad can be fascinated by, dependent on, phenomena in the worlds of man, so long it will remain a first self. So long, too, the monad will be a victim of the first self’s kinds of consciousness, a victim of

the speculations of human reason (the dogmas of theology, the theories of philosophy, and the ephemeral hypotheses of science), a victim of the emotional and mental vibrations that telepathically pervade its emotional and mental envelopes and are able to penetrate into its brain.

²It is only through the contact with its Augoeides and through the faculties of unity (the aspiration to unity in all conceivable ways) it has acquired that the human monad assimilates the energies from the second triad and finds the right way.

³The first self is the self of ignorance, for without that “spark of reason”, which the monad unconsciously acquires in the triad envelope (47:3), man would not reach much higher than the highest animal species, and the higher mental (47:5) would lie beyond his reach.

⁴It is possible for us to acquire perspective consciousness because we have gradually, during millennia, received reality ideas from mental geniuses who were in contact with the causal world. Without them we would have remained at the stage of barbarism.

⁵All envelopes of incarnation except the causal triad envelope are robots affected by energies coming both from within, from higher envelopes, and, in the majority, above all coming from without. The mental envelope is affected by mental vibrations; the emotional envelope, by vibrations from the emotional world (which means vibrations from other people); the etheric envelope and the organism, by so-called cosmic energies (atomic energies of all kinds). Only when the individual has become a second self (an essential self, a 46-self) will he be able to make himself independent of other kinds of energies than the ones he determines himself. Most people are slaves to their robots, which means that “man lacks free will”, an esoteric expression that ignorance must misunderstand. The self is not free as long as it is dominated by its envelopes.

⁶The light can illuminate that intellect which is self-controlled and free from the domination of the intellect of another.

⁷It is inevitable that the human monad believes it is where its self-consciousness is active. Precisely this is what the initiates meant by the “great illusion”.

9.13 The Development of Discrimination in Mankind

¹Slowly through his incarnations man learns how to think more independently and critically, learns to see that mankind’s political and social history largely presents phenomena and behaviour of the stage of barbarism. This implies that he grows increasingly conscious in the higher molecular kinds of his envelopes. When he has once acquired the ability to apprehend the higher kinds of attractive emotional vibrations, he discovers

that mankind is still controlled by the vibrations of repulsion in the lower regions of the emotional world.

²Many people remain unnecessarily long in emotionality, particularly those who have acquired clairvoyance in some way or other and believe they find the knowledge of reality and life in the emotional world. Regrettably, there are many people at the mental stage who through their emotional clairvoyance relapse to this lower stage.

³The higher the kind of emotional consciousness, the greater the intensity of experiences had. The illusoriness of the highest spheres of the emotional world is so intense that also very advanced disciples of the planetary hierarchy (causal selves) have been deceived. In those regions you can find emotional replicas of everything that really exists in higher worlds.

⁴The life of feelings is the activity of the lowest mental consciousness (47:7) in emotionality, and the life of imagination is the result of the lowest mentality but one (47:6).

⁵The lowest two mental consciousnesses are said to belong to the emotional stage because those who have acquired them are still emotional selves. It is only when he has come into possession of perspective thinking that man is a mental self, that he can be independent of emotionality.

⁶At the stage of culture, man begins to consciously strive after what he considers to be right. The “noble middle path” between the extremes is rather broad to begin with. It narrows as the individual grows more sensitive to what is right and wrong and more careful in his choice of motives. (That is no concern of moralists, but everybody has to find his own way without interference.) Mental or causal discrimination does not suffice for this, but it requires also essential (46) unity consciousness.

⁷He also grows increasingly sensitive to, and impressionable by, energies from the essential world (world 46). Thereby he attains the stage of the mystic and comes under the influence of Augoeides whose task it is to make the individual acquire, through the requisite experience, the qualities and abilities that are necessary for him to become a second self. Man “is wandering in the dark” but does not see it until the “light” of the second self begins to pour down into the monad consciousness. Then he begins to “seek the light”.

9.14 Discrimination as to the Knowledge

¹“Knowledge is remembrance.” (Platon) That is not to say that remembrance is knowledge. During all our incarnations, the subconscious has assimilated everything we have experienced, all false ideologies. Most of our latency is illusion and fiction systems we have worked into our

subconscious. Such things become innate, firm certainty in a new incarnation, if we are born into an environment where these fictions predominate. This latent learning thus does not, as such, equal correct knowledge. It can be correct only in the case of those who have been initiated and have experienced reality. Knowledge was in Platon's time and still is after 2400 years the same as esoteric knowledge, accessible only to those who have studied the knowledge of the planetary hierarchy, who have mastered hylozoics so that they are subsequently able to think in accordance with reality.

²Time and again mankind is given the same truths, which are unchanging even though the forms in which they are presented may vary. Subsequently, without exception, these truths are distorted by confused minds in less than one hundred years. Therefore, it is the duty of the knowers to keep the teaching pure and to clearly separate error from it, also serving those who are not yet able to see the big difference. If then the ignorant accuse the knowers of intolerance, the latter should answer: "Those who are happy with pseudo-knowledge may very well have it, and we do not wish to deprive them of it. There are such people, however, as desire to be set free from illusion and to enter the world of reality. It is exclusively those people whom we want to reach. But you apparently want us to withhold the knowledge from them, too. In doing so you demonstrate that your 'tolerance' is indifference to the truth, if not downright hostility to it."

³It is in the emotional world that the individual must learn to distinguish between true and false, between real and unreal. That is an esoteric fact which spiritists, occultists, yogis have not realized and cannot realize. The illusions of emotional consciousness are nothing but imaginative constructions, but they have an intensity that causes people to be easily captivated and fascinated by them, so that they are convinced that those illusions are reality. Their intensity is due to the possibility of directly perceiving the energy aspect in emotional matter.

⁴The clairvoyant cannot know that there is a mental world, since he cannot acquire mental objective consciousness. Subjective consciousness is not sufficient, but unshakable knowledge is had only through objective consciousness. And only causal objective consciousness cannot be deceived as to reality in the three worlds of man.

⁵Without the acquisition of causal ideas man can never become conscious in his causal envelope, never become what he is destined to be some time: a causal self.

⁶As a disciple of the planetary hierarchy the individual learns how to acquire mental as well as causal objective consciousness. Thereby he

becomes sovereign in the worlds of man and sees that it is impossible for a first self to comprehend, even to judge correctly, realities in these worlds. The subjective essential (46) consciousness he has at the same time acquired is of such a kind that he is assured of the existence of still higher worlds. As a causal self in his old causal envelope, which he received as a gift from his Augoeides, he cannot acquire essential objective consciousness. In order to become an essential self, he must sacrifice his causal envelope. Subsequently, he is for the first time subjectively conscious in the collective consciousness of existence and thereby also conscious of his potential godhood.

10 REALIZATION

10.1 Self-Realization

¹According to the law of self-realization, all must by themselves acquire all knowledge in the course of development. Such knowledge as the individual receives from others he must check himself in due time. He can, if it is deemed suitable, receive knowledge of otherwise inaccessible matters. Unnecessary knowledge is not communicated. There are possibilities for all in the fifth and higher kingdoms to acquire knowledge also of things cosmic (to the extent that such things can be understood on lower levels) thanks to the entire series of ever higher selves who are able to communicate their knowledge to the series of lower selves. However, that is a possibility which is limited by the law of self-realization. The law has such a restrictive effect that the individual hesitates to ask for even desirable knowledge of something in higher worlds, knowledge which otherwise he could receive. Also, he does not want to trouble, without due cause, higher selves in their more important work. He assumes that the higher selves know best what the lower selves need and that the higher ones communicate everything necessary without being asked for it.

²“At any cost, man must sooner or later learn to stand on his own feet, learn to master his circumstances and the reactions of his first self”, a teacher told a disciple of his who had expected assistance to himself.

³However many incarnations are needed for this, the individual must learn to be self-reliant, independent of the help of others, in his gaining of the right conception of reality and the ability to correctly realize the meaning of life, to become independent of any spiritual authorities, holy scriptures (“words of god”), etc. Such writings may give us thoughts that we can analyse until we have seen that they are right or wrong, but they must not instil dogmas that make us dependent.

⁴Unsolved problems come up again in life after life until we have solved them in the one right way. They are part of our necessary qualities and abilities and our self-realization. We can never botch them away, cannot escape from them by suicide, as many think. If we do not learn our lessons, we shall have them turned, and then they will not be any easier. They may fall under the law of reaping as well as under the law of destiny. The great Law, the sum total of all laws of nature and laws of life, is a law of necessity.

⁵Even the most life-ignorant and injudicious man is the “master of his own wisdom”. So it must be according to the law of self-realization. Step

by step through countless experiences the monad acquires the knowledge of reality. And everybody's views are absolute. Nothing can be done about that fact.

⁶The entire consciousness development is an endless progress from the incomprehensible to the evident. Only what reveals reality and the Law is evident in a proper sense. What men call evident is whatever agrees with their illusions and fictions. In the esoteric sense, the evident is whatever in our self-realization we have experienced as a revelation.

⁷Self-realization, the "realization of the self" ("become what you are"), means, where man is concerned, the acquisition of causal (47:1-3) and essential (46) consciousness as well as the application of the laws of life, however trying this may be.

⁸Without self-realization there will be no consciousness development. True, the knowledge of reality, of life, and of the laws of life is indispensable, but only for us to lead our lives right. When knowledge has been acquired, the application of this knowledge is the one necessity. We are here in order to live, to have experiences, and to learn from them, to acquire necessary qualities and abilities. Anyone who thinks that he lives in order to amuse and enjoy himself is in serious error. Anyone who does not see that "when life is at its best, it is work and toil" has much yet to learn.

⁹The acquisition of the esoteric knowledge may be easy work. The application of it, however, may take many incarnations. Understanding is one thing and the ability to realize is another and quite different thing. Understanding is part of the consciousness aspect, and realization is part of the motion or energy aspect. That is a fact which has not yet entered into general psychological learning, since they have missed the knowledge of the three aspects of reality. Add to this the ignorance of how to make use of the energies that are at man's disposal.

¹⁰Anyone who has not comprehended and understood does not know whether he knows. Also the true knowledge is superstition until you have mastered it by your own work so that you can explain in a rational way why you see it to be correct.

¹¹Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras* may be presented under the law of self-realization. They show the way of man to higher kingdoms. It is an arduous way, every step of it paved by his own work. It is no way of cheap salvation. It has cost "blood, sweat, and tears". That is the way which everybody must wander, however many incarnations it will take.

¹²The meaning of life is consciousness development. In fact, this means that the meaning of life is work. It is good for anyone who has understood that without work there is neither enduring happiness nor joy.

¹³The first self has three goals: to discover unity, to acquire knowledge

of reality, to win the will to realize. Having these insights and powers we can become fit tools of the planetary hierarchy and become disciples.

10.2 Identification and Liberation

¹The path of self-realization throughout the cosmos is a continuous identification with something higher and liberation from something lower. In this process it is to be noted that the liberation automatically brings about an intuitive understanding of the new and makes it possible to realize it. The four virtues that the disciple must acquire are discrimination; freedom from desires, fear, and worry (calm, “divine indifference”); self-discipline; a serving attitude. By practising these virtues he will automatically discard the lower (hindrances to consciousness development).

²The Buddha’s “noble middle path” through the “pairs of opposites” develops these four virtues. There is a constant choosing between good and evil, truth and lie, love and hatred, etc. The more carefully the choice is made, the subtler the pairs of opposites discovered, until the path becomes the so-called razor-edged path. Thus, for instance, the choice between right and wrong becomes the choice between right and wrong speech, right and wrong silence, etc. Eventually more and more pairs of opposites are discovered, finally pairs of opposites in almost everything: right and wrong understanding, right and wrong indifference, etc. So there are certainly opportunities to develop the power of discrimination in your daily work.

10.3 Self-Knowledge

¹Only he knows himself who is aware of his godhood, and you will be so only as an essential self, a 46-self. A causal self has reached the insight that it must be so. In each higher kingdom you will be ever more aware of the unlimited possibilities of the monad, the self.

²Only he knows himself who is aware of his share in the cosmic total consciousness, of the monad’s possibility of becoming a second self from being a first self.

³Self-knowledge is above all the knowledge of one’s own level of development and one’s own limitation. This requires the insight of how much remains before you are finished as a man, how many incarnations it will take. They are many more than most people think.

⁴The first self’s most important self-knowledge says that this self cannot acquire knowledge of reality and life on its own, but must receive this knowledge from those higher selves (second selves) who possess that knowledge. The highest possible mission of the first self is to be an instrument of the second self.

10.4 Assessing People

¹The teachers assess aspirants to discipleship by standards completely different from those by which people generally assess each other. Intelligence, knowledge, and learning are not the most important features, but the “qualities of the heart” are. A man’s level of development principally appears in his understanding of the life view, the qualities of attraction, and aspiration to unity. Theoretical learning is easily acquired, but the “qualities of the heart” are the result of striving during many incarnations.

²These heart qualities are summed up by the word “essential character”. A man who has a good and dependable essential character that is directed towards unselfish service is a great promise. If his intelligence, knowledge, and learning are deficient, then they will increase and develop during his probationary discipleship. However, if his essential character is bad, undependable, treacherous, seeking self-gratification rather than opportunities to serve, then that man cannot be used, even if he is an intellectual giant.

³Far from all mental selves are accepted as disciples. And there are cases where people who were not mentally outstanding were accepted, even such people as appeared to be intellectual “underachievers” to outsiders. In their case, a perfect dedication to the teacher and, growing from this, an unquenchable will to realize the teaching brought about a rapid development of all their useful qualities, also their intellect. In contrast, mere intellectual brilliance, without the support of a good essential character, can be a serious hindrance to discipleship, namely in so far as it breeds in the individual a quite unwarranted faith in his ability to understand and judge everything.

10.5 Self-Determination

¹Self-determination means that you determine yourself that you want to control the consciousness content of your envelopes. Disciples learn how to control a lower kind of consciousness by the next higher kind in an uninterrupted series: to control the emotional by the mental, the mental by the causal, the causal by the essential, etc.

²The experience of many incarnations is required before the monad as a first self has acquired self-reliance and self-determination as necessary conditions of that expedient will to sacrifice which is contained in the striving to become a causal self. It is one of the paradoxes of life that we have to acquire self-determination to realize the insufficiency of the first self. Until then, the first self stands in the way of his own further development, and so he usually does during a long series of incarnations, until he

has learnt to rely on his Augoeides. The knowledge of his existence should facilitate his emancipation from the limitation of the first self.

³There is a considerable difference between liberation from fear and anxiety through trust in life and trust in law and liberation by yourself alone and without such aids.

⁴In your conscious work to acquire self-determination, the following insights are important. If people are ignorant of life, think ill of everybody, and take joy in it, then whatever views they hold are quite unimportant to you. In due time, in some future incarnation, they will relearn. Anyone who is dependent on the views of others is their slave.

10.6 Self-Forgetfulness

¹Happiness is a faculty that must be acquired. Without that faculty the first self cannot become a second self. This is the reason for the esoteric saying, “It is man’s duty to be happy”; to the life-ignorant an absurd saying.

²The state of emotional happiness as well as that of mental joy presupposes self-forgetfulness, the ability to forget the thought of one’s self and to live for others, for ideas, for ideals, etc. It is a state that man can attain by making himself independent of outer conditions and indifferent to the moods of his emotional being. It is totally abortive to demand of others that they make us happy. That demand is the ground of most unsuccessful marriages. Happiness comes to us when we live to make others happy. Joy belongs to mental consciousness and presupposes mental interests. Bliss is the nature of essential consciousness and is experienced with the energies of the essential (46) world.

³The individual always falls a victim to illusoriness as long as the self is the centre, everything revolves around the self, everything is conceived in relation to his own self, as long as there are thoughts of his own self. It is only in the first triad that the self is the centre of the universe, the self is something important. Liberation from this self (“forget yourself”) is the prerequisite of contact (identification) with Augoeides and of passing to the second triad. “I live; yet not I, but Christos lives in me” means that the self has entered unity, has ceased to be a separate self. The second self has no thought of itself but lives in unity.

10.7 Hindrances to Self-Realization

¹As a first self the monad is counteracted in its development by untold hindrances in all its envelopes: physical inheritance from parents, its own inheritance from the sowing of previous incarnations, from all manner of bad or insufficient qualities and abilities, from a life-ignorant environment,

from false notions and prejudice inoculated, from defects of the collectives the individual enters into, etc. It is important to never give up, to endure, to look upon failures as necessary lessons.

²As long as the monad identifies itself with its first triad or with any consciousness content of its envelopes of incarnation, so long the monad is a first self.

³As long as man allows himself to be influenced by the ideologies of ruling ignorance for his view of reality and life, so long he is unable to assimilate the esoteric knowledge, the inspirations from Augoeides, to contact his own subjective causal consciousness. He must set himself free from traditional views, theological, philosophical, and scientific dogmas.

⁴There is a great difference in our ability both to give and to receive whether we are interested in the content of another individual's temporary being of incarnation or in his causal being. But if it is not possible to contact even the lowest kind of subjective causal consciousness (if the individual has not reached the higher emotional stage), then of course we are reduced to contacting his first self.

⁵The illusions and fictions of the first self are the greatest obstacles to the monad in its acquisition of causal and essential consciousness. These emotional and mental delusions keep the individual, the monad, imprisoned in the worlds of man until the monad finally decides to acquire the second self consciousness (the consciousness of unity).

⁶The first self's greatest illusion is its belief to be a new individual in each reincarnation. To constantly relearn the same things, to be caught in illusions and fictions again and again, is the real Sisyphean labour.

⁷In each new incarnation the individual must begin from the beginning with the instinct of life he has acquired and his latent predispositions. There is a risk that he will be idiotized anew by the delusions and superstitions of ignorance. If he has a bad sowing to reap, it may happen that he does not have the opportunity of renewing his contact with the esoteric knowledge he once acquired and never has any opportunity of remembering his ancient knowledge anew. Before the esoteric knowledge has become so widely spread that such a contact is almost inevitable, there is no certainty of his re-acquiring it. Those who understand this fact do all they can to spread esoterics. They thereby gain the right to a possibility of a renewed contact. Those who spread spurious teachings and counteract truth will not just miss it in a future life, but will be unable even to grasp it.

⁸Generally, man at the stage of barbarism is a chaos. He feels one thing, says another, and does a third thing. At the stage of civilization, he thinks one thing, feels another, says a third, and does a fourth thing. At the stage of culture, he begins to feel, say, and do one and the same thing. And at the

stage of humanity, he thinks, feels, says, and does the same thing. Only then is he a unitary individual and reliable in all conditions.

⁹One of the biggest obstacles on the way is the inability to be silent. To be able to be silent is the most important ability of the art of living, comprising much more than the uninitiated may suspect. You do not force your knowledge on those unable to receive it. You do not bear witness to yourself. You do not speak ill of others (the first stage, until you see that the law of freedom is valid and you stop being interested in the first selves of other people with all their faults and failings). But the art of being silent goes deeper than that. It is about the art of not feeling and not thinking other things than such as are true, right, and helpful. (Our thoughts about other people are returned to us with the same effects.) If people could think by themselves and not just thought what others had said, then they would have been able to figure this out from their knowledge of the laws of life.

¹⁰As long as you believe the human reason able to judge everything, you will be unable to perceive the causal vibrations, energies, ideas (the same thing).

10.8 Overcoming Passivity

¹The human individual is so enormously standardized that an external observer of mankind would not necessarily conclude that each individual has his own independent mind but that people, being passive, are regimented in huge collectives by a few minds beyond the control of the individuals themselves.

²This passivity has to be overcome by the would-be esoterician. It is not merely a matter of finding one's task and doing it, which is a necessity. It is equally important to be active and self-determined in one's own consciousness in relation to all external impulses, the "bad suggestions of public opinion", its ready-made views on everything and everyone. He is skeptical, as a matter of principle, to all such things of which it is said that "everyone knows it". He has understood this universal, passive, receptive state of consciousness to be a serious hindrance to consciousness development, his own and that of mankind.

³This active inner state of the esoterician corresponds to an active outward life. To be ripe for discipleship you must have a sufficient inner drive, so that you are constantly active in suitable work without being pressured by others. People who degenerate into idleness in the pressure-free atmosphere of an esoteric school demonstrate that they do not have a sufficient inner drive and so are unripe for discipleship.

⁴People do not have the same amount of energy. Some have more, others have less. However, before you blame your idleness on true or imagined

dearth of energy, you should carefully study how you can make a more expedient use of the amount you do have. Much can be gained through purposiveness, good cooperation with suitable people, well thought-out method, concentration on essentials, elimination of non-essentials (meaningless, mechanical habits), careful preparation, vigilance as to waste of time and energy leaks (worry, irritation, negative imagination). An insightful observance of the rule “the right time, the right place, and the right people” is necessary to success as well.

10.9 Self-Activation

¹Self-realization is done automatically, if you live for others and forget yourself, which means that you cease being the centre of your circle, have your consciousness directed to something else than your “dear self”, do not live in your envelope consciousnesses. That is why you have to be able to forget yourself in the work, in service. The experience of unity in the work, in service, blots out the “self”.

²“My envelopes want this; I do not want it”, is a good rule. It is particularly difficult to free yourself from the content of your emotional envelope. The esoterician is taught how to determine himself what is allowed to exist in his envelope consciousnesses. But this requires that he has eliminated the lowest molecular kinds from his envelopes. This he does in the easiest way by never heeding the consciousness content of those lowest molecular kinds. Then they gradually lose their vitality and power of magnetic attraction, are removed from the envelopes, and are replaced by higher kinds.

³The method of activating higher consciousness is to direct our attention to it, for example by reflecting (“meditating”) upon what we have been taught about such consciousness. In so doing we also strengthen the power of that higher over the lower.

⁴Do not be content with merely stating, “I am not a mental self, so I do not stand a chance of becoming a disciple”, but turn it the other way round! Ask yourself: What distinguishes the mental self aspiring to discipleship? Answer: The possession of mental will urging him to action. Thus: service, sacrifice, and work whose motive is not emotional, such as praise, reward, glory, self-satisfaction, pride, and so on, but only mental: what urges you to action, work, sacrifice, and service is the knowledge, insight, and understanding of what should be done and must be done. Very well. To the extent that knowledge, insight, and understanding and similar mental motives urge you do some useful and valuable work for the common good, to the same extent you are a mental self – there and then. The more often and the more intensively you allow your knowledge, insight, and under-

standing urge you to action from now on, the more a mental self, and the less an emotional self you will be. However, to the extent that the underlying motive is discontent with not being a mental self, fear of not being one or being able to become one soon, desire to “prove” something to the world, etc. – to the same extent that motive is falsified.

10.10 The Knowledge Must Be Applied

¹Esoterics affords us knowledge of reality, life, and the fundamental laws of life. It liberates us from the illusions and fictions of ignorance. All of this are essential conditions of being able to see the way that lies before us, the way to be walked. It remains to walk it, however, and that presupposes the ability to walk. That ability remains to be acquired.

²The “fresh initiate” thinks that “this is all you need to know”. Soon he will find, however, that only now do the real difficulties begin, only now can he begin living efficiently, only now does he have the prospects of solving his daily problems in an expedient manner, only now does he discover the significance of the energy aspect and that the art of living consists in discovering the energies and being able to use them lawfully.

³When the neophyte has “received the second degree”, he says that he knows nothing and can do nothing, so enormously do the problems pile up before him. By each step he takes they increase in numbers and appear ever more difficult to solve. And each new vision of the path before him gives him a dizzy sense of ignorance and impotence, his perspective is too overwhelming. Only his confidence in the Law restores assurance to him.

⁴Many people who study esoterics are eager to be informed of ever more facts. But we do not receive more from the planetary hierarchy than we need to make a comprehensible system for us, a general conception of existence that can serve as a practicable working hypothesis. Above all, we do not receive facts that mankind is in a position to produce by its own exploration, being aided by the system given to it. The essential thing, moreover, is not the theoretical world view but the practical application of the knowledge we have received.

⁵There is much that esotericians would like to know, but they must wait until at least the learned have started considering the esoteric knowledge already available. The esoteric élite have already removed themselves too far from the rest of mankind with a risk of losing understanding of general human views and being estranged from the people they should help. Besides, there are still so many esoteric facts, which esotericians have not fully utilized, that they need not be short of material. And above all they have neglected to put the knowledge received into real use in practical life. That is a neglect which makes the planetary hierarchy reluctant to com-

municate more facts for mere theoretical study. We have received sufficient knowledge to be able to liberate ourselves from the ruling ideologies and to acquire a basically correct view of reality with overwhelming evidence for the reliability of this knowledge. Those who were initiated into the lower three degrees of the knowledge orders did not receive more. Those who show by their service that they deserve to receive more knowledge and need such knowledge for their increasingly efficient service in so doing qualify for discipleship and are brought together into groups for common training. Such groups remain esoteric.

⁶The esoterician is informed that knowledge is necessary but that it is practically useless if the consciousness there is in knowledge does not also manifest its energy aspect. He is informed that knowledge without application in real life is dead knowledge, which only implies increased responsibility in life. He receives the basic facts he needs to understand existence and its laws. But the problems that thanks to this knowledge he is able to solve he must solve by himself. For that is the only way of developing. Such solutions as we steal from others do not help us but instead make it more difficult for us to solve future problems. Even those in the fifth and sixth natural kingdoms have their problems to solve, as difficult for them as our problems are for us. Only the problems we have solved ourselves we are able to solve at once in our next life.

⁷Theoretical learning (facts) we can communicate to others. The experience we can share with others, however, is the one we have realized ourselves. Anyone who seeks to give what he is will find that he begins to understand, that he is about to enter the reality which the learning is intended to familiarize us with.

⁸Many difficulties arise because we do not use the energy of our knowledge. All consciousness expressions are simultaneously energy expressions. And if the energies are not released into action, then they must get other outlets, and that will as a rule be detrimental to ourselves in some respect or other. That is one of the reasons why the esoteric knowledge must be kept secret from those who do not have the sense to put it into action.

10.11 The Esoterician's Service

¹Anyone who, when being put before the choice of several ways to serve consciousness development, always chooses the way that benefits all mankind also will make the quickest progress himself. To give men knowledge of reality, of the meaning and goal of life, is to liberate them from more than ninety per cent of the insoluble problems they wrestle with and suffer under. When you see the anguish of seekers in their struggle to

free themselves from the darkness of ignorance (illusions and fictions), then you must do everything you can to guide them into reality. Give people knowledge of reality, and they solve their problems themselves!

²The service done by the esoterician should consist in working for the spread of esoterics, for the appearance of the school. Esotericians should not serve in such domains where people who have less knowledge and worse understanding can make a fully satisfactory contribution. Only esotericians can serve the cause of esoterics, so if esotericians neglect this, who will then do that necessary work?

³Those studying hylozoics and esoterics should do so with a view to being able to disseminate understanding of the teaching. There will be quite another understanding, if you study also in order to help others understand than if you study only for your own sweet pleasure.

⁴Anyone who considers that the necessary work shall be done only in the higher worlds, on the “inner planes”, and that he works only from mental and “spiritual” consciousness levels has not understood the procedure correctly. Inner work that is not expressed in physical world activity of some kind is wrongly oriented and wrongly inspired.

⁵Anyone who wishes to contribute to human consciousness development and to “culture” should not just acquire the qualities and abilities, the knowledge of reality and the understanding of life that are required, but is also wise to avoid everything that can make his work more difficult. It is a matter of simplifying everything, not complicating it, of not assuming unnecessary duties.

10.12 The Importance of Emotionality

¹Even for people at higher stages, emotionality is of very great importance for their development: for the mystic as well as for the mental self. Therefore, it is a serious mistake, as many highly intellectual people do, to neglect to cultivate emotionality. Without emotional consciousness and its efficient participation, the first self cannot become a second self.

²With mentality alone the mental self can come in contact with the lowest causal consciousness (47:3), it is true, but he cannot reach essential consciousness (46:7). Mentality is necessary for the individual to become a second self. But only the cooperation of the highest emotionality and the highest mentality makes this possible.

³Higher emotional consciousness (48:3) makes it possible to acquire the qualities of attraction, is necessary to contact essential consciousness, and provides the dynamic energy that man must learn to master. It is via the higher emotionality that the mystic can receive inspirations from the world of wisdom and love (46), inspirations necessary to the understanding of

life, energies necessary to self-realization.

⁴Only when man sees that the first self cannot solve the problems of existence does he make himself receptive to inspirations from the second self. Also, only then does he seek to contact the consciousness of unity (essential consciousness, 46) of existence.

⁵If man is to attain essential consciousness, it is required that he activates the energies of emotional attraction and acquires the qualities of emotional attraction. Service has in esoterics been symbolized as “sacrifice”, since it can be very trying to overcome hatred (repulsion) by love (attraction). But since the energies of attraction, being of a higher emotional kind, are stronger than the energies of hatred in the lower emotional molecular kinds, they must overcome, if they are used expediently. If you use the energies of attraction, they will dominate more and more, also in your own emotional consciousness, and they will moreover automatically receive an additional contribution from the essential world (from the second triad essential atom via the unity centre of the causal envelope). This also vitalizes the essential atom, so that it automatically by its vibrations forms an essential envelope, which is embryonic to begin with but subsequently expands continually. Thereby it will be increasingly easy to contact the intuition of unity and its energies.

10.13 Emotionality is a Bridge to Causal (47:2) and Essential (46:7) Consciousness

¹Before the individual has become a causal self, he must even as a mental self activate his higher emotional consciousness to contact the world of unity and to be able to receive energies of unity. If he omits to do this, there is a risk that he “isolates himself in his ivory tower” and does not reach other people, however much he agitates. Just as theologians he will then preach to deaf ears or to churchy ears that want to hear only what calms their gnawing instinct of life.

²Cultivating feelings of the higher emotionality (48:2,3) develops us more than cultivating the lower reason (47:6,7). These feelings affect the causal superconsciousness and, being attractive, also the consciousness of unity (essentiality, 46). These emotional vibrations also pass through our superconscious causal consciousness (47:2,3) and always leave their traces, however faint the effect of activation.

³Anyone who from 48:2 is able to receive a direct, spontaneous, occasional contact with the essential world experiences an essential intuition and, with it, essential knowledge. It is always risky to say such things, for all too many people all too easily imagine anything about themselves. They may believe themselves to be disciples, causal selves,

and even higher selves, for in the emotional world everything is possible. We shall be swamped with all manner of prophets, and we see it beginning already.

⁴When unity energies (46) pour down into our envelopes and are correctly apprehended by the emotional consciousness, the result is that the mind is filled with that “love for all living beings, for the individual (however he be) which is limitless enough to allow total, unconditional self-sacrifice. This does not mean self-surrender or self-effacement, but is the active, spontaneous love that forgets the importuning demands of the natural instincts: the instinct of self-preservation, the instinct of power”. True love (essentiality) is impersonal, matter-of-fact, firm, and foreign to any kind of egoism and sentimentality.

⁵Having activated (constantly attending to) higher emotional consciousness (48:3, attraction), the individual possessing esoteric knowledge is able to reach the essential world (46:7) via the unity centre of the causal envelope. If this connection is cultivated, the will to unity develops with efficiency in service as a result. Then you do not ask what you have to give but what the other person needs. You forget yourself and “identify” yourself with the person you want to help.

⁶Using esoteric knowledge it is possible to establish a link between the highest emotional consciousness (48:2,3) and essential consciousness. The self can activate essential consciousness by realizing universal brotherhood in the worlds of man, particularly the physical world, by living for mankind, evolution, and unity. Before that, however, the monad must have become a mental self (47:5). All emotional energy has then become only dynamic, without anything of that falsifying sentimentality which of tradition is called “Christian love”. It is a considerable difference if an emotional self or a mental self activates essential matter with emotional energy. In the latter case the individual has become free from any thought of salvation and reward, any calculation. He serves because he cannot do otherwise. In so doing he contacts the wisdom and unity of essential consciousness.

⁷Emotional attractive energy must, via the unity centre of the causal envelope, activate essential matter for man to become a causal self (acquire the lowest consciousness in the second triad). The disciple learns the pertaining method from his teacher.

10.14 Control of Emotionality through Mentality

¹It is only as causal selves that we become fully free from dependence on emotionality. Even the mental self needs emotional will for action, as a driving force. Only when causal consciousness has been activated to some

strength can the mental self do without emotional will to some extent.

²In order to make himself independent of his conditions and circumstances in physical life, man must liberate himself from the blinding and fascinating power of emotional illusoriness as well as from his fear of the unknown and of the future. This is possible only through mentality, which is ineffective at the emotional stage.

³As long as the monad is still incapable of directing mental energies down into the emotional envelope and from there further, via the etheric envelope, to the brain, so long the monad is helplessly at the mercy of its various envelope consciousnesses and remains what it is in the envelopes. As long as the monad has not acquired continuity of consciousness between its envelopes, so long the monad is totally identified with consciousness in that envelope where it is for the moment; it therefore forgets what it knows in the other envelopes and remains a split being.

⁴At the present stage of mankind's development – the emotional and chiefly lower emotional stage – emotional invulnerability, unconcern for everything, emotional stability, divine indifference to whatever happens to your incarnation, forgetfulness of your own self (the first self), enter into the most valuable quality: the prerequisite of the will to unity. Anyone who wishes to become a mental self must learn to be completely independent of everything emotional. This does not in the least mean absence of love but power over emotional life. That life can and must be controlled by mental will.

⁵Glad and happy man shall be. Otherwise there is something wrong with him, a wrong that has to be removed. We have no reason to be otherwise, when we know our destination, that gladness and happiness carry us the most quickly forward, that they are of enormous importance for our environment and give us the best possible reaping. It is all a matter of emotion and, for those who have acquired will, a matter of will. Emotionality shall not control us. We can be glad and happy if we want to. Else we are slaves under our emotional being. Our mental being is happy (the mental world is our heavenly kingdom), so that anyone who is not happy thereby demonstrates his dependence on emotionality.

⁶The planetary hierarchy considers that (if development goes on as the hierarchy hopes) the significance of the emotional envelope will gradually decrease. Mankind's attention will instead be directed towards physical and mental life. Physical life involves so many unsolved problems, and they will increasingly attract attention after mankind has decided to make the physical world a "paradise" for its future incarnations. The contribution of mentality to this will increase in importance. The knowledge of the meaning of life will also entail a general striving among people to become

mental selves. Upon realizing that consciousness development is a complicated and time-consuming process and that you cannot skip mental consciousness in order to reach the causal and essential consciousness all of a sudden, theosophical and other sects will sober up and direct their energies towards nearer and more realistic goals. People will no more wish to live in an illusory world of imagination. And thereby the emotional world will be “depopulated” and liberated from the imaginative constructions that charm and deceive. The emotional envelope will become devoid of its content, and people will move from the physical world to the mental and back without interludes in the emotional world.

10.15 The Conquest of Causal Consciousness

¹The fact that it is possible to apprehend reason, wisdom (= unity), and will in the lowest worlds depends on the presence of mental atoms (47:1), essential atoms (46:1), and superessential atoms (45:1) also in the lowest matter (physical atoms, 49:1).

²Only the energies from the second triad (via the causal envelope) make evolution possible and, particularly, the higher consciousness development. It is the “causal energies” that enable man to acquire causal consciousness. Even more. They enable us to help each other “spiritually” (in everything that has to do with consciousness). The energies of the first self are no good for that.

³The three main kinds of second triad consciousness enable in the first self control of the physical envelopes through the causal consciousness, of the emotional envelope through the consciousness of unity, and of the mental through superessential consciousness.

⁴The purpose is that each life is to result in a continuous series of awakenings. “Progress”, “movement”, “awakening”, “expansion”, “illumination”, “evolution”, “growth” – these words are only a few of all those denoting the inner and outer effects of the creative process.

⁵Augoeides sees to it that man has the experiences of life that are necessary to understand life better and better. And when time is up for the “final spurt”, the teacher in the fifth natural kingdom enters and takes over the guidance. The most difficult phase of this development is the monad’s self-acquisition of understanding of life. Terms like “one-pointed work”, “struggle”, “crises”, “conflict between higher and lower” (on account of vibrations in the different molecular kinds), “sense of loneliness”, “abandonment” are used in esoterics, clarifying that it is no child’s play to hasten ahead of what is normal development during millions of years.

⁶Used correctly, causal consciousness enables man to clearly perceive reality, to see reality as it is, undistorted by the illusions of the emotional

world and the fictions of the mental world. When the disciple works at developing causal intuition and is guided in this by his teacher, the real objective of this guidance, however, is not to afford the disciple a higher consciousness by which he may enjoy having a supreme perspective on things, understanding himself and others the better, solving his problems of knowledge and thinking. The real objective is something quite different: to provide the disciple with an instrument by which he can apprehend the plan of the planetary hierarchy for the evolution of mankind, so that he may become a more efficient co-worker in this plan. Therefore, the foremost purpose of causal intuition is to function as plan consciousness, a fact that needs to be emphasized. Causal consciousness can also be used for such purposes as have to do with the disciple's own consciousness development, but from the teacher's viewpoint those are unintended purposes of secondary importance.

⁷When causal consciousness functions in a man, then he can act immediately and correctly, for then he is in contact with the plan. Therefore, the more people acquire causal consciousness, the more contact the plan. People who are causally conscious apprehend the plan in one and the same manner, which precludes disagreement on essential things. The fact that people disagree on everything is due to their illusions and fictions as well as to their lack of perspective thinking causing them to get hung up on unessentials. The knowers do not squabble among themselves.

⁸When sufficiently many causally conscious people are in incarnation, the plan will be realized.

Third Series:
WILL, WISDOM, ACTIVITY
Containing the Essays
Will
Unity
Wisdom
Intelligence
Activity

11 WILL

THEORY OR LARGER SCALE

11.1 Will

¹Will is that manifestation of energy which is the basis of all action. Without will we would be passive, inactive.

²Will is the ability of active consciousness to have dynamis act through it, act in various kinds of matter and of consciousness. There are as many kinds of will as there are kinds of active consciousness.

³We cannot “comprehend” or “understand” the nature of will, only ascertain its effect in various relations, in different kinds of matter and consciousness.

⁴Therefore, will is the union of consciousness and energy. And that is the reason why a higher kind of consciousness has a greater energy effect. This consciousness need not be “rational”, a fact that appears from physical as well as emotional “impulses”.

⁵In 45-selves, this ability has become so efficient that the kinds of matter of all lower worlds appear automatized. To a 45-self, the matter aspect offers so little resistance that “everything is energy”.

⁶The greater the density of primordial atoms (the more composed the atomic kinds), the “coarser” the matter (atomic kinds, molecular kinds), the lesser the effect of dynamis, and this in all worlds of the whole cosmos. Only in 45-matter does dynamis appear to act in such a way that the individual may begin to understand what is meant by cosmic omnipotence.

⁷Superessentiality (45) is the will aspect of the second self, and the pertaining energies reach the envelopes (including the organism) of the first self via the crown centre. This is the energy of the will to unity made perfect, that will to unity which is the first revelation of the true energy aspect.

⁸To man, will is an insoluble problem (“mystery”). Only superessential consciousness is in a position to grasp something of its nature. It may be said that the will, among other things, is a synthesis of knowledge, unity, power, and law. It is dynamis. It manifests itself as “be-ness”.

⁹Moments of self-remembrance – that is, moments of self-consciousness produced by means of knowledge, understanding, and effort – are not mere moments of consciousness but also moments of will. Almost everything that happens with us happens mechanically, automatically, not consciously. In states of self-consciousness, however, we can truly do.

11.2 The Sixth Natural Kingdom is the Kingdom of the Motion Aspect

¹The first triad represents the matter aspect; the second triad, the consciousness aspect; and the third triad, the motion aspect. The motion aspect thus is the particular aspect of the third self and the sixth natural kingdom, the very life aspect, will aspect, energy aspect enabling an ever increasing contribution to the various processes of manifestation.

²This motion, however, is much more than man can understand by his limited concepts of motion. It is a synthesis of all three aspects, being at the same time will in the original sense of the word “will” and as such the highest kind of dynamics within the solar system.

³The matter aspect shows us how it is, but the motion aspect how it will be. This requires a prevision which the ignorance of life has misconstrued as the predetermination of everything.

⁴The motion aspect expresses itself differently in the different worlds (atomic kinds), in the different envelopes, in the different centres of consciousness and, above all, in the three triads. The higher the kind of matter, the stronger the energy. It follows from this that the third selves in respect of energy influence second selves as if they were power incarnate and that is why the will aspect has been overemphasized, whereas the consciousness aspect also must evince a corresponding increase in capacity.

⁵It is only in the third triad that the individual can begin to have a real understanding of the dynamis effect in matter and consciousness and its significance in ever higher syntheses of the three aspects of reality.

⁶Matter functions there as energy pure and simple. With the knowledge made possible by solar systemic consciousness the pertaining molecular kinds work perfect finality in the particular kinds of processes of manifestation that the seven departments exhibit.

⁷How the will expresses itself in the modes of activity of the different departments, in what respects it affects the matter and consciousness aspects in the different worlds and kingdoms, are problems that belong in the worlds of the third self.

⁸The “white” magician (having some knowledge of laws of nature and laws of life) uses his knowledge to serve life (consciousness development, unity, mankind). His field of activity is the motion aspect in the matter aspect. He seeks those energies which have a formative effect on matter in the worlds of man, and the laws governing this. He acquires ever higher kinds of objective consciousness so that he can observe rotary as well as involutory molecules in the various aggregate forms and follow the matter and energy processes in detail as they shape matter.

11.3 Emotional Will and Mental Will

¹Emotional will is the strongest kind of will, even in those who have for several incarnations neglected their emotional development. Such people therefore think they are unaffected by emotionality and believe they have overcome those stages, believe they are mental selves. Faced with disasters, however, and exposed to strains and trials, man is roused from his emotional apathy. Only when having acquired perspective thinking (47:5) and system thinking (47:4) is he able to become a mental self.

²When a man has acquired mental will and using it can control emotional will, he is a mental self. Even the mental self will for a long time need emotional will for action, as a driving force. Mental will appears very late in the mental self and manifests itself, at the present stage of mankind's general development, only when the individual is approaching the causal stage, thus on the highest mental level (47:4).

³At the present stage of mankind's development – the emotional, and chiefly lower emotional, stage – emotional invulnerability, unconcern for everything, emotional stability, divine indifference to whatever happens to your incarnation, forgetfulness of your own self (the first self) enter into the most valuable quality: the prerequisite of the will to unity. Anyone who wishes to become a mental self must learn how to be completely independent of everything emotional. This does not in the least mean absence of love but power over emotional life. That life can and must be controlled by mental will. In that way emotion can become a tool instead of a hindrance; positive, attractive feelings that promote unity can become allies of the will instead of negative enemies of it.

⁴All envelopes of incarnation except the causal triad envelope are robots controlled by energies coming from within, from higher envelopes, and, in the majority, above all coming from without. The mental envelope is influenced by mental vibrations; the emotional envelope, by vibrations from the emotional world (which means vibrations from other people); the etheric envelope and the organism, by so-called cosmic energies (all kinds of atomic energies). Only when the individual has become a second self (an essential self, a 46-self) will he be able to make himself independent of other kinds of energies than the ones he selects himself. Most people are slaves to their robots, which means that “man lacks free will”, an esoteric expression that ignorance has picked up and must misunderstand. The self is not free as long as it is dominated by its envelopes. It is the privilege of the esoterician to see the enormous limitation of the first self and the limit to his possible understanding (by contact with the causal and essential worlds through centres of the causal envelope).

