

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 “beingness”.

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 of 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 of 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 to 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, at 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 ourselves: 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 systematic 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 to strive 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.