11.4 The Will to Unity

¹The will to unity is at the same time the will to law, the law of unity, the “divine love” which the first self must acquire in order to become a second self.

²That inner security which stems from the will to unity, the striving to do the right as far as one sees, always helps man through difficulties in life. He is on the right track and is guided by his Augoeides, even though man is unaware of it, when he trusts his Augoeides to help him after he has done his utmost. Man can then be sure that whatever happens is the best, even though he does not understand it.

³The content of noble qualities is due to the efficiency of the will to unity, the ability to resist evil even if it “causes some trouble”, not to compromise with what you know to be right. You help nobody by yielding to unwarranted claims, by bolstering up vice. Outsiders often regard the saint as a “hard individual”, because he is free from any kind of sentimentality, something that most people do not know what it is. It is a matter of “enlarging the concept” of qualities. Thus for example gratitude is gratitude for everything, for everything that life grants you, for the affection and understanding of others, etc.

⁴Service is no “sacrifice” but is based on the insight that all are one, the will to unity with all you can serve, an irresistible urge to live for all, something inescapable and spontaneous without thoughts of your own self and its development. There is for the second self nothing that can be called “sacrifice”, even though it may so appear to others, and hence the term. Forgetfulness of your own self means liberation from dependence on the first triad, later the second triad, then the third triad, and so forth throughout the cosmos. The monad must assimilate the different kinds of consciousness and acquire the capacity to understand reality they afford, as well as the pertaining abilities to use the energies correctly, but this is done with a view to better serving life, not with a view to the self. That is the basic attitude of all beings in higher kingdoms and the condition for the monad in the first triad of reaching the second triad. This of course implies the insight as to where you can best serve with your small and ever greater powers, make your small and ever increasing contribution for mankind, evolution, and unity. By faithfully serving in small things, where you stand, you acquire the powers that enable you to make an ever greater contribution. This is part of the law of destiny and what is inevitable in the very process of evolution. The tempo of development is determined by the will to unity and its finality and, as for the rest, by the capacity of individual character for acquiring abilities. All in higher kingdoms do as

best they can without a thought of merit or recognition. The powers they acquire by service guide them to their place of work in the processes of manifestation.

11.5 So-Called Free-Will

¹We do not possess sufficient knowledge of the laws of life to be able to exactly define them or the individual's relation to them: so called free-will. The following facts, however, could perhaps afford us the understanding that is necessary for our needs.

²The original philosophical definition of will was the relation of consciousness to a purpose. Thus will is always determined by motives (the strongest motive), and therein lies its lack of freedom. Free-will implies the possibility of free choice of motives. In primitive people, who are dominated by their impulses, the tendencies of their envelopes, this possibility is absent. The greater power over the impulses of his envelopes man has, the greater his power is to freely choose his motives. He is relatively free when his reason can always decide which motive he is to follow, independently of the tendencies of his envelopes. In practice, he is not even relatively free, since he is instinctively, automatically dependent on the motives that are latent in his subconscious (his "complexes").

³An expression of will is an expression of energy. If this causes friction, then resistance and reaction ensue, and so it does in all worlds. That is why only that man is free whose motives agree with the laws of life, the basic law of which is the law of balance and the energies of which see to it that the balance disturbed is restored. If balance were not restored, the cosmos would degenerate into chaos, and this is true in all worlds.

⁴"My envelopes want this; I do not want it", is a good rule. It is particularly difficult to free yourself from the content of your emotional envelope. The esoterician is taught how to determine himself what is allowed to exist in his envelope consciousnesses. But this requires that he has eliminated the lowest molecular kinds of the envelopes. This he does the most easily by never heeding the consciousness content of those lowest molecular kinds. Then they gradually lose their vitality and power of magnetic attraction, are removed from the envelopes, and are replaced by higher kinds.

⁵The planetary hierarchy fully realizes the distress of our mankind, the hell of life in the physical world, such as it has developed on this planet through the monads' basically hostile attitude to life and their will to power, through the hard conditions of evolution. The planetary government and hierarchy do everything they can. But man has his so-called free-will, inviolable according to the law of freedom. Mankind must itself, by its own

work, liberate itself from its ignorance of life, its illusions and fictions. If men want to go on living in them, then no higher kingdoms are able to help them. By giving mankind the knowledge of reality and life, the hierarchy has indicated the way everybody has to walk. Anyone who does not want to walk it must take his own way and go astray.

11.6 Understanding Will

¹The consciousness aspect can be partially understood through what the average seeker at the stage of the mystic calls “meditation”, that is: emotionalized thinking, imagination, visualization. This is connected with the fact that the consciousness aspect chiefly expresses itself in the second self, that essential consciousness (46) is the kind of consciousness most typical of the second self, and that there is a close contact between emotionality and essentiality. In contrast, the will aspect cannot be understood by any such thinking as wavers between emotionality and mentality, the mentality of the stage of culture. Just as the will aspect expresses itself chiefly in the third self – that is, one step beyond the second self – so the understanding of will requires a thinking of a higher kind, namely that thinking which marks the transition from mental to causal consciousness. Such a thinking emerges in moments of self-consciousness, self-remembrance. Self-consciousness has a consciousness aspect and a will aspect. In the beginning, disciples have a tendency to emphasize the consciousness aspect at the expense of the will aspect, and this is seen in their understanding of self-consciousness and self-remembrance as well. However, if in moments of consciousness they reach the deepest understanding of consciousness, then in moments of will they reach the deepest understanding of will. And moments of self-consciousness induced by will are such moments of will.

²In the following explanation let us use the terms “matter aspect”, “consciousness aspect”, and “will aspect” not in their literal sense, but as designations of individuals or collectives who are at different stages of development and, therefore, are characterized by some one of the three aspects in particular. Then a number of little considered truths can be established: 1) The consciousness aspect cannot understand the will aspect, no more than the matter aspect can understand the consciousness aspect. 2) The matter aspect cannot even understand itself. 3) The consciousness aspect can understand the matter aspect and itself. 4) The will aspect can understand not only itself but the matter aspect and the consciousness aspect as well. 5) The will aspect understands the consciousness aspect better than the latter understands itself. 6) That is why the will aspect is the synthesizing aspect. It alone surveys the whole. 7) All these truths stand out with the greatest clarity when the three selves are compared with each

other; for the first self represents the matter aspect; the second self, the consciousness aspect; and the third self, the will aspect. The first self understands neither the second self nor the third self, nor even itself. The second self understands itself and the first self. The third self understands itself and the lower two selves. The lower cannot understand the higher, the higher understands the lower. The first self can only strive after the understanding that is fully possessed by the second self. But what is meant by “the will aspect understands the consciousness aspect better than the latter understands itself”? Simply this: the consciousness aspect has too strong a tendency to regard consciousness, insight, understanding as aims in themselves, whereas the will aspect views them as mere tools of realization.

³An example of what kinds of meditation disciples of the planetary hierarchy are recommended to perform is seen in the following assignment, which D.K. gave to a pupil who had three envelopes of the first department. It had reference to the motion aspect (the “will”) and the supreme representative of that aspect, the planetary government. He was asked to reflect on “the problem of will in all its relationships” as purpose such as it appears in the planet, such as it works out in man’s life, in the relation between his own will and Augoeides’ plan with his life and the relation of this plan to the “divine will”, his causal will to his group will, the relation of this group will to the hierarchy’s will and this will to the government will.

11.7 The Parting of the Ways

¹The planetary hierarchy does not regard the first and second initiations as major initiations. Only the third is so regarded, because only at that initiation the first triad and the envelopes of incarnation are flooded with energy coming from the second triad 45-molecule – the “will and purpose aspect of the soul” – via the will centre (47:1) of the causal envelope. To this kind of energy the black magician is not responsive. He can and does respond to the knowledge existing in the knowledge centre (47:3) of the causal envelope. He can also appropriate and utilize some of the energy of attraction stored up in the unity centre (47:2). But he cannot receive and use the mental atomic energy that conveys knowledge of the plan of the planetary government and that controls the transformation of knowledge into wisdom (from 47:4 into 47:3, to begin with). It is that will energy of the causal centre which by its consciousness aspect clarifies the finality of action and by its motion aspect affords power of action to group consciousness and cohesion to the group itself. It is at this point that the two ways – the way of darkness and the way of light – diverge. Right up to

the third initiation, illusions and fictions may determine the views of those seeking to understand the conditions of discipleship, so that they may mistake the untrue for the true and the unreal for the real. The candidates of black magic lead pure and disciplined lives for their own safeguarding, but not in order to convey material energies of higher kinds, as do the disciples of the planetary hierarchy. They work with the power of magnetic attraction with and in groups, but they do this for their own selfish ends and not in accord with the plan of the planetary hierarchy. They do not attain the third initiation, however, but the ways part before it. The third initiation is attained only by the true disciples of the planetary hierarchy, and they are the only ones to receive in full the energy coming from the second triad and to establish a first contact with the third triad, the true manifestation of the will where our solar system is concerned. The Pythagorean symbol for this choice at the parting of the ways was the letter Y.

PRACTICE OR LESSER SCALE

11.8 Self-Activation is the Acquisition of Will

¹Evolution is the self-activation of consciousness. What does this mean? It means the acquisition of will by consciousness in ever higher worlds. Self-activated consciousness is consciousness activated by the monad's own will. At the present stage of mankind's general development, the emotional stage, this self-activated consciousness is found chiefly in the physical and emotional envelopes. In the mental envelope it is rare, and when it occurs, it is faint and of brief duration. This fact is demonstrated in the quality of attention: directed attention is attention of the best and rarest kind, which most people have difficulty in keeping. It is so difficult because of the faint development of mental will in the majority. Only the mental self is able to direct attention, using mental will, for an unlimited time. More difficult still is keeping self-consciousness. Only the causal self is able to keep self-consciousness, using causal will, for an unlimited time.

²A number of insights very important for self-realization may be derived from what was just said. Namely: the emotional self can develop into a mental self by increasingly, more and more often, directing attention using the will of thought. Because at the moments when the monad directs its attention in this way it is no longer an emotional self, but a mental self. The more often and the longer the monad does this, the less emotional self it is and the more mental self it becomes. And if the monad, on these occasions of directed attention, moreover succeeds in creating moments of self-consciousness, the monad is a causal self temporarily, so to speak. This is

how the activation of higher consciousness from lower is done. It is not an all-or-nothing process, so that you are supposed to be an emotional self only and remain one until you are a mental self all of a sudden, and then to one hundred per cent. Such an idea is an instance of formatory thinking. Quite the reverse: we have to understand that in lower kinds of consciousness there are preparations and precursors of the higher kinds.

11.9 Being able to Do and not being able to Do

¹In school work the idea that we cannot do is very important, and we must always return to it. Summed up in the simplest way it says: “Everything happens. People can do nothing.” From the time we are born to the time we die things happen, happen, happen, and we think we are doing them. This is our normal state in life, and even the smallest possibility to do something comes only through the work on consciousness, and at first only in oneself, not externally. Even in oneself doing very often begins by not-doing. Before we can do something that we could not do, we must not-do many things which before we only believed we did, that is, we allowed them to happen mechanically. For instance, we cannot awake by just wanting to awake, but we can prevent ourselves sleeping too much and too long.

²It is about understanding – not through theories but through self-observation – that one of the principal traits of our being is that we cannot do what we decide. We decide, for instance, to observe ourselves, to remember ourselves, not to express negative emotions. If we observe ourselves fairly thoroughly and are somewhat honest, then we must concede that we cannot do it. It does not need to remain so, however. Man can change, also from his present condition. But “can change” does not mean that he changes automatically. Change requires knowledge, understanding, and expedient effort from within one’s being.

³We are so accustomed to thinking that things could be different that we do not try to change the things we could change. We can change today, but yesterday is finished. If we change today, tomorrow things can happen differently. It looks like a contradiction, but it is precisely our belief that things can be different that prevents us from doing what we can to make them different.

⁴This fact that in your ordinary, mechanical state you cannot do, you do not come to the understanding of it just like that. It comes after some time of work on yourself, so that when you come to this realization you have many other realizations besides; chiefly that there are ways to change if you apply the right instrument at the right place and at the right time. You must have these instruments, and these again are only given by work. It is very

important to come to this realization. Without it you will not do the right things, you will excuse yourself.

⁵Try to remember instances when you tried to do something differently and see how you always came back to the same thing even if you made a slight deviation – enormous forces driving you back to the old ways. This is how you can understand it.

⁶Our power of choice begins only when we begin to realize our situation, our mechanicalness, and when we begin to struggle for something else. There are possibilities for that. But regarding this as either determinism or freedom is a formatory way of thinking. Some things are determined, some less determined, some are in our power, if we know how to change them or how to turn them. Only, we must know. All such things are relative.

⁷In trying to become conscious all man's work is his own.

⁸Neither consciousness nor will can develop mechanically. Every small thing has to be developed by struggle, otherwise it would not be consciousness or will. It has to be made difficult.

⁹But in that case we must consider what and how, and *how* is more important than *what*. Most people think about *what* to do, and *why* they did something, but they do not think about *how*. Often the things they decide to do are impossible, like stopping wars and other such things. Also, their thinking about the possibility of self-development is usually too theoretical, does not deal with real things, real forces, real hindrances. They need to start on a much smaller scale. Instead of asking, "Why did I do this?", they should ask, "How could I have done it in another way?"

¹⁰When understanding this it is necessary to refrain from thinking in a formatory way, because every idea carried too far becomes its own opposite. That is how formatory thinking works. If you persuade yourself too seriously that you can do nothing, you will find that you really can do nothing. It is a question of relativity. Also consider that the idea of not being able to do refers to people who are not connected with any teaching. When one begins to study certain teachings or systems which give school methods, one has to try to do certain things. In the work we have to do, for if we do not try to do, we will never develop. We have to do from the very beginning – not much, but very definite things. If you are able not to identify, it is already the beginning of doing. If you can refrain from talk when you have an inclination to talk, that is already doing. Doing begins with going against the current – first in oneself, in personal things.

¹¹Some people realize through self-observation how difficult it is to truly do something oneself, and they say then that they need a teacher for this. A teacher cannot do anything for them, however. The teacher can only give them certain tasks, but they have to do them themselves. The teacher

cannot help those who have not begun to do themselves. For everything there is a preparation, a preliminary stage, and for discipleship too. And at this preliminary stage, the aspirants are advised not to do instead of doing. They learn to do by first learning not to do. Instead of doing things they consider desirable they have to try the other way round – not to do things that are undesirable.

¹²We cannot wait until we change. There is one very important principle in school work – we should never work in accordance with our force, but always beyond our force. This is an immutable principle. In the work we always have to do more than we can; only then can we change. If we do only what appears possible in our usual state, we shall remain in it. One has to do what appears to be impossible. You must not take the word “impossible” on too big a scale, but even a little means much. This is different from ordinary life – there you only do what is possible. The constancy of certain habits is an example.

¹³It is necessary to put more energy into things – into self-study, self-observation, self-remembering and all that. And in order to put more energy into your work it is necessary to find where it is being spent. You awake every morning with a certain amount of energy. It may be spent in many different ways. A certain amount is necessary for self-remembering, for the theoretical study of the knowledge, and so on. But if you spend this energy on other things, nothing remains for that work.

¹⁴Try to calculate every morning how much energy you intend to spend on the work in comparison with other things! You will then see that even in elementary things, simply in relation to time, you give the work very little, if anything at all, and you give most of your time to quite meaningless things.

¹⁵Therefore it is necessary to put more pressure into your own work. In study groups it may be noticed that only few people speak – the others only want to listen, for it is more peaceful, more comfortable, more pleasant. Then they do not work on the thoughts they receive through the teaching. It is mental laziness, general laziness, aversion to effort. This laziness and aversion must be overcome. You cannot get anything out of school work by being lazy, or by doing one thing and leaving everything else.

11.10 Developing Will

¹Work on intellect means thinking in a new way, creating new points of view, destroying illusions. Work on emotions means not expressing negative emotions, not identifying, not demanding consideration. Later on it also means doing, working on the emotions themselves. But what does work on will mean? It means work on one's actions. First we must ask our-

selves: What is will in an undeveloped man? The answer is that it is the resultant of mechanical desires.

²Then we have to ask ourselves on what the will of a fully developed man could be based. The answer is that it must be based on full consciousness, and this implies knowledge and understanding connected with self-consciousness and a permanent self (the continuity of consciousness). So four things are necessary: knowledge, understanding, consciousness, and a permanent self. Only those people who have these four things can have real will; that means a will that is independent of desires or anything else. Those who do not yet have these four may of course develop them, increase their presence and power, make them come more often and last longer. Thus any all-or-nothing condition is not implied here.

³We have to understand will as something relative: there are different wills on different levels. A mechanical man who never thinks of development has only a multitude of small wills that are quite mechanical. He has a certain desire: one side of him wants to do something and another side is afraid that he will be punished if he does it. A struggle ensues between the different tendencies, and the result of this struggle – or the resultant to use the language of mechanics – we call “will” in his case. A more conscious man has another kind of will.

⁴Then in order to develop will one must go against desires. First of all man must become one. In his undeveloped, “normal” state, he is not one but is many, hundreds of small “selves” and hundreds of small “wills”. If you want to develop an independent will you must become one and conscious. Will depends on unity and consciousness.

⁵Someone asks: If we are determined to do something we do not like, and manage to do it, are we not using will? The answer is: No, for it may depend on some illusory emotion such as fear, hope, desire for a reward, recognition and so on. Perhaps we are afraid of what may happen if we do not do it, or perhaps we expect some reward either in this life or the next or being praised by others – many things are possible. Generally we are either afraid of something, or expect some kind of benefit from it. As a rule the term “will” is used in a relative sense, but when we speak of will here, we have to speak of a certain level of consciousness. Before we can speak of the possibility of will we must at least have a central point which can control the rest. Will means liberation from the mechanical state, the state conditioned by the envelopes.

⁶Will cannot grow without effort. You have to save energy to collect enough for struggle with certain weaknesses. Suppose you realize something is a weakness and that you must struggle with it, but you find that you have not enough energy; you can then try to do some smaller thing which is

not so difficult and in this way you will save energy. Generally speaking, we miss opportunities of making small efforts. We disregard them, do not consider them important enough. Yet we can increase our capacity for making efforts only by making these small efforts which we disregard.

⁷Desire is not will, not even desire to develop can be called will. Will belongs to the whole of man's being and is another side of self-consciousness. Even in his present state of consciousness man can know the difference between desire and will. He can do so by observing himself and realizing through this that it is desire when it just happens to him, without intention, consciousness, or plan, and that it is will when he can do what "it" does not desire. One part of you wants to awake. But the larger part of you wants to sleep. Your task then must be to decide on whose side you are, and then help that side.

⁸Sometimes there arises a strong desire that is against the work, and if we stop it, it means we apply will. It is not at every moment that we can apply will but only at special moments. And what does "against the work" mean? It means against rules and principles of the work or against something you are personally told to do or have engaged to do. There are certain general rules and principles, and there may be personal conditions for different people.

⁹One moment you realize that you are a machine, but the next moment you want to act according to your own opinion. At that moment you must be able to stop, not to do what you want mechanically. This does not apply to moments when you have no intention of doing anything, but you must be able to stop if your desire goes against rules or principles, or against what you have been told. It often happens that people go on studying and miss these moments. They think they work when nothing happens. We cannot always work equally; at one moment passive study is sufficient, at another moment it is necessary to go against oneself, to stop.

¹⁰Discipline is good if it is discipline. But if it is just an arbitrary invention, then it can give no result. The most important aspect of discipline is not expressing negative emotions and not indulging in negative emotions. Mechanical tasks cannot give any result, but if you catch yourself at a moment of negative emotion and stop it – then this is discipline.

¹¹That is why self-remembering is necessary. Self-remembering is not only self-awareness, it means also a certain capacity to act in a certain way, to do what you consciously want. In our logical thinking, logical knowledge, we separate consciousness from will. In reality, however, they are not separate. Consciousness means will, and will means freedom.

¹²What do you want to get by being conscious? You must not think that you can answer this question immediately. It is very difficult to answer it.

But you must keep coming back to it, keep working at it. With time, with qualitative work, the answer to that question becomes more important, more valuable.

¹³If you remember your aim, think about it, find more and more reasons why you should work, your will will move in one direction and will get stronger. If you forget your aim, think of it only seldom, then you get slack, you fall asleep.

¹⁴If you work too much on understanding and knowledge and neglect will, then instead of growing stronger your will will become weaker, or remain the same as it was, instead of growing stronger. If will remains undeveloped, the development of understanding cannot help much. Then you may understand a great deal and yet not be able to do anything about it. So from the very beginning you must start making serious efforts to develop will.

¹⁵Self-will and wilfulness are described as general hindrances, and in some people, they are particularly serious hindrances. There is no particular difference between self-will and wilfulness. Both are manifestations of the same thing – generally, manifestations of defiance. It is will created and controlled by defiance. This will we have, but it does not come from us, it comes from the obstacle. Self-will is expressed when, for instance, someone sees that a man does not know how to do a thing and offers to explain, but the man says, “No, I will do it myself”, “I will decide it myself”, “I don’t want to listen to anybody”, and so on. Wilfulness is much the same, only more general – it can be a kind of habit. It is mechanical will, generally based on wrong assumptions about oneself and one’s experience. Self-will is self-assertion. If you compare self-will with a normal action, you will see that there is always some defiance in it – you want to do something you should not do. In studying ideas you know that certain things you must avoid, but you want exactly those things. If you start with this in thinking about self-will, you will find your own examples.

¹⁶In the work every moment one has to overcome laziness, inertia, wanting to stop. If one does not work there is nothing to overcome, but if one works at anything one always has to overcome one’s desire to stop working. If you want to change something it is not enough to look at it. Looking at a thing will not change it. Work means friction, conflict between “yes” and “no”, between the part that wishes to work and the part that does not wish to work.

¹⁷It is necessary to be active in the work; one can get nothing by being passive. We forget the beginning, where and why we started, and most of the time we never think about aim, but only about small details. No details are of any use without aim. Self-remembering is of no use without

remembering the aims of the work and your original fundamental aim. If these aims are not remembered also emotionally, years may pass and one will remain in the same state. It is not enough to educate the intellect; it is necessary to educate the will, too.

¹⁸Effort is our money. If we want something, we must pay with effort. According to the strength of effort and the time of effort – in the sense of whether it is the right time for effort or not – we obtain results. Effort needs knowledge, knowledge of the moments when effort is useful. It is necessary to learn by long practice how to produce and apply effort. The efforts we can make are efforts of self-observation and self-remembering.

¹⁹The first thing you have to decide is to do your own work and to do it regularly, to remind yourself about it, not to let it slip away. We forget things too easily. We decide to make efforts – certain kind of efforts and certain kind of observation – and then just ordinary things, ordinary mechanical events, interrupt it all and we forget. Again we remember and again we forget, and so it goes on. It is necessary to forget less and to remember more, it is necessary to keep certain realizations, certain things that you have already seen and understood, always with you. You need to apply will to remembrance, too.

²⁰You decide to work, to do something, to change things – and then you remain just where you were. Try to think about your work, what you are trying to do, why you are trying to do it, what helps you to do it and what hinders you, both from outside and inside. Your thought is the most important tool of your work.

²¹If you make regular efforts, that will help you to go on. This is one of the realizable decisions you can make. In the work you must make only possible decisions, and decisions which have to be remembered.

²²At certain moments we are faced with particularly important decisions in life. That is when we arrive at a cross-roads. All life consists of streets and cross-roads. We are being pushed along, so to speak, not being able to make our own decisions, but suddenly we have the possibility of choice, of turning to the right or the left or continuing ahead. Making the right decision at cross-roads may be done more systematically if one has a centre of gravity. Then one thing will continue to be more important and one will always turn in the same direction, so that one is moving ahead towards one's goal.

11.11 The Long Thought of the Will to Sacrifice

¹My insight is that in order to reach the higher I must sacrifice the lower, that the path to freedom (the fifth kingdom in nature) is to give out love and sacrifice, that sacrifice means to give up egoism to serve evolution and

mankind.

²This is no new teaching but was known to the ancients. Using gnostic parlance we say that we should become “sacrifices of atonement” by “taking up our cross” and like Jeshu bear the “sins of the world”, endure contempt, calumny, persecution, etc. Only so can we be liberated from our illusions, from our identification with the lower.

³With each higher kind of consciousness (energy, reality) the self acquires, the self is liberated from its dependence on lower kinds: in turn from its dependence on being attached to things physical, emotional, mental, causal, etc. Then the lower has once and for all lost its allurements, its power to fascinate, to lead astray. This is the essence of freedom, the gaining of power over whatever has held sway until then, the liberation from life-ignorance and impotence.

⁴As long as life in lower worlds can enchant and attach and hinder us from striving for the infinitely richer life of the fifth natural kingdom, so long we have still much to learn, we condemn ourselves to further incarnations. What we should be able to learn from life at the mental stage is that human wisdom affords us no knowledge of reality and life, that the kingdom of man is but a kingdom of preparation.

⁵It is important to realize that you do not give up the lower until you have mastered it completely and you know that it has fulfilled its purpose, has nothing more to teach you. You reach nothing higher by “sacrificing the lower for the higher” before all conditions are fulfilled. That is a thing you can never decide by yourself. The will to renounce, the power to renounce, is a good thing, but to renounce too soon is always a mistake.

⁶We must give up suffering and we must also suffer in order to develop. These are not two contradictory principles. There is much unnecessary suffering, which one does not want to give up. Then there is some inevitable and necessary suffering, which one must accept if one wants to get something: knowledge, understanding, qualities. On the way, not all at once, one has to sacrifice all unnecessary things: wrong theories, talk, imaginary suffering.

⁷Much of our suffering is not real, and we increase it by imagination. Real suffering is limited by many things, by time for instance. It may be impossible to stop or limit imaginary suffering. Imaginary suffering takes away knowledge. Real suffering may not be connected with negative emotions; imaginary suffering always is.

⁸Everybody has some kind of suffering he does not want to give up, self-pity, for instance. Such imaginary suffering can be the man’s most cherished possession. For many people, to sacrifice their chief negative emotion would mean sacrificing their whole life. It has already become a

habit. In order to get rid of unnecessary suffering, the first step is to decide to give it up in one's mind. One efficient method of doing this is realizing that there are higher and lower values; another method is dividing things into real and imaginary ones.

⁹Everything has its price. If you want something you have to sacrifice something. Suppose you have a grievance, either you are hurt or offended or something. Sacrifice your imagined suffering – negative emotions and negative imagination. It is a great liberation to realize: “I have nothing to worry about. Nobody is guilty.”

¹⁰By itself suffering can bring nothing, but if one remembers oneself in connection with it, it can be a great force. Usually people try to escape suffering, or they identify themselves with it and in this way destroy something that could be of the greatest benefit to them. Until we get rid of useless suffering we cannot come to the useful.

¹¹We get nothing by pleasure; from that we can only get suffering. Efforts are usually suffering, realizations are often suffering, unpleasant truths about ourselves. Value suffering from the point of view whether it helps or hinders your work!

¹²Most of our suffering depends on identification, and if identification disappears, our suffering disappears too. One must realize that it is no use suffering if it is possible not to suffer. Nobody can suffer for anyone else.

¹³Every kind of suffering can be transformed into positive emotion, but *only if it is* transformed. Nothing transforms itself. It must be transformed by effort of will and by knowledge.

¹⁴If you receive suffering voluntarily, consciously, you can rid yourself of it and become free. Voluntary suffering can become school work. Nothing is more difficult and at the same time nothing can create so much force as voluntary suffering, suffering received without identification and without negative emotion.

¹⁵We are far from understanding the idea of suffering, but if we realize that small things can be attained with small suffering and big ones with big suffering, we shall understand that it will always be proportionate.

¹⁶There is suffering which can be relieved and suffering which cannot be relieved because it depends on bigger causes. Sleeping people have to suffer, because only suffering can eventually wake them up. If they can arrange their lives so as to be happy and contented in sleep, they will never awake.

12 UNITY

12.1 The Law of Unity

¹The law of unity guarantees that the unity of all life will be realized some time. The law of development and the law of destiny guarantee the never-ending development of all life. The law of reaping guarantees the implacable justice of life.

²All consciousness activity that has not reached the stage of emotional attraction or the stage of essential unity violates the law of freedom, the law of unity, and the law of development.

³That race or nation which regards itself to be superior to others violates the law of unity, and this has consequences.

⁴At lower stages man has no prospect of living rationally or in accord with the laws of life. To be able to grasp the law of unity and the unity of all life he must (at the stage of the mystic) have experienced attraction and the happiness it bestows.

⁵The talk about freedom from responsibility is typical of mankind's almost total ignorance of life. There is no such thing as freedom from responsibility. We all make up a unity whether we know it or not. This means that we are all responsible for everything that is and happens. Our common participation, during thousands of incarnations, in everything thought, felt, said, and done has contributed to making it as it is. Even by our thoughts we work for or against the consciousness development of all. We are responsible for everything we think or have thought. As human beings we share in the responsibility for lower kingdoms. If you think you can be free from responsibility, then you think you can make yourself independent of laws of nature and laws of life. There is only one way: to apply them.

⁶The energies pouring down through the causal envelope and keeping the lower envelopes alive act differently on different individuals, since everything is unique: the individual's envelopes, the matter of those envelopes, consciousness in the envelopes (due to unique experiences in all the processes of involution, evolution, and evolution). The energies pouring down are unique, since the compositions of atoms making up those currents always are unique. General features are shared in common, particular ones make up individual character. No two conceptions are absolutely identical in all respects, but essential features are shared in common. All this makes itself felt in the law of freedom and the law of unity, two fundamental laws of life, both reciprocally dependent and inevitable: the individual character of everything and the unity of all things.

⁷Anyone who in his consciousness development has not reached up to the understanding of unity as the necessary condition of freedom and power has still much to learn. There is no other way when the individual has reached self-determination: either the unity of all or the war of all against all.

⁸The tests the disciples must undergo are according to the law of reaping. They have asked to become helpers, and the more liberated from old sowing they are, the freer they are to help. Many think that what they must endure often verges on the bearable. This is a mistake, however, since they cannot know how great resources are at their disposal if they would use them. Nobody who has taken his stand under the law of unity can be put in insuperable difficulties. "Love brings all bad reaping to an end." Then it is another matter whether the disciple voluntarily assumes sacrifices in order to help.

⁹The esoteric axiom goes: "As man thinks, hopes, and wills, so is he." It is not a matter of "faith" but of will, an unrelenting, purposive direction with dynamized individual energy. When the individual's will is in harmony with the law of unity, the law of development, and the law of self-realization, then the saying "be done to you as you will" will be literally true. Then man's will has become "god's will" (not the other way round). The saying "not my will, but thine" means precisely this.

12.2 The Love and Wisdom of God

¹Probably the majority of people are prepared to accept the existence of a fundamental intelligence (usually called "god"), the truths that behind all appearances the impelling force is love, that all the best things in man (the will to unity and understanding) are the effect of the will and activity of god, also the obvious truth that it is in the human kingdom that the will and love of god must be realized, that we do this by becoming the instruments of god among people. Theologians are misguided if they preach something else.

²It is the task of mankind to become realizers of the intention of the solar systemic government on earth through common sense, motivated by love, and activated by the energy of unity. Just as the planetary hierarchy supervises and guides the consciousness development of mankind, so mankind will some time supervise and guide mineral, vegetable, and animal consciousness; transfer mineral monads to the vegetable kingdom, vegetable monads to the animal kingdom, and prepare for the causalization of animal monads.

12.3 General on Unity

¹The entry into the common consciousness of the essential world (46) does not imply that the “self is absorbed into the universal soul” and self-consciousness is annihilated. You cannot be absorbed into something of which you have always been an indestructible part: the share of the monad consciousness (even though unconscious in lower kingdoms) in the cosmic total consciousness.

²Each and every monad (primordial atom) is an individual possessing an unlosable individual character and, upon its acquisition of an unlosable continuity of consciousness between triads and envelopes, also possessing an unlosable self-identity. After the monad has been introduced into the cosmos and its potential consciousness has been actualized, it has but one way to go, and that is (however long epochs it will take) to become a highest cosmic self (a 1-self in the highest cosmic world). The tempo of development of the different selves can be widely different. There are those who set records in developmental rapidity and developmental inertia; those who pass through the human kingdom in one eon and those who use eons in several solar systems until they decide to put their will at the service of evolution and not live for themselves, for their self-assertion, their power any more.

³Self-asserters will have everything their way, and others to comply with their will. To enter unity, to become one with all, is impossible for them. It takes them absurdly long time to pay off their debts to all monads in all kingdoms. Debts must be paid to the last penny. That law of justice cannot be altered by anyone. We forgive others, and that is the best for us. For the law, however, there is no “forgiveness”, only redress.

⁴Potentially, all (all monads) are one, thanks to their unlosable share in the cosmic total consciousness. It is the task of the individual to actualize that unity by applying the law of self-realization, by acquiring ever higher kinds of self-consciousness in ever higher worlds and kingdoms. It is only as an essential self (46-self) that the individual becomes constantly conscious of unity by living in it.

⁵Even at the stage of the mystic, however, he can for some moment reach up to the essential consciousness of the second triad and have the same awareness of unity and so the sense of being “one with god”, become conscious of his godhood (god immanent). At the mental stage, he can, through a sudden causal intuition, experience that the hylozoic view he has incorporated with his mental consciousness agrees with reality, and then he also knows that he is god immanent, divine in essence, and that it is only a matter of time when he will become a second self.

⁶We are all embraced by unity, whether we know it or not. Those who sense this know that the more we love, the more love pours through us to others and the more we seek to be a vibrant centre of fundamental universal love.

⁷We have entered unity when we have come to consciously share in the cosmic total consciousness. This has nothing to do with the demand for so-called equality, which is ignorant of the enormous number of developmental levels from the lowest level of the mineral kingdom to the highest cosmic level. But it means that all are united in their striving towards the same goal.

⁸Unity is universality. In it, there is no longer a matter of individuality, love for some certain individual or thing, but for all without exception. Individuality, even the existence of your own self, then has lost its meaning. As long as the individual feels he is an individual he does not understand the state mentioned. In it, there is no awareness of opposition between me and you. This can be grasped by those alone who have entered the consciousness of unity.

⁹In the conscious collective consciousness (that of world 46 and all higher worlds), all individual thinking disappears (there is no me or you) in the individual himself. He lives in collective consciousness, in common consciousness with others. To fully understand this it is of course necessary to acquire essential (46) consciousness.

¹⁰The whole cosmos is one great process of development. All the processes of manifestation (also the processes of involution and evolution) can be regarded as stages preliminary to the final process. The process of evolution goes continuously from unity to diversity, and from diversity to unity. When the next goal has been reached, a world has been conquered, striving begins anew, and so it goes on until the individual has entered the cosmic total consciousness, an endless service with endless powers to do it, work for the liberation of everybody from the limitations of imperfection. The more monads are liberated, the greater is the common bliss. The striving for power is a striving for isolation resulting in fear of greater powers and contempt for lesser ones.

¹¹The inept occult saying about the self and the not-self and the ultimate understanding that they are one can be better replaced with the explanation that the monad as well as its envelopes (with their atoms) share in the cosmic total consciousness and therefore are "one". Everything makes up a unity, because there is only one single consciousness. Also the talk about identification is misleading, since it, too, implies opposites. It should be apparent from what is said here that actually even essentiality is beyond all human concepts. The essential perception of "self" is the same as the

perception of everything, the life of the whole. The part is a unitary part of unity.

¹²A man who has not entered unity, who has not become an essential self, is always outside unity. He can experience unity, in rare moments contact the essential world, but cannot enter it. He can become a saint (the highest emotional level with the emotional attraction to all living beings), but he is not therefore an essential self, has not entered unity. On this point all religions are mistaken.

¹³The disoriented seeker has no perception of “god immanent” when doing all kinds of stupidities. That is so because the monad’s share in the cosmic total consciousness cannot be perceived by lower consciousness than the essential (46). It is only when you have attained 46-consciousness that you become aware of your share in cosmic divinity (1–46). We must now hope that countless fantasists who hear about this final goal will not, as usual, believe they are essential selves!

¹⁴A higher kind of consciousness enables the individual to acquire the pertaining knowledge, but that is a possibility which must be exploited through research and application. The entire development is continuous work for yourself and for others. The energy and knowledge to do it we receive from the individuals of higher worlds whom we shall some time be able to emulate in a mutual give and take. Drones become laggards. For anyone who has entered unity the service of life will be his supreme bliss.

¹⁵The esoterician experiences emotional consciousness as happiness, mental consciousness as joy, and essential consciousness as bliss. The essential self can say like Lohengrin: “I do not come from pain and darkness. From light and bliss I hither came”, and others sense it in his presence so that they learn that he knows what he is speaking about. No other “proofs” are needed.

12.4 Particular Esoteric Aspects on Unity

¹In esoterics it is preferable to speak of “unity” rather than of “love”, since the word “love” is so abused, has been used of the most egoistic desires, such as separate the individual from unity. Also “love” is confused too often with injudicious sentimentality, which is devoid of reason and discernment and has brought about so much misery. Unity transcends what is mere human and what is too human. This unity is not only superhuman love, however, but also superhuman intelligence and superhuman will. What is meant here is basically essential (46) consciousness. Also the monad’s self-consciousness in the unity centre of the causal envelope is called unity consciousness, for it mediates 46-consciousness to the extent that it can be expressed in 47:2. And at mankind’s present general stage of

development, also higher emotionality (48:2,3) is actually superhuman. Men still have to learn that the higher emotional qualities, the qualities of attraction, are nothing you simply possess merely because you imitate saints. Self-realization through service to mankind, evolution, and unity is required.

²The three main kinds of second triad consciousness have been called “intelligence” (47:1-3), “unity” (46:1-7), and “will” (45:4-7). These terms are analogies with human faculties and are misleading if taken literally. Comprehensible terms are still lacking, since the pertaining kinds of consciousness and energy are beyond possible human experience. In its highest potency, “intelligence” (47:1) implies sovereign understanding of all objective material phenomena in the worlds of man (47:4–49:7). “Unity” (46:1) is consciousness of unity, of community, with understanding of all kinds of consciousness within worlds 46–49. “Will” (45:4) is a synthesis of all energies and consciousnesses within worlds 46–49 and omnipotence in those worlds. The mathematical denotations have the advantage that they exactly indicate the mutual relations between various worlds, atomic kinds, molecular kinds, etc. Indirectly they also intimate how abortive it is to name the three aspects in higher worlds by such terms as cannot even classify the realities referred to.

³Excepting the lowest kind of causal consciousness (47:3), the consciousness of the second self is simultaneous individual and collective consciousness. Also higher causal consciousness is collective consciousness due to the fact that the connection between the unity (47:2) and will (47:1) consciousnesses of the causal envelope is actualized by energies from the second triad.

⁴The fact that it is possible to apprehend reason (intelligence), wisdom (= unity), and will in the lowest worlds is due to the presence of mental, essential, and superessential atoms even in the lowest matter (the physical atom).

12.5 The Contact with Essential (46) Consciousness

¹It takes many incarnations from man’s first spontaneous contact with superconscious worlds (or molecular kinds) until he has developed an ability to contact them methodically. It is the same with the acquisition of lacking qualities; it may take a hundred incarnations before a certain quality has been acquired fifty per cent, unless the individual strives after it methodically and systematically. It is an enormous difference between being “intuitive” one per cent and, as an essential self, one hundred per cent. There is reason for the saying, “you are never finished”. Besides, how many are able to tell the difference between a vagary and a vibration from

the essential world?

²There is every reason to assert emphatically also to occultists that the normal individual is unable to determine whether his “freaks” are intuition, come from his subconscious, or his emotional superconscious, or from Augoeides, or are essential (46) in character. Common sense is his only guide. Essential intuition is inaccessible to all who are not in everything governed by the will to unity and the service of life.

³It is easier for man to contact the second triad essential consciousness than its causal consciousness. Because the essential world is contacted through the first triad emotional atom (via the unity centre of the causal envelope) and not through the mental molecule to the second triad mental atom (via the intelligence centre). This explains why Christos attached such importance to “loving god”. That is the fastest way to develop. If the individual has knowledge of how to establish the connection between emotionality and essentiality and then how to keep it unbroken, he is also able to use essential intuition, which is infallible. That knowledge is obtained in esoterics. This shows that esoterics is very important also to the life view. The only connection between the individual and essential consciousness is his emotional atom. Mental consciousness can contact only causal consciousness. The contact with superessentiality goes through the physical atom. That is why physical incarnation is necessary.

⁴The quickest way of contacting essential consciousness is to strive for loving understanding of everybody, liberated from the vulnerability and infatigability of the first self, unconcerned by everything.

⁵The planetary hierarchy assures that there is no aspirant who cannot intensify his consciousness of unity, which should not be confused with emotional attraction and its sentimentality.

12.6 Unity is Non-Duality

¹Glibly the neophyte talks of identifying himself with others, and eagerly he endeavours to ascertain his group and merge with it. Yet in so doing he constantly uses the concept of duality: himself and all other selves, himself and the group, himself and the group energy which he may now wield. Yet this is not so in reality. Where true unity is achieved, there is no perception of self and this other, self and these others. Where merging with unity is complete, there is no recognition of individual activity within the group, because the will of the consciousness that has merged with the group consciousness, is one with it, and works in complete accord with it. Where true unity has been acquired, the individual becomes only a channel for the group will and group activity, and this with no effort of his own but simply as a spontaneous reaction.

²When religious people and mystics pray to god, when they desire or long for god, they conceive of god as a being outside themselves. The esoterician knows about the causal envelope and the triad chain and knows that there is one single consciousness in the cosmos. He seeks an ever greater share in this cosmic consciousness by acquiring consciousness in ever higher worlds. He does not conceive of god as transcendent but as immanent. God is in everything, since everything is one consciousness. Therefore, god is not in opposition to the self, but the self is a portion of god.

³If by “god” you mean higher natural kingdoms than the human, then you have the concept of “god transcendent”. When the yogi says, “I am god”, this may mean, either that he understands the unity of consciousness and the unity of everything and that he is part of unity or that he errs in a belief that he has reached the final goal of all evolution.

12.7 The Esoterician's Contact with Unity

¹When passing from the emotional stage to the mental stage many people think they “have lost their contact with spirituality”. That belief is part of emotional illusoriness as well as mental fictitiousness. The esoterician knows that we are all contained in unity and that we can never lose that contact as long as the desire to own it remains. The sense of loneliness and abandonment is an illusion, for we are all enclosed by higher worlds and share in their consciousness, whatever we may believe or feel or think. The individual is so helpless, however, that he may fall a victim to mistaken views of whatever kind. He lacks the factual criterion of truth until he has become conscious in the causal world.

²The esoterician's “god” is the cosmic total consciousness of which he himself makes up an unlosable part (god immanent). His percentage share in this is due to the developmental level he has attained.

³What the mystics call “to live in the sense of god's presence” is related to what esotericians conceive as their share in cosmic total consciousness (and thus potential divinity). The experience of the mystic is emotional, that of the esoterician is mental, but it concerns the same reality. Even the esoterician is wise in learning how to experience this reality not just mentally but also emotionally, for emotionality is the mightiest impelling force in the current eon. For man, it is his Augoeides who represents this “divine presence”, his Augoeides is his soul, the deva deputy of the second triad.

⁴The esoterician has a very simple method of measuring the degree of his capacity and the degree of his humility. He only needs to ask himself: How much can you love, how many can you love, independent of how they

relate to you, how much of all living things can you love, how much remains for you to love of everything superconscious? Even high cosmic beings see how far above them other beings in still higher worlds are. That insight is the basis of their humility.

⁵For the esoterician there is only one “community”, the “community of the saints”, the fifth natural kingdom, the planetary hierarchy. Those communities which are part of mankind are just too imperfect to be of avail to him. It is not the planetary hierarchy, however, which the clairvoyant meets in the emotional world and which so willingly receives him as a member, and which so easily makes him believe that he can soon enough become a mental self as well as a causal self and essential self and many more kinds of higher self. He only needs to pass those initiations to which he is summoned when he has been duly prepared to accept all the illusions that are part of those higher degrees. It is in the nature of the matter that the illusion appears intensely real to the man passing the degrees. Do not try to tell him otherwise for he has experienced “reality”, and he knows what he is talking about.

⁶A piece of good advice to the esoterically ignorant: Don't strive to become clairvoyant! Put that off until you have become essential selves, so that you cannot be deceived, for essential consciousness is the only guarantee!

12.8 Groups

¹There is much talk of the “group” in esoteric literature, for all esoteric work is group work. The word “group” could in most cases better be replaced with the word “collective” or the “general” as opposed to, and as a condition of, the individual. The word “group” refers to a gathering of individuals with common tasks of work. Likewise, the expression “group consciousness” in esoteric literature could better be replaced with “collective consciousness” (on a certain level). There are as many different kinds of collective consciousness as there are levels of development, degrees of acquired understanding of life, individual and general.

²Whenever the uninitiated hear about a group, they think of something separative, exclusive, a group in opposition to other groups. Where esoteric groups are concerned that view is utterly false. There is no exclusivity in unity, and esoteric groups are no isolating entities in the collective. All groups collaborate. The only *raison d'être* of the group is the efficiency it makes possible.

³Everybody adds to the group his individual character, his special ability, his special talents, and the combination of these different energies strengthens the individual's contribution a hundredfold. The group power is

superindividual and that is why it is so efficient.

⁴When the power of understanding – mental and emotional, psychological and cultural – and the capacity for tolerance are almost non-existent, it is natural for people to gather into groups where people can meet in at least one of the respects mentioned. Such self-formed groups are not the same as esoteric groups. According as intolerance increases and understanding is ever more rarely seen, such groups appear to become ever smaller.

12.9 Discipleship is Group Life

¹The influx of disciples is nowadays so great that the teachers have been forced to resort to new methods. Nowadays, no single individual is accepted as a disciple, but the disciple always belongs to a group of nine individuals at the most, and the group is accepted as a disciple. What the disciple is taught becomes the common knowledge of the group. Also the individual teaching about the disciple's envelopes and the particular recommended consciousness activation is communicated to all in the group. There must be no individual isolation. Everybody may know everything about everyone in the group so that the individuals learn how to think collectively as a unit. Unity becomes paramount.

²This means very great advantages for all the members of the group. Everyone in the group is prepared to help the others with his special qualities and abilities, in doing which the individual has an opportunity to be quickly liberated from remaining faults and failings and to quickly acquire the requisite percentage of insufficient qualities. All sense their oneness in full harmony and understanding. This requires from everyone a spirit of self-sacrifice and a total dedication to the task. One individual may delay the work for the others. It is a shared knowledge, ability, and energy, almost like a force of nature. This capacity is put at the disposal of the planetary hierarchy to solve a particular problem of mankind. If a few thousand such groups are formed, the evolution of mankind can be speeded up considerably. The problems may concern any sphere whatever: political, social, scientific, philosophical, esoteric, etc.

³Also, the group is protected from the too forceful energies pouring down. The envelope centres of the disciple cannot assimilate those energies, but they would have a destructive effect if they were received and not passed by without trace. When the old methods were used, the energies were first made to pass through the teacher's envelopes and then transferred to the disciple. In the group, the energies are distributed to several people and therefore they can be absorbed by the group members without harm. The group thus acts as a protection.

⁴The task of the group is to form a common “group soul”, a collective being. Everyone must make his special contribution to that end, using the qualities and abilities of his individual character. These will benefit the others in the group. The common work for the perfection of the “group soul” makes it easier for all to reach the same perfection. Each one-sided individual character is complemented by the others for common allroundness. And sharing in the common group soul facilitates the transition to the essential world, the definitive passing into community. With his collective consciousness, Augoeides does what he can to facilitate this making of collectives. At the dissolution of the causal envelope and transition to the essential envelope, also the “collective soul” is dissolved, since it has then achieved its purpose. The collective being is a material form, made of molecules from all the participants’ envelopes. Exchange of molecules in the form takes place when the individual has activated a higher molecular kind in some one of his envelopes. When perfected, the form consists of the highest molecular kind (the subatomic one) of every member. It should be kept in mind that all the molecular kinds have originally been formed of atoms from the world they belong to, thus consist of atoms.

⁵Also esoteric medicine becomes a group activity. The “healing energies” are a common group force to which everyone contributes with his ability, being fully aware of the state of ill-health and which centre of the etheric envelope is to be worked upon. Thus it is no random healing but an activity that presupposes true expert knowledge.

12.10 The Building of the Bridge

¹The conquest of the second self consciousness means objectively that the individual builds a link between the first triad mental molecule and the second triad mental atom. Using mental ideas the monad builds, piece by piece, the bridge by which it can travel between the first and second triad. The individual builds this link himself by self-initiated consciousness activity, by independent creativity in accord with the laws of life.

²This he does by acquiring knowledge of reality and life according to the law of self-realization. This he does by helping others to gain a greater understanding of life on their levels, a greater understanding of the law of unity or love. This he does by serving all in the ways he is able to or as opportunities arise. This he does by lovingly understanding all and everything, which is something quite different from injudicious sentimentality or personal affection.

³The building of the bridge is no easy work, and it may take several incarnations, depending on the first self’s emotional powers of attraction and mental understanding of reality and life. For the highest emotional and

mental capacity it can succeed in one incarnation, if the self, being free of emotional illusoriness and mental fictitiousness, wants to reach the goal in order to better serve mankind and unity.

⁴When the individual has built the bridge, he can by vitalizing the heart centre acquire consciousness in the second triad essential atom, to begin with only in the lowest kind of essential molecular consciousness (46:7).

12.11 Invocation and Evocation

¹“Invocation” means request; and “evocation”, the meeting of the needs. They correspond partially to the old terms, “prayer” and “granting of prayer”, which have been abused so incredibly. But invocation is much more than what you only mean by “prayer”. It is also the instinctive longing for “something higher” as well as the disciples’ clearly conscious request for assistance from the planetary hierarchy. The needs are always there and are met when there is a prospect for the right use of the energies received, which is seldom the case. If the motive of invocation is to receive assistance in the service of mankind, evolution, and unity, and if there is a prospect for right use, then the assistance will be given: evocation. Evocation thus is intended to have the effect that the insight gained is put into action.

²Dualism in the esoteric sense refers to the opposition of higher and lower. This opposition is always there until the individual has reached the highest cosmic world, although in the worlds of unity (46–1) it is not perceived as opposition. The science of invocation and evocation refers to this very relation; for instance, the mental as lower in relation to the causal as higher. The lower always finds response in the higher whenever the lower is prepared to receive the material energies of the higher. In this “prepared” lie the requisite methodical and systematic conditions for right use. The currents of positive and negative energy are constant and work in both directions: evocatively “downwards” and invocatively “upwards” as evolutionary energies.

³At mankind’s present stage of development, men are unable to use the potential of invocation right, since they lack the knowledge of the laws of life and cannot “demand” right. The prayers of men generally conflict with the laws of life or bring about a strengthening of the selfish tendency or are harmful to their development. Therefore, men receive from the planetary hierarchy requisite formulations, so-called mantras, which they are encouraged to use. Only those are able to utilize these mantras right who understand the import of demand and are prepared to use the energies received right, use them for mankind, evolution, and unity.

AUGOEIDES

12.12 General on Augoeides

¹Augoeides, a deva monad having the capacity of an essential self (a 46-self), has given up his causal envelope to man. By means of this causal envelope he also serves as a causal self for man until man becomes one himself. Subsequently he is the essential self of the causal self until the causal envelope is dissolved and he is set free from his assignment.

²Augoeides lives in the planetary essential consciousness, collective consciousness, common consciousness, consciousness of unity. This means that he represents our share in universal brotherhood.

³The term “god” refers to the great distance in developmental respect. Because there is a fundamental difference between those who are still outside and those who have definitively entered the consciousness of community, of unity.

⁴In unity, the self perceives no opposition between me and you. Anyone who has become an essential (46) self can identify his consciousness with the consciousness of another, can be another simultaneously as he is himself. That is why Augoeides can identify himself with man.

⁵Although all who have entered unity are individuals with their individual characters preserved, they are simultaneously a collective being, and that perception is the primary and dominant one. Also, all collective beings are one. Since all monads in lower kingdoms are part of potential collective beings, there is nothing but collective beings or, more properly, one single cosmic being. Anyone who has entered unity is one with everything in a community of life that is indissoluble.

⁶Augoeides is interested in his protégé and his consciousness development but also in mankind as a whole. If the individual lives for himself and not for mankind, development, and unity, Augoeides can do very little.

⁷As always where consciousness is concerned, the level determines the ability. Much of what is said about Augoeides is grasped differently on different levels. Everybody might test himself.

12.13 Contact with Augoeides

¹In the esoteric literature, the individual is encouraged to acquire intuition almost as though it concerned the faculty of mental judgement. Intuition is a faculty of the second self, however, and to acquire it you must at least be in contact with world 46. Thus the faculty intended can only be a contact with Augoeides, as he can convey mental ideas also at occasional

and sporadic contacts.

²Making a permanent contact with Augoeides requires much more. To do so, the monad in the first triad in the incarnating causal envelope must activate the second triad causal as well as essential consciousness: the causal consciousness in the second triad mental atom (47:1) through the first triad mental molecule (47:4), and the essential consciousness in the essential atom (46:1) through the first triad emotional atom (48:1), both contacts as permanent links via the centres of the causal envelope. The old term for this work was “building the antahkarana”.

³To establish this permanent contact the monad must become a causal self, moreover one having an incipient essential consciousness. The causal link alone is not sufficient, since Augoeides lives in the consciousness of unity and takes no interest in the individual and separative problems of the first self. Emotional attractive energy (48:2) must, via the unity centre of the causal envelope (47:2), activate the passive consciousness of the embryonic essential envelope (46:5-7).

⁴The human monad does this by realizing universal brotherhood in the worlds of man, particularly the physical world, by living for mankind, evolution, and unity. To start building the antahkarana, however, the monad must have become a mental self (47:5). All emotional energy has then become only dynamic, without sentimentality. It is a considerable difference if an emotional self or a mental self activates essential matter with emotional energy. In the latter case the individual has become free from any thought of salvation and reward, any calculation. He serves because he cannot do otherwise. In so doing he contacts the wisdom and unity of essential consciousness.

⁵As long as man feels he is an isolated individual, without the sense of belonging somewhere, and is seeking Augoeides for his personal development and not in order to better serve life, he lacks a contact with essentiality in existence and he will vainly seek to contact Augoeides. Only those who love can reach him. Love, liberated from sentimentality, manifests itself rather as will, not as emotion. Love is unifying energy without reference to your own self.

⁶Thus it is only when the man decides to live for mankind, evolution, and unity, that he may count on the help of Augoeides, and then only for solving problems concerning his services in the three domains mentioned. Augoeides must be assured lest the man should abuse the knowledge and energy received.

⁷Even after man has achieved a contact with Augoeides, there is always a risk that he confuses his inspirations with telepathic “inspiration” from countless directions. It is therefore important not to accept anything that

wars against common sense or the laws of life.

⁸Even if you are unable to become aware of the presence of your Augoeides, it is a good habit, once you have decided to serve mankind, evolution, unity, to consult him in everything concerning this. That habit turns into a tendency to activation of the superconscious. In due time this must yield results and facilitate contact.

⁹It is man's business to get into such a relation to Augoeides that he does not appear as a you, another self, but as man's own soul. This happens at the stage of the mystic and has been formulated in the mystics' writings in many different ways – man's sense of being divine, being god, being one with god, etc. – paradoxical to anyone who has not had the corresponding experience. That is the experience had when contacting the essential world through Augoeides. We understand why the planetary hierarchy when teaching disciples does not differentiate between man as a causal being and Augoeides, but speaks of both as the "soul".

12.14 The Guidance of Augoeides

¹Augoeides guides us through life according to the law of destiny. If he notices that we are becoming hardened egoists, less and less perceptive of his vibrations, that we are cultivating our worse qualities instead of strengthening our better ones, then it may happen that he, in order to wake us up, sees to it that we "fall". Well it has been said that "lead us not into temptation" means: save us so from evil that you need not lead us into temptation.

²That inner security which stems from the will to unity strives to do the right as far as one sees always helps man through difficulties in life. Man is on the right track and is guided by his Augoeides, even though he be unaware of it, when he trusts his Augoeides to help him after he has done his utmost. Man can then be sure that whatever happens is the best, even though he does not understand it.

³We have nothing to worry about. We are well cared for if we only use the offers of life. Augoeides does what he can to guide our development, and all the Augoeides cooperate in helping. It is the fault of men that they prefer living by appearances instead of in reality. It is incredible how they make life difficult for themselves and others. It need not be like that. If men lived for unity, we would live in a paradise and we would share in the knowledge of Augoeides.

⁴Seek the truth yourself and trust your own judgement, however it is! That is better than bothering about what people say, think, and try to make you do. The individual must learn to trust his reason and his Augoeides, who enlightens him when he may do so. There are two kinds of criterion of

truth: the esoteric knowledge system with the knowledge of the laws of life and the proof of unity.

12.15 Becoming an Instrument of Augoeides

¹Augoeides can work directly with man only when man has acquired emotional attraction, which is the stage preparatory to collective consciousness, enables contact with the essential world and receptivity to essential vibrations with aspiration to unity and love for all.

²Man is the instrument of Augoeides in the worlds of man, and Augoeides sees to it that this, his instrument, is shaped to become increasingly expedient. When this is perfect, the human monad as a causal self can use its envelopes in the right way. We need not worry about our development. Augoeides only demands that we are willing to be an instrument and work to make this instrument function physically, emotionally, and mentally. It is no use waiting for initiatives from Augoeides. Man shall develop his faculties by his own work, according to his possibilities. Only in so doing can he become an instrument of Augoeides. When man does his best, Augoeides can, unnoticed, give him opportunities to have new experience to solve some of the countless tasks that Augoeides sees can be solved within man's domains of life. Only on higher levels does man see the meaning of the work he does, which can often appear insignificant and meaningless, as a preparation for more important work. No kind of work is insignificant; that is a truth which is hard for men to grasp. "Him we can trust under *all* circumstances, and his faithful service is pledged to us come well, come ill... He is one who may make innumerable mistakes out of excessive zeal but never is unwilling to repair his fault even at the cost of the greatest self-humiliation; who esteems the sacrifice of comfort and even life something to be cheerfully risked whenever necessary; who will eat any food, or even go without; sleep on any bed, work in any place, fraternize with any outcast, endure any privation for the cause."

13 WISDOM

13.1 What is Wisdom?

¹Philosophy is a quest for truth. Any attempt at limiting that definition must be emphatically rejected. The appropriation of ancient names for some certain branch of research must be deemed impermissible. Indeed, the philosophers of our times will not have the last word. To an esoterician, “modern philosophy” is on the wrong track and is as disoriented in reality and life as all the other products of speculation.

²The philosopher is not wise. He is just a friend of wisdom. Pythagoras, who said this, showed by this that he knew that wisdom is essentiality (46), a stage of consciousness that is attained only when the individual has passed to the fifth natural kingdom. How far from that esoteric realization are the philosophers of our times! They have not acquired even perspective consciousness (47:5).

³Wisdom consists in that latent fund of life experience which has become large enough to be turned into instinct of life, latent mental or causal ideas on the threshold of waking consciousness.

⁴All wisdom is knowledge gained through experience and realized through unity. You understand only what you realize, make real.

⁵To conceive the positive there is in all ideals is the main problem of the art of living; to survey them all in their connectedness is the final goal of human wisdom.

⁶Wisdom is by its very nature “esoteric”, inaccessible to those who have not attained the requisite levels.

⁷“The treasures of wisdom are hidden.” If all the axioms of wisdom were collected into a book, were read like a catechism by everybody, yet the effect of this would be almost nil.

⁸Wisdom is understanding and the ability to apply the law with regard to unity.

⁹Man becomes wise to the extent that he acquires a sense of proportion.

¹⁰Wisdom, the true knowledge, is never preached in the marketplace of opinions (in our times literature and other mass media). That would be pointless. For the knowledge is for the “initiates” (those who have the knowledge latently, and they are scarcely 15 per cent).

¹¹You never need to propagate for and to advertise the true knowledge. You need not repeat it incessantly, preaching it every Sunday and preferably also in between. It is sufficient that the individual has once clearly conceived the idea. Then it is ineradicable and a power in existence

that need not be thrashed over and over again or be emotionalized.

13.2 The Beginning of Wisdom

¹Wisdom is acquired by striving to understand, by sympathizing with all living beings, by sincerity, humility, and the desire to serve. Thereby the finest human qualities are acquired. They are not acquired by learning by heart what is said in books, which is praised as education and a mark of culture. The capacity for judgement thus trained is a very simple ability of inference: it agrees or does not agree with what I have learned (what I believe I know).

²Book-learning may be valuable, if it increases our prospects of having experiences. It may enhance understanding, though only if it serves to awaken latent experience. You can learn from the experiences of another if you have these experiences latently yourself. You cannot learn from the experiences of another, if they are above your own level and outside your own past experience. Platon saw that the wise man may become the most skilful in everything he takes an interest in and has an opportunity to reacquire, just because he has these very abilities latently, having acquired them in previous incarnations.

³Wisdom begins by seeing the importance of “evil” for development as an impelling factor, by seeing the importance of the appearance of the latent faults, by understanding the importance of mistakes and failures. Until then, the passivity and omissions of the negative attitude have been prevalent, laissez-faire has been the most comfortable, the fear of making mistakes has strengthened cowardice. Correctly Dante answered the question, “Who knows good?” by “He who knows evil.” The perversion of evil, which we experience daily, finally teaches us to see the necessity of good. Evil is lawlessness, and the basis of evil is life-ignorance. Because anyone who has true knowledge and insight (which includes the knowledge that existence is incorruptible) does not act against the Law. When that insight has become axiomatic in mankind at large, then man will have come of age, not before.

⁴All people make statements about everything. They are very clever. However, the beginning of wisdom is your realization that you are an idiot: a new formulation of the Sokratean wisdom saying. It is with wisdom as with self-knowledge. It begins when you have realized that you know “nothing”.

13.3 Wisdom is Consciousness of Unity

¹The law of unity (the love for all living creatures) is the foremost of the laws of life. This shows best in the fact that those who apply it instinctively and spontaneously in everyday life are able to accomplish amazing things

with a discrimination that is in accord with true wisdom of life. Theological psychology has always led people astray in this respect as in all others. Not intellectual simplicity but the “simplicity of the heart” is wisdom. The law of unity is the summary of all laws of life, leads directly and the most quickly to the goal (the contact with the essential world, world 46).

²Life is a never-ending series of problems of reality through all the higher worlds and kingdoms in nature. It is characteristic that these problems cannot be solved theoretically but only practically. It is true that you must get to know the facts of existence. But in addition understanding is required and you gain that only by living the life. It is in life that you find the solution, see the solution, not through pondering and speculation. The solution is spontaneous, like a revelation, when you live in unity and for unity. That is the meaning of the ancient saying “love solves all problems”. That is why essential consciousness (46) is called “love and wisdom”, the two being inseparable. There can be no wisdom without love, only prudence.

³The essential life is unity and wisdom. The emotional saint lacks the knowledge of reality, even if he deceives himself that he has gained “cosmic consciousness”. It is not sufficient to have a knowledge of the physical and emotional worlds, and that is why the so-called love (eros) of emotional attraction is often unreasonable and unwise. Only when the individual has acquired the mental, causal, and essential knowledge, can he purposefully apply unity (agape).

⁴The original function of religion was to clarify to the individual (the self) the possibilities of acquiring causal and essential consciousness, acquiring both wisdom and love. This implied, to borrow an expression from Poul Bjerre, “restructuring” the self from “separate self to communal self and to universal self”. Bjerre aptly expresses the different attitudes taken by these three “selves” as follows: “It was your fault. It was our fault. It is my fault.”

13.4 Love Alone Does Not Suffice

¹It is up to ourselves when we shall be able to enter the world of common consciousness, when we shall be able to experience unity. It is the will to unity that develops attraction to all living creatures, and this attraction is a condition of the acquisition of the consciousness of unity. As long as we are in opposition to any living creature, we cannot be “one with all”. Perhaps you understand now what Christos–Maitreya meant by “god is love”, “we are all the children of god”, etc. He had to use such images when addressing the uninitiated who knew nothing of, and could not even grasp, the unity of life. He had to use the word “love”, which designates what is part of emotional consciousness, since this faculty is the highest

one that people can grasp. Emotionality does not suffice, however. Consciousness of unity presupposes and also implies wisdom. If we are to realize unity, we must have some knowledge of life. Feeling is not enough. Will is required, will that impels us to acquire the requisite qualities and abilities, so that we can realize unity.

²Emotionality (feeling and imagination) is no source of knowledge, even though imagination in its highest sphere can contact the essential world and experience the perception of ineffable bliss. It will not be more than a perception, however, since the self at the emotional stage is quite unable to grasp the consciousness of unity, the consciousness of community. It is that attraction, however, and not the desire of blind emotional will, which is supreme wisdom. Essentiality is a combination of unity (“love”, agape) and wisdom, and is far above the wisdom of the saint, far above the saint’s capability of understanding.

³Man’s so-called love of god and of his fellow man is emotional attraction. Such attraction is necessary, for it is the impelling power of all noble actions. It is not sufficient, however, for acting wisely, not even for acting prudently. Love without understanding, without the power of judgement, has caused innumerable and the most incredible follies, has brought about an infinite amount of unnecessary suffering for all parts concerned. Particularly in the matter of upbringing such love is often the ground of wasted lives. Love must be combined with wisdom. Else it can be disastrous.

13.5 Wisdom in Superhuman Kingdoms

¹The supreme representative of the will in our planet of course is the planetary ruler. Next below him are his three “lieutenants”, the three so-called buddhas of activity. These three are the supreme representatives of wisdom in our planet. They are the cosmic prototypes or models of man’s first triad mental molecule, causal centre, and second triad mental atom. These three representatives of wisdom also are responsible for mass causalization of monads from the animal to the human kingdom, the act of initiation, and the presentation to the initiate of a glimpse of the cosmic purpose.

²These the four highest divinities of our planet are spoken of in the catechism of the inner schools with the following words: “Out of the seven virgin-men (kumaras) four sacrificed themselves for the sins of the world and the instruction of the ignorant, to remain till the end of the present manvantara. Though unseen, they are ever present... These are the Head, the Heart, the Soul, and the Seed of undying Knowledge. O disciple, thou shalt never speak of these great ones before a multitude, mentioning them by

name. The wise alone will understand.”

³World 46 has been called the world of unity, since it is in this world, the first world of self-conscious collective consciousness, that we experience unity, the condition of further evolution. But it is simultaneously the world of wisdom. Two ways lead to it: departments 6–4–2, which are called the way of unity, and departments 7–5–3–1, which in world 46 are discovered to be the way of wisdom. Such symbolic terms are very informative to those who strive to understand the meaning and do not interpret everything literally.

⁴In that which the planetary hierarchy calls love–wisdom, love is the force that unites the planetary hierarchy with mankind; wisdom is the force that unites the hierarchy with the planetary government.

⁵The expedient cooperation of the fifth ray with the second ray, causal-mental consciousness subordinate to 46-consciousness, is wisdom.

⁶To the types of the seven departments at the causal stage, the expression of life has a different character than at the stage of the normal individual. To be is will, is wisdom, is thought, is harmony, is knowledge, is attraction, is order of process. Starting from the last, the seventh, you can follow how consciousness expresses itself in evolution, even if imperfectly indicated.

⁷That the wisdom aspect is indispensable should be clear from the following fact. In our solar system, those monads who become second selves on the 6–4–2 line, and so have their love aspect more developed than their wisdom aspect, are many more than those who become second selves on the 7–5–3–1 line and so have their wisdom aspect more developed than their love aspect. However, these “monads of love”, when later having become cosmic selves (42-selves), need to take an “intensive course in cosmic wisdom” in the Sirius system, which is our solar system’s next higher source of wisdom.

⁸Esoterically, the “spiritual” and the “divine” do not refer to the same kind of reality. Spirituality is unity, that is: the consciousness and will of the second self. Divinity is what is symbolically called “will”, that is: the consciousness and will of the third self. Wisdom is the principle uniting them and mediating between them. That is why the perfect 45-self is called the “master of wisdom”, because 45-consciousness and 45-will is what is highest in the second self and what is lowest in the third self.

13.6 Wisdom of Life

¹The spirit of revolt against destiny demonstrates the individual’s self-centredness. The same is true of all emotional suffering.

²You do not see faults in other people that you do not have latently yourself. What is disastrous about hateful criticism is that indulging in it

you rouse what is latent.

³The worlds of man's incarnation are the worlds of ignorance, the worlds of "appearance", the effects of unknown causes. In the causal world, he will see the causes.

⁴Buddha indicated four grounds and causes of suffering: ignorance of the Law and inability to apply the Law; desire or fear of something; inability to live in mentality; inability to observe the following eight rules of wisdom: right knowledge; right thought; right speech; right action; right livelihood, that is not to cause suffering or loss to anybody; right striving; right remembrance; right control of attention.

⁵Buddha never said that "life is suffering". He certainly knew that suffering exists only in the lower three regions of the physical and emotional worlds (49:5-7 and 48:5-7) and then only as bad reaping out of bad sowing.

⁶If man were the supreme product of life, life would not be worth living.

⁷According to theologians, wealth is a gift of god, a sign that god is pleased with the wealthy, has blessed them. Error. Wealth is good reaping out of good sowing and as a rule turns into bad reaping in the next life, because most people abuse the apparent benefits of wealth.

⁸"Everything" that we meet with is reaping and an opportunity for new sowing.

⁹It is part of the wisdom of life not to bereave yourself of the composure you have by fighting "disasters" beforehand, not to enlarge disasters by concentrating on them. As a rule, "nothing will be as good as you hope, nothing as bad as you fear".

¹⁰It is part of the wisdom of life to see the truth of the old saw: "Others may, you may not."

¹¹Half of all wisdom of life consists in saying nothing and believing nothing.

¹²Keep silent about what you know! Let everybody be the master of his wisdom! Never teach except when requested! Answer with questions only! Never controvert anyone!

¹³Anyone who does not forgive ties himself to the one he does not forgive.

¹⁴We are more or less idiots, all of us. But he is the greatest idiot who believes he is not.

¹⁵Common sense is supreme reason. Common sense sees its great ignorance, the relative uselessness of its learning, its lack of discernment.

¹⁶The esoterician distinguishes between emotional happiness, mental joy, and essential "bliss". To the mentalist, "happiness" seems to belong to the infantile stage; and to the essentialist, both happiness and joy fade away.

¹⁷Nobody needs to feel alone who lives for his work. Nobody is alone who has become betrothed to wisdom. We “are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses”, of beings from many worlds! Nobody is alone!

¹⁸It is part of the wisdom of life to forgo power until you are able to use it right. Until then you should only strive for the knowledge that helps you to right understanding.

¹⁹You can never teach the moralists anything in their perverse attitude to all things human.

²⁰There is no such thing as a free gift. Everything received must be paid for, sooner or later, and in all respects. Parasites, too, must pay back some time.

²¹Suffering is a consequence of the self allowing the envelopes (the emotional in particular) to rule.

²²There is only one path to freedom: to serve.

13.7 From Knowledge to Wisdom

¹Probably it is only at the stage of reason that the demand for exact conception of reality is imperative for action. Then, in order to be able to act at all, you must understand why you should act in a certain manner.

²The mystic does not need such clarity, since the dynamic energy of attraction is a sufficient impelling force for him. But experience will teach him, by the consequences of unwise loving actions, that wisdom and knowledge are necessary as well. It constantly appears that human wisdom is not very wise. And so begins the pursuit of true wisdom, and that goes on during incarnations until the individual, through the higher mental development, reaches up to the “world of knowledge” and finds that the prerequisite of wisdom is the understanding that all life is one. Only he is wise who has entered unity, the world of unity. The causal knowledge of reality is not sufficient for man always to “live right”, to act wisely.

³The first self can acquire knowledge, but wisdom is a faculty of the second self. Wisdom requires essential consciousness (46, intuition in the original and proper sense), consciousness of unity, collective consciousness, consciousness of community. But you are well on the road to wisdom if you make efforts to apply in practice the esoteric knowledge we have received and are not content to use it for theoretical study only. Knowledge without application is the direct opposite of wisdom. Our failure to apply the knowledge is the ground of our faults and failings. Along with knowledge goes responsibility, something that most people would heed more if they could study their incarnations.

⁴Civilizational man may conceive of hylozoics as a working hypothesis at the most, albeit the most probable one. Anyone who cannot see that it

agrees with reality, however, has never really understood it. For it gives the first self a sovereign view of thousands of otherwise inexplicable phenomena and facts, understanding of the mind and its problems and clarity about the right attitude to life and action. But if it remains only a theory without being realized and in its realization affording ever increasing understanding of its correctness, then it does not entail the development of consciousness intended. And that should be what most seekers desire: to reach beyond the level they are on, comprehend and understand ever more by themselves. Without work according to the law of self-realization there is no development. Theories that are never turned into something better, that are not applied in real life, only increase that responsibility in life which goes along with greater knowledge and with esoteric knowledge in particular. If we do not realize what we have understood we cause ourselves increasing difficulties in subsequent incarnations, we lessen our prospects even of understanding and remembrance anew; in any case we do not receive any new offers and opportunities of life to develop further. The planetary hierarchy has not given us the book of knowledge in order that we put it under the pillow to sleep better.

⁵It is important to learn to tell the difference between the knowledge of the first self and the wisdom of the second self. Thereby you also learn to distinguish between the energies of the first self and those of the second self. Anyone who has done this has solved the basic problem of life, a problem the individual must solve himself. Nobody else can do that for him, nobody else can teach him how to do it. That is no mysticism, but surely the secret of the true art of living, which you discover by telling the essential from the unessential, by living with a purpose and an aim. In so doing you transform knowledge into wisdom; the problem of the first self.

⁶Esoteric knowledge is by no means necessary to find the way into the planetary hierarchy. It is sufficient if you acquire the necessary qualities through service and self-forgetfulness. The greatest importance of esoterics lies in the fact that it liberates from all the ideologies of ignorance and affords a theoretical world view and life view to those who must have such a basis to build on. However, anyone who mentally sees that all ideologies are untenable, that the hypothesis method of science is insufficient, is filled with compassion for all life and wants only to help whenever, wherever he can, he is already on the way. That was the deep symbolic meaning of the saying, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (served unity, baby talk to the uninitiated).

⁷A loving heart is an invaluable asset and is necessary to pass from the first self to the second self. Emotion is not always wise, however. We do

not exist to always take up the burdens of other people. You have no right to free others from the problems that life has given them to solve for their own development, free them from having necessary experiences. Our fellow man is the man who is dependent on our very help, who has no other prospect. We cannot suffice for all who are in need. We do not help by hindering ourselves. Where we have not taken duties on us we are not obliged to yield to the demands of others. Wisdom is needed to always be able to help in the right way. Mankind has yet a long way to go before it can see the limitation of man. That is not possible without the Sokratean realization, the summit of the first self's wisdom.

⁸Knowledge is that quintessence of the first self's collected, worked-up experience which is stored in the causal envelope. This knowledge can be transformed into wisdom only under the influence of essential (46) energies. Before the monad has become a causal self, these 46-energies are mediated chiefly by Augoeides. Later, when the monad has become a causal self, it can itself receive and apprehend them, the lower three kinds to begin with: 46:5-7. According to the law of self-realization, the monad must effect this transformation of knowledge into wisdom by itself. The contribution of Augoeides is necessary at the beginning, but later must be superseded by the purposive work of man himself. Man's own growing understanding of the necessity of this work is an aspect of his incipient wisdom, too. By wisdom alone he must gain wisdom.

13.8 Learning or Erudition, Knowledge and Wisdom

¹There is no wisdom, if there is no common sense before. Without common sense, wisdom cannot find any expression.

²Learning or erudition (information), knowledge, and wisdom must be differentiated. Learning, erudition, is mere collected information, data on various subjects. Those data need not be true, be in agreement with reality. Even if true they may from a factual point of view be insignificant or misleading for an important context or purpose. By ending up in wrong contexts, facts that are correct in themselves may become meaningless or misleading. Also, one erroneous datum among otherwise correct facts may distort the entire presentation.

³Learning is not a bad thing in itself. It fulfils its purpose on its level, is important as a step in man's intellectual development. What is perceived as the esotericians' objection to, and criticism of, learning actually is not criticism of learning in itself, only of the tendency to regard learning as being what it is not.

⁴The learned often demonstrate that they do not understand that there is something beyond learning, something much higher. You must always

strive after something that is higher than your present state if you want to progress also in your own field.

⁵Knowledge is nothing but facts, essential facts, put into their right reciprocal relations, so that they objectively form an essential context. Many contexts, correctly combined into a still greater whole, form a system of knowledge. Knowledge is not the same as expanded learning. However much learning is expanded, it cannot supplant knowledge. Knowledge is superior to learning not in quantitative, but in qualitative respect. What is qualitatively different in knowledge is the growth of understanding, the heightening of consciousness.

⁶Esoterics can be studied at the stage of barbarism. Study is not ability, however; learning is not wisdom; and the teaching is not life. What is essential is our own experience. The importance of knowledge is that, when possessing it, we need not grope in the dark.

⁷Wisdom is knowledge applied expediently in action. No more than a mere quantitative growth of learning makes knowledge, no more just a quantitative increase of knowledge equals wisdom. Just as a qualitative extra element makes the difference of knowledge from learning, such a qualitative element distinguishes wisdom from knowledge. Where wisdom is concerned, this qualitative element is experience elaborated upon. It is by trying to apply his knowledge, by making mistakes and learning from them, that the individual grows in wisdom.

⁸In esoterics the thesis applies saying that knowledge does not precede experience but results from it. We learn by living, by making our own experiments in life. The knowledge we have received before experience has quite another significance through experience. Neither does knowledge impart the ability of realization. Man learns that by experience, by the endless number of unsuccessful experiences. That is why mistakes are necessary on the path to wisdom. That is also why it is said, *sapere aude*, dare to be wise, for it could as well be said: dare to make mistakes.

⁹Life-ignorant man lets himself be cast down by failures, blames himself, and loses his trust in self. The man experienced in life knows that mistakes are unavoidable and that he learns the most by making mistakes. He acquires trust in self through his failed attempts, for having made them he knows much more than before. Anyone who does not dare to act for fear of failing often misses valuable opportunities of learning. Many people also fear the criticism of others. Criticism (other people's lack of understanding) must be taken into account and be used to liberate oneself from the dependence on the opinions of others.

¹⁰Just as there is a process of development leading the individual from learning to knowledge, and from knowledge to wisdom, so there is also a

process of degeneration that may implicate individuals and entire groups, if they do not take care: What became of the wisdom that decayed into knowledge? What became of the knowledge that decayed into information?

¹¹Seek wisdom while you have the strength, or you may lose the strength without gaining wisdom.

¹²“Anyone who loves wisdom loves life. And anyone who seeks her early will be filled with joy.”

¹³The three worlds of the first self make it possible for mental consciousness to function as common sense. Causal consciousness, consciously conquered by the disciple of the planetary hierarchy, gradually transforms into wisdom the experience the monad has gained in the lowest three worlds.

¹⁴Wisdom begins as man ceases to be the centre of his circle and instead puts an ideal there, not to become ideal but to forget himself.

¹⁵“To will, to know, to dare, and to be silent” is the sum of esoteric wisdom.

13.9 The Golden Mean

¹Aristoteles’ view was that of all things being good within the limits set by the laws of life. Outside the law good becomes evil and virtues become vices. In his doctrine of the golden mean between the extremes (the “pairs of opposites” of esoterics) he tried to fix those norms which man must adopt if he is to be harmonious and happy. According to the Buddha, this is the path of wisdom.

²“In all relations there can be one measure that is too much, one that is too little, and one that is right which lies midway between the other two. This cannot be calculated mathematically, but reason learns the correct measure through experience. Virtue is the middle way between two vices, which are on either extreme side of virtue.” Virtue presupposes experience. Aristoteles thereby introduced the principle of relativity in so far as he showed that the middle way changes in every new situation, appears different from different points of view, and can be defined for the purpose of orientation only.

³“The virtue of courage lies midway between the vices of cowardice and foolhardiness. The coward calls courage recklessness and the foolhardy calls courage cowardice. Generosity is the virtue that lies between greed and extravagance. Temperance is the right middle way between love of enjoyment and asceticism, popularity between ingratiating and aloofness, meekness between slowness and wrath, etc. ad infinitum.”

⁴We become virtuous through the habit of acting right, which presupposes experience, common sense, and ability of judgement.

⁵According to esoterics everything is vice that conflicts with the laws of life. Among these vices is curiosity, since it violates our right to a private life protected from the encroachments of others.

⁶Virtue is the ability to choose right, to find the golden mean between the extremes.

⁷The opposition of right and wrong shows man a middle path to go, the “golden mean”. The more the individual conception of right is ennobled, the narrower the path is until it becomes the razor-edge path the planetary hierarchy speaks about. Only then you are on the sure path.

⁸The laws of the land indicate the outside limits. The norms, which in a cultural environment are ever more refined by the instinct of right, develop into tact, in which process the path becomes ever narrower.

⁹Those who talk about the justification for “white lies” are still pursuing a rather broad path. This is also the path of curiosity and gossip, interest in the personality.

¹⁰The level of development appears quite clearly in the conception of right.

¹¹Insight discovers the golden mean. But the art of using it depends on the emotional balance between attraction and repulsion.

13.10 The Wisdom Aspect in Disciples and Aspirants

¹A lower consciousness cannot perceive a higher one. But to the extent that the monad in its lower consciousness strives intentionally and expeditiously after higher consciousness (such as it perceives this), it activates the germs, the potential of higher that always exist in the lower. And it is through these germs that the monad is able, even though faintly and confusedly, to perceive something of the higher. That is why there are such germs of both causal and essential (46) consciousness also in disciples who are still first selves and are not even causal selves. The essential germs have, as has everything essential, a love aspect and a wisdom aspect. The love aspect appears in the compassion disciples show each other, in their solidarity, friendship, and brotherhood, their mutual help and support in difficulty and adversity.

²The wisdom aspect appears in their methodical work, under the guidance of their teacher, of sharing with each other their experience of their work with their consciousness development, a “down-scaling” of the common and shared experience that is at the disposal of 46-selves thanks to their having entered unity, possessing group consciousness.

³“Our way is that of group discussion. In solitude there is renown, and in renown there is peril. Welfare is to be found in a group. Those who follow this way find great benefit and blessing in group meetings.”

⁴Another expression of the first germs and potential of the wisdom aspect appears in disciples in all such things as can be summed up in the phrase “practical understanding of the existence of higher consciousness than my own.” Only knowledge and intelligence are required to understand the existence of higher consciousness theoretically. The disciple is convinced through the facts and ideas of hylozoics that there must be a higher consciousness than his own, higher even than the highest possible human consciousness. To apply this understanding practically, however, requires something in addition, and this “something in addition” is the beginning of wisdom.

⁵The study group has members on a higher and a lower level of knowledge and being, in the school there are disciples on higher and lower levels. So it is because also in the esoteric teacher’s (the 45-self’s) group (ashram) there are disciples on higher and lower levels (in all things esoteric, the pattern, the example is set from above). It is thanks to their wisdom aspect, incipient or even somewhat developed, that those on a lower level perceive that those on higher levels are wiser and willingly receive their wisdom. Conversely, it is when this wisdom aspect does not make itself felt that disciples on lower levels challenge the wisdom of the higher ones, assert their own views against this, and do not consider the concerted experience, purpose, and well-being of the group.

13.11 Your Days are Numbered, Use Them with Care Then!

¹Some people deplore that they only late in life had the opportunity of studying the truth, the knowledge of reality. However, everything depends on what they do with it during the time that remains for them. Your last day in life can be made a perfect day. Since no man knows in the morning whether he will live in the evening, he has every reason to live as if each day were his last one. The ancients did so.

²“Wisdom may reach a man in the morning, and then he may die without grief in the evening the same day.”

³“Brethren, know that whoever works well in his days, his affairs are praised, but whoever does evil in them has lost his life. Whoever falls short will tomorrow regret his falling short. And whoever leaves the work for his future will regret it. And whoever abandons the guidance will weep when he has realized it. For the times are passing in haste, and days are seized and carried away from us. So hasten with your life before you depart, and seize your life before you die.”

⁴“Now then, monks, this I tell you. Transient are all things that have arisen. Work with care at your perfection.” The last words of Gautama the Buddha to his disciples.

13.12 *Wisdom is Skill in Action*

¹The Greek word *sophos* is usually translated “wise”, so that *sophia* is “wisdom”, *philosophos* means “lover of wisdom”, etc. However, in the ancient Greek society, a skilful shoemaker was considered *sophos* in his line of trade just as a teacher of wisdom in his one. Therefore, a more exact translation of *sophos* is “skilful in his work”, “skilful in action”. Thus wisdom is the same as the ability to apply the knowledge, skill in action. In the Gothic Bible, the oldest translation of the Bible into any Germanic tongue, the Greek word *sophos* was rendered by *handugs*, “handy”. That expresses the same idea of what wisdom is.

²Of course mere action is not sufficient. Wisdom is action with quality, the quality of consciousness. Wisdom is the power to realize.

³Correct statements are rare, and judgement is a rare capability. Many people are not clear about the great differences between intelligence, judgement, and ability of application. Judgement requires intelligence and expertise, knowledge of facts, and processing of those facts. The ability of application finally results in wisdom. People talk about theory and practice but often have superficial notions of both. Theory is about generals and universals, things considered on a large scale. Practice deals with particulars, things directed towards action. Practice is theory applied to things on a small scale, in man’s daily life.

⁴Action is conditioned by the totality of actual circumstances, which can almost never be foreseen. Even afterwards we often cannot decide whether we acted right. Acting right presupposes wisdom, and this is not obtained from rules which, at the best, cannot be more than orienting. The best actions are the spontaneous ones that come from the unconscious once we have acquired the right attitude to life. Anyone who needs to inquire and analyse, to argue with himself, or who needs to be influenced by rules or sentimentality, or be persuaded, does not have the spontaneity that comes from the understanding of life.

⁵Wisdom is won through self-realization. That is the one and only path. Without practice, everything will remain theory. No theory, however correct it may be, will help anyone to go forward. Realization requires experimental experience. Through such experience new, undreamt-of faculties are acquired.

13.13 *Wisdom is Service*

¹The whole of the wisdom of life is the simplest of all simple things. Forget yourself and live for something other than yourself. Doing this, however, you must use your common sense, so that you do not throw away

yourself on activities that are below your own capacity, but live for those things by which you can best serve mankind, consciousness development, and unity. This is how the great ones live, those in higher kingdoms. Then your self-identity remains, but that is all that is left of your own self. You are given all for nothing: your envelopes and the experience of your worlds of consciousness, and moreover all you need to make your contribution. Anyone who gives his all to life receives all from life to ever higher degrees. This is the simple summary of the art of living taught by all religions.

²The attitude that life is service brings about incomparably more opportunities from life to sow good sowings, to weaken the effects of bad reaping, to develop the right instinct of life, to find the best way.

³Service is a difficult art. It is very difficult to serve in the right way. By serving others you can do more evil than good. You shall not serve evil, and you may do that by serving without discrimination. The important thing is not to satisfy egoism, not to allow yourself to be exploited, not to “bolster up vice”, not to yield to claims.

⁴There are many sayings in the Gospels attributed to Christos which he never uttered, at any event not with that formulation. He cannot have said, “Give to anyone who begs you”. Then you would be defenceless against unreasonable demands and soon be plundered. He has absolutely not said, “resist not evil”. We have a duty to resist evil. Else we abandon life to the power of evil.

13.14 Wisdom and Folly

¹A fool may live together with a wise man a whole life-time and yet fail to learn anything. A wise man may live together with a fool for only a day and yet learn much. The wise can learn from everything and everybody.

²There are many sayings attributed to Jeshu as very young though not recorded in the Gospels. This is one: “Jeshu, son of Mary, who taught you wisdom?” – “No one. I observed the folly of men and avoided it.”

³Where goodness is not combined with common sense, goodness turns into a vice and becomes the basis of the phenomenon that unreason and arbitrariness to a great extent may rule. The goodness that is weakness leaves the field open to insolence, cynicism, exploitation. The goodness that allows evil to rule is accessory to whatever evil brings about.

⁴Self-criticism is a good thing. But it must not be exaggerated, morbid. There are people who always take sides against themselves all the way to self-resignation. They do not realize that right is right regardless of you or me. I cannot possibly always be wrong. Such a view is injudiciousness made absolute. I may be right despite the fact that it is me.

⁵The slaves to beauty obviously have no idea of the tyranny of beauty and its idiotizing influence. The adoration of beauty can be defended, if beauty crowns goodness and wisdom.

13.15 The Sokratean Insight

¹What above all characterizes latent esotericians is the Sokratean insight that one is an idiot, thus genuine humility in respect of truth. That is the first step on the path of wisdom. Anyone who feels important (or feels ready) is far from reaching that insight. Another great mistake is any kind of comparison with those at lower levels. We are all brothers of the same kingdom in nature, and even though the path to the next higher kingdom is of different length, yet it is exceedingly short compared to that remaining for us all. When those of the fifth and sixth and still higher kingdoms call us their brothers, then we have every reason to try to assimilate that view of life: that all living beings make up a universal brotherhood. Anyone who has realized this understands, too, that hatred in all its thousand manifestations is the very perversion of life.

²Whatever may be a true “revelation” to one person, affording him an increased understanding of reality, may appear a paralysing limitation to another person who has experienced an even greater “expansion of consciousness”. And this is true of all individuals to be found on the seemingly endless gamut of developmental levels from the lowest physical to the highest cosmic. In this process it is typical that anyone who has acquired common sense and has got a vision of cosmic evolution always sees his own limitation and how “immensely much remains” for understanding. Therefore it was one of the characteristics of wisdom in Sokrates that he could say of himself that he “knew nothing” (implicitly: of what he desired to know in order to fully understand). That insight is the true humility, not what people call humility: bending one’s neck to wiseacres who believe they know, not suspecting their boundless ignorance.

13.16 The Seven Pillars of Wisdom

¹“Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.” (The Bible, Proverbs 9:1.) This symbol indicates that the essential self (46-self) builds his own essential envelope (46-envelope), in which he is sovereign in all seven departments. This means that the 46-self controls his own type energies, thus with will and intention (which, of course, is one with the group will and the group intention) “is” that type which is the most suitable for the time being, for the particular work that the 46-self is doing right now. Selves of lower kinds (physical selves, emotional selves, mental selves, and causal selves) lack this sovereignty. Therefore they are

ruled by their dominant types. Even if the causal self has begun liberating himself from this dominance, he still lacks the freedom of the 46-self who is able to “play the types” like the pianist the keys of his piano. This freedom is wisdom, skill in action. “Hewn out” indicates that this wisdom, freedom, skill in action is no gift but is the result of the individual’s own hard work through the long series of incarnations. Physical life is the quarry where the stones for the “temple of Solomon” are hewn. And the “temple” is the causal envelope, which is built with over 150 000 incarnations, alluded to in 2 Chronicles, 2:17,18 with the information about the number of workers in the quarry. Also the esoteric saying “the wise man rules his stars, the fool is ruled by them” has reference to the 46-self’s mastery of the seven type energies. The “stars” in question are the “seven sacred planets”, which are mediators of the seven energies on a solar systemic scale.

²The teaching of the esoteric schools was consistently symbolic, was made up exclusively of symbolic sayings such as the ones given above. These sayings were unintelligible to the uninitiated and also to initiates of lower degrees, so that the latter had to have them explained to them by the hierophant, and repeatedly, for deeper understanding, in each higher degree. To initiates of higher degrees they were axiomatic, because they corresponded to their own insight, the wisdom acquired by their own work.

14 INTELLIGENCE

14.1 Intelligence Considered Esoterically

¹The first self (the human being) acquires intelligence; the second self, unity as his essential capacity.

²The three main kinds of second triad consciousness have been called “intelligence” (47:1-3), “love” (46:1-7), and “will” (45:4-7). These terms are analogies with human faculties and are misleading if taken literally. Generally comprehensible terms are still lacking, since those kinds of consciousness and energy are beyond human experience. In its highest potency, “intelligence” (47:1) implies sovereign understanding of all objective material phenomena in the three worlds of man (47–49).

³The fact that it is possible to perceive intelligence in the lowest two worlds depends on the presence of mental atoms even in the lowest kind of matter (the physical atom).

⁴The third department is the department of intelligence. It has the purpose of developing human mental consciousness into independent thinking and common sense. That is why it divides itself into the four departments 4–7, which have the same purpose: to help the different types in the human kingdom to advance in the manner that is the easiest for them.

⁵In esoterics, intelligence is studied according to that basic esoteric principle which says that we should always look at things from above rather than from below, from the higher rather than from the lower, from the goal rather than from the start, and value the lower as interesting only in its capacity of being that contrast to the higher which can help us better understand this higher. The term “higher intelligence”, as used in this study, can only have reference to that higher mentality which can function freely also from the higher emotionality (48:3 and 48:2), thus perspective thinking (47:5) and system thinking (47:4). It is this higher intelligence which is able to understand esoterics, because it achieves a contact, even if a faint one, with causal consciousness. A still higher intelligence is of course the causal one (from 47:3 to 47:2 and from 47:2 to 47:1).

14.2 The Tools of Intelligence Briefly Described

¹Comprehension is the result of reflection. Understanding is immediate perception as a result of remembrance anew on completed working up of a certain subject-matter. The simplest mind can conclude from cause to effect. The ability to conclude from effect to cause calls for judgement. Judgement presupposes experience and knowledge of facts, the ability of

analysis and synthesis, and is limited to a certain sphere of knowledge. Judgement in one sphere of knowledge does not automatically entail judgement in another one. In its sphere of knowledge, good judgement can judge facts correctly, put facts in their correct contexts, distinguish between fact and fiction, between blind belief and that critical view which asks whether sufficient facts are available for an assumption to be made for the time being. Ignorance is lack of knowledge of facts. Analysis is the study of details, of individual facts, and the assessment of them on the basis of their relative importance. Upon the conclusion of analysis synthesis ensues, which is the combination of details, facts, into principles and system. "Synthesis" without a previous analysis is the most common of common things and can be made by the most ignorant, but then the quality and usefulness of such a "synthesis" will reflect that ignorance. Facts, concepts, and principles are absolute, taken separately. But they acquire a relative significance when put into relations to others in their correct system. Concepts are necessary to comprehension. Principles are necessary to survey concepts, being summaries of concepts. A principle is a generalization of clear-cut cases that seldom occur in reality. Generally speaking, many mutually modifying principles are required for a correct statement.

14.3 Thinking and Intelligence

¹Like all other capacities, the capacity for thinking must be acquired. At home and at school we learn how to think within certain limited spheres of experience. When we move out of those spheres, however, we practically always think wrong. If we do not have all the facts for a final judgement of a particular case, we think wrong. The history of philosophy should have taught us how hard it is to think and even harder to think right. It should have taught at least the philosophers that thinking requires knowledge. Without knowledge you merely indulge in fancies, which are phenomena in your emotional envelope. Mentality requires exactitude.

²Intelligence, learning, knowledge, and wisdom must be distinguished. Intelligence is mental faculties: inference thinking, principle thinking, perspective thinking, system thinking, and causal idea thinking. Learning is the gathering of data in some certain field, data that need not all be true, but may be facts and fictions. Knowledge is esoterically nothing but facts agreeing with reality. Wisdom is capacity for application, skill in action.

³What is usually meant by intelligence is not pure mental thinking but imagination, a union of emotionality and mentality, the kama-manas of the Indians. Intelligent people fancy they have a capacity for judgement, which always has been the enormous error of mankind. Actually, they are sovereign only in the lowest mentality (47:7), for mental consciousness is

so little developed that rapid activity in this, its lowest sphere is regarded as “talent”. The grotesque feature of this is that the lowest kind of capacity for reflection (the ability to “think” at all) is perceived as correct or infallible. Whenever someone raises his head above the crowd, he is a “genius”. Mankind has come to its senses when it realizes its enormous mental limitation and its inability to make correct statements about reality.

⁴Generalization, the summing up of many similar things, is one of the first instances of how the individual’s incipient capacity for reflection utilizes experience. Life-ignorant man finds it too easy to draw such conclusions, a fact to which familiar sayings and traditional proverbs bear witness. They very easily are made absolute and so have an idiotizing effect.

⁵The acuity produced by the philosophical giants’ mills of logic overwhelms those comprehending it, so that it is not to be wondered at that their disciples give in to the effects of that machinery. The esoterician can seldom match those mental razors in acuity. The esoterician is not acute or, in any case, need not be acute for acuity is sovereignty in principle thinking. He does not solve the problems, but is given the solution through new facts that he receives. Acuity does not find the path leading to perspective consciousness the condition of which is the application of common sense and the demand for a larger horizon and survey. It is essential not to get stuck in anything, never consider anything final, never accept dogmas, but always move on. Acuity fixes and locks up. Perspective goes round, finding more and more viewpoints. Acuity is a typical ability in fifth department consciousness. Perspective is the most easily acquired in the third department.

⁶Esoteric logic teaches that analysis never yields any synthesis. The learned may in however many conferences analyse a thing “endlessly” not getting anywhere. And so it is because synthesis esoterically belongs on a higher mental level, and such a level you reach only through an idea from the world of ideas. A true, esoteric synthesis is either a causal (47:1-3) or an essential (46) intuition. Ordinary so-called syntheses either are obtained through elimination or are old “wisdom” latent in the subconscious and so do not live up to their name.

⁷You can effectuate something resembling a synthesis by raising the whole problem on to a higher level, up into perspective consciousness.

⁸The most superior intelligence and capacity for judgement to be found in the exoterist appear in the interest he takes in problems of reality of all kinds while understanding that all exoteric solutions are suppositions and can never afford absolute certainty, however ingenious they may appear. The knowledge of reality (except that of the physical world) remains in-

accessible to exoterists. Superphysical problems of course are no problems to the individuals of the fifth natural kingdom, and their basic view was taught by Pythagoras in the secret knowledge order instituted by him.

⁹The superphysical problems include the three aspects of reality and the nature of matter, motion, and consciousness. Those are problems that science will never be able to solve. Their solution requires the capacity for consciousness of unity (46 and higher), a capacity that is not acquired in the fourth natural kingdom.

14.4 Lower Intelligence (47:7 and 47:6)

¹At lower stages or as the result of deficient education, human intelligence consists in attempts at grasping what others have said to be able to parrot it. More than 99 per cent of prevalent views are more or less deficient due to the scarcity of facts.

²The lower intelligence used by the intelligentsia of the stage of civilization is 47:6, principle thinking. This thinking is not rational but rather rationalizing, intellectualizing emotional assurances. This intelligentsia, which the civilizational individual looks up to as his authority, is characterized by its hostility to superphysical knowledge and experience in general and esoterics in particular. It is also characterized by its “lunacy” (in the esoteric sense), thus its propensity to hunting for, collecting, formatory “ideas”. Intellectuals of this category generally are committed to some idiology (not ideology) which is replete with such formatory “ideas” of scant reality value. Such an idiology typically conflicts with common sense, objective findings, and traditional human experience and therefore cannot be defended with ordinary, rational arguments. Too often its protagonists resort to means of compulsion against dissenters.

³Marxism was such a compulsive idiology which now seems to be on its way out of history. In its stead we have got others, such as for example propaganda for the belief in the so-called Holocaust, gender theory (the allegation that sex, or “gender”, is a social construction), and the presentation of homosexuality as a normal phenomenon (with or without so-called queer theory). The governments of many western countries have lent support to these ideologies, funding them through the public education system, forcing through various sanctions dissidents to submit and researchers to produce “findings” that “scientifically confirm” the “truths” politically decreed and to be silent about facts that refute them. Such compulsive ideologies are part of that cultural radicalism which the planetary hierarchy considers to be one of the most serious hindrances to its planned reappearance.

⁴The traditional religions, such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and

Buddhism, are not indicated as problems in this respect, since they represent a general human normalcy based upon experience of life gathered by mankind, afford people some ideas of a higher reality and the continuation of life, and also are compatible with some kind of esotericism and even contain such traditions (although Christianity does it the least).

⁵Intelligence of a lower kind is limited to, or perceives almost exclusively, quantitative conditions, judges things according to them and orients itself by them. In contrast, intelligence of a higher kind observes especially qualitative conditions. Therefore, assessments of the influence of various human groups, for instance, may be quite different according to what kind of intelligence made the assessment. Quantitative intelligence seems to have difficulty in seeing that also relatively small groups belonging to a much larger collective may express the qualities of the collective in a very active, unitary, and purposive way, whereas the collective itself is largely passive or divided. Quantitative intelligence has difficulty in perceiving the qualitative connections between the small groups and the larger collective. This is true in particular if the small groups manifest qualities of the larger collective in a new way, in a more developed or more intensive fashion.

⁶When intelligence reaches the limit of principle thinking (47:6) but is not able to pass beyond it, imagination prevails over thought. Then the thinker will drift into mysticism and subjectivism, since the lower mentality cannot control the higher emotionality (48:3 and 48:2), which are the regions of mysticism. We find instances of this transition of principle thinking into mysticism in certain modern physicists, who have launched hypotheses of reality that conflict with common sense and the principle of objectivity and also are markedly subjectivist in the manner of Kant's "reality adapts to our concepts".

14.5 Emotionalization of Concepts

¹A great problem is the emotionalization of concepts. When a concept is emotionalized it means that the individual or collective has not been able to conceive the mental content belonging to a certain word but has replaced this with a predominantly positive or negative emotion that he or it connects with the word from then on. Many words, in the vocabulary of politics, for instance, in many people evoke mainly emotional associations – positive or negative – and when they subsequently use the words themselves, they above all express their personal feelings connected with them. The word "democracy" may serve as an example. Originally and properly it meant just people power, the choice of the majority expressed in representative assemblies. Nowadays in the Western world there is an increasing tendency to emotionalize and subjectivize the pertaining concept, so that

they do not any longer consider it determined by the objective criterion of popular power but rather by certain “values” that are selected subjectively and arbitrarily and then called “democratic”. Subsequently they can as arbitrarily reject election results obtained by clear majorities in general elections that have been held in an exemplary fashion. Thus the people were “undemocratic” and “voted wrong”. In such cases, the power élite, knowing everything better, would rather have another people.

²The emotionalization of many important concepts is so powerful because it is a collective process in large masses of people at the emotional stage who are easily manipulated by cunning opinion makers who are at a slightly higher level of intelligence. The process has a great suggestive power, so that also the mentalist or anyone who strives to be one will often need to put up an active resistance to those “bad suggestions of public opinion” in his own thinking. In all issues where we have not actively examined the matter ourselves and formed an independent opinion we run a risk of being members of the unthinking, easily controlled, easily manipulated masses.

³It is better to self-actively refrain from having any opinion at all on a certain issue than to accept, without examination, the view of public opinion or, rather, the view of its leaders. Otherwise a good beginning of a more critical attitude is to ask yourself, as did Roman Lucius Cassius, “cui bono?”, that is: who benefits from our taking sides against or with a certain cause?

⁴At the emotional stage there is no difference between analysis and criticism. Emotionalism is either attractive or repulsive making impersonal analysis impossible. Such an activity is possible only at the mental stage. It is easy to ascertain that mental analysis is always perceived emotionally by emotionalists and that this perception of theirs is submerged in general injudiciousness.

⁵The emancipation of concepts and ideas from emotionalization, as seen esoterically (from the objective point of view), is connected with the emancipation of the mental envelope from its coalescence with the emotional envelope and the resulting process of the closer attachment of the mental envelope to the causal envelope, a process that is contained in what is called the “building of the antahkarana”.

14.6 The Development of Intelligence

¹Scientific discoveries and technological progress are often mistaken for intellectual development. But the former have nothing in common with the latter. The innumerable discoveries that natural science and its technological offshoots have made ever since Galilei united natural research (ascertainment of facts) with experimentation and the mathematical

method, have continuously increased our knowledge of physical material reality. Gradually, research has liberated us from the fictions and superstitions handed down from our fathers; it has expanded our horizon, and developed our sense of reality. But the ability of inference and conceptual comprehension are the same. People do not comprehend better, although in a totally different way, namely in accordance with the things explored. An ever deeper comprehension of the absolute conformity to law of existence begins to make itself felt. Without conformity to law research would be utter nonsense. They begin to see that ignorance depends on ignorance of the laws, or of the constant relations.

²Just as the stage of civilization brings with it an intellectualization of barbaric emotionality, so the stage of humanity entails the same as regards cultural emotionality. Intellectualization implies that feeling, poor in intelligence, becomes increasingly more rational, and gradually passes into, or is replaced by, imagination, and the latter in its turn is superseded by clear ideas. Intellectualization occurs at the same time as mental consciousness becomes self-active and the mental envelope emancipates itself from its dependence on and coalescence with the emotional envelope. The process begins with the activation of the fifth molecular kind (47:5). When the higher layers in this matter are activated, then also the mental envelope can assist in activating the causal envelope. Until then, the contribution to this by the mental was limited to the faint impulses at the end of the existence of the personality in the mental world “after death”, when the experiences of the life just concluded were sublimated into causal ideas that the causal was able to assimilate. The now double influence soon makes consciousness self-active. A consequence of this is that causal ideas become increasingly easily accessible to mental consciousness; inspiration and vision, to emotional consciousness.

³If the higher emotionality is developed exclusively by cultivating devotional intense longing for, aspiration towards merging in, essential unity (46), then the mental activation is neglected. The mystic remains mentally undeveloped. This is the cause of the infantile, rationally helpless trait of most mystics. They appear undeveloped, and are therefore totally misjudged by always presumptuous ignorance. The mystic who has succeeded in his efforts, however, has developed an understanding that has no need for comprehension, that in respect of life is incomparably superior to the greatest mental ingenuity. The higher remains “esoteric” to the lower. Understanding presupposes both the activation of the requisite sphere of consciousness and the corresponding latent experience, qualitatively and quantitatively. If understanding is lacking, there is always a risk of misunderstanding even by those who have comprehended clearly.

14.7 Higher Intelligence (47:5 and Higher)

¹The step from principle thinking (47:6) to perspective thinking (47:5) is much bigger than that from inference thinking (47:7) to principle thinking, since the lower two kinds of thinking both are part of emotional mentality, whereas perspective thinking is part of higher mentality the conquest of which presupposes control also of higher emotionality.

²Different levels of intelligence, so to speak, can be distinguished in the acceptance of truths, from the level characterized by the uncritical acceptance of everything said up to the level where the greatest critical ability is displayed. Criticism in this connection means judgement, ability to judge.

³Higher intelligence strives after and achieves clarity of concepts. It has realized that “if each concept is a little cloud, then thinking with these concepts will just be a bigger cloud.” An important feature of this work is also the insight that “clarity is not all”. The thinkers of old viewed clarity as an evidence of truth. Esoteric logic, however, teaches that clarity in itself has nothing to do with truth or reality. Fictions can be formulated with thoughts of great clarity and so mislead many intellectuals. Conversely, reality ideas may at first be grasped obscurely and be given a vague formulation. Nevertheless it is true that human thinking, when fully developed, can clearly comprehend any kind of reality in the worlds of man (47–49) and therefore should render this reality with clearly formulated concepts, also to counteract the spread of fictions and illusions.

⁴Higher intelligence is creative thought power, the ability to think new thoughts, think the thoughts of the future, formulate truths that only an esoteric intellectual élite can grasp yet. Lower intelligence repeats the old, untenable, already refuted, only presenting it in new forms.

⁵Where lower intelligence is most often attached to the form, the matter aspect, and the physical expression, higher intelligence is able to see beyond the form, to notice the consciousness and motion aspects. In so doing it can ask questions – perhaps answer them, too – about motives, intentions, ends, goals, functions rather than forms. There is in this the understanding that individuals and groups do not have unchanging “essences”, but rather express more or less changeable qualities. The confusion of objectively existing individuals and groups with subjective concepts of unchanging “essences” is a particular instance of the general subjectivism that is seen in the mix-up of objective reality with subjective concepts.

⁶The higher the intelligence, the deeper the interest in, and understanding of, the motion or will aspect. There is in this a deepening understanding of how the law of change rules all reality. This understanding also counter-

acts the subjectivist belief of lower intelligence in unchanging “essences”. The static concepts, rigid in their timelessness, of lower intelligence are supplanted by dynamic ones, accompanied by at least some idea of change, its direction and strength. This time aspect should also be present in what is perceived as momentary, just as every point of a graph has a derivative (indicating the direction of change in that very point), this in its turn has a derivative of the second degree (the rate of change of the change, the inclination of the whole graph), and so forth.

⁷One of the most important functions of a developed intelligence is being an instrument that a more conscious self uses to eliminate limitations of its own thinking, that is to say self-criticism directed to erroneous conclusions, primitive constructions, formatory thinking. In so doing the more conscious self distinguishes the less conscious self, practises non-identification in relation to it, separates itself from it as being a not-self. This is the same kind of function as the more conscious self uses when disidentifying from negative emotions. Here it is rather the matter of disidentifying from lower, unnecessarily limiting thoughts.

⁸In contrast, undeveloped intelligence is identified with its erroneous conclusions, primitive constructions, formatory thinking, and this identification appears in its unwillingness to acknowledge the errors, even in justifying and excusing them. All this stems from the control that emotional consciousness wields over the lower mental and the absence of contact between the lower mental and the causal consciousness. The personal prestige that may also appear in this is just another manifestation of strong identifications which, in their turn, demonstrate that thought has not set itself free from its attachment to emotionality.

⁹“The negative judgement is the peak of mentality.” It is important for us to be able to say what a thing is not, because we are human beings, first selves, and as such seldom possess a certain, positive truth, or real knowledge. There is abundant positive truth, knowledge, only in the second self. For the first self it is in most cases very difficult to arrive at the truth, but much easier to discern and separate lies. It is a natural, human urge in us that makes us more willing to seek positive certitude than to ponder negative doubt. However, “by doubting we arrive at the truth.” By eliminating what is untenable methodically and systematically we prepare ourselves step by step to receive the tenable. Esoterics really should be the last thing you examine, after you have scrutinized and discarded all the rest. The procedure is similar to the technician’s systematic troubleshooting. “Intellectual troubleshooting” could be the name for the fifth department’s special path to the truth or the knowledge of reality.

14.8 Conscience of Logic

¹In the mentalist there is something that might be called the “conscience of logic”. This prevents him from accepting anything that he cannot support with his power of reflection, his common sense, and his knowledge of facts. For anyone walking the esoteric way it is of the utmost importance to cultivate and tend this conscience of logic, not to accept anything that he realizes to be a lie. Aspirants and disciples seek to attain the truth or the knowledge of reality, and how can they be successful in this endeavour, if they simultaneously accept lies? It is important to realize that by accepting lies you make it more difficult, or impossible altogether, to contact causal and essential consciousness. Your outer life must correspond to your inner life, and that is why it will not do to just make an inner reservation while you lend your external support to the “powers that be”. Also in this matter the would-be disciple or the accepted disciple must cultivate the virtue of courage: to speak out and save his soul or, if necessary, be silent, but never ever speak against his own better judgement only to please unjust power and be spared temporary trouble.

14.9 Self-Observation, Self-Criticism, Self-Consciousness

¹One important aspect of higher intelligence is the ability of self-observation and self-criticism. There is a fairly general understanding of this. People who happily chatter away about themselves and their dealings, without a thought of how they reveal their stupidity, tactlessness, bad qualities, are often seen as embarrassing by people around them; for example by intelligent children who are ashamed of their parents’ “howlers”.

²Put simply: Anyone who sometimes observes himself is more intelligent than anyone who never observes himself. Anyone who often observes himself is more intelligent than anyone who seldom observes himself. Anyone who always observes himself intentionally, expediently, is more intelligent than anyone who observes himself in a haphazard way.

³Being intentional in one’s self-observation means, first and foremost, that one is always aware, never forgets, that one makes impressions on other people in everything one says and does, everything one does not say and does not do; secondly that certain opportunities or meetings are much more important than others and that one should then make the best possible impression. Being expedient in one’s self-observation means that one really observes oneself when this is necessary and important, and is able to use this higher degree of attention and consciousness to achieve the aim one has set up for oneself.

⁴Self-criticism is a natural result of self-observation. For to the extent that one observes one's behaviour one is liberated from identification with it. The explanation is that you cannot be what you observe, cannot be identified with what you observe, for what you observe becomes an external or internal object, and observer and object cannot be identical. This brings about the possibility of judging, assessing, and criticizing these internal objects which the person who does not self-observe must identify with and in so doing use such expressions as "I was angry", "I am irritated", "I cannot stand him", etc. When judging, assessing, and criticizing things the individual sorts them into better and worse in relation to the aim he is striving for: "Does it benefit my individual aims, the aims of my group, the group of the school, if I yield to this impulse, identify with that feeling?"

⁵All this inner activity of self-reflection, self-observation may, if the individual proceeds on the basis of knowledge and understanding, be made to pass into states of self-consciousness. The understanding of the nature of self-consciousness and its immense significance for individual and group consciousness development is due to intelligence of a particular kind which is close to causal consciousness. There are highly intelligent people who do not possess this understanding and cannot even acquire it. Those who possess it, however, evince it in higher and lower degrees, which depend on this particular intelligence, which actually is the first condition of causal consciousness.

14.10 Intelligence in Understanding Esoterics

¹The conquest of new domains for higher intelligence is a process that runs through many steps. Generally, seven steps can be distinguished: 1) The disciple deems something "higher" (part of esoteric reality) incomprehensible or misunderstands it. 2) He can with effort comprehend the simpler aspects of this higher temporarily, when the teacher demonstrates it to him with graphic examples. Afterwards, however, when the teacher's magnetic influence has ceased, this comprehension has vanished. 3) He can, thanks to the teacher's repetition and his own reflection, learn these simpler aspects, so that he remembers them also in the absence of the teacher and his magnetic stimulation. However, it is still comprehension without the deeper understanding. 4) He can learn how to comprehend some other, more extensive aspects of the higher and by reflecting upon them remember them. 5) He can, at first under the guidance of the teacher and later by his own reflection, draw general conclusions and see overall patterns. Now he has entered the stage of self-activity in a real sense. 6) During this process, understanding awakens, but not before. 7) He can

make his own observations and draw correct conclusions from them. The domain of higher intelligence is now fully self-active where this particular theme is concerned. The process just described needs to be repeated with other themes, but with time the process is more rapid and simpler, as general understanding awakens more and more.

²The simplest, most immediate, actually self-evident fact is the most difficult to find. They still have not understood that. You may hear from those who have been told that matter, motion, and consciousness are the basic factors of existence: “But that is so self-evident it need not even be said!” Such a statement shows that the person in question has no idea of how seriously deficient the intellect is in its perception of reality. The esoterician is taught that all knowledge is self-evident, is the simplest of all simple things, but that it is utterly impossible for our intellect to discover it without preparation. This should give the mystics food for thought as well, those who think that truth is inconceivable. It is quite the opposite. The truth is the most self-evident, and that is precisely why it is inaccessible to reason of lower kinds.

³Intelligence is not sufficient to understand esoterics, if the individual does not have a latent understanding of it, because the knowledge is remembrance, as Platon pointed out, Even as an exoteric phenomenon esoterics will remain esoteric for those who have not once been initiates. If it is accepted by others, which will probably be the case to an increasing extent, then it will turn into a new form of superstition. It is necessary to realize that what determines whether it is esoteric or not is not the object of the study or understanding but the quality of the consciousness manifested in the study or understanding. If that were not the case, then the fancies of an average new age person – for example that he is now living his last incarnation in the human kingdom and, consequently, possesses not only full causal consciousness but also incipient 46-consciousness – would be esoteric understanding as well. Self-deception in esoteric studies is more self-deception than esoterics. Uncritical belief has nothing to do with esoterics, and least of all belief in one’s own eminence.

14.11 Intelligence in Seeking the Meaning of Life

¹Most seekers are emotional and not mental. They decide on a teaching or system that appeals to emotional and wishful thinking, not to reason and intelligence. Often this teaching is the first one they came across in their seeking, the one that satisfied them, and subsequently they are stuck in it on sentimental grounds. If intelligence were dominant in them, they would proceed in a quite different manner: starting by examining all extant teachings, not getting stuck in any one of them, comparing them as for inner

qualities: how badly or well they explain the problems of life, how many facts they contain and how important those facts are, and to what extent the teachings examined display inner contradictions. As for contradictions, however, one should proceed carefully: there are contradictions and “contradictions”. The latter are not contradictions but can be explained by deficiencies in the terminology used, incompleteness or lack of skill in formulations, etc. The understanding and knowledgeable person repairs such defects when reading, helps the writer to formulate his thought better, as it were. (This procedure should not be confused with the attempt made by some historians of philosophy to explain away the errors of “great thinkers” by allegations about “what they actually intended to say”.)

²Only after such a thorough examination should they select a teaching to study in depth, dedicating themselves to it. It is certainly to a great extent the business of intelligence to choose between different teachings on the superphysical. This is not to say that intelligence alone would be sufficient for the final choice. But it may eliminate many unworthy candidates that should have been weeded out at the first scrutiny. Those are such systems as are too primitive because they do not afford the requisite clarity, do not explain the problems of life in a satisfactory manner, do not supply the tools for deciding whether alleged facts are real facts.

14.12 Intelligence in Approaching the School

¹Just as there are four degrees of the quality of attention – attention of the lowest degree (mechanically shifting or non-existent); attention attracted by its object (in emotional fascination); self-determined and directed attention (in mental concentration); and attention of the highest degree, which is simultaneously self-determined, directed, and self-conscious (in contact with causal consciousness) – so individuals approaching the school display the corresponding degrees of the quality of their interest and dedication. Those corresponding to the lowest degree can be left out of account; they ended up in the school through some chance event and were made to leave it through some other chance event. The next degree is represented by the majority of aspirants at the beginning; they are driven by their “spiritual hunger” and by being stimulated by the teaching and the friendship of fellow students but may “feel full” for a short or long time and so slacken in their interest, which then apparently is egocentric. The individuals representing the higher two degrees are the strenuous, disciplined, dependable, and responsible. They have prospects of being successful on the esoteric way. What is important here, however, is not which category you belong to from the beginning, but how seriously you work to reach the next higher one. In all this we may see different degrees

of the quality of intelligence at work, and these qualitative degrees imply degrees of mental independence of emotionality, mental contact with causality, and emotional contact with essentiality.

²A note of warning should be sounded against a stereotyped assessment of individuals, since intelligence finds different expressions in the different types. In types 1 and 7, intelligence is more oriented towards will and physical realization; in types 2 and 6, it is more emotionally coloured; and in types 3 and 5, more theoretical and technical. Type 4 shares to some extent in all the modes of manifestation. You can be intelligent without being very intellectual, and you can be an intellectual without being intelligent in the esoteric sense (have some consciousness connection with the causal envelope).

14.13 The Process of Abstraction

¹The importance of language for consciousness, thinking, and intelligence can hardly be overestimated. Language is a system of signs or symbols that human beings use for mutual communication. Without language no knowledge or experience can be transferred from the one individual or group to the other or be handed down from the one generation to the other. Language is not used only for the exchange of thoughts between people, however, but also within one and the same individual: language is a tool for the individual's reflection.

²The purpose of language – any language – is to supply words and a system of rules for their use. Concepts are attached to words. Words fixate concepts, anchor them in physical existence, and thanks to the fact that words mutually differ man is able to differentiate concepts (distinguish between them). Differentiation is comprehension, and comprehension is differentiation. Comprehension of what words and concepts are begins with the differentiation of the two: words are not concepts, concepts are not words – but there is, as said, a relation between words and concepts. The word is the phenomenon: the physical manifestation (sound vibrations, a group of letters, etc.). The concept (the idea) is the noumenon: the mental manifestation, the mental content, the meaning, attached to the word. It is by using concepts that man conceives, comprehends. The more and the better the concepts of an individual and the clearer his conception of them, the better his comprehension. An undeveloped person does not possess many concepts. He may, however, use many words that he does not understand right and so must abuse. Conversely, a developed individual has more concepts than he has words, since he has made many observations in mental reality but nevertheless is reduced to the poor vocabulary of the current language to express these observations, so that he must often use

one and the same word for several concepts (meanings). Therefore, groups of more developed people, who have a common and shared deeper experience of mental and higher reality, create a language of their own, a terminology of their own.

³From the viewpoint of consciousness, the ability to abstract is the most important faculty connected with language. The word “abstract” is derived from the Latin *abstraho*, which literally means “I drag away, I draw away” but in this connection is best translated by “I disregard”. What is meant by this is the faculty generally present in consciousness functions – in sensory, emotional, and intellectual functions – of disregarding almost all details when observing the elements of reality (external and internal “things”), of concentrating instead on a few important characteristics.

⁴It is essential to understand that abstraction is done in a process that occurs in many orders or comprises many levels. For instance, sensory functions make a first abstraction of, say, a particular coffee cup, that is to say: Charlie’s coffee cup in the dining-room. Our consciousness disregards almost all of the countless details that characterize this coffee cup when stating, “Charlie’s coffee cup”, and in so doing distinguishing it from Katie’s coffee cup which is nearby. Our consciousness distinguishes only such details as are interesting to us when we are to decide which coffee cup of several possible ones it is about. We call this an “abstraction of the first order” or an “abstraction of the lowest level”. This is a concept formed on the basis of a concrete reality experienced; therefore it is called a “concrete concept”. Abstractions of the second order are abstractions of abstractions of the first order. Such abstractions are again produced by disregarding details, namely such details as make Charlie’s coffee cup different from Katie’s. “Coffee cup” pure and simple thus is an abstraction of the second order. Even on this level, the second one, consciousness is somewhat removed from physical reality and approaches mental reality. The concept of “coffee cup” thus is more abstract than the concept of “Charlie’s coffee cup”. “Drinking-vessel” would be an abstraction of the third order, for in order to form this concept it is necessary to disregard also such details as all coffee cups have in common, such as for example a certain form or approximate size, to exclusively concentrate on their function. It is an even more abstract concept, which also affords us an example of the character of higher abstractions of increasingly disregarding the form in favour of function and purpose. In fact, ever higher abstractions make it possible to think of, and understand, questions of “how?” and “why?” and so pave the way for higher consciousness and insight. However, also lower levels of abstraction enable us to recognize things and to form general concepts.

⁵Animals abstract, too. However, processes of abstraction by animals are

characterized by the fact that they pursue only a few steps. A dog recognizes its mistress among all other women. Then it abstracts from “Mistress” to “food”, “tenderness”, and perhaps some level beyond those, but not further. The dog also recognizes “Little Master” among all other boys. From this abstraction it proceeds to “funny games”, etc., and perhaps some level beyond, but then the process ceases.

⁶In contrast, the most important feature of man’s abstracting is his ability to proceed to ever higher abstractions without limit: from “table” to “furniture”, from “furniture” to “household goods”, from “household goods” to “possessions”, and subsequently abstractions of ever higher orders. Higher order abstractions can be made in many different directions according to the individual’s interest, knowledge, and understanding. Here follows just one example starting from “possessions”. The next higher abstraction may be attachment to possessions, from there to attachment in general, then identification as a hindrance to consciousness, from there to general hindrances to the acquisition of consciousness, then the whole purpose of one’s consciousness development, the development of human monads, the manifestation of the cosmos.

⁷By allowing himself to be controlled by the activity of his emotional envelope, an individual may end up in a pretty permanent state of contempt, hatred, or doubt, and get stuck in it. This may destroy his peace of mind, impair his relations with other people or his prospects of developing consciousness. However, it is not necessary to get stuck in this way. It is possible to move on, to abstract. A higher abstraction demonstrates the limitation of the lower abstraction. The higher includes the lower and so implicitly shows its subordinate position in the greater whole. Suddenly this contempt, hatred, or doubt no longer is “everything”, but there is something greater, something beyond it, something capable of watching it, reflecting upon it, valuing it, criticizing it, laughing at it. Even whatever was a negative and degrading state – stuck in hatred or doubt – may, when abstracted to the next higher level, have a liberating effect. To hate one’s own hatred means to get rid of the first, more harmful hatred. To doubt one’s own doubt starts a process of seeking after truth which may lead to certainty.

⁸Here follow some more examples of how higher order abstractions bring about a widening, a deepening, an intensification of consciousness. Starting from concepts or conditions that in themselves are positive, such as “culture”, “knowledge”, “attention”, “consideration”, “love”, or “trust”, we find that on the next higher level of abstraction they receive new potentials that are very interesting to consciousness: “culture of culture” intimates a more intentional cultivation of positive values, “knowledge of

knowledge” indicates a deeper and more conscious reflection on the nature and purpose of knowledge, “attention to attention” leads us to the study of methods of developing self-consciousness, “consideration of consideration” is a more active way of refining and ennobling ourselves, “love of love” and “trust of trust” summarize what is best in human aspiration. Anyone who has understood this basic idea can expand on it with other examples from various spheres.

⁹In a sharp contrast to the conditions just mentioned there are others which are negative and cannot teach us anything; worry and fear, for example. If we abstract such ones to the next level – worry of worry, fear of fear – we end up in near-pathological states. Pity of pity is dangerously close to self-pity. Belief in belief yields fanaticism. Ignorance of ignorance is of an even more difficult kind. Thus what is important here is to distinguish which concepts or conditions may take us further to higher abstractions that liberate us and create consciousness, and which lead us in the opposite direction.

¹⁰Abstraction thus means that the observation of something is observed, this second observation is in its turn observed, etc. When man directs this multi-levelled observation to himself, to his external activity (motion and sensory functions) and to his consciousness functions, internal feelings and thoughts, then the possibility of self-consciousness arises in him. Thanks to his faculty of unlimited abstraction to higher levels man can reach states of self-consciousness. Esoterically, this fact is the most important reason why it is essential to understand the process of abstraction and become more aware of it.

15 ACTIVITY

15.1 General and Introductory

¹The most important activity is to direct attention to what is happening in outer reality and what is happening in inner reality, for that is the only way in which one can begin to do in a real sense. What people call “doing” is mechanical and automatic results of as mechanical and automatic bodily movement, sensory, emotional, and intellectual functions. The quality of attention is the most important factor, for the quality of all the rest depends on it.

²Unthinking people see activity as physical, visible, palpable only. But activity is also mental: reflection, solving of problems, planning, preparation, etc. Without a right, well-executed mental planning, physical work cannot be of the highest quality. In all esoteric work, the aspect of preparation is stressed. A particularly important effort is preceded, when possible, by a particularly long preparation, during which all participants direct their attention to all sides of the work to be done, which is considered begun, not when taking shape in the physical world, but at the moment when the idea was consciously formed for a definite, intended result. To a certain extent it is true that the longer the time of preparation, the greater the force of the result, just as a falling object hits the ground with a force that is greater the greater the height of the fall.

³Activity is not the same as tension of muscles or nerves. You can be intensely active physically as well as mentally and very calm and relaxed in your organism at the same time. Skill also includes the ability of economizing: not using more energy than required by the task at hand, just as you do not stretch other muscles than those needed by the work you are doing.

⁴Activity also is not-doing, intentional renunciation. Gautama Buddha was asked once how his teaching could be summed up in the most concise way. He answered: “Not to do evil, to do only good, to purify one’s mind, this is the teaching of the Buddhas.”

⁵The true nirvana is hopelessly misunderstood. The prerequisite of universal expansion and emancipation from all involvement is to serve life, to enter a globe, a seven-globe, and ever greater global formations in cooperation with other selves. To seek knowledge and power for other purposes than to serve life results in renewed involvements in the ever coarser matter of ever lower worlds. When life is at its best it is work in inconceivable bliss in the service of the process of manifestation, without any thought of one’s self. Helping the primordial atoms, unconscious in the

primordial manifestation, to acquire consciousness, self-consciousness, collective consciousness, omniscience, and omnipotence in the quickest possible way is the only path to the longed-for final goal: eternal rest. To continue to live after that is to offer the true “sacrifice”.

⁶Anyone who in a life of service shows that all the illusions of life (power, wealth, honour, etc.), which hamper and separate, have been annihilated for evermore, speeds quickly towards his anticipated goal.

⁷Perfected third selves, serving mankind and thus keeping their two lower triads, can be active in several different worlds at the same time, though not of course with full capacity. (This explains the doctrine of “the three bodies of the Buddha” taught in esoteric Buddhism.) It is part of esoteric training to try to do two things at the same time. The different kinds of consciousness can, when the coalescence is dissolved, work separately, mechanically and in a routine manner as “robots” sporadically inspected by the self.

⁸The first and seventh departmental types are particularly people of action for whom the path of service is the most expedient one.

15.2 *Karma Yoga*

¹Karma yoga can best be described as “the yoga of action”; knowledge, understanding, and insight put into a life of service. What of old has been called “karma yoga” ought properly to be called “dharma yoga”, the way of the fulfilment of duty. It ought to be made known that to serve self-forgetfully is the way to acquire all necessary knowledge.

²According to the planetary hierarchy, the serving attitude to life is the easiest, safest, quickest path to the fifth natural kingdom. All kingdoms capable of it have as their foremost task of life serving those at lower stages of development, so that they will be able to reach higher stages. Without such help there would be no evolution, or evolution would take tremendously longer time. “He who gives shall receive.” Those who serve mankind unselfishly are given more and more opportunities of doing so. Service itself develops all requisite qualities and abilities, liberates from emotional illusions and mental fictions.

³The karma yogi does not amass money, as the greedy do, just in order to will it away to more or less “charitable causes” when he can no longer enjoy his fortune. He does not despise wealth and power, however. On the contrary, he recognizes their importance as long as mankind is dominated by such illusions. He will use those power factors in order to serve evolution in the most efficient way.

⁴Karma yoga, then, is the yoga of action, action as expression of the will. Action includes everything that the individual sets about, every visible

expression of thought and feeling. Thought and feeling that are not put into action become obstacles on the path. The example is the most powerful teaching.

⁵To the gnana yogi, knowledge is good and ignorance evil. To the bhakti yogi, love is good and hatred evil. To the karma yogi, freedom is good and bondage is evil. This is the basic attitude taken by the third, second, and first ray types, respectively.

⁶Everything makes up a unity. The seemingly isolated parts are all manifestations of the one, indivisible unity. Those who live in appearance see only the parts and think that they are independent selves, whereas those who live in reality know that they are parts of unity, are one with everything. The yogi strives after unity and thereby raises himself above good and evil and life's perpetual changes.

⁷That power which we all take to be our will manifests itself to the yogi so strongly in the whole of his nature, when he follows the Law as far as he can see, that he understands that this is not his own power but something that has been put at his disposal and which will become his property when he enters unity. Thereby he becomes a tool for the deity and his will coincides with the will of destiny. Anyone who sees the divine in everything must recognize, love, and worship the presence of this divine will in himself and, in so doing, gives up all his own motives in favour of the will of unity in himself.

⁸This means that the yogi offers himself up as a sacrifice to the deity. In so doing, he does away with all thoughts of reward, all fear or apprehensions as to the results of action as well as every egoistic interest, even the satisfaction of having acted disinterestedly. He also refrains from every attempt at valuing his action, whether it was good or evil. Everything is sacrificed, yet the sacrifice is no self-effacement, not negative, but positive. It has nothing in common with the fatalist's resignation, which easily will degenerate into quietism, not acting at all. The sacrifice embraces everything, every action, nay, every breath; everything becomes an offering to unity divine. He acts to make an outlet for the powers of the deity that flow through him. The result itself is an offering which is made perfect in the work being perfectly done. The proof that the yogi has sacrificed everything is his indifference ("divine indifference") to whatever happens to him. He never asks what the result will be, whether happiness or misfortune, honour or disgrace, life or death.

⁹In the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, which can be called the gospel of karma yoga, the necessity of action is given the strongest possible symbolic expression in the description of inner life as a struggle between two armies drawn up and prepared for battle. The poem was a reaction against the tendency to

slackness, idleness, quietism, a protest against indolence and passivity. This apathy has also been fostered by the superstition that one can “go in the way of karma” (rather like going in the way of the law of gravity).

¹⁰The yoga of action has always been regarded by the planetary hierarchy as the essential one, because insight that is not put into action becomes an obstacle in the future, according to the law of karma.

¹¹All activity is spiritual activity if it is done in the right spirit: to serve mankind and life. The least work that is needed for the functioning of life is necessary and, therefore, divine. The fact that services are different and in the eyes of men of different value is of no consequence here. Sweeping floors is as necessary as ruling the kingdom. The king who does not see this may be forced to learn how to sweep floors.

15.3 Dharma

¹The rishis taught the purposefulness of existence, taught that the purpose of life is the evolution of everything and that the goal of life is cosmic perfection. Of what they taught, dharma is perhaps what has best preserved its original rational content or reality content.

²Although the law of destiny and dharma are not quite synonymous terms, it is easier to understand the matter if you regard karma as the law of reaping and dharma as the law of destiny. It is wrong to consider both as the same law, especially also in the fatalistic sense.

³Dharma is the inmost nature of every individual, that which constitutes his true being. Dharma is what is given in the interdependent arrangements of things. It is the dharma of fire to burn. It is the dharma of the tree to take root, to grow, to put out leaves, flowers, and fruit. It is the dharma of animals to live in accordance with their individual characters and their inherent instinct's striving to fulfil their mission. Dharma is the meaning of life for every individual.

⁴Man's dharma is different at different stages of development, in different circumstances of life. Everybody has his special dharma, his problems of life to solve, his duties to perform. Man lives in a state of insecurity and uncertainty when he is not acting to the best of his ability, in accordance with his dharma. The dharma of mankind is humanity.

⁵We are partly free, partly not free. We become free to the extent that we have acquired knowledge of the Law and the ability to apply that knowledge. The lower down the scale of development we are, the less free we are. We become free from the lower by being absorbed in the higher. We shall only become entirely free when we have attained the highest divinity. And this we shall do by discovering and applying the Law, more and more in ever higher worlds.

⁶We think we are free when we are acting in accordance with our individual characters. But as long as we lack knowledge of the Law and the ability to apply it correctly, we shall make nothing but mistakes, which will lead us into the bondage of compulsion and obsession, and this will go on until we have seen our mistakes through experiencing them. We are not free when we rebel against our destiny, our dharma, the meaning or our incarnation, when we act against unity, when we are controlled by the fictions and illusions of our ignorance of life and the pertaining conceptions of right and wrong, as long as our individual character has not absorbed in itself that Law which we have come to know, and is applying it from then on.

⁷We do not achieve freedom through quietism, through omitting to act. No development will be brought about through inactivity, idleness, through begging the deity to do what it is our dharma to do. We free ourselves by acting, by taking a positive attitude to everything we meet with, by letting the divine powers act in us and through us, which they unfailingly will do as soon as we remove the obstacles to their reception.

⁸Life puts everyone of us in the place that is best for us, which by no means always is the one we think best. If we do not understand this, but regard self-assumed duties, or those that life lays on us, as a burden which we assume reluctantly and with a feeling of constraint, then we do not understand life and we lack the right positive attitude. If we have difficulty in accepting that we are overqualified for the work that life has allotted to us, that our capacity is not duly appreciated, that we are to go through life as seemingly insignificant nonentities, this only shows that we need to be freed from many qualities which, although perhaps desirable on lower levels, are most unsuitable on higher ones. Many necessary qualities we acquire in subordinate, insignificant positions and under trying conditions. We shall make an entirely different, a more useful contribution, if we have learned to allow the competence we have acquired to be a willing tool where destiny has placed us, if we have learned to accept being seeming nonentities, just tools. Honour and distinctions, like power and wealth, have unexpected possibilities of affecting the vibrations in our lower emotional molecular kinds, the regions of illusions and false values. By being willing tools of higher powers we acquire the prerequisites of becoming tools of still higher ones.

15.4 The Knowledge must be Put into Action

¹The ability to assimilate the knowledge is a special capacity; another as important faculty is to utilize the knowledge, to apply it in a purposive, expedient, and efficient manner. Many are content with their theoretical

learning. It affords them clarity and thereby all they think they need. That is the mistake of most people.

²To develop does not only mean to acquire ever higher kinds of consciousness with the material energies that go with them, but also to utilize that consciousness and energy expediently. To live means to handle forces. Ideas are forces; and if they are not used by the self, they are used by the envelopes according to their inherent tendencies, and that is seldom to the advantage of the monad.

³Energy requires some outlet, and if the energy will not be used right, mistakes are unavoidable. Life is an experiment that gives experience. We can spare ourselves much unnecessary experience by applying the knowledge of the laws of life that exists. Thereby we can save ourselves many incarnations. The unlimited number of incarnations was what the initiates meant by “punishment in eternal hell”, misinterpreted as all the other esoteric symbolism. But how would ignorance be able to interpret correctly?

⁴Often man’s desire to understand the meaning of life and to clarify how to lead a rational life causes him to take an interest in the esoteric knowledge. After he has succeeded in finding the answers to these questions he is fully content to cultivate the first self’s egoistic interests. But if he thought a wee bit further, cared about his future incarnations, he would be wise in taking life more seriously. For anyone who wills for development needs to be awakened, and that can mean a rather unpleasant re-education, and a life that makes him look about for something different. Anyone who thinks that physical life is something worth striving for obviously has not had his eyes opened to what life really is. Else he could have learnt that by looking around in the world and ask himself, when seeing how most people live, whether he would like to be in their place. For it is quite possible for him to experience what he would give everything to be spared. There is no other hell than physical life. But anyone who has experienced that side of life certainly agrees with that 45-self who called the physical world “a real cold hell”. Others say, “a hot hell”.

⁵The planetary hierarchy needs helpers in its work to help mankind. Without co-workers in the physical world the hierarchy can achieve very little. The distress of mankind in all respects is enormous. The greatest obstacles to evolution are the prevalent lying ideologies that mislead, brutalize, and satanize mankind, engender the repulsive tendency (hatred), strengthen egoism and mania for possessions that deprive others of the necessities of life. If people were living in harmony with the laws of life, then there would be no want. Nature, too (the three lower natural kingdoms) would then live to serve a mankind that lived to serve instead of exploiting nature for its own self-glory.

⁶We can all help by making our contributions in politics, social work, economics, science, etc. We must see to it that nobody will be in want or will lack the prospects of acquiring knowledge of reality and life and insight into the conditions of leading a happy life. Life would be paradise if all lived to serve. That is the level we must reach: to help and not exploit one another.

⁷Anyone who will not or cannot understand this and will not strive to realize this knowledge is not even an aspirant to discipleship. And that is the least which the planetary hierarchy demands of the individual, if he is to expect special consideration in the application of the law of destiny.

⁸The planetary hierarchy looks for co-workers in the worlds of man. There is a crying want of “labourers in the vineyard”, individuals willing and able to help the planetary hierarchy in its work to give mankind knowledge of reality, of life and of the Law, to solve the many problems of expedient life in the physical world as a precondition of consciousness development, the realization of the meaning of life. That shortage is the one to be made up, and those who do not wish to help in that task lack all the prerequisites of life in higher kingdoms, where life is service.

⁹Aspirants to discipleship who wish to participate in the planetary hierarchy’s work for mankind are encouraged to work, for it is through the very work that they develop, acquire the requisite qualities and abilities and become ever more competent co-workers. They learn through the old proven method of trial and error. It is by making mistakes that we learn, and the less experienced we are, the more mistakes we shall make. By elimination and constant improvement we become more and more competent co-workers in the process of evolution. We learn humility, grow ever more fit for service and instinctively conscious of what other people need and how we are to best meet their needs. Where the will to unity remains unaffected we have done our best.

¹⁰The aspirant to discipleship does not wait for the teacher to appear and tell him, now you are good enough. The learning he has gained in the esoteric literature enables him to give people the true knowledge and to free them from their illusions and fictions. He takes his small share in the common work wherever he can and in so doing shows that he is fit for greater tasks.

¹¹Everything which the individual is given for nothing for his own self-realization is aimed at making him an ever more efficient co-worker in the great cosmic evolution. Life in higher worlds is no selfish sluggard’s life (with such a life there will be no evolution) but a self-forgetful impersonal life of a 24-hour-a-day effort for the welfare of all.

15.5 The Disciple as a Worker

¹In order to be able to do something in the human kingdom the planetary hierarchy must, according to the Law (several laws), use human beings. In order to implement a certain plan the hierarchy needs co-workers whom it can inspire for the execution of the plan where such co-workers are necessary.

²Before the individual has acquired subjective causal consciousness the planetary hierarchy cannot use him as a tool in its work, and only such people can expect to be accepted as disciples. It is a grave error to think that the planetary hierarchy is especially interested in anyone who is not fit to work for the hierarchy in the physical world. Only he can be a fit tool who has acquired the twelve essential qualities. The hierarchy has no use for unfit tools (and all who think they are fit are such ones).

³The individual's own development in order to enter the fifth natural kingdom does not interest the planetary hierarchy. They do not care about what a man knows or is able to do but what contribution he makes for evolution, how he realizes brotherhood. Until he qualifies in that respect he is to pursue the ordinary path of development under the supervision of his Augoeides, who for the individual represents the Law with everything which that implies. The individual must, according to the law of self-realization, find the methods of development himself, and in this the evolutionary energies are at his disposal. Development goes on automatically in the great evolutionary process during millions of years and according to the law of self-realization.

⁴Before the disciple can be of any great use to the teacher, his etheric envelope must be entirely re-organized, so that it will be able to receive the vibrations from the causal envelope. The prerequisites for this are integration of the envelopes of incarnation, mental dominance, and knowledge of the method of re-organization. Thereupon the disciple can begin to learn about the energies that pour in, their origins and expedient application.

⁵When science has discovered and recognized the existence of the physical etheric envelope, the esoteric knowledge of the relations between the centres of the etheric envelope, the nervous and glandular systems of the organism will be allowed for publication. That will bring about a total revolution in medical thinking.

⁶The disciple never works alone at the implementation of a hierarchic plan. Before this will be possible, he must have joined a permanent group of disciples with a common consciousness. Within this group, criticism is precluded and full harmony prevails.

⁷The planetary hierarchy works with causes. The disciples in the worlds

of man are enmeshed in the effects of these causes hidden to them and cannot therefore judge them right. Not until the disciple has achieved a constant contact with his causal consciousness will he be able to liberate himself from the illusions and fictions and discover the causes of events. It is the very ability to see the causes that makes prevision possible, the “prevision of the future”.

⁸“Service” is activity in accordance with the laws of unity, development, and freedom. All three laws are engaged. Service is an expression of the unity of all beings. Service aims at the development of consciousness in all beings. Service does not imply the forcing of one’s opinion on others but appeals to their possibilities of apprehending facts and relations. This activity in accordance with the laws of life brings ideas with widened perspectives to the worker. In service you find the way to develop most quickly. Anyone who in his egoism keeps the knowledge to himself, stagnates or becomes the victim of fictions. There are untold kinds of service (political, social, scientific, cultural, etc., in addition of course always individual service when opportunities present themselves and the seeker or asker is not unworthy). The essential thing is that the activity intends to benefit the whole.

⁹The disciple exists not for himself, but for others. He errs if he thinks that the deeper insight he gains by serving is for his own development. It is intended to make him a more able worker in the service of the planetary hierarchy. The insight he experiences is in accordance with the temporary plan for the consciousness development of mankind and thus is limited to some certain field.

¹⁰The disciple need not seek after opportunities to serve. They present themselves and are often very obvious; they exist in his immediate surroundings. Anyone who wants to is able to discover the needs that exist everywhere. Everybody is to serve in the way in which he can best serve. Imitation is always abortive. In any case service is not done on the orders of any authority whatever. “Spiritual leaders” who issue orders and commands are in error.

¹¹The disciple who in a new incarnation is again accepted as a disciple receives information about the plans of the hierarchy concerning the immediate future. The plan is presented in such a manner that he gains insight into that part of the plan which the department he belongs to is estimated to be able to implement, as well as into the contribution which he himself thinks he will be able to take on him. Thus he is not charged with a task, but must assess his own possibilities himself. Never is he exhorted to any work whatever for the hierarchy. Wishes, prescriptions are unthinkable as from any authority whatever in higher kingdoms, for that would conflict

with the law of freedom. It is quite another thing that anyone who wants to gain something for his own part (attain a higher stage) must observe the prerequisites.

¹²It would be completely abortive to think that the disciple is to be robotized in order to become a suitable tool for the planetary hierarchy. A more apposite analogy is that of an ambassador sent out by his government on a most demanding and delicate mission.

¹³It is no easy work that the disciple takes on him. He receives no directions, no advice. The only assistance he can count on is that the requisite energies are placed at his disposal to the extent that he understands how to use them expediently. It will be his business to see what he is able to do with his qualifications, where he can make his contribution, how he will best adapt it to the prevalent conditions. He must not shirk responsibility. He must not force his view on others, just dispassionately account for his view on the matter. A fanatic is unsuitable as a disciple. He must consider other people's stages of development, possibilities of understanding. All this he will learn through daily experience in all kinds of relationships.

¹⁴Knowledge is necessary. But it is practically worthless if the consciousness there is in knowledge does not also manifest its energy aspect.

¹⁵Everybody 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 correctly. They are the only ways in which his unique individual character can develop. The ignorance of life, complaining of difficulties, does not see their function and necessity.

¹⁶Our difficulties show us our ignorance and our impotence, but also the way we must go to find that knowledge and power which will solve our problems. It is not enough to understand, but we must use the energy there is in understanding.

¹⁷Many difficulties arise because we do not use the energy of our knowledge. All consciousness expressions are simultaneously energy expressions. And if the energies are not released into action, then they must get other outlets, and that will as a rule be detrimental to ourselves in some respect or other. That is one of the reasons why the esoteric knowledge must be kept secret from those who do not know how to put it into action.

¹⁸Those who are not attached to the planetary hierarchy as disciples and aspirants are supervised by the planetary organization, which sees to it that the Law has its course and that everybody will reap what he has sown. It is by his work for mankind and for the lower kingdoms that the individual develops his consciousness and receives help to become an ever more capable co-worker in the service of evolution.

15.6 Self-Activation

¹There are many strange conceptions people have formed of god's will. The Christians pray to god that he should do everything. It is true that the whole cosmos is the work of monads who have attained the seven highest cosmic worlds (1–7), and certainly the energies and consciousness needed by life pour down through all the worlds. But ignorance does not know that the cosmos exists in order to afford the monads opportunities to acquire consciousness and, as their final goal, omniscience. The monads receive everything they need from higher kingdoms. But it is their business to assimilate through their own work whatever life grants to them. The organism digests food but we must supply the organism with food. Ideas are given to us for nothing. But we must assimilate the ideas through our own work. We are given everything we need for our development. But this development is the result of self-initiated consciousness activity according to the laws of self-realization and self-activation.

²Since the meaning of life is the consciousness development of all monads, the central motive of all individuals in the worlds of higher kingdoms is to serve this purpose. For anyone who has understood this, all those conceptions fall away which people have formed of the "will of god" during millions of years and which religious emotional imagination has constructed in the longing need for religious activity. It would be an easy task to fill entire libraries with all the literature that during millennia has been produced on these subjects.

³At the present stage of mankind's development, emotionality is the dynamic force that realizes what reason comprehends to be expedient. Emotion is the impelling force. Many people comprehend what ought to be done but let the matter rest there, since they do not "turn on" the impelling force of emotion. The intelligentsia is largely content with passively receiving the knowledge without applying it in life. The fault is with our present system of education, which neglects the culture of emotional activity. The mystics remain dreamers. They are content with being absorbed in devotion and expend their energy in imaginative excesses, not understanding that the energy of attraction must find expression in physical life. Self-realization shows in action. God does not need any prayers. He needs workers who execute his purposes in the physical world. Not to use the knowledge, not to apply it in the right manner, is to misuse it. To receive knowledge is to be offered opportunities to serve, and anyone who does not seize these opportunities has no prospects of getting any offers in the future. It is a "grace" to be able to serve.

⁴Not merely preaching the message of peace but also living the peace

they preach.

⁵The worker in the vineyard allows others to enjoy the harvest and the honour of its quality. For him it is enough that the harvest is the best.

⁶You strive to become strong, able, wise, glad, happy, to develop, etc. in order that the world be such. You are carried or you carry, you press down or you lift up.

⁷You may serve life in many ways, mainly by fulfilling your duty.

⁸It is a mistake to neglect exoteric duties for esoteric ones, lower duties for self-assumed higher ones. On the other hand, the individual is wise in not assuming new duties that encroach on his work for self-realization.

⁹Just as you cannot be an expert in all spheres, cannot perform all kinds of work, so you cannot be “perfect” in all respects. The main thing is that the work you do contribute, be it professional work or “spare time work” for “the welfare of all”, is done as best you can. Perfectionism of any kind is a waste of time.

¹⁰Adaptation to people or to circumstances increases our fitness for life and our capacity for service. This need not in the least imply that you compromise, only that you give up self-assertion.

¹¹In the matter of service, being the esoterician’s path to the insights and abilities of higher worlds, the rule applies saying that you serve with your best abilities and not by doing such things as others could do equally well if not better. Too great emphasis has been laid on material help, which as a rule is no help at all. The only true help is the aid to self-help. Other kinds of help mostly equal bolstering up vice, rather promote the welfare receiver attitude, laziness, dissatisfaction, diffidence, and lack of enterprise. You do not help others by becoming a hindrance to yourself.

¹²We help others with their problems by analysing the matter with them until the problems solve themselves in the uncertain people.

¹³You may hear that, since service is a condition of consciousness development, it is in the egoistic interest of the individual to be able to serve. Those who so presume have no idea of what service means. Very often it is of such a nature that, if there is anything of egoism left in the individual, “he cannot stand it” but gives up.

¹⁴Of course there are “idealists” also at the stages of civilization and culture. However, they lack that foundation of the knowledge of reality which guarantees the constancy and irrefutability of the pertaining ideas. Life-ignorant “juvenile idealism”, which soon volatilizes, is a sufficient illustration of that fact. Unshakable ideality belongs at the stage of ideality in the world of Platonic ideas. It is true of all ideas, however, that at lower stages the individual does not have the latent fund of life experience necessary to realize ideals belonging at a higher stage of development.

15.7 *Four Faculties for the Work of the Group*

¹Four faculties principally distinguish the kind of work to be performed by the group of disciples. These faculties should, therefore, characterize also the disciples to be selected for training: 1) sensitivity to higher impressions, 2) impersonality, 3) incipient causal consciousness, and 4) mental polarization. Idealistic aspiration, unselfishness, and will to serve are not mentioned in this connection. This is not because these faculties are supposed to be unimportant, but, on the contrary, that they are fundamental, so that they must be found as essential qualifications in all esotericians.

²*Sensitivity to higher impressions.* Here “sensitivity” does not mean that introversion, impressionability, and fragility, not to say touchiness, which is commonly seen in a certain category of “spiritual-minded people”, who are thin-skinned, self-centred, self-loving, and always on the defensive against a surrounding world that scares them. What is meant is, on the contrary, that faculty by which you may widen your own perception into awareness of increasing possibilities for contact with other people, grasping the quality of your relationships with them, and quickly reading their needs in order to serve them, not with what you want to give them, but with what they need. It is a matter of physical, emotional, and mental attention and the ability to observe consciousness expressions of all three kinds. This faculty of sensitivity has nothing in common with the hypersensitivity of one’s own false personality, such as it may manifest itself in dejection, self-pity, the feeling of being attacked and thus the need of defending oneself, negative imaginings about being the victim of other people’s slights and wrongdoings, or being misunderstood, discontent with the conditions of one’s life, injured pride and vanity, and so on in seeming infinitude. These faults and failings are important only in so far as they affect the group and reduce its efficiency. In such cases, the individual must make efforts, with attention and understanding, not to let such things find expression in the inner life of the group. The sensitivity dealt with here thus is a kind of wakefulness in relation to other people and presupposes a living interest in them and their needs.

³*Impersonality* is a faculty that well-developed personalities find it particularly hard to acquire. Many cherished ideas, many hard-won qualities, many carefully nurtured righteousnesses, many powerfully formulated opinions militate against impersonality. The stronger the personality, the weaker the impersonality. However, personality is the synthetic consciousness of the envelopes of incarnation, a functional consciousness that is more or less in conflict with awakening self-consciousness in the

causal envelope. The fiction of personality consciousness is connected with the belief that there is an enduring “self” in what is mostly the constant interaction of fleeting functions. It is counteracted by the understanding that the only permanent self of man is the monad’s impersonal self-consciousness in its causal envelope. The illusions of personality consciousness include pride of “one’s own” contribution and desire for the gratitude, recognition, awards, admiration, attention of others – as many hindrances to the work and life of the group. There is a close relation between impersonality and non-identification. The condition of impersonality is promoted, its quality is nurtured by a deeper understanding of our almost total dependence on our elder brethren in evolution, Augoeides and our teachers in the planetary hierarchy. “If it is my own, it is not up to much. If it is worth much, it is not my own.”

⁴*Incipient causal consciousness* can come about only as the result of long and unceasing practice according to school methods and unselfish service. Thus it has nothing in common with that which new age people call “intuition” and which are emotional impulses with a faint mental content. Incipient causal consciousness manifests itself in, among other things, direct understanding of reality ideas and as direct rejection of unreality ideas (fictions); quick response to real needs of other people, which is a quality of the heart centre in connection with the unity centre of the causal envelope; right use of qualitative type energies for creative service in the physical world; understanding of the time factor, perception of the cyclic process of time and the different qualities of different time periods, all of it resulting in the practical ability to wait for the right opportunity (this includes understanding of the great significance of preparation in all esoteric work). The whole of this development is necessarily slow, and so it requires great patience.

⁵*Mental polarization* means to live with reflection (ponderingly, meditatively) and also to control emotions. Increasingly, emotions, desires and illusions, are brought under the control of mentality, mentality as being controlled in its turn by causal consciousness. Emotions, which generally are self-centred and personal, are superseded by realizations of universality and impersonality. The emotional envelope increasingly becomes only a clear mirror of essentiality, personal wishes are superseded by aspiration to unity promoting the whole. All these desirable qualities, abilities, and states are produced through mental polarization, self-observation, self-remembrance, and meditative attitude. Nothing of this is something new for the disciples, for it has been said over and over again in all basic esoteric instruction. But it remains to put it into practice as well.

15.8 *The Twelve Virtues of Group Activity*

¹Understanding of the twelve essential qualities has, up to now, been too much characterized by the average aspirant's (the "psychician's") tendency to individualism and occupation with his own separate "self". However, both aspirantship and discipleship are not, as has been emphasized many times, individual conditions, but group activity, group life. Not alone, but with your group you enter the fifth natural kingdom; not in isolated, passive observation, but in efficient group work, group activity, you will perfect the qualities. Now and increasingly in the future, the twelve essential qualities will be understood as the twelve virtues of group activity, group life. Below a few intimations are given about these twelve. It has been considered expedient not to make a detailed description of all twelve, but to leave it to those who understand this to complete the presentation.

²*Trust in life* means trust, not in life in a general sense, but in the most conscious part of life, those beings who are consciously one with unity: Augeides, the planetary hierarchy, and the ever higher divine collectives. This trust in our elder brethren in evolution affords us security, safety, assurance, lightheartedness, hope, trust in Law, courage. It affords us the realization that there is no failure, since our elder brethren once walked the same way as we are now walking, made the same mistakes as we make, yet reached the goal. It affords us the understanding that everything is planned for the best, since perfect wisdom and love govern all higher worlds and kingdoms. Trust in the Great Ones affords us freedom from fear, anxiety, envy, and despair.

³Where group activity in particular is concerned, this means that members have confidence in that plan which the Great Ones have made for the development of all life, for the evolution of mankind. Having this confidence they see that it is a vain undertaking to make one's own separate and separative plans; that what this implies for the group is the necessity of perceiving the plan of the planetary hierarchy as clearly as possible and the attempt at realizing that little portion of it which falls within the competence of the group.

⁴The departmental energies, rays, that especially carry this confidence are the first and the seventh. The qualitative expressions of the first ray are courage, power, endurance, honesty, reliability, the power of the group to stand alone, to influence conditions rather than people, to liberate itself from emotional illusions. The qualitative expressions of the seventh ray are ability to act, organizing ability, methodic work, exactitude, and orderliness.

⁵*Trust in self* means the group's self-determination, self-criticism, frankness, determination to win, self-control, balance, ability to decide for itself what is good and right independently of the valuations of the surrounding world and without slavery to the common authorities of mass "thinking". The departmental energy that carries the group in this respect is the fourth. Its keyword, "harmony through conflict", indicates that the necessary balance in expression is a result of development achieved during a long and hard battle between the higher that the group is to become and the lower that it was. When finally the group has attained the balanced active self-expression it strived for, it has found the path of virtue between the two extremes of self-assertion and resignation. The group does not force itself and its views on others, and does not allow others to force themselves and their views on the group.

⁶*Trust in law* means the group's sense of duty, honesty, straightforwardness, and endurance, with a simultaneous observation of moderation, striking the golden mean. This also includes freedom from stubbornness, self-will, and fanaticism. Trust in circumstances and people, in your own first self, in its power and knowledge, is an evidence of life-ignorance. That trust lacks that firm basis in reality which only trust in the laws of life can afford. The second self is so pervaded by the lawfulness of existence that he has become, as it were, a manifestation of the Law by entering unity. The will to unity is at the same time the will to law, the law of unity, "divine love", which the first self must acquire in order to become a second self. This is true of the group as well as of its individual members. The second ray is the particular carrier of the trust in law, which demonstrates that this ray has the closest connection to the will to unity, wisdom, and the heart centre.

⁷*Joy in life* is joy in work, for only a life of work and service is a life worth living. At least that is how all those who have entered the kingdoms of unity look upon it. "When life is at its best, it is work and toil." It is in the work and service for the good of all that the hierarchies in the worlds of unity have their happiness, joy, and bliss. The group has this experience, this insight, "scaled down", and finds in it a source of power and optimism that liberates it from imagined suffering, bitterness, grief, inhibitions, moralism and idealism that destroy joy, dissatisfaction, and self-torture. The rays that carry this are the fourth, the fifth, and the sixth. The fourth ray in its lower quality represents conflict, but in its higher quality a balanced expression and a striving towards the art of living. The better energies of the fifth ray promote common sense, thoroughness, and exactness. The qualitative expressions of the sixth ray are dedication and reliability. In their harmonious cooperation these rays afford competence,

efficiency, and endurance in work.

⁸*Purposefulness* means the group's energy, power, efficiency, positivity, firmness, unshakableness, unyieldingness, courage, staying power, as well as the group's freedom from thoughtlessness and self-defeat. The ray energies that carry this are the first, third, and seventh. In its higher and better expressions, the first ray affords power, courage, and determination in the being concentrated on essentials, always considering the goal. The third ray enables the group to look at problems and tasks from many sides, liberating it from narrow-mindedness and fanaticism. The qualitative energies of the seventh ray afford the capacity for realization in the physical world, the understanding of the necessity of action.

⁹*Wisdom* is the group's common knowledge, insight, understanding based on experience, its common sense and power of judgement demonstrated in action, its humility and freedom from dogmatism, moralism, and pride. The carrying ray is the fifth, which in the qualitative sense implies the striving for knowledge, insight, and understanding.

¹⁰*Unity* is the group's attraction, love, goodness, and compassion both internally, between members, and externally, to other groups. Included here are respect, tact, delicacy, consideration, service, patience, and tolerance, as well as freedom from hatred, vengeance, malice, moralism, tactlessness, and contempt. The carrying rays are the second and the sixth, which in harmonious balance afford a dedicated aspiration to love and understanding of all, sincerity and earnest in the realization of unity.

Fourth Series:
**SELF-REMEMBRANCE, CONSCIENCE,
RIGHT ATTITUDE**

Containing the Essays

Self-Remembrance

Self-Observation

Conscience

Non-Identification

Right Attitude

16 SELF-REMEMBRANCE

16.1 Self-Consciousness is the Truly Human Consciousness

¹Man does not possess self-consciousness, but he can acquire it. Self-consciousness is actually the truly human consciousness, that which separates man from the animals. Even animals have functions: emotional, instinctive, and moving functions; the highest animal species even have certain simple intellectual functions. But animals do not even have the possibility of self-consciousness. Man has it, however, and when he is not living self-consciously, he is living below his true level. He has a right to be self-conscious.

²Rare glimpses of self-consciousness occur spontaneously in the lives of most people. All of us probably have experience of such moments where we have felt immensely present in what is happening to us and around us. In such moments all impressions are strong and vivid; light and colours, sounds, touches, and smells can be almost intrusive in their realness. From early childhood, we have some few strong and vivid memories that stand out clearly against long, grey stretches of oblivion and unconsciousness. Those are memories of moments when we were self-conscious. The fact that such glimpses occur particularly in childhood is explained by the fact that our inner centre of emotional functions is very alive at that age.

³Moments of strong happiness and joy can be accompanied by self-consciousness. A young mother, feeding her first-born baby, is thinking, “Now I really know what happiness is; I will never forget what I am feeling right now.” In that moment, perhaps, she experiences self-consciousness. Be it as it may, she cannot keep that state. Later she will only remember that she had the experience, but the feel of it is gone.

16.2 Self-Remembrance

¹Is self-consciousness possible only in the form of rare, spontaneous glimpses? No. Man can create intentionally moments of self-consciousness, and working purposively he can make such moments last longer and longer. Such created self-consciousness is called “self-remembrance”, or “remembering oneself”. This term may be somewhat misleading, in the sense that it really is not about remembering or recalling anything that was, but, on the contrary, being intensely present here and now. “Self-remembrance” as a term connects with the corresponding term in Buddhism, *sammāsati*, which is translated as “right recollection”. “Right recollection” is said to be one of the eight elements of the Buddha’s noble

eightfold path, *ariya atthangika magga*. Early Christian authors, too, writing in Greek and Russian, treated self-remembrance as a path to spiritual awakening. In Islamic sufism there is a corresponding experience and term, *dhikr* (*zīkr*), a word meaning “remembrance”.

²Self-observation is not self-remembrance, but self-observation can lead to self-remembrance, if you do it while understanding the purpose of the exercise: “I am not conscious, but I want to become conscious.” Remembering oneself means the same as being conscious of oneself – “I am”. It is a very strange experience. It is no function, no thought, no feeling, but another state of consciousness. It comes of itself only for short whiles, usually when you are in a new environment, when you wake up in the morning after having spent the night in a strange house, for instance. Then you perhaps say to yourself: “How strange. I am here.” This is self-remembrance, in that moment you remember yourself.

³Another way of describing self-remembrance is as attention in two directions. Usually we are hardly attentive at all or our attention jumps about, staying very briefly at different objects without being directed or controlled by our intention. At other occasions our attention can be attracted by some object that captivates, fascinates us, an exciting film, for instance. Our attention is seldom directed from within ourselves. This directed attention is the most valuable kind, however, and it is only when it occurs in our functions that they will be able to do work of any higher quality, whether in the realm of thoughts, feelings, sense perceptions, or movements.

⁴Self-directed attention is not self-consciousness, however. Directed attention can come about with self-consciousness and without self-consciousness. Mere directed attention without self-consciousness can be pictured as an arrow having its point directed at the object of attention. If, simultaneously as you direct your attention at an outer or inner object, you direct your attention at yourself, then you have doubly-directed attention. Then you “remember yourself”, then you become self-conscious. This can be represented graphically by an arrow that is pointed at both ends.

⁵It has to be emphasized that in all essentials man, both in his outer and in his inner life, is a machine, that things “just happen to him” without his willing or controlling it. Mechanicalness thus is his being. An equally important truth is that mechanicalness and self-consciousness are mutually exclusive states: when he remembers himself, when he is self-conscious, he is not a machine. And conversely: when he is mechanical, acts like a robot on impulses not his own, then he is not self-conscious. Therefore, man can reduce his mechanicalness by striving to be self-conscious, as often as possible, even if it will be only for brief moments, at least in the beginning.

⁶Man lives below his rightful level, because he is not conscious at the point where he receives impressions from without. At this point, where external impressions enter, he should create self-consciousness, the presence of himself.

⁷Actually, it is most amazing that the teaching of self-remembrance, which has such an important place in the fourth way, has escaped the learned people of the West almost completely. Probably, this is due to the fact that in the West we have an unreal division of all kinds of studies and training into theoretical and practical subjects, a division in which theoretical studies and those pursuing them are considered to be better. Self-remembrance is a practical thing, which you can understand only if you have some practical experience of it, and the better the more extensive your practice is. You must have experienced it, not just once, but many times in different connections, various situations, so that you have a sufficiently large material of experience of it. Only then will you appreciate, in a deep way, beyond a mere shallow fascination, its immense significance. People who are too theoretical in their ways of looking at things cannot take any interest in it. Just a few half-hearted attempts will not lead you anywhere. But even the serious efforts you make at the beginning are necessarily weak, quite simply because you are a beginner and have too little experience to do it right. Precisely because intentional self-remembrance often yields so small and feeble results in the beginning – actually the mere realization, “I do not remember myself” – makes it quite improbable that some lone individual, in a grey distant past, would have discovered, by accident, self-remembering as a path to higher consciousness. Only people who have reached the higher two states – self-consciousness and objective consciousness – can understand the vital importance of self-remembrance as method. It is from such individuals – teachers of esoteric schools – that self-remembrance as an idea and as a method has come. It has not arisen through the ordinary turnover of ideas in human philosophical speculation.

⁸As you make the effort of remembering yourself, many times a day, not just in quiet moments but above all in all situations of everyday life, you will find, with time, that it will be an increasingly deeper perception, that it will be possible to retain it longer, that you will be able to possess the perception of “I am” in connection with more functions.

⁹It is important to stress that self-remembrance, if real, does not in any way hinder or impair your ordinary intellectual, emotional, instinctive, and moving functions. Whatever hinders a function can only be another function: thinking of remembering yourself is not remembering yourself, no more than thinking of eating is eating. Functions are one thing, states of

consciousness are another. Self-remembrance is “above” those functions, does not detract quality from them but, on the contrary, adds quality. You convince yourself of this fact by observing yourself.

¹⁰It takes some time to find the knack of self-remembrance. In a way it is like acquiring other skills, such as learning to ride a bicycle. Every normal person can learn to ride a bicycle; it is impossible to do it at once, but all of a sudden the skill is there. The important difference in self-remembrance is that you have to regain the skill every time you remember to remember yourself. And it takes some time to learn to tell the difference between real self-remembrance and mere imagination. Real self-remembrance has an aspect of heightened aliveness, impressions being more vivid. Other recurrent descriptions say that vision becomes clearer as though a dimming veil had been drawn aside from things. The ancients had a word for this, the Latin *serenitas*, often used in this connection with *tranquillitas*. Self-remembrance is also accompanied by a calm though strong optimism, like the insight of the mystics that “all is well”.

¹¹Under certain circumstances, self-remembrance can lead you further, into higher states of consciousness that in some respects correspond to “union with God” as described by mystics, or to what some people have called “cosmic consciousness”, actually a misnomer. Descriptions and designations are unessential, however. The only essential thing is the fact that it is quite possible for man to reach such higher states. But, as said, it is possible only by making many strenuous efforts with your consciousness. Consciousness can grow only from consciousness, never from some mechanical function.

16.3 *Self-Remembrance is the Heart of the Work*

¹All exercises given to those who wander the fourth way actually are one single exercise: the method of creating self-remembrance. This is the heart of the work, its essence and centre: the effort to create moments of self-consciousness. All other exercises should be entries to that centre, entries to self-remembrance. For example, in the exercise “being intentional” you should move on from intentionality to self-remembrance.

²The exercise of observing yourself in different intellectual, emotional, sensory, and moving functions is intended to lead up to self-remembrance. If you remember sometimes during the day that you should observe yourself, then you should be able to remember also that this exercise has an aim: to help you move on to doing self-remembrance. “Of course! Self-remembrance!” The same is true of all the exercises: stopping thoughts, not showing negative emotions, observing your own and other people’s identifications, being in balanced active self-expression, etc.

16.4 There are Many Degrees and Stages of Self-Remembrance

¹In the beginning of the work self-remembrance does not contain much, actually only the realization of your mechanicalness: “I have not remembered myself.” This realization is necessary, however, and must be repeated, for man believes in his own consciousness, and this belief hinders him from acquiring consciousness. If he goes on striving, he will probably be able to create self-remembrance more and more often, sometimes making it stronger, making it last longer and go deeper. Then he will see, on the basis of his own experience, that self-remembrance has many degrees and stages, degrees of quality in an ascending scale.

²There are also many paths to self-remembrance. But they are all based on the perception that there is something else, something more, something more important and greater than just this life that we all live. Since my “self” is not unitary, is not the same at different moments, the path to self-remembrance, and even self-remembrance itself, must be different at different times. The skilful man knows this. He does not always practise the same method. To do so would amount to trying to reach a non-mechanical state in a mechanical way, and what is mechanical is useless for the work. So the skilful man does it now in one way, now in another way. He experiments, notices what is no longer efficient, and then invents some other way. He “gets out of his own way”, allows something to arise which he has been hindering by his mechanical functions and reactions.

16.5 The Daily Practice

¹The most important part of the work is self-remembrance. In each act of self-remembrance lies one of the great inner meanings of the work for self-realization and esoterics in general. All other work on oneself ultimately depends on self-remembrance.

²You must remember yourself at least once a day. If you cannot remember yourself once a day, then you should try to remember yourself three times a day, in other words: make a bigger effort. Thus: at least once a day, but not more than a short while. Self-remembrance need not last longer than half a minute to be valuable.

³When trying to remember yourself you should do it willingly from yourself, not from an outer compulsion, to please the teacher or the group.

⁴Observe carefully what inner states and outer circumstances tend to favour episodes of self-remembrance. Such things may be different for different people. For example quiet moments, being out in the countryside, by the sea, may favour some people, while others find it easier to do it in crowds, among people who are particularly mechanical in their behaviour,

display obvious herd behaviour.

⁵Do not think about self-remembrance, but do it! At first it is best to do it at some definite time that you decide upon, but soon enough it is better not to make self-remembrance dependent on such external factors.

⁶The first sign that you are doing it right is that you have a distinct perception of force entering you, as if something had opened in you. Immediately you feel this, stop instantly, and do something else. After a while you may do it again.

⁷Another way of self-remembering is making an inner stop in oneself. This is done in connection with self-observation. For example you observe that you are beginning to talk in a certain mechanical way, or that you are getting annoyed with somebody. You then make an inner stop, but this must be made completely, as if you cut it off. It does not matter if later the things you are trying to stop come back.

⁸All self-observation should be accompanied by some degree of self-remembrance. You should not just observe yourself, but also try to remember why you do it. If you remember it, you should be able to remember yourself, too. It is self-remembrance to feel the presence of the work in your thinking while you are observing yourself.

⁹Start from your memory of previous episodes during the day when you remembered yourself but then lost it. "Where did I lose it?" Make a new attempt and observe once again where you lost it! Continue in this manner until you can make two episodes close to each other and try to shorten the gap of forgetfulness and unawareness in between.

¹⁰The attempt at self-remembrance can be practised in many different ways, from sitting quietly, passively relaxing the body and mind, becoming aware of the breath gently moving the chest, to a more active one where you exercise self-observation repeatedly during your everyday work. There are exercises that appear, at first, unimportant and easy, but are in fact very difficult to perform.

¹¹A few examples of exercises: make an effort to remember yourself when you look in the bathroom mirror while shaving or at your dresser making up your face. Attempt to remember yourself sitting down at the breakfast table, both legs on the floor to make contact – feeling the warmth of your coffee or tea cup and enjoying consciously what you eat – being aware that this is food of the first kind for which you should be grateful.

¹²Try to remember yourself when you handle your car keys, your door keys, when you take them out of your pocket or handbag, when you start the car, pull the key out, lock the car or the door of your home; stay with self-remembrance for a few moments in these small actions!

¹³Invent "alarm-clocks" for self-remembrance! Use them daily! But also

change them before they become useless habits! Be also aware of one great trap: you may become convinced, “now I am remembering myself”, while instead you are merely repeating the phrase mechanically, because in that case you are identified with the exercise. Self-remembrance means separating yourself from mechanically working “self”, creating a vacuum for really seeing yourself.

16.6 Right Understanding of Self-Remembrance

¹In the beginning of the work people are continually asking what they should do or should not do. The best answer to such questions is: “Remember yourself! You can do what you like as long as you remember yourself.” Superficial, formatory thinking easily misunderstands this as if it meant “everything is permitted provided you remember yourself when doing it.” But that is not what it means. On the contrary it means that by being in states of self-remembrance you can refrain from many things, for example yielding to bad impulses.

²One can arrive at a right understanding of self-remembrance by asking: “Which self do I want to remember?” “Which self do I want to forget?” We should both remember ourselves and forget ourselves. The “self” referred to in these different connections is not one and the same. It is equally correct to call self-remembrance “self-forgetfulness”, for in self-remembrance you forget false personality, that bundle of mechanical, meaningless reactions.

³All normal human beings who have the right attitude and some understanding of esoterics can start practising and understanding self-remembrance, even though in the beginning it is usually weak, incomplete, and seemingly without content. Full self-remembrance is a higher state, but there are many lower degrees that are steps on the path to that state. Obeying the laws of the work at a decisive moment is a kind of self-remembrance, not doing so is forgetfulness and a kind of sleep.

⁴Self-remembrance can never be a mere intellectual exercise. It may begin in the intellectual centre, but must include the emotional centre and the physical centres if it is to have the desired effect. The intellect is only a very small part of our being. Mechanical states, states of sleep, are characterized by our being restricted to a very small part of our being. Therefore, conscious states must comprise a much bigger part of our being.

⁵The act of remembering yourself precedes the state of self-remembrance: the initiative that starts the process and the result of the process. The initiative, the effort, has its origin for the seekers in their inner need to live on a higher level. To reach this higher level they must pay with a qualitative effort, an effort from within what is best in their being.

Without effort, no higher state.

⁶Very often we forget to remember ourselves. We wonder what to do, but forget to remember ourselves. Perhaps we think of it but we do not try to do it. Perhaps we often think of it but yet do not try to do it. Only thinking of it but not doing it – is it not better than forgetting about it altogether? Perhaps we imagine it is, but in practice there is no difference. It may even be worse, if it turns into a habit. Anyhow it is necessary to overcome this distance between thought and action, between apathy and will. Because moments of self-remembrance are not just moments of consciousness, but moments of will, too.

⁷Self-remembrance cannot have the result that the personality is strengthened, its self-conceit, its self-justification, its excuses are increased. If this happens it is because you remember a false self, and that is a mechanical act.

⁸The work cannot start from the fullness of the personality. The work must start from the thinning of the personality, from your realization that you are not what you imagine, what you pretend to be.

⁹In the work for self-realization it is necessary to come to the point where you see your own utter nothingness. This is mercifully delayed and it is not something you can arrive at by artificial means. You cannot pretend to be nothing.

¹⁰To remember yourself simply as you are now is not self-remembrance. Self-remembrance comes down from above, and full self-remembrance is a state of consciousness in which the personality and all its pretences almost cease to exist and you are, so to speak, nobody, and yet the fullness of this state, which is really bliss, makes you, for the first time, somebody.

¹¹Can you become nothing to yourself even for a moment? Can you intentionally lift out sense reactions, emotional reactions, thoughts from yourself so that “nothing” remains? Can you, when “nothing” remains, become aware of the intensive reality of yourself? Can you stop your own noise, your own babble, even for a moment? Can you feel your own presence in everything you do, even for a moment? All these things are various ways of remembering yourself.

¹²Self-remembrance as a power that comes down from what is “higher” (whatever we mean by this) is an idea that must never be lost. This idea contains implicitly another idea, namely that this “higher”, too, has a “higher”, this in turn a still higher, and so on, thus affords the possibility to understand the existence of a kind of staircase or path leading upward. And to understand this idea right you must realize that as a human being and in your present state you can see, at the utmost, the first step of the many steps of the staircase, and that this step is the lowest one in all respects, the

lowest one qualitatively, and that you cannot understand the essence of the staircase or the path, cannot know what it means to walk it upwards, what the higher steps or stages of the walking mean, except by the scanty information we have received from those who have gone before us. The ordinary human way of judging things “from below up” is hopelessly misleading in regard to all esoteric matters. Of course this is true of human attempts at assessing self-remembrance and self-consciousness as well. If we attempt to assess it in its entirety, with all its possible ever higher stages, on the basis of the small and relatively insignificant parts of it we have experienced, then we shall be in grievous error. Man is only at the first, tottering beginning of his experience of life. This is a truth which no human arrogance in the world can invalidate.

16.7 We must Receive Help

¹Self-remembrance as an idea and as a method comes from esoteric schools. Therefore it cannot be understood without esoterics, cannot be understood by people who are unfamiliar or out of sympathy with esoterics. And the most important insight that may reach man, so that he can begin to understand the idea of esoterics is: truth – knowledge – help comes “from above”, from superhuman and divine sources. Why? Because what man is able to do, even at the highest stage of understanding and capability, does not suffice. A man should always remember himself, but such as he is he has not the power to do so, and he cannot even remember that he should remember himself. Therefore, if he wants to develop he must trust to higher, greater powers than his own. And he can receive such powers, if he has the right attitude and makes the right effort; if he goes halfway to meet those higher powers. Thus man must turn to “God” – Augoeides, the elder brothers, the planetary hierarchy.

²If a man does not accept that there are higher powers than his own, he can never remember himself right. Those higher powers are above all his own superconscious, the possibility of a permanent self. The objective basis of the superconscious is man’s causal envelope, his envelope of immortality. The causal envelope has its centres, which are always awake, whereas man himself is mostly asleep. Then there are higher beings such as the Augoeides and the planetary hierarchy. Without their existence, their self-sacrificing work, we would never have become human beings, we would never have received causal envelopes. In addition there is the entire systemic and cosmic organization, 49 worlds filled with conscious beings. But if a man believes that the cosmos or nature came about of their own and do not have a meaning, then he can never remember himself right, because he has the wrong “belief” – better: the wrong attitude – that is to

say, that there are no powers above him.

³According to esoterics, man can be transformed into a conscious being on a much higher level than that on which he now lives. However, if man is content with, and proud of, his present being, he cannot develop.

⁴If man obeys the rules and laws of the work against his own self-love and self-will, then he can raise the level of his being. And if he can listen to what the work bids him to do, then it can be shown to him how he is to work at himself to transform his being.

16.8 Difficulties of, and Hindrances to, Self-Remembrance

¹Why is it so difficult to create moments of self-remembrance? There are many reasons for this. Forgetfulness. The habit of living in mechanical states. The habit of not using higher parts of centres. Centres in the mental and emotional envelopes work poorly, there are too often wrong functions in them. We are too sluggish and too dull. And first of all: we are too identified with our temporary mechanical states.

²When one is very much identified with mechanical life, it is difficult to remember oneself. It is also difficult when one has a wrong attitude to the work. Again, it is difficult to understand anything about self-remembrance when one is identified with oneself. When you have made a practice – note this: practice, not habit! – of self-remembering every day, you begin to be aware of a continuity running through your life. Then you become aware also when this continuity is lost. When you sense this continuity and the loss of it, you have reached a certain point: the first awakening of the conscience of the work.

³A man who is identified with himself cannot remember himself, since he cannot perceive anything beyond his temporary mechanical state, anything higher than this. As long as he is identified there is to him only that with which he is identified, and in this state self-remembrance is impossible. That is why liberation from identification is an important and necessary step towards self-remembrance. If you can observe your own identifications afterwards, see how ridiculous, useless, harmful they are, much has already been gained.

⁴There is a certain feeling always connected with self-remembrance. You cannot just make up your mind to remember yourself starting from your ordinary state. It is necessary to get into a certain state to begin with, a certain frame of mind, and then do it from there. Reflection on “cosmic ideas”, esoteric truths, may create such a state. On the other hand, it is quite possible to observe oneself without starting from a special preparatory state.

⁵If you have no faith, do not “believe”, in some higher power, you

cannot remember yourself. It is to be expected that in the near future esoterics, particularly hylozoics because of the mental clarity and order it affords, will attract the interest of the intelligentsia at the stage of civilization. However, these people generally have no understanding of such a higher power, no understanding why it is necessary that man loves, serves, and venerates this higher power to be able to approach it. They are too proud, too arrogant, too full of themselves to feel humility and the desire to serve, to bow to a power that is greater than they are. They say that they are “skeptical” of the idea of the planetary hierarchy, the elder brothers. Little they suspect how skeptical the elder brothers are of their prospects of consciousness development. It is typical of these self-glorious people that they cannot understand self-remembrance, precisely because in their pride they do not recognize any power above themselves.

16.9 Why should Man Remember Himself?

¹Man should remember himself because only in moments of self-remembrance, self-consciousness, can influences of a higher order reach him, influence his being, and so help him go forward. Without this help man can do very little, actually only effect one thing at the expense of another equally important or even more important thing.

²You will have to make your own experiments to convince yourself why it is better to self-remember than not to do it. You will then find that the best method is to compare states of consciousness: you are always moving from a state of relative wakefulness or self-consciousness towards a state of relative sleep or mechanicalness, or vice versa. For example, ask yourself about a thing you regret having done: could I ever have done it in a state of self-remembrance?

³In true self-remembrance, many mechanical intellectual and emotional functions are quite impossible: hatred, anger, irritation, discontent, envy, malicious joy, and other negative emotions can exist only in mechanical states, never in states of self-consciousness.

⁴All mankind is asleep, and this is what causes all these horrors, all this suffering that mankind experiences. Sleep is the absence of consciousness, of self-consciousness. If people awakened, if they gained even a few degrees of higher consciousness, everything would be improved, much of the evil we now see surrounding us would be impossible.

⁵Unless a man can lift himself up by self-remembrance he does not receive help, and unless he receives help he cannot reach a higher level of being. But at the same time, unless he prepares himself by means of self-observation and trying to separate himself from wrong functions, such as he has been taught what they are, he cannot receive the influences coming

from higher centres. Man has to prepare his lower centres so that they can hear and obey what higher centres tell them. Those higher centres, centres of the causal envelope, are always speaking, try to reach us and influence us, but we do not hear them. You feel the absence of the influence of higher centres in the sense of uncomfortableness as if you had forgotten something you once knew.

16.10 Remembering Esoterics and the Work is a Help to Self-Remembrance

¹A great help to self-remembrance is to remember esoterics and your own work in connection with it, your work for the development of consciousness. All true self-remembrance begins with something that has to do with this work. When you remember yourself, you should always try to remember your aim, and your aim of course is such a one as has to do with the work and not with the egoistic endeavours of the separative, mechanical self (“power, reputation, money”). It is said here “remember esoterics”, not “think about esoterics”, because even those who are deep into esoteric studies in a formal sense may wander about in everyday life for hours and days without devoting the slightest thought to esoteric truths, as if they had completely forgotten them. Suddenly, right in the middle of everyday cares, remembering such a truth can make them somewhat more conscious. From this remembrance they can move on to become even more conscious: “Esoterics! Oh yes! There is another Reality behind this plastic replica which I and all the others are following like sleepwalkers. I am an immortal monad. How could I forget?! And being an immortal monad I have a work to do that is quite different from that of the sleepwalker. I have an assignment: to try to wake up, become conscious.” And then pass from this understanding to action: do it, do self-remembrance, even if for half a minute only.

16.11 The Abode of Immortality

¹If a religion is not to be without meaning, it must afford people the hope of individual immortality.

²If an initiatic teaching is to be a genuine esoteric one, it must afford this hope, too, but must not stop there; it must go far beyond that: It must explain why the hope for immortality is well-founded. In other words, it must afford something that does not merely quiet the heart’s unrest but also gives an explanation that satisfies the intellect and so dispels its doubts.

³But not just an explanation. An initiatic teaching cannot be a mere theory, but must be as much practice. In other words, it must indicate the method of the attainment of immortality. This presupposes an initiatic

organization: a chain of teachers and disciples, foremen and workers.

⁴It is useless just talking about immortality and not working to achieve it. But it is equally useless working to achieve it if you do not know how to work. And nobody can begin working until he has received help, teaching on how to do it, from those who are older and more experienced in the work. For a long time after he has started this work he will need this help and teaching.

⁵This is the very basis of the existence of schools. Schools are only the first beginning of the initiatic work, mark the nearer abutment of the bridge, so to speak. The very bridge must be built by the disciple himself. It is the bridge of life between the mortal first self and the immortal second self: the antahkarana.

⁶Immortality is not an absolute condition, however, existing out of man's reach in his present state.

⁷The teacher explains that the disciple can achieve it temporarily through knowledge and effort, also in his present condition. The disciple attains it by making efforts from within his being and so creating self-consciousness. Moments of self-consciousness created through self-remembrance are moments of immortality as well. Why? Because moments of self-consciousness are moments of causal consciousness even of the lowest kind in the beginning. And the causal envelope and its incipient self-active consciousness is the first essence and vehicle of immortality.

⁸In a school, even in the simplest school, and in school teaching, even the most elementary one, the disciples are taught a variety of procedures, methods, for the activation of consciousness. All those methods or exercises have one single nucleus: self-consciousness, constant watchful attention to what is within and what is without.

⁹The Teacher said: *"My teaching has one single all-pervading principle."*

¹⁰The wisest of the disciples present: *"Yes, Teacher."*

¹¹Thereupon the Teacher left the room.

¹²The other disciples: *"What did he mean?"*

¹³The wisest disciple: *"Our Teacher simply meant this: as to what is within us constant watchful attention, and as to what is without us constant consideration for people, and those two are one and the same."*

¹⁴If disciples work conscientiously, diligently, and zealously according to school principles and school methods and obey school rules, then the school can become an abode of immortality to them. What is meant by this is that through school work the false personality can die and the work

personality after many transformations can become an actual being of immortality.

16.12 The Voice of the Silence

¹Self-remembrance may come about when the constant inner babble has been put to silence, even for a few seconds. When constant occupation with small and big worries, the inner harping on all the vexations of everyday life, the constant fascination of the senses with the stream of outer impressions, the constant commenting on these impressions by the inner or outer babble machine, when all this ceases, is stopped, and when in an intense moment there is perfect clarity and quiet, as if those nonsensical things never existed – then self-remembrance, too, will come. And it may come with power and with joy.

²The “voice of the silence” is the symbolic expression of the fact that inspiration from Augoeides can be apprehended by anyone who is able to disengage his attention (or even his consciousness) from the physical, emotional, and mental. To such a person, phenomena in the worlds mentioned can no longer hold his interest. The “silence” is the symbolic term for the mental quiet ensuing when man has set himself free from that urge which like a slave-driver’s whip compels him to pursue all the chimaeras of ignorance. In that stillness the higher mentality (47:5) can take part in the revelation of causal intuition. The voice of the silence is the “voice of the soul”, intuition from superconscious causal consciousness. In their language, the great mystics have said the same about the pertaining experiences.

³Disciple: “How may I come to the supersensual life, so that I may hear God speaking?”

⁴Teacher: “When you can throw yourself into THAT where no creature dwells, though it be but for a moment, then you hear what God speaks.”

⁵Disciple: “Is THAT where no creature dwells near at hand, or is it far off?”

⁶Master: “It is in you. You reach it by ceasing, even for a moment, from self-thinking and self-willing and stopping the wheel of the imagination and the senses.”

17 SELF-OBSERVATION

17.1 Introduction

¹All inner work for consciousness starts with self-observation. And self-observation starts with noticing bad states in oneself, with not saying “I” to them, and so separating oneself from them. In this way our inner life is purified. Since our inner life attracts a corresponding outer life, we can with time change, not only our attitude to this outer life, but also the events themselves. In most cases we cannot change them directly, but indirectly by changing our attitude. And all this starts with self-observation.

²If a man begins to observe himself, he will soon have a couple of important insights. The first one is about “I”. We say “I am doing”, “I am sitting”, “I feel”, “I like”, “I dislike” and so on, and without thinking, automatically, we assume that we have only one “I”, which remains the same. This is our chief illusion, for we are not one. At one moment when I say “I”, one part of me is speaking, and at another moment when I say “I”, it is quite another “I” speaking. At one moment our attention is captivated by something definite and at the next moment by some other thing, and then we do not even remember what captivated us just a short while ago: a new “I” replaces or suppresses an old “I”, and this process is going on all the time and makes up our inner life. At the one moment one “I” decides something. At the next moment some other “I” has already taken over and knows nothing of the decision of the previous “I” and of course is not prepared to carry it out. We sometimes complain about our absent-mindedness when, for instance, we have walked out of a room into another to fetch something there and being in the other room we have already forgotten what we were going to fetch. We do not see that this division is our normal state. In other words, we are split into hundreds and hundreds of different “I”s. The first insight to be gained by our self-observation can be summed up thus: “I” am not one; “I” am many.

³The second insight is about the fact that it is very difficult to observe oneself. This difficulty lies in one single fact: very soon you forget to observe yourself.

⁴Now I want you who are reading this to stop and to ponder the most important thing you have learnt so far about self-observation, which is this: You can not, however firm a decision you make, observe yourself more than a few seconds. You quite simply forget about your decision to do so. You think of something else, and then of something else from that, and so it will go on for many minutes, perhaps even hours, before you suddenly wake up and

remember: "Gosh, I was supposed to observe myself! And I forgot about it!"

⁵The fact that we are not able to observe ourselves more than for brief moments is connected with the fact that we are not one, not a unitary "I", but many small apparent "I"s constantly replacing each other. One such "I" makes a decision about self-observation, but the next "I" soon appearing is up to something else and does not carry out that decision.

⁶The fact that we are split into many apparent "I"s implies that we largely lack will. If we were a unitary "I", we would be able to observe ourselves however long; then it would just be a matter of doing it. But we cannot keep concentration and so we must admit that we lack will.

⁷As long as man perceives himself as one and single, says "I" to everything that happens in his inner life, he cannot be transformed. As long, too, he will live in a false perception of himself. It is the aim of self-observation to break down this fictitious perception. It is only on its ruins that man can build knowledge of himself. This knowledge cannot be built on a mere theory, on an acceptance of what other people assert, but it must, if it is to transform him, be the fruit of his own experience gained through self-observation.

17.2 The Division of Man and the Purpose of Self-Observation

¹In the fourth way, it is emphasized that you must know what is the purpose of self-observation and you must, when observing yourself, know something of how man is divided.

²What is constantly going on in man's outer and inner life is called functions. We know the difference between intellectual and emotional functions. For instance, when we discuss things, think about them, compare them, invent explanations or find real explanations, this is all intellectual work; whereas love, hate, fear, happiness, worry, suspicion and so on are emotional.

³Very often, when trying to observe ourselves, we confuse intellectual and emotional functions. When we really feel, we often call it thinking, and when we think we call it feeling. But with time, with right knowledge and instruction, we learn in what way they differ. For instance, there is a great difference in control: intellectual functions we can somewhat control; emotional functions we cannot control. Moreover, there is an enormous difference in speed: intellectual functions are slow, emotional functions can be extremely quick.

⁴Then there are two other functions, which no system of ordinary psychology divides and understands in the right way: instinctive function and moving function. Instinctive refers to the inner work of the organism: digestion of food, beating of the heart, breathing. Instinctive functions also

include ordinary senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, the feeling of cold and warmth. Moving functions include almost all of the body movements. It is very easy to distinguish between instinctive and moving functions: we are born with the capacity to use all the instinctive functions, whereas moving functions all have to be learnt. Of reflexes, only simple ones belong to instinctive function. Acquired reflexes, such as those appearing when you drive a car, thus are moving functions. Moving functions also include dreams – both dreams during sleep and day-dreams – imagination, and imitation.

⁵When observing oneself, it is necessary first of all to divide these four functions and to classify at once everything that one observes, saying, “This is intellectual function”, “This is emotional function” and so on. If you are honest with yourself, you will find at once how difficult it is; that you can work at it only for a short while at a time, because you forget yourself, forget your decision and your work. Working diligently, methodically, and strenuously, however, you will eventually achieve better results. With time, you will have a clear idea of the process of one function unceasingly replacing another. For example: a thought arises, is at once pushed aside by an emotion, which in its turn disappears as a movement function enters when you change your sitting position or turn your head, or when an instinct function in the form of visual or auditory impression makes itself felt. It must be emphasized that all these functions – thoughts, emotions, movements, and sense impressions – arise mechanically, that is: without our will and control. The exchange or replacement of functions occurs mechanically as well; you do not decide that a certain thought shall cease and be followed by an emotion or a movement.

⁶From these facts, which are based on an increasingly clearer self-knowledge through self-observation, we draw the following conclusion: in his present state, man is almost completely a machine. A machine has no consciousness, no will. If we human beings had consciousness and will, then thoughts and feelings would not arise and stop mechanically, through impulses outside of our control. If we were conscious beings, we would think conscious thoughts and feel conscious emotions. But practically everything happening in our inner and outer life occurs mechanically. In this respect, there is no difference between scrubbing floors and writing poetry.

⁷What is the meaning or purpose of observing oneself? First and foremost, to arrive at an understanding of our low state of consciousness, of the fact that we are machines. Only if we understand this can we have the motivation to make efforts at trying to become something other than machines.

⁸If we want to cease being machines, we must try to do such things as a machine cannot do. A machine cannot observe itself. Even if a machine

had psychic functions such as man has, it would not be able to observe them. Therefore, every time we observe ourselves we are no longer machines. From such a state of self-observation we can proceed to create also a state of self-consciousness, the genuinely human state of being.

⁹At the very moment we observe ourselves we are not machines. Soon self-observation stops, however. It stops from a mechanical cause, a force we do not control, and then we are machines again, and remain so until we once again initiate self-observation from within ourselves. If we initiate self-observation on the basis of correct knowledge of our division and motivated by our desire not to be machines any longer, our desire to become beings with our own consciousness and our own will, then self-observation becomes a tool in our effort to develop self-consciousness and will.

17.3 Happiness is not in Outer Events but in Self-Control

¹A man's ability to lead a happy life depends on his ability to develop consciousness, and his ability to develop consciousness depends on his ability to use certain instruments for living. One of these instruments for living is self-observation.

²A man who does not observe himself, who does not know that it is possible for him to observe himself, or who thinks that he is observing himself constantly and automatically, must remain dependent on outer circumstances to lead what he calls a good and happy life. But any time, all of a sudden, these outer factors may change without his being able to do anything about it. In contrast, he is able to control that good and happy life which can become his lot, if he enriches his inner life, develops his consciousness.

³A man who was born into great wealth can do everything he desires without material hindrances, for example live all his life travelling in exotic countries. But if his inner life is filled with anguish and torment, worry, self-contempt, or self-pity, he may still, with all his wealth, be the unhappiest man alive. If then the insight dawns upon him that he can start developing his consciousness, which in his case means first of all to see the causes of suffering within himself, through self-observation, he can attain peace of mind, happiness, and joy.

⁴Anyone who complains that life is dull, meaningless, a bad deal, and on the whole not worth living may be informed that none of these qualities exist in life itself but all of them are projections onto neutral life by his own inner states and that he can see for himself that this is so by beginning to observe himself. But this will require hard work done during a long time, with knowledge and understanding of the necessary procedures, methods. Without such a work one cannot expect any result. Mere desire for development or

enthusiasm for the idea of development cannot achieve anything. It would be like sitting down in a car without turning the key and stepping on the gas, only feeling desire or enthusiasm about the car starting.

17.4 Distinguish Between Outer Events and Inner States

¹When observing oneself it is important to be able to see the difference between one's own inner life and life in general, outer life. Most people cannot do this. When such a person looks back at his own life and says that it was a happy life or an unhappy life, he means outer life. If he mentions his inner life at all, his attitude to it is probably that outer events made his inner life either happy or unhappy. If so, he is far from the understanding that the very events do not determine whether we shall be happy or unhappy, but our attitude to them, how we take them, determines it. Life does not consist only of outer events but also of inner states. We are machines to the extent that we allow those outer events to determine our inner life. A machine or a robot is defined as an organisation that is controlled by outer impulses, not by a consciousness and will of its own.

²Try, then, as a first exercise in leading a more conscious life, to distinguish between outer events and inner states: Someone spoke to you harshly, spitefully, injuriously. That is an outer event which is not in your power to change. However, you have the power to decide whether those puffs of hot air coming out of some other person's mouth will determine your inner state now and perhaps many hours or days to come.

³And if you nevertheless allow yourself to be influenced negatively by that outer event, then say to yourself soon afterwards: "This is being sad... irritated... upset..." or "This is going around fretting... feeling sorry for yourself... harping on wrongs... blaming people for their imperfections..." Observing oneself means precisely observing one's own mechanical reactions as events separate from oneself.

⁴The very act of observation separates these mechanical psychic states from yourself, so that you will find it much more difficult to say "I" to them. Consequently henceforth not "I was angry", but "a feeling of anger arose", not "I was irritated", but "a feeling of irritation arose". Later, with effort, exercise, experience, understanding: "a feeling of anger tried to get the better of me but failed," "a feeling of irritation arose but I observed it, laughed at it, and it went away."

17.5 To Observe Oneself is to Divide Oneself

¹To physicalist man there is no other reality than the physical one. He can hardly take an interest in some "inner life", since he does not recognize any human qualities or functions beyond those of the organism. Organism,

objective man, is unitary – one single body, working as one. But also the man who has accepted some theory saying that he is more than the organism, that he has a “soul” or even is a “soul”, nevertheless in practice has concurred in the physicalist belief in man as a unitary being. If he observed his inner life, his “soul”, his “psyche”, honestly, methodically, and persistently, he would rather soon see that there is nothing permanent in it, that his inner life is made up of a constant, continuous flow of impermanent perceiving units that succeed one another.

²When self-observation is done correctly, man’s apparent inner unity, the apparent unity of his psyche, is temporarily suspended, since the individual divides himself into two parts: the *observing self* and observed *apparent selves*. This process creates a new inner life and also a new outer life. The new inner life, the observing self, is a more conscious inner life, and this new outer life is everything else in man’s psyche, all that which man mechanically and unreflectingly took to be his inner life and to which he said “I” but which he now understands to be a “not-self”, separate from the self and thus part of his outer life. We could also describe this new state by saying that the dividing line between outer and inner has been moved inwards. Actually, however, it is only now, in self-observation, that an inner life has come about at all, inner life in the sense of the presence of the self. When the self does not exercise self-observation, it is basically absent. Then the self is not present. In the allegorical language of the schools this condition is likened to a house in disorder. It is a house where neither the master, nor the steward, nor even the deputy steward is present, and so the servants do just as they like, acting the master by turns; this rotation of the servants is of course an image of the constantly changing and transient power wielded by the apparent selves. When temporarily an observing self arises, it is as if the deputy steward suddenly appeared and put the house in order – for the time being.

³A man studies esoterics and tries to arrange his life in accordance with it. Then some day a negative thought about the knowledge arises in him. And at once the opposite thought comes: “I really must not think like this!” Even if this is a right attitude that wants to correct an erroneous one, an attitude which in itself is laudable and necessary, he makes an error – he says “I” to this thought: “I think this.” That is taking oneself as one. Then he does not observe himself, for observing oneself means observing this thought, looking at it as an external thing, separate from the observing self.

⁴However, if after having the thought “I must not think like this” he realizes that he did not observe himself, then he can correct himself and truly observe himself: “That was not observing oneself. That was taking oneself as one.”

17.6 From False Unity to True Unity

¹Man can become unitary; he can attain a state where his being is one. But he will attain that state only when all that happens in him is self-determined. The unity of his being cannot be built on the basis of that chaos of mechanical associations and reactions which now makes him up. Then it would be a false unity that could be maintained only through ignorance, inability to see, inability to observe himself, imagination.

²Man's process of unity, process of becoming one, runs through three stages: First there is that false unity in which the man who does not reflect, does not observe himself, can believe. Then the man who works on his consciousness begins to divide himself into the observing self and the observed apparent selves. Finally the individual obtains true unity through his complete work on consciousness, a work where self-observation is one of many intentional processes.

17.7 Imagination Regarding Self-Observation

¹Man cannot make efforts to acquire something he believes that he has already. If he believes that he is one, as unitary in his psyche as in his organism, then he is the victim of his own imagination. It is the purpose of self-observation to dispel this imagination like so many other fancies of similar kinds.

²"The work at developing consciousness begins by observing oneself." Some people who hear this say: "Oh yes, that is nothing new to me. I have always observed myself." And yet they remain as they are. They imagine that they already know all about themselves, imagine that they observe themselves. It is the same kind of people who at once having heard about self-remembrance say that they know what it is and that they always remember themselves. This is imagination. It is possible to imagine just anything, particularly about one's own capacity. People's imagination generally is a serious hindrance to consciousness development, and in the case of certain people it is their most serious hindrance. Imagination is one of the forces that keep mankind asleep. To wake up we must observe our imagination so that we are able to separate ourselves from it and so weaken it.

³Imagination is emotionally controlled thinking that is a substitute for reality. It has the same kind of relation to reality as lie has to truth. If man wants to attain truth, he must separate himself from lies, and if he wants to attain reality, he must separate himself from imagination, set himself free from it. This is a very long process, however, running into many stages. It also presents many obstacles; for example, it is very easy to imagine that one is free from imagination, imagine that one "is very advanced and

almost at the goal” merely because one has acquired a preliminary, primitive understanding of the need for this liberation. In order to take the first steps in separating yourself from imagination you must do what imagination cannot do: use directed attention. Observing your own imagination is an important and indispensable part of self-observation. However, this is something that you ordinarily cannot do in the beginning of your work, but only after long time. Also, there many difficulties involved in observing your own imagination. There are strong opposing forces such as self-love and self-justification. There is also the difficulty that imagination ceases whenever you try to observe it; that is to say: when you exercise directed attention, imagination ceases functioning. Imagination belongs to lower, more mechanical parts of centres, thus is connected with inattentiveness, wandering attention or, at the most, attention attracted by the object, emotional fascination.

⁴Imagination cannot teach us anything either of ourselves, of other people, or of reality at large. In self-observation everything is about what we can learn of ourselves, what facts about ourselves we are able to verify. Imagination in combination with excuses and self-justifications suggests to us the illusions that please “us” (the false personality), and this is what affords it power.

17.8 What Should I Observe?

¹The question is often asked: “What should I observe?” What you should observe in the beginning is only simple functions: this is thought, this is emotion, this is emotional reaction to sense impression, etc. Once you have learnt how to distinguish the functions, you proceed to fuller observation lasting through great parts of a day, and then you see yourself as an outside person. In all this self-observation it is important not to say “I” to anything. Thus you should not say: “What am I doing?” but “What is it doing?” You then see now these fragmented, chaotic thoughts, now these easily stirred emotions, now these little dramatic scenes, now these more or less elaborate lies, now these speeches, excuses, and inventions. Next moment you fall asleep, so that you fully take part in those states, are those states again. And you remain asleep until you wake up and start to observe yourself anew.

²Self-observation should be applied especially to talking. Most rules in schools are about talking and about how to deal with wrong talking. It is necessary to observe inner talking, or rather inner babble, and from where it is coming. Wrong inner talking is the breeding-ground not only of many future unpleasant states but also of wrong outer talking. The exercise called “inner silence” is a force to be applied against wrong inner talking. You cannot usually practise such an inner silence in any indefinite, general way.

But you can practise it very consistently in regard to some distinct and definite thing, something you know and see quite clearly. Someone asked: “Is practising inner silence the same as not letting something come into your mind?” The answer is: “No. What you are practising inner silence about is already in the mind and you must be aware of it, but you must not touch it with your inner speech.” If there is something particularly negative, bad, or destructive in your mind, then this will manifest itself as inner talking when you are in a negative state, and from there it easily flows into outer talking. In your work it is necessary to be careful about wrong outer talking at first, and, later on, about wrong inner talking. In this case, as in so many other cases, the cause of the outer is in the inner, and therefore the aim of the exercise is to abolish this inner cause. Such inner talking as one can free oneself from in this manner is always untrue: downright lies, half-truths, or truths connected in the wrong order or with something added or left out. This includes slander and gossip.

³Observe anxiety! Notice how it manifests itself physiologically: in your stomach, muscles, nerves, your whole body. You are the observer, the one who intentionally, consciously separates himself from this: “I am not my stomach, I am the one observing my stomach. I am not my muscles, I am the one observing my muscles. I am not my nerves, I am the one observing my nerves.” Notice how anxiety manifests itself psychologically. Observe the state of anxiety as something separate from you being the observer: “It is anxious, I am the one observing anxiety.” Widen the difference between the observer and the things observed by perceiving your own presence in the observer, create self-remembrance: “This anxiety is not me, I am the observer of this anxiety.” Perceive the calm, peace, freedom from anxiety that are in the observer, the conscious self: “Where anxiety is I am not. Where I am anxiety is not.”

⁴Observe laziness! There is laziness in all the centres: the laziness of the moving centre, the laziness of the instinctual centre (inattentiveness of seeing and hearing), the laziness of the emotional centre, the laziness of the intellectual centre. Separate yourself from laziness in some centre by intentionally wanting the opposite and doing the opposite: “It wants to be lazy, but I want to be active.” This exercise is called “occultation”.

17.9 It is Necessary to Have a Better Understanding of Self-Observation

¹A pupil told his teacher that he disliked a third person intensely. The teacher said: “Try to observe it.” He replied: “Why should I observe it? I don’t need to. I know it already.” He confused knowing with observing. This is a common error and revealed that the individual in question had not

understood what self-observation is and moreover had not realized that self-observation is active and can be used as an instrument for self-transformation, whereas mere knowledge is passive and cannot be used in that way. Knowing something is not necessarily directing one's attention to it, observing it. Knowing something can be very mechanical, but directing one's attention is an intentional act and is closer to self-consciousness.

²People also confuse thinking with self-observation. Thinking about oneself is not observing oneself. A man may think about himself all day and never observe himself even once. Thinking about oneself is among the most mechanical and most ordinary activities in people's lives. If it were an instrument for consciousness development, then we would all have reached higher kingdoms long ago. On the contrary, man should learn how to stop thinking about himself.

³When hearing about self-observation many people think that it consists merely in noticing that one feels moody, unwell, bored, agitated, eager, curious, and so on. This is not self-observation. Self-observation begins with the establishing of an observing self in one's own inner world. If you say "I feel gloomy", you are not observing yourself, you are not observing this state, but you *are* this state, are identified with it. In that case there is nothing distinct in you that is standing outside your state, something that is independent of it and is looking at it, something that has a feeling and thought quite different from that state. And this identification is confirmed by the word "I". It is useless to say, "I wish I were not in a bad temper," for then you still take yourself as one and single. To observe yourself you must divide yourself into two: the observing self and all that it observes.

⁴In ordinary human social life, too, there are situations where individuals exercise a sort of self-observation. Such activity may make you more successful in social intercourse, business and professional life, etc., such as behaving impeccably when invited to a fashionable dinner party, or making the best impression during an employment interview. However, this is quite different from self-observation in an esoteric sense, since the understanding of the higher aim, consciousness development, is absent and therefore the right method as well. Self-observation without definite knowledge of what you should observe and why you should observe it leads nowhere in the work on one's own consciousness.

17.10 Insights to be Reached in Self-Observation

¹In regard to very many events one has to learn to be "passive", that is, not react at all, not to do anything about them. Actually, "passive" is not the right word here, for doing this requires a great inner activity, activity of consciousness, to prevent the mechanical event producing an equally

mechanical reaction in one, a reaction to which one may say “I” only in a state of ignorance and non-discrimination. Rather, “passive” here means that the personality is passive while the observing self, the more conscious self, is the more active.

²Observation and self-observation are two different activities. The former is about observing outer or objective events, the latter is about observing inner or subjective events. What is common to both is that they require attention. And the attention that is to be applied must be of a higher kind qualitatively speaking. The lower two kinds that we ordinarily use, thus (1) wandering, shifting, or transient attention and (2) attracted attention, respectively, do not suffice here. Only the third kind, self-initiated attention or attention directed from within, can be used for this work.

³It is easier to observe outer events than inner events, for we have senses for the former that usually work in a reliable fashion. However, we have no such senses for observation of inner events but our intellectual function and its ability of directed attention. The intellectual function can be improved for this purpose by our knowledge and understanding being increased. This knowledge and understanding reach us through our observation of outer events, namely our being attentive to the teaching we receive through teachers and writings. Thus the quality of self-observation depends on the quality of our attention, and this attention we must cultivate in regard to both inner and outer events. If we are not sufficiently attentive to the teaching we receive, then we shall misunderstand it, and without having a correct conception of the teaching we cannot practise it correctly; then self-observation and other exercises cannot have the effect intended.

⁴If you observe yourself over some time and then end up in an unpleasant inner state, for example a state where you easily identify yourself with negative emotions – such as “I am” a failure, treated unjustly, misunderstood, disdained, etc. – then you will notice that all sorts of negative apparent selves try to deal with this state in succession and make something out of it. This is because negative apparent selves live by these negative energies and so must be negative. Their life consists in supplying us with destructive thoughts and negative feelings, and they cannot do otherwise. If self-observation is to be sincere work, you must sincerely observe how these negative apparent selves thrive in yourself, that there is a side of yourself that enjoys them. This self-observation is important, for if man enjoys having destructive thoughts and negative feelings, he cannot separate himself from them. If he delights in them, he cannot become clear about it through this self-observation. The secret of their power is the force of identification. As long as man identifies himself with them, they remain strong. But to the extent that he can observe

them, he also weakens identification.

⁵The aim of self-observation is above all the purification, the ennoblement of emotional life. The method consists in separating “myself”, the observing self, from what is impure and less pure, what is ignoble and mean. Mechanical man, who does not observe himself, is full of self-love, vanity, self-aggrandizement, self-absorption, self-justification. If he says: “I always think of others”, he is lying, which he can see in a moment of conscience. Self-observation makes him see these truths about himself.

⁶Moreover, self-observation helps us see the motives for our actions. “If two people do the same thing, it is not the same thing.” One person does a thing out of fear (fear of punishment, of loss of reputation: “what will people say?”), another person does the same thing for the sense of justice and the love of good. Motives are not discovered by the observation of outer actions, and confessions are often deceptive. Only self-observation may reveal it, but seldom at once, often only after long work.

⁷Self-observation is incomplete without self-remembrance. Why? Because self-remembrance is the aim of self-observation. Self-observation is only one of many exercises all aimed at producing moments of self-consciousness through self-remembrance. The aim of man is to become a conscious being. He must not forget that. To practise and yet while practising forget the ultimate aim of the practice is not to practise; it is to be identified with practising – a quite different thing. Self-observation can be raised to self-remembrance with comparative ease, for being a more conscious state it is close to self-remembrance. Try to become aware of yourself at the precise point where you receive impressions, try to become aware of yourself as an observing self.

17.11 Some Particular Advice and Instructions

¹It is important to inculcate that self-observation must not be criticism, analysis, or valuation. The very observation has the effect that man divides himself into two: the observing self and the things observed. You cannot be what you observe: as soon as you observe it you are separated from it, you weaken your identification with it. This is the favourable force that helps man to set himself free from the power of undesirable feelings and thoughts. On the other hand it is useless or detrimental to fight undesirable thoughts and feelings with identifications such as negative emotions; this is only mechanical manifestations of one kind fighting another kind.

²As long as the exercise goes on, the observing self shall be connected with the perception of self as much as possible: “I am seeing.” Therefore you should make the effort of adding self-remembrance to self-observation. It is easier to do so from this relatively conscious state. The states observed, the

apparent selves observed, should of course be connected with the perception of not-self as much as possible. Thus you do not say “I” to them, but “it”.

³It is necessary to write down important self-observations. Why? Because in each moment we live in a very small part of ourselves, so that an insight had by a better apparent self is very soon forgotten or distorted by worse apparent selves. A person may be in the habit of constantly, in his inner babble, criticizing other people: their behaviour, their speech, appearance, dress, hairstyle, etc. How will it be possible for him to overcome this negative trait if he has a buffer that assures him that he “loves people”? Mere self-observation is not sufficient, for he may make the same observation over and over again and still forget them all in succession. Then his daily notes will be his only remedy. When reading them he sees that the same criticism and blame recur constantly with small variations, he perhaps finally sees that this fault lies with him and not with other people.

⁴Self-observation, when done daily and hourly, supplies man with a material of seemingly disconnected parts; momentary pictures of himself. Two factors bring those parts together to form a complete picture of his inner and outer being: understanding and valuation. Understanding and valuation must always have a material of knowledge and of experience to work on. They cannot work with no corn to grind. The better and the more often we observe ourselves and write down important observations, the better our understanding will become, too.

17.12 Laurency on Self-Observation

¹There are two methods of counteracting this state of split consciousness, lack of will power. The one is to occupy consciousness by letting attention be absorbed by some interest. The other method is to pay constant attention to the content of consciousness.

²This unceasing watchfulness would be tiring or unbearable if it implied any sort of supervision, effort, or strain. It can preferably be accompanied by some simple relaxation exercise now and then. You observe as though unintentionally how your thinking picks up and drops the one line of thought after the other in an endless succession. The unconstrained attention with which you follow the restless flight of thought is not perceived as any fetter, which else would cause a reaction. Soon you have imperceptibly slipped into an unintentional control, as it were. You learn to distinguish between thoughts from the unconscious and thoughts from without. The entire procedure should be regarded as an amusing play of thought. Of course you relax attention at the first feeling of strain, fatigue, or discomfort. You soon find that the very attentiveness alone automatically results in a rejection of undesirable thoughts. Being observed,

attention is prevented from strengthening unserviceable impressions, thoughts, emotions, etc. The control of consciousness results in calm, quiets anxiety, makes the content of consciousness clearer.

From *The Philosopher's Stone*

³Sense perceptions, emotions, thoughts, causal and essential (46) ideas make up the totality of the subjective consciousness possible for man. By observing all kinds of impulses and ideas – from the subconscious, from the environment, from the superconscious – the individual eventually learns how to distinguish the different kinds of vibrations pouring through his envelopes and brain, he learns how to separate these different kinds of consciousness expressions. In so doing he eventually acquires the ability to decide at once from which envelopes and worlds they come. Causal ideas from the world of ideas afford knowledge of material reality. Essential (46) ideas afford understanding of life and understanding of the various consciousness expressions of our fellow human beings.

⁴By constantly paying attention to these subjective consciousness expressions we learn to live in consciousness and to activate the kinds of consciousness belonging to our superconscious; we develop our consciousness, which is the meaning of life.

⁵The emotional thinking of universal life ignorance, going on day and night without rest, produces in the lower regions of the emotional world a continuous flow of vibrations pervading the emotional envelopes of all people and influencing their subconscious (being unconsciously picked up by the solar plexus centre). The esoterician who has learnt how to consciously apprehend them can also ascertain that those who try to acquire a correct view of reality must wage an unceasing defence battle against those idiotizing thought-forms (or depressing moods), until they have liberated their emotional envelopes from at least the lower three emotional molecular kinds (48:5-7).

⁶Those emotional vibrations should not be confused with vibrations issuing from the planets, so manifestly reflected in man's states of mind, changing constantly from hour to hour day and night. The Jupiter, Saturn, Venus, and Mars vibrations are the most easily ascertainable.

From *The Way of Man*.

18 CONSCIENCE

18.1 Morality and Conception of Right

¹What is moral and what is immoral? It is impossible to give a rational answer to that question because what is called “morality” is based on illusions and fictions, false values of life and erroneous ideas of reality. This is also clear from the fact that moral values change constantly, and moreover vary from people to people; in other words, there is nothing permanent in them. If we examine the moral rules that are upheld in many parts of the world, we find that they all contradict one another. There is no such thing as general morality; there is no such thing even as could be called Christian morality. All moral systems are more or less subjective and arbitrary, and most of them are created by power elites for purposes of mass manipulation.

²If morality carries little weight, on the contrary understanding of right and wrong is vitally important. In those matters, man must have a certain insight into differences and limits. Moreover he must be sufficiently skeptical about ordinary morality and must have understood that there is nothing general or stable in it. Finally he must understand the necessity of objective right and wrong, namely that there are definite, unchanging standards by which he can discern what is right and what is wrong in each individual case, so that all arbitrary conceptions of right, limited to times and places, make way for absolutely valid norms of right. All of this is about starting from a right attitude, a right conception; what the Buddha called right view and enumerates first among the eight elements making up the noble eightfold path. Morality passes, but the understanding of right endures.

³An enduring conception of right, conception of good and evil, right and wrong, can arise in a human being only in connection with a constant aim and a constant understanding. In esoteric schools, one of the aims is that disciples shall effect such a constancy in their own essence. This is called creating a centre of gravity, and the instrument for this creation is the work personality. The work personality, which in relation to the allegory of the house in disorder is also called the “deputy steward”, is the sum total of all such forces of the individual which do not merely want to work to develop consciousness but also have some knowledge of the conditions of doing so. The opposite of work personality is false personality, the sum total of all such forces of the individual as neither are able nor desire to develop consciousness and therefore can only hinder work personality in its

striving. Work personality and false personality arise in the individual only when he begins to develop his consciousness intentionally and with a certain degree of intensity. In people who do not have this interest or have it only faintly developed, those two opposite forces exist only potentially but do not appear.

⁴By establishing an aim you can establish the principles of good and evil. There can be no clear idea of good and evil or right and wrong without first establishing an aim or direction. When you have an aim, then what brings you closer to your aim is good and right and what takes you further away from your aim is evil and wrong. If this personal aim corresponds to the possibilities of consciousness development, then it contains a common basis of values for many people, namely all those who want to develop. What keeps us from reaching our aim is mechanicalness, sleep; and what helps us achieve our aim is consciousness, being awake. From this it follows that consciousness is good and mechanicalness is evil. Instead of “good” and “evil”, people who want to develop can speak of “conscious” and “mechanical”. This is quite sufficient for all practical purposes. It does not mean that all that is mechanical must be evil, but it means that evil cannot be conscious, must be mechanical; moreover: that good cannot be mechanical but must be conscious. Everyone must ask himself: Can I be evil consciously? Can I consciously do what I have realized to be evil? Must not evil, if I have realized what it is, be something that I do mechanically, in my state of sleep? And the corresponding as to good: Can I be good in my habitual, mechanical, sleeping state? Must I not be conscious to be good?

18.2 What is Conscience?

¹It is possible for man to exist in four states of consciousness. But such as he is presently, he practically has no experience of the two higher states: self-consciousness and objective consciousness. In this connection, objective consciousness is described as a state where we can know truth. If we reach that state, we shall also know what is right and what is wrong. Consequently, the same way which leads to higher consciousness leads also to the objective understanding of right and wrong. Since we have not got objective consciousness, we consider everything that helps us to develop it as right, and everything that hinders us in this as wrong and bad.

²On our way to full objective consciousness we can in the third state of consciousness, self-consciousness, have a certain limited objective consciousness, namely of ourselves. One important aspect of this objective consciousness is conscience. Here, the word “conscience” does not mean the individual reactions against violations of prohibitions that express

themselves mechanically in people and even in pets such as dogs and cats. Such a conscience may be however arbitrary and is totally dependent on the conventional morality from which the prohibitions in question have been formulated. In esoteric teaching, what is meant by conscience is a certain faculty that exists in every normal person, and by normal person is meant one whose consciousness can develop. Man has a potential for true conscience. But in most people that potential is buried and slumbering. In its stead there is a feigned conscience, conventions, hypocrisy, morality.

³Conscience is what brings together all our different, mutually irreconcilable feelings about some certain thing, so that we can know them all together, all at once. Conscience is the higher, positive emotional understanding of our own actions, an understanding that is free from lies and self-justifications. Conscience is a sudden, instantaneous state in which one cannot hide anything from oneself, cannot lie to oneself, where one is at once aware of all the feelings one has felt in relation to something or somebody, all those feelings with all their mutual contradictions and inconsistencies. It is a shocking realization of how asleep and mechanical one is in one's feelings, how much lie and falsehood, how many absurd contradictions there are in the feelings one imagines are noble, unselfish, and loving. We cannot say that we do not have a conscience, so it is not about developing something that does not yet exist within us. Conscience exists within us, but in our lives it is beyond what is apparent. Conscience is buried very deep within us and it is asleep. Therefore, it is very well protected from false ideas and false emotions.

⁴It can wake up for a short moment in everyday life, and when it does, this usually brings about suffering, at least in the beginning, for it is very unpleasant to see the truth about oneself.

⁵Conscience is another manifestation of consciousness, of being awake. You might say that consciousness works more on the intellectual side and conscience more on the emotional side. Conscience is the same in relation to feelings, as consciousness in relation to ideas. More intellectual consciousness and more emotional conscience only appear separate; actually they are two aspects of the same state, and the one cannot develop without the other awakening. Conscience is a tool of discrimination that helps us see what is good and bad or right and wrong in our own conduct. Moments of conscience are absolutely necessary steps on the path to waking up, and a man without conscience cannot develop. Using a different formulation we say that there must be two paths on which man approaches the higher, as yet superhuman states of consciousness: the path of higher intellect and the path of higher emotion. Pursuing only one of the two paths will not do. The work is so great and so difficult that all good forces must be used.

⁶Conscience can be defined as the emotional perception of truth in a certain matter. Conscience is the same as self-consciousness, it only appears different to us. We are subjective, so we view things subjectively. When we think about what is meant by self-consciousness, we think of a certain force, a certain energy, or a certain state in connection with an intellectual appreciation. The same energy, the same state can appear through emotions, and this can happen to quite ordinary people in quite ordinary conditions. Sometimes it may happen that people have an emotional perception of truth – some of them more, others less. This is conscience. Lack of self-consciousness, absence of self-remembrance, and many other factors, such as identification and imagination, shut us off from moments of conscience which otherwise would be more possible. Seeing contradictions and feeling conscience are connected, but are not one and the same. You may see contradictions and yet you may not feel conscience, so if you take these two as one and the same, you will not arrive at the right understanding.

⁷Conscience is not very far for a normal human being, and, generally, it is easier to have moments of conscience than moments of self-consciousness. At first, when conscience manifests itself in us, it turns against us, so that we begin to see all our inner contradictions. Usually we cannot see them, because we are always in one or another small apparent self that does not know of the other apparent selves, but conscience can see from top and shows us that here we felt one thing, there another thing, and here again quite another thing, all on the same subject, or person. For instance, we love somebody one moment, and wish him or her dead the next. We become aware of such contradictions in moments of conscience, and this is what makes them so unpleasant. All our life, all our habitual ways of thinking, have only one aim – to avoid shocks, unpleasant feelings, unpleasant realizations about ourselves. And this is the chief thing that keeps us asleep. But if we want to wake up, we must welcome moments of conscience, without fear, with gratitude. Waking conscience is waking the courage to see the truth about ourselves.

⁸Such people as are called “crooks without a conscience” regrettably are too often successful with people who have a somewhat awakened conscience. If the latter lack discrimination and a wide experience of life, they usually have difficulty in understanding that other people do not have an awakened conscience. Such good people all too easily believe that others are as good as they are. There is, as Confucius remarked, a real need of people in the world who have both an awakened conscience and an immediately active discrimination.

18.3 *Buffers*

¹In railway-carriages the function of buffers is to dampen the force that arises when carriages collide. Man has mechanical appliances that have a similar function and therefore are called buffers as well. Their effect is that they reduce the collision of two conflicting aspects of him, so that he does not notice them together. This prevents him from seeing his self-contradictions, so that lying to himself will be much easier.

²Buffers are machines that feed you excuses, subterfuges, and self-justifications. Each buffer is the result of years of wrong and stupid life, of sleep, ignorance, indulgence in, excuses for, every kind of weakness, unwillingness to make efforts from within your being, laxity, apathetic loitering, shutting your eyes to your own errors, escape from uncomfortable truths, constant lying to yourself, blaming and accusing other people, etc.

³Morality is made up of buffers. Buffers make the life of ordinary man easier, more pleasant. It would be very hard for him to live without them, since he does not understand the necessity of conscience. Buffers prevent him from feeling true conscience. Instead of true conscience he has feigned conscience and buffers, moral conventions, hypocrisy, and vanity.

⁴Buffers prevent him from developing consciousness as well. Even if man earnestly desires to awaken, be transformed, lead his life on a higher level, yet these buffers will hinder him pretty efficiently, since they reduce shocks, and only shocks, jolts, blows can shake a man out of the state of sleep in which he lives, wake him up.

⁵Buffers are formed slowly and gradually. Many buffers are formed artificially by “education”, other buffers by the suggestive influence of the surrounding society. Consensus, having the same opinions as all the others, as convention tells you, because you are afraid of “what people say”, expresses itself as some kind of hypnosis or trance, that is, an apathetic state where the individual can be induced to believe in the most absurd things and act against what in a moment of conscience he would realize to be right. Ethnographers describe allegedly primitive human societies in Asia, Africa, and South America, thus outside Europe, as being dominated by irrational taboos that manifest themselves as acquired anxieties for sensual contact with certain objects or beings. Many people in modern European societies, however, educated, learned, and intellectual people in particular, evince a no less irrational anxiety about contact with tabooed subjects of conversation.

⁶When a man discovers something within himself, he experiences a shock, but if his buffers are strong enough they make this occasional clarity soon evaporate, so that he can go back to sleep. The more a man observes

himself, the more likely it will be for him to begin to see these buffers. This is so because the more you observe yourself, the more you will catch glimpses of yourself as a whole (note this: as a whole, not as a unity!). And when you see this whole, you will also see conflicting traits, precisely such conflicts as buffers are supposed to hide. Finally you will be able to see your buffers, see them as the unnatural formations that they are.

⁷Buffers lull man to sleep, give him the pleasant feeling that everything is well as it is, that there are no conflicts and that he can go on sleeping in peace and quiet. Buffers are mechanisms that make man believe that he is always right and always does the right thing.

⁸It is often very easy to see the buffers of other people. It is very difficult to see your own buffers and you will eagerly deny them. A man was told by his teacher that his chief feature was that he contradicted. He reacted at once and hotly by saying: "But I never contradict!" Then the other pupils could not help laughing.

18.4 Waking Conscience

¹When people who are being trained in esoterics are told about conscience for the first time, they usually comprehend it too shallowly and, therefore, take it too lightly. As if they and all other people had conscience. It is with this as with self-consciousness. It is very easy to believe, when you hear about it, that you have it. But we do not have an awakened conscience, no more than we have self-consciousness. Thus conscience has to be awakened. In fact, this is one of the most important aims of your work on yourself. And there are many obstacles to this.

²The awakening of conscience is a process that runs in many steps, like the development of self-consciousness. Therefore, we may speak of an "awakened conscience" as on many different levels. A fully awakened conscience is far away for most people, but a faintly awakened, a temporarily awakened, and an awakening conscience exists in pretty many people.

³Conscience, when awakened, is the same in all people, which is a fact that must be stressed. In our self-observation certain realizations may reach us: "I am not this person whom I am observing. I am not these behaviours, views, statements, certainties, self-justifications, excuses. I am not the one I imagined. I am not these public distinctions and recognitions, positions, and virtues. I am not these appearances. I am something different, deep below, hidden." Such realizations may form an intellectual basis for the possibility of waking conscience.

⁴All work on waking conscience must, just like all intentional work, start from the intellect, the thinking centre. It must begin with knowledge,

understanding, insight, right attitude, right effort, reflexion, self-observation. Thereupon this qualitative intellectual factor can activate higher emotions, where conscience is the most active after it has awakened. These higher emotions must be or become active, alive, in man, because without their participation there will be no moments of conscience. Purely intellectual man, who either does not have much of these emotions or does not care to activate them, must remain a man whose conscience is asleep. Hopefully he will finally realize, if his intellect is strong enough and deep enough in understanding, that he must (re)acquire the mystic's intensity, devotion, and love of this higher, whatever he calls it – God, the higher self, soul, or spirit –, for this higher is the origin of conscience. Like self-consciousness conscience comes down from above and leads us upwards, if we are able to receive it. And to be able to receive it we must love it. The love of God is flowing toward us without reserve, the mystics are right in saying this. But what does “toward us” mean? It means that we must meet it halfway.

⁵If you remember yourself in one mood, then remember yourself in another mood, and try to unite them, you may begin to see how contradictory your emotional states are.

⁶As long as a man views himself as one and single, he will never leave the condition in which he exists. To awaken his conscience he must start to see contradictions in himself. But if he tries to see contradictions believing at the same time that he is one and single, nothing will come out of it. Then it will just be as if he put his one foot upon the other and wondered why he does not move from the spot.

⁷Man prevents, delays, or even destroys the awakening of conscience above all by lying to himself and about himself. Self-lying is what keeps false personality alive, but conscience is what will ultimately kill it. Every time a man refrains from lying to himself or about himself thanks to the wakefulness of his conscience, he weakens or thins false personality somewhat. It must die eventually for the true man to be born.

18.5 Preparing for Moments of Conscience

¹At one moment you entertain a certain kind of feelings towards some definite thing, event, or person, at another moment you have feelings of quite the opposite kind, and this without realizing it. Then, suddenly, conscience arrives, the condition where these mutually opposite feelings exist simultaneously. The shock of seeing these irreconcilable, illogical feelings makes it impossible for you to identify yourself with them. You then observe them in a state free of identification. This is a self-conscious state of a higher emotional kind. But it is impossible to make up one's

mind, exert oneself to create such a state. It is possible to create a state of self-remembrance after receiving training in methods and applying them with understanding. It is impossible to do something corresponding to intentionally creating a moment of conscience; nothing but imagination will come out of it. You must wait for conscience until it arrives. On the other hand it is possible to prepare a room in yourself for its arrival, cultivate such an attitude that you will be able to welcome it when it arrives. You do so by trying to see yourself as you are, not as you want to be, by being sincere to yourself, by lying to yourself as little as possible. This preparation has a preparation in its turn, namely right attitude, right understanding of what is false in yourself, what cannot or what should not be developed in yourself. Also efforts at creating moments of self-remembrance may favour moments of conscience later.

²It is possible to prepare for conscience by working, in our present condition already, at its better moments, on liberating ourselves gradually from our habitual feelings. This we cannot do directly, only indirectly. And we do it by dis-identifying from them. This dis-identification, too, we do best and the most efficiently indirectly, by observing unnecessary emotions as the objects, separate from ourselves, they are. Then they are no longer inner states that we talk about by saying “I” and “me”, but they have become more like external things, objects of our reflection and observation. From this fact comes the term “objective consciousness”. When we can observe them as objects outside the self, we can also clearly see their mutual inconsistency, that we hate the person or the thing we say we love, and love those we say we hate. Then we can even more intentionally withdraw inwards to the centre of ourselves and, using understanding, make those emotions belong to what is external to us, our inner external world, so to speak. All this work is preparation for future moments of conscience. Even this preparation must contain many things, above all an inner rejection, separation from oneself, of all expressions of lying, hatred, suspicion, and pride, and an intentional cultivation of the opposite qualities, especially in one’s attitude to beings and realities of higher kinds.

18.6 Understanding Conscience

¹It is difficult to describe the experience of a moment of self-remembrance to anyone who has not had this experience, and it is even more difficult to describe the experience of conscience. The less experienced can approach understanding of more intellectual self-remembrance through intellect, but approaching more emotional conscience through intellect is more difficult, and through ordinary emotion it is even more difficult, since its sentimentality, egoism, egocentricity, negativity, and

other such personality reactions falsify everything. At moments of conscience, personality is entirely passive and quiet, does not react, and so cannot falsify.

²It is difficult to understand conscience, because personality has grown over it, so that our feelings and our perception of self have shifted to personality. Therefore it is impossible for us to “feel all together”, and even if we could, it would be unendurable to us such as we are now. If a man could feel all together, it would mean that he were one. But personality is not one, but is divided into many small apparent selves. The most important thing to understand about personality is its division. That is why you now feel in one way and now in another way, but separately and not together, and without even memory as a unifying bond – just as it is with your thoughts or body movements: at the one moment in one way, at the next in some other way, and in most cases you do not even notice these constant changes. It is this constant shifting and impermanence that man perceives as a unitary self and so calls it “I” – a mere imaginary unity, suggested to him by his physical unity, his name and his body.

³And also quite apart from the idea of conscience it is important that you discover within yourself that when you feel strong emotions – this has nothing to do with insignificant emotions –, when you feel strongly about some particular thing, you can be practically certain that at another occasion you felt differently about the same thing. If you cannot see this in yourself, then you should try to see it in others and then ask yourself what your reason is for believing you are an exception. When you realize that these mutually contradictory feelings exist, then it will help you understand your mechanicalness and your lack of understanding of yourself – lack of self-knowledge. As long as we have different emotions at different moments, what are we? Now we have confidence, now we are suspicious; now we like something, now we dislike it; now we assert that something is immensely important and blame others for their lack of interest, now we are indifferent ourselves. The aim is to bring all these different emotions together, otherwise we shall never come to know ourselves. If we always feel only one emotion at a time and do not remember other emotions, then we are identified with this one emotion. When we have another emotion, we forget the first one; when we have a third one, we forget the first and the second. Very early in life, through imitation and in various other ways, we learn how to live in a state of imagination to protect us from unpleasant experiences. Thus people develop within themselves this capacity for feeling only one emotion at the time.

⁴With conscience, in conscience, you understand the basic unity of religions. Without conscience, outside conscience, they must all wage war

against one another.

⁵Ordinary man, who is not interested in developing consciousness, cannot understand conscience either. To him, conscience, if he were hit by it, would only amount to torment, unnecessary suffering, which he would hasten to forget.

⁶There are people in whom opposing forces, such as false personality, lying, self-justification, conceit, are so strong that they can never have any moment of conscience. Mercifully, the powers of destiny have seen fit to spare such people an instinct for, or an interest in, anything that has to do with the development of consciousness. For it would be inhumane torture to let a man be inflamed with eagerness to strive for something that he could never attain.

⁷Demands for public demonstration of remorse, confession of sins, can only obstruct the manifestation of true conscience. Conscience is the individual's private business, which he is not obliged to report to any other. It is all too easy to falsify conscience. False personality is an expert on such things. Sentimentality, indignation, righteous wrath – no such things have anything to do with conscience. All such is the unrest and noise of personality. Conscience is observation, quiet, and silence. It is a higher state of consciousness. Personality must find a state where it is passive, quiet, withdrawn, if conscience is to appear. If man is too full of himself, his personality, conscience cannot awaken.

⁸False personality is the most decided enemy of conscience. Does this mean that enmity is mutual? That conscience is the enemy of false personality? Not in the sense where enemy means "hater". At the moment of conscience there is no hatred, so conscience hates nobody and nothing. But conscience has such a force that false personality, with its lies, hatred, and pride, must lie low, humiliated. It is more correct to say that conscience is the unyielding adversary of false personality. There is no possibility whatever of reconciliation between them. Their struggle must end in the complete victory of conscience and the crushing defeat of falsity. Therefore conscience may be likened to the noble warrior who has banished all hatred from his heart but who nevertheless is unflinchingly prepared to defeat his adversary completely, because this is what *dharma*, divine law, commands him to do. Precisely this is the theme of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

⁹Man's whole work at trying to develop consciousness is about reaching a higher state, the third state, self-consciousness, with a view to making it permanent. This state exists within him as a potential. The organs that are its carriers exist. They are centres of the causal envelope, man's envelope of immortality. Our so-called normal state, waking consciousness, is the second, lower state. All kinds of thoughts, all emotional reactions, all self-

conceptions, all the attitudes with which we relate to the surrounding world, other people and ourselves, all this is part of this lower. We seek to attain the higher, the third state. That is why we are called “seekers”. We are seeking the knowledge or truth of reality and of ourselves. But it is useless seeking if you cannot entertain any hope of finding what you are looking for; the seeker hopes to become a finder. And the seeker finds some part of the truth in the third state and then more in the fourth state. We cannot form any correct idea of what full, permanent self-consciousness means on the basis of the short glimpses of it we have caught. These glimpses rather show us the way to something that we can reach, something that we can find. What we can be certain of, however, is that in this third state intellect and emotion, or rather their higher counterparts, become utterly different from what we are used to. The united understanding of thought and feeling will be so different qualitatively from what they are in your mechanical states that you must exclaim: only now do I understand!

18.7 Conscience in Encounters with the Knowledge and Its Representatives

¹In Peter Brook’s film *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, which tells the story of Gurdjieff’s early search, there is a scene which depicts, in a realistic and moving way, how a seeker after knowledge, Russian Prince Yuri Lubovedsky, has his conscience suddenly awakened at his encounter with an emissary from a school, in this state of higher consciousness has the most shattering insight about himself, and immediately makes the most important decision of his life. The scene is enacted in a teahouse in Cairo. Gurdjieff and Lubovedsky are sitting on the floor waiting for their tea when the emissary, unknown to them, enters. This is the conversation which then ensues between the emissary and Lubovedsky. The emissary begins:

²– One can think well here. You are Russian.

³– Yes.

⁴– I am glad to speak to someone from Russia. I have been in Russia. But that is not the point. Eh, Gogo! Gogo!

⁵– How do you know that name?! Only my mother and my nurse ever called me by it, and that was more than forty years ago!

⁶– Gogo! You have worked and suffered all these years. But you never knew how to work, how to let the desire of your mind become the desire of your heart.

⁷– Who are you?! How do you know me so well?

⁸– Does it really matter who I am or what I am? Is not your curiosity one of the chief reasons why your life has come to nothing? It is so strong that

even now all you want is an explanation who I am and how I know you.

⁹The prince casts down his eyes and is silent. He is hit by conscience. Then he says:

¹⁰– Yes, Father. You are right. I have seen many miracles and tried to understand them. But it has brought me no real understanding. Yes, I am empty. It is too late. I do not truly want to know what I just asked you. I sincerely beg your pardon.

¹¹The emissary waits for a few moments. Then he says:

¹²– Perhaps it is not yet too late. If you feel with all your being that you really are empty, then I advise you to try once more. If you agree to one condition, I will help you. The condition is: die – consciously – to the life you have led until now and go where I shall indicate.

¹³After a few moments of quiet pondering, Prince Lubovedsky nods his answer, rises without saying a word, and follows the emissary out as he leaves. During the whole of this encounter and conversation Gurdjieff has been a silent outsider and observer.

¹⁴With his conscience awakened, the prince had a clear vision of all his previous life, how aimless and useless all his search had been, as its motivation was curiosity and thirst for sensations, not love of knowledge, seriousness, and responsibility, as he had imagined hitherto. In this state of higher consciousness he saw all the endeavour of his life as separated from his conscious self, and this conscious self was himself at that moment. It was of less importance that this conscious self was only temporarily present; the important thing was that it was present at that very moment. Now Lubovedsky realized that this long, failed endeavour of his was conditioned mechanically and driven mechanically, thus empty in the sense of empty of consciousness. According to Gautama the Buddha, apparent selves are impermanent, without self or soul, therefore empty, and inseparably bound up with suffering. Such a clear insight into the difference between conscious and mechanical states can arise only in a state of self-consciousness, in this case manifesting itself in a moment of conscience.

¹⁵When Lubovedsky, through this shocking realization of his own emptiness, had reached a state of passivity of his personality, a state where a higher consciousness suddenly appeared, the emissary was able to have a serious talk with him, teach him, lay down for him the conditions of that decision which he could make only in such a state. It would have been utterly meaningless for the emissary to speak to Lubovedsky as long as he was in mechanical states, for then the emissary would have addressed only the personality, chock-full of robots. And those robots would have brought up nothing but objections, excuses, justifications. Therefore it was necessary for

the emissary to provoke a state of higher consciousness, self-consciousness, in Lubovedsky. What the emissary now was able to convey is called C influence. This means an influence that can be transmitted by a conscious being to a human being when the latter temporarily is in a self-conscious state. It is of the utmost importance that the man obeys the instructions he receives in that state, since any objection he may raise can only come from his own personality with its apparent selves (robots), can never come from the conscious self, and by allowing them to act he would discontinue the state of self-consciousness and revert to a mechanical state or, expressed differently: from being awake fall asleep again.

¹⁶On such an occasion one should refrain from making proposals of one's own. The teacher or guide is a conscious being who knows what the seeker needs better than he knows it himself. (Once again the important esoteric theme of the difference between desires and needs: we desire what we do not need, and we need what we do not desire.) At best such proposals are just unnecessary, at worst they burden the further journey with obstacles or detours. However, the guide may let the seeker's self-will have its way to teach him a lesson. Remaining self-will demonstrates that his first perception of his own emptiness did not cut deep enough, and then the seeker needs some more experience. This, too, is shown in the film *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, in the series of scenes beginning with Gurdjieff and Professor Skridlov seeking out the Dervish Bogga-Edin in Bukhara. Bogga-Edin opens the conversation with Gurdjieff. Skridlov says nothing.

¹⁷– Have you found what you are looking for?

¹⁸– I have found nothing. I do not even know how to search. There is never any answer. What can I do now? I am desperate.

¹⁹– You will never find the answer by yourself. Alone a man can do very little. His only hope is to find a place where real knowledge has been kept alive. I advise you to try to find the Sarmoung Brotherhood. Go up the Amu-Darya; go towards Kafiristan. It is a dangerous undertaking. You will be risking your life. But at the right moment there will be a guide.

²⁰– Can I take my friend with me?

²¹– I think you may, if you can vouch for his honour.

²²Once in Afghanistan, Gurdjieff and Skridlov chance upon Father Giovanni, who leads a group of monks of another brotherhood. They stay as guests of the group. Gurdjieff's promised guide does not turn up. Then one day Professor Skridlov tells Gurdjieff as they are sitting alone with one another:

²³– Father Giovanni has consented to take me under his protection. I am going to stay here. I have a feeling I have nothing more to seek.

²⁴Only now is the obstacle removed that Gurdjieff put on his path by his

uncalled-for proposal to the Dervish Bogga-Edin. At the same moment a boy steps forward to Gurdjieff to tell him:

²⁵– Your guide is waiting.

²⁶(Note: Kafiristan, present-day Nuristan, is a province in Afghanistan.)

18.8 *Metania*

¹In conscience, there is something that resembles remorse somewhat but still should not be confused with remorse such as it usually expresses itself: an inner chaos of self-destructive, negative emotions, just as meaningless and useless as the negative emotions that led to the action which the man now regrets. Instead we should speak about *metania* (sometimes written *metanoia*). This word, which is used in the Gospels, means “rethinking”. In contrast to chaotic, negative, lower emotional, destructive remorse, which cannot lead us anywhere, metania is a creative, positive, higher emotional and higher mental state, where we receive help to see how we can make good what we have violated, find a new way, be reconciled with the things or beings that we have ill-treated.

²In schools, metania is a necessary tool in the pupils’ work on themselves, a tool without which they cannot develop consciousness. The person who is not transformed need not merely be one whom the teaching of the schools never reached. It may also be one whom the teaching has indeed reached but who is careless about it, neglects it. This is not very serious, however; it is practically inevitable at the beginner’s stage and is generally corrected by the man himself as time goes by. It is far more serious, though, if the man expresses negative emotions or derogatory attitudes to the knowledge or the elder brothers from whom he received it. It occurs ever more often in this period of decline we are now experiencing that people, through one part of their being, praise esoterics and bear witness of its great and positive influence on their lives, but through another part of their being, slander and calumniate the individuals to whom they owe the little esoteric learning they have been able to pick up. If they were hit by a wee bit of conscience, they would realize that they had to make metania for what they had violated or else lose the possibility of a renewed contact with the knowledge in future lives. Ingratitude was never a path to the sublime knowledge.

19 NON-IDENTIFICATION

19.1 What is Identification?

¹When we begin to observe ourselves, we find that most of our functions, and emotional functions in particular, are accompanied by a strange phenomenon: we are too easily captivated by whatever we are observing, we become too absorbed in things, so that we are lost in them. Here “being lost” means that the self-observation that was possibly there before this phenomenon appeared ceases completely. This state of being lost in whatever one is watching, feeling, or thinking of is called identification. A very clear example is when we switch on our TV set, actually without any intention of watching a certain programme, browse through the channels, come right into a drama film that has just begun, and then just sit there for one and a half hours, being quite in the grip of the film. During this time, we do not really exist; we are the film, are identified with it. Another example is when we are discussing something with someone and then become emotionally very committed. If we observe ourselves immediately after this, we shall notice that we were not present, we were not there. We were not anywhere else either. We did not exist – except as unconscious, mechanical functions. When one is deeply identified, one does not exist; only that exists with which one is identified.

²As in everything else, so in identification there are degrees. Identifications can be strong or weak, deep or shallow. In observing yourself you find when you are more identified, less identified, or not identified at all. Sometimes you identify so that you can see nothing else, at other times you can see something. If things were always the same, there would be no chance for us, but they always vary in degree of intensity, and that gives us a possibility of change.

³Being in the grip of something is an extreme case, a deep identification. But there are many small identifications, shallow identifications, which are difficult to observe, and these are more common. They are the most important, because they keep us mechanical. Between deep sleep and wakefulness there are many different stages, and we pass from one stage to another. We are always passing from one identification to another.

⁴When people look at old feature films or old photographs of actors and similar people, it may strike them “how artificial and unnatural” people were in former times. What they notice then is the power that identification wields over mankind. Each epoch has its particular individual and collective identifications, and we look at the expressions of states of identi-

fication of former times through our own states of identification. Therefore we think that the old expressions, behaviours, manners of speaking and acting, joking, etc., as “funny and unnatural”, but not those of our times, despite the fact that they are equally conditioned by identifications, only of other kinds. We do not realize that we shall appear as funny to the people of the future as the people of the past now appear to us.

⁵If you are strongly identified with something, you are practically asleep. In states of weak identification, you are not as deeply asleep, you are closer to being awake. If you want to wake up, you must become free from identification. You can become free. Such as we are now we are almost never free, because we are practically always identified.

⁶In his untransformed state, man is identified with all kinds of illusions regarding himself. He believes he has a will of his own and is fully conscious. He may believe that he is near the goal, has only one or two incarnations more to do in the human kingdom. He can believe in such illusions because he has not seen deeply enough into himself. And identifications hinder him from doing so.

⁷If you observe yourself immediately after a short time of strong identification, you will notice an inner emptiness. This emptiness depends on the absence of yourself, of your own essence. During the time you are identified it is quite impossible for you to observe yourself and of course to remember yourself. However, at the moment you observe yourself, it is impossible for you to be identified. Thus identification and self-observation or self-remembering are mutually exclusive states: if the one is present the other is absent.

⁸Identification happens when you are repelled or attracted by something. Study or observation does not necessarily produce identification, but attraction and repulsion always do. Also, we use too strong a language, and this automatically produces identification. We have many automatic appliances of this sort.

⁹Identification always has an emotional element. It is a kind of emotional disturbance. But sometimes identification becomes a habit, so that one does not even notice the emotional element. That is not to say that emotion is bad. In itself, emotion must afford us new energy, new understanding. Emotion is not destructive, but identification is. It is very easy to confuse identification with emotion. We do not have a very wide experience of emotion without identification, so in the beginning we have difficulty in understanding what an emotion free from identification is. People often speak about their emotions when in reality they mean their identifications.

¹⁰Negative emotions cannot exist without identification. Really positive emotions are free from identification. Real love exists in states of non-

identification; it is impossible with identification. The same is true of sympathy; there is sympathy without identification and sympathy with identification. When sympathy is mixed with identification, it often ends in anger, hatred or some other negative emotion. Identification eventually kills all emotions, except the negative ones. With identification only the unpleasant side of them remains.

¹¹We all have what should be called “unnecessary emotions”, negative emotions that cannot teach us anything, only cause us trouble. These emotions originate from identification. Each one of us has a hundred and one unnecessary emotions. Each one of us is identified with a hundred and one unnecessary emotions. If identification can be made to cease, these emotions will lose their power and disappear.

¹²It is not so much a question of what one is identified with. Identification is an inner state. Many things that we think are outside us are really in us. Fear, for instance, is independent of things. If you are in a state of fear, you can be afraid of anything, innocent everyday objects, ash-trays and clothes hangers. This often happens in pathological states, and a pathological state is only an intensified ordinary state. “Anger is temporary insanity.” This fact, that identifications are inside in us, not outside of us, makes it possible for us to set ourselves free from them.

¹³Certain desires must be bound up with identification: for instance the desire to harm someone. You cannot do it without identification, and if identification disappears, you do not want it any longer. It is possible not to lose oneself; losing oneself is not a necessary element of desire at all.

¹⁴If one is completely absorbed in one’s work, it will be bad work. If one is identified, one can never get good results. It is one of our illusions to think that we must lose ourselves to get good results, for in this way we only get poor results. It is a wrong idea that one cannot study a person or anything else without losing oneself. If you lose yourself in something, you cannot study it. Identification is always a weakening factor: the more you identify, the worse is your study and the smaller are the results. We can do well whatever we are doing only as much as we are awake. The more we are asleep, the worse we do the thing we are doing – there are no exceptions.

19.2 Understanding Identification

¹It takes time to understand what identifying is. It will help you to understand, if you want to remember yourself, find that you cannot, and try to see why you cannot. Then you realize that identification prevents you. Then you will see what it is. All these things – identification, sleep, mechanicalness – are connected.

²If you catch yourself after a state of deep identification, you can compare that moment with other states. In this way you can make it clear to yourself what it means to be identified. When you begin to observe yourself, certain kinds of identification become impossible. The best way to understand identification is to find examples. For instance, you observe how a person is quite in the grip of his views, his arguments, his irritation, his enthusiasm; all of this is identification. Then you find the corresponding states in yourself. You realize that identifications are there all the time – not just at moments when something unusual happens.

³It is important to realize that identifications can never help you. They do not help you understand more or better; they only make things more confused and more difficult. If you realize that, it may help in some cases. Identification gives us no energy that we can use, only destructive energy. In states of identification you cannot feel right, think right, see right, judge right. Identification and imagination are the chief causes of our weakness.

⁴It happens that people who want to work on their consciousness and hear about such terms as “self-remembrance”, “self-observation”, “non-identification” get very identified with those words. This prevents them from understanding what those words mean and also from reaching the corresponding states. You cannot reach a state of non-identification by being identified. Thus if you try to exercise self-observation while being very identified with some anxiety, tension, or fear of failure, of not having understood or not achieving, then nothing will come out of it. You cannot achieve anything qualitative with consciousness in such states, because then you are in lower parts of centres where negativity generally prevails. Then when you fail, this often results in feelings of disappointment and depression, which reinforce identification and negativity. A vicious circle easily ensues.

⁵The only way of recognizing identification is to observe the phenomenon, for it is not always equally strong. We do not notice our body temperature except when it becomes somewhat higher or lower than normal. Similarly we can notice identification when it is stronger or weaker than normal. By comparing such degrees we can discover what identification is.

⁶There are many forms of identification, but the first step is to see it; the second step is to struggle with it in order to become free from it. We spend our energy in the wrong way on identification and negative emotions; they are open taps from which our energy flows out.

19.3 Reaction and Identification

¹If we observe carefully how we relate to events that we witness, are involved, or take part in, we must start to realize that there is a basic and crucial difference between mechanically reacting to such events and relating to them more consciously. It is an important aim of our self-observation to arrive at this realization. The difference between mechanical reaction to a happening and a more conscious way of relating to it depends on the degree of identification. If we are in a state of pretty strong identification, we make no difference between the event, our impression of it, our mechanical reaction to this impression, and our sense of self. All four are put together into a chain of identities: the event equals the impression of it, the impression equals the reaction, and “my” reaction – actually the reaction of the machine – equals me: “I am so angry”, “I feel so outraged”, “I am so hurt”, etc. This chain of identities is precisely what is meant by identification. It is because of the mechanical state that the chain is kept whole and unbroken. Only the conscious self can break the chain at the point where impressions are received.

²Reaction means re-action, responsive action. In this connection it means psychic response, responsive action in the emotional centre. Reaction is part of emotionality. Mentality, the intellectual centre, is free of reaction. An event makes an impression on our senses. Sense impressions are received in the instinct centre, a physical centre. Physical centres function normally in normal people. Therefore, the problem of identification does not arise there, but in the emotional centre, when it is brought into play and reacts mechanically. This is not to say that reaction is a bad thing in itself. Emotional reaction is needed in many cases as a trigger for necessary physical action. The degree of consciousness determines the degree of identification, however, and emotional reactions of different qualities: with strong or faint identification. It is also possible to observe mentally when reacting emotionally, provided your identification is faint. Emotionally negative reactions are accompanied by strong identifications that without exception make mental self-observation impossible. However, it is easy in such cases to deceive yourself so that you believe that you could observe yourself when this “self-observation” actually was added as an afterthought. All of this can be verified through some honest self-observation.

19.4 Non-Identification

¹If we get identified this means that we are not conscious at the point where we receive impressions from without. Then impressions control us rather than we controlling impressions. The expression “controlling

impressions” is actually not exact, since what is meant is not the impressions themselves but rather the imaginations and other identifications that arise from them automatically and mechanically when we are in non-conscious states, states of sleep. In themselves, impressions are neutral, and if we are conscious at the point where we receive them, they cannot give rise to identifications. This might be called interposing a “conscious, evaluating pause” between the impression and the ensuing reaction. If such a pause is interposed, the reaction will be different or will be absent altogether. For example, a man is walking in the dark outside his house and then notices some curled-up thing lying on the ground. If he is in a non-conscious state it may happen that this impression is automatically interpreted as “dangerous snake”, so that the man is seized with fear and runs away. In a more conscious state he receives the impression at a point where the observing self rules, and then states: “A curled-up thing – might be a snake, but might also be something else, a piece of rope, for instance.” Instead of reacting with fear and panic, conditions where he can neither see nor think clearly, he observes the object attentively and approaches it carefully. Then he will see clearly that it is indeed a piece of rope.

²Try in your practical work to see what you have been most identified with today or yesterday and try to separate from this particular form of being identified and try for the time being to make an aim to remember yourself in situations where this kind of identification tends to come about. Certainly you will not be able to carry this out for long because your attempts will become mechanical to the extent that you cease to understand what it is you are doing. There is nothing extraordinary in this, on the contrary it is everyone’s experience. There is consequently no reason for pessimism; just try to make a new effort, but this time in some other direction until that becomes mechanical, too. You simply go on in this manner, persistently, unrelentingly. You should have many different ways of working against identifications, like “many irons in the fire”.

³It is a very marvellous thing to experience a moment of not being identified. When you are in such a state you seem to live in a quiet central place in yourself although you are aware that all things outside you are trying to advance on you and seize hold of you. And “all things outside you” are not things of the external world but the multitude of apparent selves in your own psyche. They are like a crowd now being kept at bay by invisible policemen. In such a state you can see what one of the main objects of self-observation is: to separate yourself from so much that is continually going on in emotions and thoughts and laying hold of yourself and in fact often dragging yourself down to a lower level. Then you will understand the allegory of the “house in disorder”. In a state of non-

identification you can establish a certain amount of order in the house, and this precisely because you do not put the feeling of “I” into what you observe – this is exactly what non-identification means: I am not identifying with it. Now, if not before, you understand, through experience and not mere theory, why in all self-observation it is necessary not to say “I” about what you observe, necessary not to think that you are one “I”, necessary not to think as if one single force acted in you as feeling and thought.

⁴As long as you keep this illusion of your inner oneness, you cannot understand what self-control means. If you think that there is only one force acting in you as feeling and thought, then it is impossible for one thing to command and another to obey. The allegory of the “house in disorder” means that all those who really are and should be servants do not wish to obey but only want to rule and command, the one after the other, for brief moments, under no higher control, plan, or aim. In contrast, self-observation means that the observing self commands and the apparent selves obey, however briefly. The observing self cannot be identified with the observed apparent selves. It is a psycho-logical law that one cannot be what one observes. The same truth expressed differently: at the moment you observe something it becomes separate from yourself and your identification with it ceases.

⁵All exercises that aim at creating consciousness must start from states that are relatively free of identification, thus in the highest parts of centres (“kings”), and be continued with the least possible identification. Such exercises are best when done almost unintentionally, without showing them to others and without showing them even to oneself so to speak.

⁶One should not work for definite short-term results, least of all be identified with such things. The only results obtained in such work will be disappointment and depression, and nothing can be based on them. One cannot prescribe anything for the work no more than for the way to be walked in a larger sense. One must have faith in the fact that the work and the way follow their own laws over which no man has any control. Having a little more experience of the way of the work and the work of the way one has come to the realization that there will be results but never such as one expected in one’s ignorance.

19.5 Non-Identification Preserves Force and Supplies Force

¹Each act of non-identification preserves force. And what is meant here by “force” is the force needed for waking up. If we get identified with everything that arises in our psyche or impinges on our senses, then we cannot have the force needed to perform the work for consciousness or

even to understand it. The work will then be distant from us.

²One reason why we lose force is that we are not in the right centre for the thing we are doing. This is rather easy to observe in ourselves provided we have some previous knowledge of the centres. If we do a certain work while daydreaming and allowing our attention to wander because we feel bored, then we can only lose force. On the other hand, if we are in the right centres, in the highest part of centres, perhaps this in all centres, then we direct attention properly to what we are doing and do not lose force, on the contrary we gain force or at least keep it because we act more consciously. Then we shall be able to receive good impressions that supply us with more good force; one more example of the truth of the Gnostic saying: “Unto every one that hath shall be given.”

³The sense of boredom is identification. No necessary, useful, and valuable work is boring in itself, but this emotion is exclusively due to the individual, his state of identification. If he raises his consciousness to less mechanical parts of centres, the sense of boredom ceases. If his attention is directed from within, he may find any observation, any activity interesting. If his attention is wandering, mechanical, everything will be boring.

19.6 Balanced Active Self-Expression

¹Interaction between people, whether in private or professional life, business or public life, is largely determined by what could be called the “war of personalities”. Personalities are worn and torn mechanically between each other, and as mechanically, negative emotions such as irritation and aggressiveness arise from these frictions. In moments of lowered self-control there can be fits of rage, harsh words, and innuendo; envy and malicious joy can be expressed for all to see. In some people, the expression of such negativity can be habitual, since it has become their “second nature”, which they cannot bridle, for example in such people as are wont to gossip about others and slander them. Anyone who is the target of such aggression and negativity may easily let himself be carried away, get identified so that he “feels injured” and “has to pay them back in the same coin”. Then he proves to be as mechanical as the aggressor. Now the battle is in full swing, brought on and continued, not by any conscious decisions, but solely by mechanical causes outside the control of the individuals themselves.

²Such a “struggle of personalities” inevitably brings to mind the image of wild beasts fighting for domination. This image is apposite for the personalities in mechanical mutual struggle are about as unaware as animals. These transactions between personalities become mechanical and negative because individuals are under the sway of strong identifications.

³People who want to develop consciousness cannot avoid ending up in situations where they will be assailed emotionally. Then it is important to try to maintain the understanding that there is no necessary connection between the event or situation and their negative emotional reaction. A negative emotional reaction can come about only if one sinks down into a state of identification: situation = impression = reaction = myself. But if in that moment I bring about self-consciousness with will and understanding, then it is impossible to get identified with some emotional reaction. Thus the understanding must be: the situation is not the impression of the situation, the impression is not the mechanical emotional reaction to the impression, the mechanical emotional reaction to the impression is not myself. The mechanical emotional reaction cannot be myself, if I am conscious and observe it. I cannot be what I observe. If I am able to observe it as it is coming about, it can never become strong, but only faint, insignificant, banished to the periphery of my internal field of vision (the “inner external world”).

⁴In some expressions of such aggression there is a perverse feature: namely that people who in some respect represent or embody something of superior quality, such as esoteric knowledge, consciousness development, work for the general good, often become the targets of hatred and persecution on the part of spiteful individuals, typically without having done these persecutors the least harm personally, on the contrary they may even have supported and helped them. (Gurdjieff called this unpleasant phenomenon *tzvarnoharno*.) However, they need not let themselves be carried away so as to engender a struggle between personalities. It is important to understand that situations or events do not necessarily entail identification. I myself (the observing self) am the one to decide whether I will be identified.

19.7 Self-Perception and Perception of Others

¹Self-consciousness and self-remembrance are not the same as self-perception. “Self-perception”, “self-sense” or similar words denote a mechanical perception of oneself. It is an emotional or intellectual perception, therefore belongs to the apparent selves of the emotional or intellectual centre and their views. In contrast, self-consciousness and self-remembrance belong to a higher state of consciousness, exist “above” the centres mentioned. It is important to understand this distinction, not through a theory but through your own experience. It is self-perception, or self-sense, that makes us say “I” about all these mechanical states with which we are identified: “I was so scared”, “I was so angry”, “I feel useless”, “I feel so offended.” The distinction is clear from the fact that it is

impossible to say such things in a state of self-remembrance, when you are self-conscious.

²Physical self-perception is identification with the organism. It is particularly dominant in our times when physicalism (in the form of scientism and atheism) is the officially proclaimed world view intent on banishing all remaining ideas of a higher reality to the fringes of public life (marginalizing Christianity, which despite its deficiencies taught that man is not only body, but soul and spirit as well). Defeated by physicalism, man believes he is nothing but body, that some day he will die along with it and then be extinguished for ever. Small wonder then that the cult of the body, of physical appearance, absorbs so many people.

³Emotional self-perception is identification with one's own mainly emotional personalities; and intellectual self-perception, with one's intellectual personalities. The one or the other kind of identification can predominate in an individual. The common feature of all these self-perceptions is that they are based on identification and so makes self-observation difficult or impossible altogether. Identification with one's physical, emotional, or intellectual perception of oneself has the effect that one is restricted to a very small part of oneself. In such a state, no deep understanding of oneself is possible.

⁴This restrictedness of one's self-perception also entails a reduction, narrowing, of one's perception of other people. The ground for this is that a man's psychic qualities are attached to centres consisting of higher and lower parts that are also organs of perception and valuation of the corresponding qualities in other people. Each such limitation of the function of a centre entails a distortion of its perception and valuation. Such distortions are mainly apparent in the fact that a lower part of a centre in an individual cannot perceive and correctly value qualities belonging to a higher part of the same kind of centre in another individual. This explains how individuals who are at lower stages of consciousness development and so have not activated higher parts of centres must underestimate and depreciate expressions of higher emotionality and higher intellectuality in other individuals.

⁵Therefore it is a piece of wise advice in a general human sense and also for the struggle with identifications to leave personalities out of consideration. Criticism should be directed only at principles, facts, erroneous views as such. Those personalities that were the temporary mouthpieces of the erroneous views should be left in peace from mechanical valuation, which almost always is depreciation. Regrettably, those who are most in need of obeying this counsel usually are the ones who least understand its necessity. The necessity for this counsel derives from the reality of the law of reaping, for we shall smart for our evil thoughts, too.

19.8 *Struggling with Identification*

¹You overcome identification by realizing that you are identified and then turning your attention to something more important. To do so you must learn to distinguish between important things and unimportant things. If you turn your attention away from less important to more important things, this will with time help you to become less identified with unimportant things. If you want to become free from identifying, you must be able to see this state as apart from yourself, separate it from yourself, and you can do that only by trying to become more conscious, trying to remember yourself, to be aware of yourself.

²In a way, struggling with identification is not so difficult, because, if we can see it, it becomes so ridiculous that we cannot remain identified. Other people's identifications always seem ridiculous and ours may become so too. Laughter may be useful in this respect, if we can turn it on ourselves.

³The aim of struggle with identification is to awaken. Identifying is a feature of sleep; identified mind is asleep. Freedom from identifying is one of the sides of awakening. A state where identifying does not exist is quite possible, but we do not observe it in life and we do not notice that we are constantly identified. Identifying cannot disappear of itself; effort is necessary. But first one must understand what to identify means.

⁴The expression "struggle with identification" may be misleading if taken literally. It is not about an emotional reaction, least of all aggression, for such things amount to identification, and then it will just be one identification struggling with another. This rather strengthens identification.

⁵The most efficient way of struggling with identification is just observing it. Observation breaks off identification, since the self cannot be what it observes. If the self in addition strengthens the force of observation by realizations such as "I am not this irritation", etc., the effect may be even stronger. Self-remembrance of course makes the strongest effect. No identification can endure the light of self-remembrance.

⁶Refraining from demanding consideration and instead showing consideration is necessary in all esoteric groups. "Demanding consideration" is mechanical activity in the emotional centre expressing itself as displeasure that other people do not care for you, do not give you the attention or recompense you think you deserve. The observing self can dissolve also such mechanical, emotionally negative states by understanding: "This is grumbling, but I am different from this," "this constant harping is a machine that sounds like a screeching tumble drier, but now I shut it off," "I am watching you, identification, and you have no power any more," or

just “stop it!” “Showing consideration” implies that attention is directed mainly in the emotional centre but also in the intellectual centre and the physical centres. This includes a vivid interest in what is best for other people, an effort to make the best possible out of the situation where the work for the common goal is not lost from sight. When no member of the group demands consideration, when they all show consideration, then the group works with the least possible friction, in the greatest possible harmony, concord, and mutual understanding.

⁷The members of the group showing each other consideration does not in the least preclude their keeping a check on each other for order and seriousness in their work on three lines as well as their observance of rules. Quite the contrary: if the group is made up of people who are earnest in their work, then they have a joint agreement on applying this earnest in practice, for this is “to do” in an esoteric sense. For example, one group member says to another: “That looks like an identification.” The one to whom this remark is addressed need not take offence. Because either he was identified, and then he should be grateful for the remark, or he was not, and then he cannot take offense, for this is possible only when you are identified. Whatever is the case he should be grateful since a fellow human being cared for him in his most important work: the work for consciousness. Of course such a practice presupposes that the members exercise discrimination and good will, but these virtues are part of the practice, to be sure. Nothing in the work of the group can be just theory; practice must permeate everything.

⁸It is absolutely necessary for all who want to work “spiritually” or esoterically to make themselves completely independent of other people’s negative emotionality, personal criticism, abuse and insults. Such as mankind is, with its majority still at the lower emotional stage, the aspirants to discipleship must make themselves invulnerable to all the attacks of hatred. To be vulnerable is to be dependent on other people’s lack of appreciation. By this dependence you afford those other people, who do not wish you well, power over you. Anyone who wishes to join the ranks of self-realizers must see that this is a self-inflicted disadvantage, nothing but a weakness, and a hindrance to his own work for consciousness; that it has nothing to do with wisdom, understanding of reality, and knowledge of man, but is the direct opposite of these values. Vulnerability is identification of a most serious kind. As long as you can become a victim of it, you cannot progress, for you cannot set yourself free from certain identifications and yet keep other and more difficult ones at that. They must all be eliminated.

⁹Often disciples and initiates have voluntarily and intentionally exposed

themselves to the censure and blame of their contemporaries, done such things as are not blameworthy from a higher standpoint but have entailed the moral condemnation of public opinion. Such actions have been risky; many of them had to pay for this with their lives. They did so, however, to liberate themselves from the last remnant of dependence on the estimation of others and also to set examples to junior disciples, give them the message: “you too will have to learn this some day.” Not for nothing the last incarnation in the human kingdom is called the “incarnation of crucifixion”.

19.9 *Overcoming Confusion of Ideas Regarding Identification*

¹Ordinary human languages are poor in words for realities and experiences of higher kinds. This poverty has the effect that often the same words are used for different concepts, or ideas. The word “identification” is an example of such a word having several meanings. Now it is used to denote a non-desirable, worse psychic function that hinders man from being conscious of himself and his inner states; now it is used to denote higher kinds of consciousness than those ordinarily known to man. These two meanings of “identification” thus are direct opposites of one another.

²One example of the first of the two meanings of the word “identification” cited above is given us by Patañjali in his *Yoga Sūtras*, Book 1, sūtras 2, 3, and 4: “Yoga is control of the mechanical and automatic activity of the envelopes. When this control has been achieved, the see-er stands firm in himself. Identification with envelope activity will otherwise be the result.” Also the fourth way teaching uses this word in this first meaning.

³Examples of the second meaning of the word “identification” are given us by 45-self D.K. in his teaching, presented in the books *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* and *The Rays and the Initiations* by Alice A. Bailey. In these books, consciousness in the three worlds of the first self (physical sense perceptions, emotional feelings, and mental thoughts) is called “consciousness”, and consciousness in higher worlds is called “identification”. The intention of this distinction is obvious: The expression of the consciousness aspect is so different in those higher worlds that another word has to be used to highlight that fact. If, as Laurency proposes, you do not use different names for the consciousness aspect in different worlds, but are content to use different numbers only, yet it is indubitably wise to carefully observe that the planetary hierarchy with its terminology obviously considers that there is a radical difference between the lower mental consciousness and the higher, usually called causal consciousness, since the distinction is drawn precisely between these two.

⁴Why is the distinction drawn there? The explanation is that only causal

consciousness (47:3) makes self-consciousness possible, for mere mental consciousness (47:4) does not suffice for this, and there is a radical difference between self-conscious states and non-self-conscious states. This difference is immediately evident to all who have experienced both. Self-conscious states are characterized by the perception of one's own presence, clarity, and control; perception of peace and inner tranquillity where freedom from unnecessary, debasing, negative emotions and babbling thoughts is the most characteristic. Non-self-conscious states are the opposites of all this: no or little presence and control, disquiet, the constant exchange of apparent selves. Self-conscious states are furthermore distinguished by non-identification, whereas non-self-conscious states are states of identification – please note: the word “identification” is used here in the first meaning.

⁵The apparent paradox here lies in calling causal consciousness and higher states “identification”, when those states are free of identification according to the first meaning of the word “identification”. The paradox is dissolved by the understanding that the word “identification” in itself only means “being made the same” and that higher (superhuman) kinds of self-conscious states actually are states where the individual monad consciousness attains being-made-the-same with higher collective consciousnesses while the monad's self-identity is preserved; moreover that such states are the direct opposites of human states of mechanical identification with the apparent selves of envelope consciousnesses, states that preclude self-consciousness. Thus it all depends on what identification, being-made-the-same, is about and whether it happens mechanically with apparent selves or is done self-consciously. Identification according to the first meaning of the word “identification” must happen mechanically and cannot be self-conscious. Identification according to the second meaning of the word “identification” cannot happen mechanically but must always be self-conscious. Since mental, emotional, and physical consciousness is *always* accompanied by identification with mechanical apparent selves, always to some degree, and can never be self-conscious in themselves, whereas causal and higher consciousness is *never* accompanied by apparent selves and is always self-conscious, you may in fact use the word “identification” now in the one sense, now in the other sense, provided you indicate clearly which kinds of consciousness you are speaking about.

⁶The following excerpt from an essay by Plotinos (Latinized: Plotinus; lived 204/5–270, first in Egypt and then in Rome where he founded a school) is of especial interest, since the author describes both lower and higher states using words that in either case indicate identification: being made the same, being made similar or like. Plotinos, who was an initiate,

had a clear understanding of the radical difference between lower and higher, mechanical and self-conscious, which is evident from the text:

⁷“Since the soul is evil when it is thoroughly mixed with the body and shares its experiences and has all the same opinions, it will be good and possess virtue when it no longer has the same opinions but acts alone – this is intelligence and wisdom – and does not share the body’s experiences – this is self-control – and is not afraid of departing from the body – this is courage – and is ruled by reason and intellect, without opposition – and this is justice. One would not be wrong in calling this state of the soul likeness to God, in which its activity is intellectual, and it is free in this way from bodily affections.” (*Enneads*, 1.2, “On Virtues, Chapter 3)

20 RIGHT ATTITUDE

20.1 Introduction

¹“Right attitude” or “right view” is an esoteric term and therefore cannot be understood from ordinary meanings of the words composing it. Its concept is something different from what may be meant by having a right attitude in some everyday or generally human sense. The teaching on man’s possible consciousness development is central to esoterics. All the practice, the individual’s work on himself, on his own consciousness, as well as the corresponding work of the group and of the school for the development of consciousness, is based on this teaching. “Right attitude” thus means something very definite to all those who want, and are able, to develop consciousness. But it cannot have this meaning to those who do not value, do not care for, consciousness development. In this esoteric sense, right attitude must be closely connected with the work on three lines: the work of the individual, of the group, and of the school, for consciousness development.

²“Right attitude” is best understood in connection with the contemplation of Gautama Buddha’s noble eightfold path. The first of the eight elements of this path is indicated as *sammāditthi* (Sanskrit: *samyagdṛishti*), which means “right view”. Thus it is about right view or right conception according to the basic proposition that man can develop consciousness, can be transformed so as to reach a higher state where he can know the truth. Right attitude, right view, or right conception is best understood in relation to the other seven elements of the noble eightfold path. Because since all that is necessary to a man’s wandering towards that higher state is contained in the ideas of those eight elements, “right attitude” must comprise all that the other seven do not comprise. The other seven are right decision, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right remembrance (self-remembrance), and right liberation (from a lower form of existence). From this we realize that right attitude, right view, or right conception includes also such faculties as right thinking, right knowledge, right understanding, right discrimination, right insight, and all similar things that are not included in the other seven. It is clear, too, that right attitude is particularly close to right decision, is its condition. Right attitude thus also means right basis of a decision. If right attitude also comprises right motive, right incentive to action, then it is a condition of right effort as well.

³If we make the decision to work for consciousness development, then at first we must have some knowledge of what this development is, what are

its conditions, possibilities, hindrances. Our own right understanding and right valuation have a given place in it, for the right motivation is based upon these two, and without a right motivation it is impossible to walk the way towards higher consciousness. Thereby it is realized that right attitude comprises everything that has to do with an understanding that is already beginning. Thus: to develop consciousness we must, even at the beginning, possess some understanding out of the ordinary. Otherwise we shall not progress. This is close to the words of the Gospel, “Unto everyone which hath shall be given”, and is in fact their true import.

⁴If this incipient understanding is to start wielding its effect in a man, then he must possess a certain receptivity to particular influences of a higher kind. These influences differ in a qualitative sense from those influences, impressions, and effects that reach a man from all those conceptions, opinions, ideologies, etc. which are constantly being propagated in mankind (“power, fame, money”). These ordinary influences originate exclusively from untransformed mankind. They are mechanical in origin and are of no significance for consciousness development. The higher influences previously mentioned, on the other hand, have their origin outside mankind. They come from our elder brothers in consciousness evolution. When these influences reach us, they are the last links in a transformation of originally esoteric ideas that have been sent out by the fifth natural kingdom of our planet. The fifth natural kingdom is made up of awakened beings, permanently self-conscious beings. They try in various ways to awaken sleeping, mechanical mankind, by sending out knowledge ideas, esoteric truths, and also in other ways. When these ideas and truths later enter into the ordinary turnover of influences, views, etc. in mankind, are taken up as motifs in philosophy, religion, literature, art, etc., they are generally distorted and deprived of most of their vital content. Sometimes, however, sufficiently much remains to be able to arouse some kind of recognition in receptive individuals. Some of these people may unconsciously collect such ideas, often from early childhood, in a particular centre of attraction, or magnetism. If such a centre grows with the impressions or ideas that are being supplied to it, it may become more active, and the individual himself more determined and more conscious in his further quest for additional similar ideas. In the best case, this process results in the formation of a magnetic centre of such a power and quality that it guides the individual to esoterics. If this happens, and the individual reaches an esoteric school and submits to an esoteric discipline, then his magnetic centre is no longer needed. Anyhow such a centre cannot come up to the power and quality of that work personality which the pupil is taught how to build from his first day in the school.

20.2 *How is it that Esoterics is So Easily Misunderstood and Distorted?*

¹How is it that esoterics is so easily misunderstood, also by people who nevertheless appear to be seeking something “higher” or “spiritual” beyond the ordinary religions? How is it that so few people are prepared to receive the knowledge such as it is offered and to walk the way such as it lies? How is it that distortions are more spread and attract the interest of more people than the genuine knowledge? Many important causes are certainly hidden from us, but some causes will be discussed in the following. To understand them better is necessary also for those who study the genuine knowledge, for can they really claim that they are free from all tendencies to misunderstanding and distortion, even such tendencies as are unintentional and unconscious?

²In fact, esoterics cannot appeal to large segments of the present mankind. This is so because the knowledge has a negative, eliminatory character. People generally want to acquire something, get something, without the need of refraining from, letting go of, anything. They desire encouragement, confirmation, reassurance, rewards. Esoterics goes against this tendency in its entirety. It deprives man of lots of false assurances, dissolves illusions (false values in life) and fictions (false ideas of reality). It makes a hole in false personality. In the beginning, it pulls down much in man, more than it builds up, it will seem. Such a thing cannot become popular, at least not in the current eon, the emotional eon.

³Even if the individual has a magnetic centre that attracts him to something “higher” or “spiritual”, yet pretty much is required for him to find esoterics and, having found it, to have a right attitude to it. Very often his magnetic centre is too weak, too little developed, or wrongly developed. Wrong development may mean that imagination, clairvoyance, or mediumism dominates in it over higher mental faculties. In such cases, the individual cannot take a right interest in esoterics. However, he may be attracted to teachings or movements that have picked up some esoteric ideas in a distorted form. There are many such quasi-esoteric teachings, and new ones appear constantly. In their multiplicity and their mutual differences they correspond to the multiplicity and differences of individual weakly or wrongly developed magnetic centres. If man cannot accept esoterics, there is almost always something that must appear superior to him or as “truth itself”, because it corresponds to his own level of comprehension and his own magnetic centre. He is then attracted to this quasi-esoteric teaching according to the principle of “like is attracted to like”.

⁴It is a common feature of these distortions that they are based on

emotionally controlled thinking: imaginative speculation, often with clairvoyance and mediumism at the core. Hence their erroneous notion that the object of study determines whether it is esoterics or not. But imaginative speculation on the realities dealt with in esoterics still is mere imaginative speculation and not knowledge. The object does not elevate the study. What determines, then, whether a teaching is esoteric or not? First and foremost its origin, and then whether it is received and conceived in the manner intended. Esoterics consists of reality ideas that have a superhuman origin; they have been conveyed by teachers belonging to the fifth natural kingdom, the planetary hierarchy, and been scaled down (reduced in dimension) into mental ideas, so that man can grasp them. Anyone who is able to think (to use directed attention in his intellectual centre) with esoteric facts realizes without further ado that imagination and speculation cannot produce esoteric knowledge, for if they could, then anyone could be an expert on esoterics and no teachers from the planetary hierarchy, no esoteric knowledge schools, and no hylozoic system would be necessary.

⁵Many factors must pre-exist in a man if he is to be attracted to esoterics and not to any one of the distortions. Right effort is one of those factors or pre-conditions. This means right effort in the highest part of the intellectual centre, attention directed by the observing self. This means the ability to think using esoteric facts, to draw the right conclusions from the material. This implies much more than mere “doing”; it implies above all “not doing”. Not doing is an important principle that pervades all practical esoterics. (When disciples ask, “What are we supposed to do?”, the teacher answers, “You cannot just do. You must learn how ‘to do’, but first you must learn how to ‘not do’.”) Here, where the reception of knowledge is concerned, “not do” means curbing the mechanical tendency to speculation, refusing to consider, and above all refusing to believe in, the vagaries and “brainwaves” that arise mechanically in lower, mechanical parts of the intellectual centre when studying esoterics. This is something that most occultists are unable to, since the impulse is too strong for them and emotionally suggestive. If in addition the occultist is an emotional clairvoyant, he “sees” that his own “esoteric ideas” are confirmed by “reality”, and then he is even more convinced that they are correct. According to the Buddha, it is better to be a skeptic than a dogmatic, better to doubt than to believe in things you cannot both comprehend and understand (explain in detail). That is one of the basic propositions of esoterics.

⁶In summing up it may be said that right understanding of esoterics is connected with right effort, effort made by the rational faculty, thinking by formulation, active endeavour to overcome formatory thinking, self-active work at seeing through fictions (conceptions that war against reality) and

illusions (false values in life, false ideas of oneself), self-observation.

⁷Right effort thus means that directed attention overcomes attention attracted by the object, mere emotional fascination; that mental self-initiated activity overcomes emotional mechanical activity; that self-understanding based on self-observation overcomes imagination about one's own esoteric capabilities.

20.3 Why is It so Difficult?

¹Esoterics is basically such knowledge as the second selves possess. Man is a first self that can be transformed into a second self, can be transformed from a mechanical into a self-conscious being. "Can be transformed" does not necessarily mean that he is transformed. There is nothing automatic and mechanical in this process. Self-consciousness can be developed only with intentionality, effort, and knowledge.

²In the first self the matter aspect dominates, starting from objectivity, observation of the physical material world. In the second self the consciousness aspect dominates, starting from subjectivity, perception of consciousness – in this case not just the individual consciousness, since the second self is group-conscious. In order to start transforming himself into a second self, man must systematically observe himself, his consciousness functions. But this self-observation meets with many difficulties and obstacles. You should form a good idea of them if you want to stand a realistic chance of overcoming them with time. Unrealistic expectations of swift progress are among those illusions which can only bring disappointment.

³Like everything else in evolution, the development or activation of consciousness goes from below up, starts from the physical world. This means that physical functions are the most developed ones. It is an even more important fact that they are well developed and largely work as they should. Emotional and mental functions are not well developed, and they do not work as they should. There is in them too much negative emotion, identification, imagination, and lying. This condition depends on the fact that attention of lower, more mechanical degrees predominates and that attention of a higher degree, attention directed by the observing self, is relatively rare. And this state of affairs, in its turn, depends on the stage mankind has reached in its general consciousness development.

⁴Consequently, what this implies is not merely that physical consciousness (sense functions) is the most developed, then emotional consciousness, and mental consciousness the least, but that the corresponding "the lowest the most and the highest the least" condition obtains also in the qualitatively different parts of man's physical, emotional, and mental centres. The lowest parts, being the most mechanical ones, are the most

developed and the most active ones. The highest parts, being the least mechanical and the most conscious ones, are the least developed and the most passive ones.

⁵To observe yourself you must be able to direct your attention. This means using the highest parts of your centres, thus the least mechanical and the most conscious parts, and above all the highest part of the intellectual centre. But this is precisely what ordinary man finds the most difficult. Directing his attention to what is happening in the physical world is easy enough, for man has particular tools for this work, tools that function well, namely his sense organs. Many people even find it relatively easy to direct the attention of the intellectual centre, as long as it is about directing it at physical things and events, such as the text of a book or the words of a lecturer, for in such cases the intellectual centre is supported in its work by the much better developed physical sense centre. This faculty of so-called concentration is a condition of all kinds of systematic study at school and at the university, etc.

⁶Observing oneself, however, is something radically different from the simultaneous intellectual and physical attention just described. Because self-observation means that the attention of the intellectual centre is directed, not at outer, physical reality, but at inner, psychic reality. In this work, the intellectual centre, which is little developed and does not function well, is reduced to itself, has no longer the support of the physical sense centre and its ability to direct attention. And that ability of attention, which the lone intellectual centre must use for self-observation, is of the third kind, qualitatively the highest kind: the attention that the observing self directs from within itself.

⁷How difficult this is will be realized by anyone who has made honest attempts for a long time to observe himself methodically and systematically. The most important lesson to be drawn from such attempts is that you cannot do it except for very short spells of time. You simply forget to do it, so that the exercise is interrupted, often only after a few seconds. The exercise is interrupted because the short-lived apparent selves overpower the observing self. And as seen from the psychological point of view (from the consciousness aspect), this observing self is the first tender nucleus of the future second self.

20.4 Seeing the Difference between Mechanical Functions and Self-Consciousness

¹For people who want to develop consciousness there are many insights to be had that are important to their further wandering. One of them is seeing the critical difference between consciousness in the first triad and

consciousness in the second triad. The difference lies in the fact that consciousness in the first triad is mechanical, whereas consciousness in the second triad is self-conscious. Man's self-consciousness is a faculty of his causal envelope (which has been formed through the second triad), of the centres of that envelope. This explains why animals lack self-consciousness; they do not have causal envelopes. This also explains why self-consciousness occurs so seldom in average man: moments of self-consciousness are momentary causal consciousness, albeit of the lowest kind (47:3). And finally it explains why even those who work for their consciousness development find it so difficult to achieve moments of self-consciousness: doing such exercises they actually make efforts at achieving momentary contacts between the monad and centres in their causal envelope so that they become briefly causally conscious.

²Therefore, using self-remembrance to make the effort of achieving a spell of self-consciousness is to make the effort of being a causal self, even of the lowest kind and even for a moment. So this is no small thing, but anyone who succeeds in this experiment will see the important difference between the first self's consciousness and the second self's consciousness. It is about this very important insight, and it is an insight, since it is not a theory but an experience.

³Having this insight you understand why fully realized second selves, such as our elder brothers in the planetary hierarchy, when teaching us human beings, make such a clear distinction between the two kinds of consciousness that they do not use the same word for them but restrict the word "consciousness" to refer to functions of the first triad and use the word "identification" for consciousness in the second triad.

⁴Another such distinction appears in the talk of "darkness" and "light". The first triad is said to perform its mechanical functions in darkness: they are machines which work in darkness and which, because of that, the observing self finds it hard to control. The more light that is shed on the machines, the better the observing self controls them. The terms "darkness" and "light" may be taken here as symbolical: "darkness" meaning the absence of self-consciousness, and "light" the presence of self-consciousness. No mere symbolical meanings are intended, however. What is meant is darkness and light in a quite literal sense, since self-consciousness, when it appears, is actually a ray of light issued via a centre of the causal envelope. The ray is a higher kind of matter, and this is always light in relation to a lower kind of matter as darkness. It is the light of the second triad, mediated through the causal envelope and its centres.

⁵The observing self (the monad), too, is light in relation to the darkness of mechanical functions (machines). When the observing self temporarily

passes to become a self-conscious self, then it becomes an even stronger light, since it is then united with the ray so that a bridge of light is formed between the first triad mental molecule (47:4) and the second triad mental atom (47:1) via some centre of the causal envelope. This bridge is called the antahkarana in Sanskrit, a word meaning “what makes between” or “what builds between”, and it is obvious why it is called so.

⁶It is the task of man to build the antahkarana. He does so every time he creates a moment of self-remembrance. Sometimes the antahkarana he builds is strong, sometimes it is weak, now it lasts somewhat, now it passes very quickly. But it does not endure, it dissolves all too soon, and then he often forgets that he made it at all. It must be like that since he is not a causal self. When he has become a perfect causal self, however, he possesses continuity of consciousness. What does that mean? It means that he himself, the monad, has conquered permanent self-consciousness. What does that mean in addition? It means that he has built an enduring antahkarana, a permanent bridge of light between the first triad and the second triad. All his millions of seemingly failed attempts have then led to an enduring result.

⁷As a causal self man realizes that all his psychic functions – emotional and mental functions – were valuable to his consciousness development only to the extent that they could become anchorage points, even though momentarily, for the ray of self-consciousness from the causal envelope. And such psychic functions are always the most conscious and the least mechanical ones, namely those occurring with directed attention, attention directed from within the observing self. Only these psychic functions are sufficiently “luminous”, have sufficient light of their own. Less conscious functions – those occurring only when attention is attracted (fascinated) by the object, when attention is wandering or non-existent – are too “dark”, are useless.

⁸Here we see very clearly what is good and what is bad for those who have chosen the way of consciousness development. All emotional and mental apparent selves occurring with directed attention are good and useful for the work of building the antahkarana. All the others are bad and useless. In those bad and useless ones man has everything that may torment him psychically: meaningless inner babble, imagination, negative emotions, anxiety, depression, irritation, etc. Mechanical emotional and mental functions are meaningless and harmful. Therefore, the person who is serious about his consciousness development should make it his aim either to feel and think intentionally or not feel or think at all. Causing emotional and mental functions to be quite still as long as he does not use them intentionally – this is a great and difficult aim, but he must eventually attain it.

⁹Only physical functions, such as movements, can be good and useful when mechanical, and much of our activity in the physical world must be of that kind to be efficient at all. However, the fact that physical functions in themselves are better than emotional and mental ones, expedient and useful also when mechanical, is due to the relative perfection of the etheric envelope. The etheric envelopes of most people are sane, function well. The emotional and mental envelopes of most people are not sane, do not function well, are unreliable, dysfunctional.

¹⁰In what is said here there is no valuation and least of all any judging, only the enunciation of a few important facts. You can be a good and responsible human being and yet live a physical life throughout, not taking any interest in consciousness and its possible development. It is not at all necessary to have that interest. But sooner or later, in some incarnation, man awakens to the realization that another life is calling him, quite another life, of which he had no idea hitherto. As this realization is strengthened and deepened, his attitude, too, his view, must change thoroughly.

20.5 *Pre-Formation*

¹All esoteric training can be called “pre-formation”. What is meant by this is that all the material which the teachers give to the students for their study, all the exercises they assign, all the rules they lay down, are intended to help the students to achieve better conditions of giving their knowledge and their being, in advance, the form they have in higher states of consciousness.

²All upbringing is a kind of pre-formation. Children are not grown-ups but they can be taught how to behave like grown-ups (should) behave, be taught to show consideration, to restrain their self-will and expressions of egoism, etc. Esoteric training is in some respects – second line work – a second upbringing.

³The study of the hylozoic system is an example of pre-formation. No ordinary human being, no human being who is reduced to using mere mental consciousness, the ordinary intellectual functions, the speculations of philosophy, etc., could invent hylozoics. Hylozoics is a product of higher consciousness, far beyond the capacity of ordinary human beings. It corresponds to the causal self’s “thinking”, properly: viewing of ideas. This is not to say that causal consciousness would suffice for this; it does not, since hylozoics describes reality far beyond the causal world. In fact, in order to “view hylozoics”, the causal self must receive causal reductions of 46-ideas, 45-ideas, etc. The causal self receives these dimensional reductions from teachers in the planetary hierarchy. Those teachers, in their

turn, have received higher-order reductions from still higher authorities: teachers in the planetary government, and so it goes on all the way up to the highest kingdom of the cosmos. Ordinary man, having none of these capabilities, can nevertheless learn how to comprehend and understand something that has a mental form corresponding to causal viewing, and this mental form is the hylozoic mental system. If he masters the system, he is able – within its framework – to think truth, think reality, which is a mental pre-formation to causal viewing. Without this mental pre-formation he will not arrive at causal viewing.

⁴The corresponding is true of exercises. Causal and higher selves are permanently self-conscious. Untransformed human beings are self-conscious only sporadically and uncontrolledly for brief moments. If they do the exercises they have received from their teachers, however, they will be able to create self-consciousness in a controlled way, intentionally, and with time make it last longer. In so doing they shape their emotional and mental consciousness functions into forms that emulate higher consciousness, and through these forms they achieve a contact with aspects of higher consciousness. Even if these contacts are temporary and of short duration, yet they are of immense importance. In fact, they are necessary, if the higher consciousness is to be activated at all. The greatest faculties always started from very modest, seemingly insignificant attempts.

⁵All esoteric training stresses the importance of preparation. No higher kinds of consciousness can be conquered starting from nothing. At the outset there must be some acquisitions, some previous understanding and experience. It is the purpose of pre-formation to facilitate such acquisitions.

⁶The purpose of the rules of the school is to teach the pupils to refrain from such self-expressions as are unnecessary and obstructive to their own work, the work of the group and of the school. (The theme of “not doing” once again.) Most rules in schools aim at the curbing of unnecessary talk, wrong speech. Wrong speech is partially due to wrong attitude, but is nevertheless considered a problem to be handled separately, which is also clear from the Buddha’s noble eightfold path, where right speech is an element of its own beside right attitude.

⁷In the Pythagorean School, they solved this problem in the easiest and most efficient manner by prohibiting neophytes to speak at all in the assembly the first two years. The idea was that during that time they would, by observing the elder brethren, learn that in the assembly you never talked mechanically but always with directed attention, thus when you had something necessary and rational to say, and otherwise you were silent. This was also out of concern for the neophytes, and the observation of this rule was a step in their transformation. It is a characteristic feature of

untransformed man to unresistingly yield to his impulses: physical, emotional, mental ones. Modern upbringing praises “spontaneity”, which driven to extremes makes the man yield to these impulses; the gravest psychological error upbringers can make. Yielding to physical impulses people become murderers, criminals of all sorts; at first impulses are unintentional, then a tendency is established. Yielding to emotional impulses people learn to address others hurtfully, to gossip, to slander, etc. Yielding to mental impulses people produce all manner of vagaries. Only when mankind has reached the stage of emotional attraction can consciousness be allowed spontaneity, for then its impulses are born from the tendency to unity. And only when you have realized mankind’s ignorance of reality will you be spontaneously skeptical to the correctness of your vagaries and will test them by asking yourself, “what facts do I have on which to base my assumption?”

⁸The praise of spontaneity as something that is always good seems to be due to an erroneous identification of spontaneous and superconscious (good qualities, noble-mindedness, etc.), as if it were a case of a symmetrical relation. However, it is not symmetrical, but rather asymmetrical: everything superconscious comes spontaneously, but everything spontaneous does not come from the superconscious; something similar to “all knowledge is remembrance, but all remembrance is not knowledge”.

20.6 Right Attitude to Esoterics

¹Esoterics describes the cosmos as a long series of qualitatively higher kinds of consciousness states, which are already actual, since they are activated by a series of ever higher kinds of beings (god transcendent); that man (the monad) has all these consciousness states but only as potential and that it is his task to acquire them step by step as consciousness capacity of his own, that is: transforming potential into actual.

²Careful, correct self-observation passing into self-remembrance demonstrates to man that, despite occasional brief breakthroughs to somewhat higher states, he is still somewhere near the bottom of the “cosmic gamut”, that almost all of the higher states remain to be conquered, and that, therefore, he cannot know anything about this higher from his own experience. As seldom as these higher states occur, as often as he remains an ordinary human being, he realizes in moments of honesty and sincerity that he cannot “do”: cannot know, cannot understand, cannot judge – as compared with those in the fifth natural kingdom who are able to do so. This makes him humble, makes him willing to accept the teaching of the older brothers, to exert himself carefully and conscientiously – without individual distortion, without self-aggrandizement and desire to correct and

complete it with the vagaries of his own imagination – to incorporate it with his own consciousness and to hand it on to others in a form as little corrupt as his best will enables him. This is the right attitude to esoterics.

³Most seekers get themselves some knowledge of how to become a second self, elaborate an interesting world view and life view, and are content with that. They forget why they got themselves knowledge and the fact that it is not an end in itself. The knowledge exists to teach us how to live; it exists to be put into real life. Otherwise it is little more than bad sowing for bad reaping, for knowledge entails responsibility, and we have not received the knowledge to merely be content with it. We have received the knowledge from the fifth natural kingdom for the purpose of striving to enter that kingdom and no longer be a burden to our guides.

⁴By acquiring esoteric knowledge, becoming mental selves and causal selves, you do not estrange yourself from mankind. You just further increase your capacity to serve human consciousness development, become an ever more useful tool of Augoeides and the planetary hierarchy.

⁵It is not a matter of wanting to be quickly saved from the cycle of reincarnations, which to be sure is a sign of the opposite of self-forgetfulness, but it is a matter of being able to help others to understand reality and develop their ability to live in accord with the laws of life. We develop the most quickly by helping others to realize the meaning of life. That is the great compensation of unselfishness.

⁶To forgo your own development in order to use your energies to help others to develop amounts to no loss in the long run. Old debts, which always exist, are offset. And according to the law of compensation it entails rather a quicker development than would else be possible. However, anyone who thinks he may gain selfishly by such a “sacrifice” strengthens egoism. The one right motive is to be forced by your will to unity (“love”), because you “cannot do otherwise”. This will to unity is due to the fact that you have been able to utilize the energy of the essential (46) molecules poured down on mankind by the planetary hierarchy (symbolically so-called benediction). Those higher kinds of matter are supplied to the planetary hierarchy by the collectors of cosmic energy (called in Sanskrit the nirmanakayas). They are sources that are always gushing.

⁷Service is no “sacrifice” but is based on the insight that all are one, the will to unity with all you can serve, an irresistible urge to live for all, something inescapable and spontaneous without thoughts of your own self and its development. There is for the second self nothing that can be called “sacrifice”, even though it may appear so to others, and hence the term. Forgetfulness of your own self means liberation from dependence on the first triad, later the second triad, then the third triad and so forth throughout

the cosmos. The monad must assimilate the different kinds of consciousness and acquire the capacity to understand reality they afford, as well as the pertaining abilities to use the energies right, but this is done with a view to being able to better serve life, not with a view to the self. That is the basic attitude of all beings in higher kingdoms and the condition for the monad in the first triad of reaching the second triad. This of course contains the insight as to where you can best serve with your small but growing powers, make your small and ever increasing contribution for mankind, evolution, and unity. By faithfully serving in small things, where you stand, you acquire the powers that enable you to make an ever greater contribution. This is part of the law of destiny and the inevitability of the very process of evolution. The tempo of development is determined by the will to unity and its purposiveness and, as for the rest, by the capacity of individual character to acquire abilities. All in higher kingdoms do as best they can without a thought of merit or recognition. The powers they acquire by service guide them to their place of work in the processes of manifestation.

20.7 The Esoteric Sense

¹In all esoteric instruction worth its name the attitude of the student is considered particularly important. How does he relate to the superphysical, to things still subjective and esoteric? He must assume and consistently hold the position of the observer, detached from the mechanism of observation and contact. He must recognize himself as essentially a spiritual entity, different in nature, objectives and methods of working from the envelopes which he considers it expedient to occupy temporarily and to employ. He must realize his unity and lines of contact with all similar workers and thus arrive at a conscious awareness of his position in the hierarchy of spiritual beings. So much misinformation has been spread abroad and so much emphasis has been unwisely laid upon status and position in the so-called hierarchy of souls, that sane and balanced disciples now seek to turn their thoughts elsewhere and to eliminate as far as may be all thought of grades and spheres of activity. It is possible to swing from one extreme to the other and to underrate the significance of these stages of activity. Foolish attempts have been made to determine the positions of individual human beings on the evolutionary ladder, and this has brought the whole matter into disrepute in the minds of the public. But if these stages are regarded sanely for what they are – states of extended consciousness and grades of responsibility – then such terms as “accepted disciple”, “initiate”, “adept”, and “master” can be freed from personality reactions. It must always be remembered that the individual is to keep his status strictly to himself and

to demonstrate his level of development evolution by a life of active unselfish service and by a clear vision which is ahead of the general idea of mankind. Each worker is responsible only for himself and his service. The evolutionary status is to be gauged, not on claims made, but on work accomplished, love and wisdom shown, demonstrated knowledge of the plan for mankind and a manifested esoteric sense. What is meant then by the esoteric sense? The power to live and to function in the consciousness aspect, to possess a constant inner contact with the causal consciousness and Augoeides, which must work out through love and wisdom, actively shown, and through the capacity to include and to identify oneself with all that lives and breathes. This means an interiorly held mental attitude which whatever its object is controlled by will and intention. It can govern and control the emotional sensitiveness, not only of the disciple himself, but also of those whom he contacts. By the strength of his silent thought, he can bring light and peace to all. Through that mental power he can tune in on the world of thought and on the world of ideas and can discriminate between and choose those mental forces and those concepts which will enable him, as a worker under the plan, to influence his environment and to clothe the new ideals in that thought matter which will enable them to be more easily recognized in the world of ordinary everyday thinking and living. This mental attitude will enable the disciple also to orient himself in the causal world and to discover his fellow-workers, communicate with them and cooperate with them in the working out of divine intentions.

²This esoteric sense is what the aspirant at this time need develop most. Until aspirants have somewhat grasped it and can use it, they can never form part of the new group of world servers, and the instructions given will remain for them theoretical and mainly intellectual, instead of being practical and effective.

³To cultivate this inner esoteric sense, control of consciousness is needed, and continuous control of consciousness, in the early stages of development. But as time elapses and a man's contact with the second self grows, this control of consciousness will give way to a steady orientation to the second self and then this control of consciousness will no longer be required. Then the detachment between a man and his usable envelopes will be so complete that he will live always in the "seat of the observer", and from that point and attitude will direct the activities of the intellect and of the emotions and of the energies which make physical expressions possible and useful.

⁴The first stage in this development and cultivation of the esoteric sense consists in the holding of the attitude of constant detached observation.

20.8 *Our Debt to the Higher*

¹The whole cosmos has been brought into existence in order to enable the unconscious monads in primordial manifestation (chaos) to acquire consciousness, omniscience, and omnipotence. The entire cosmos has been built by an inconceivably vast collective of I-selves. All the processes of manifestation are directed from the seventh divine kingdom in worlds 1–7. Involution and evolution, and everything pertaining to them in the matter of never-ending work at the three aspects of reality, are the results of the activity of higher kingdoms. It is an activity that in lower kingdoms has its reward in the form of help to a quicker consciousness development and knowledge given of superconscious worlds. It is a law of evolution that all must receive help and all must help with everything that all need, and this in all kingdoms. Anyone who does not see and realize this counteracts evolution.

²The individual is in debt to everything. He is in debt to the solar systemic and planetary governments who have provided him with a planet on which to develop, have supervised his involution and evolution in the process of manifestation, given him his three triads, permitted him to pay his debts by instalments, debts that would otherwise make it well nigh impossible for him to continue his development. He is in debt to the different natural kingdoms (those of involution and evolution) that have lent him envelopes and their matter. He is in debt to all people who have in thousands of incarnations given birth to him, brought him up, etc. He should make the effort of thinking about all the processes which he has been made to go through and which were intended to arouse him to consciousness and self-control. He should be grateful for all the toil, all the work other beings have put in for him. He should realize that the only right attitude is to begin paying back, with gratitude and effort.

