



KEY NOTEBOOK

X

(Continued from July Supplement)

Section IX [continued]

Key, 171

Definite Words for Definite Things

Without definite and fixed terms to indicate each "Principle" in man, a confusion of ideas arises in our minds with regard to the respective functions of these "Principles." The exposition of, and discussion about, the "Principles," was begun using their Sanskrit names instead of coining immediately, for the use of Theosophists, their equivalents in English. The confusion is more apparent than real, however.

I have heard some of our Theosophists express surprise at, and criticize several essays speaking of these "principles," but, when examined, there was no worse mistake in them than that of using the word "Soul" to cover the three principles without specifying the distinctions. The first, as positively the clearest of our Theosophical writers, Mr. A. P. Sinnett, has some comprehensive and admirably-written passages on the "Higher Self." His real idea has also been misconceived by some, owing to his using the word "Soul" in a general sense. Yet here are a few passages which will show to you how clear and comprehensive is all that he writes on the subject: —

... "The human soul, once launched on the streams of evolution as a human individuality¹, passes through alternate periods of physical and relatively spiritual existence. It passes from the one plane, or stratum, or condition of nature to the other under the guidance of its Karmic affinities; living in incarnations the life which its Karma has

¹ The "re-incarnating Ego," or "Human Soul," as he called it, the Causal Body with the Hindus.

pre-ordained; modifying its progress within the limitations of circumstances, and, — developing fresh Karma by its use or abuse of opportunities, — it returns to spiritual existence (Devachan) after each physical life, — through the intervening region of Kamaloka — for rest and refreshment and for the gradual absorption into its essence, as so much cosmic progress, of the life's experience gained "on earth" or during physical existence. This view of the matter will, moreover, have suggested many collateral inferences to anyone thinking over the subject; for instance, that the transfer of consciousness from the Kamaloka to the Devachanic stage of this progression would necessarily be gradual²; that in truth, no hard hard-and-fast line separates the varieties of spiritual conditions, that even the spiritual and physical planes, as psychic faculties in living people show, are not so hopelessly walled off from one another as materialistic theories would suggest; that all states of nature are all around us simultaneously, and appeal to different perceptive faculties; and so on.... It is clear that during physical existence people who possess psychic faculties remain in connection with the planes of superphysical consciousness; and although most people may not be endowed

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² The length of this "transfer" depends, however, on the degree of spirituality in the personality of the disembodied Ego. For those whose lives were very spiritual this transfer, though gradual, is very rapid. The time becomes longer with the materialistically inclined.

with such faculties, we all, as the phenomena of sleep, even, and especially... those of somnambulism or mesmerism, show, are capable of entering into conditions of consciousness that the five physical senses have nothing to do with.

We — the souls within us — are not as it were altogether adrift in the ocean of matter. We clearly retain some surviving interest or rights in the shore from which, for a time, we have floated off. The process of incarnation, therefore, is not fully described when we speak of an alternate existence on the physical and spiritual planes, and thus picture the soul as a complete entity slipping entirely from the one state of existence to the other. The more correct definitions of the process would probably represent incarnation as taking place on this physical plane of nature by reason of an efflux emanating from the soul. The Spiritual realm would all the while be the proper habitat of the Soul, which would never entirely quit it; and **that non-materializable portion of the Soul which abides permanently on the spiritual plane may fitly, perhaps, be spoken of as the HIGHER SELF.**"

This "Higher Self" is **ATMA**, and of course it is non-materializable," as Mr. Sinnett says. Even more, it can never be "objective" under any circumstances, even to the highest spiritual perception. For **Atman** or the "Higher Self" is really **Brahma**, the **ABSOLUTE**, and indistinguishable from it. In hours of **Samadhi**, the higher spiritual consciousness of the Initiate is entirely absorbed in the **ONE** essence, which is **Atman**, and therefore, being one with the whole, there can be nothing objective for it. Now some of our Theosophists have got into the habit of using the words "Self" and "Ego" as synonymous, of associating the term "Self" with only man's higher individual or even personal "Self" or Ego, whereas this term ought never to be applied except to the One universal Self. Hence the confusion. Speaking of **Manas**, the "causal body," we may call it — when connecting it with the **Buddhic** radiance — the "**HIGHER EGO**," never the "Higher Self." For even **Buddhi**, the "Spiritual Soul," is not the **SELF**, but the vehicle

only of **SELF**. All the other "**Selves**" — such as the "Individual" self and "personal" self — ought never to be spoken or written of without their qualifying and characteristic adjectives.

Thus in this most excellent essay on the "Higher Self," this term is applied to the **sixth principle** or **Buddhi** (of course in conjunction with **Manas**, as without such union there would be no **thinking** principle or element in the spiritual soul); and has in consequence given rise to just such misunderstandings. The statement that "a child does not acquire its **sixth** principle — or become a morally responsible being capable of generating **Karma** — until seven years old," proves what is meant therein by the **HIGHER SELF**. Therefore, the able author is quite justified in explaining that after the "Higher Self" has passed into the human being and saturated the personality — in some of the finer organizations only — with its consciousness "people with psychic faculties may indeed perceive this Higher Self through their finer senses from time to time." But so are those, who limit the term "Higher Self" to the Universal Divine Principle, "justified" in misunderstanding him. For, when we read, without being prepared for this shifting of metaphysical terms, that while "fully manifesting on the physical plane... the Higher Self still remains a conscious spiritual Ego on the corresponding plane of Nature" — we are apt to see in the "Higher Self" of this sentence, "**Atma**," and in the spiritual Ego, "**Manas**," or rather **Buddhi-Manas**, and forthwith to criticise the whole thing as incorrect.

Key, p. 175

**The
HIGHER
SELF** is

Atma, the inseparable ray of the **ONE SELF**. It is the God above, more than within, us. Happy the man who succeeds in saturating his inner Ego with it!

**THE
SPIRITUAL
divine
EGO**, is

the Spiritual soul or **Buddhi**, in close union with **Manas**, the mind-principle, without which it is no **EGO** at all, but only the **Atmic Vehicle**.

THE INNER **Manas**, the "Fifth" Principle, or **HIGHER** so called, independently of "Ego" is Buddhi. The Mind-Principle is only the Spiritual Ego when merged **into one** with Buddhi, — no materialist being supposed to have in him **such** an Ego, however great his intellectual capacities. It is the permanent **Individuality** or the "Reincarnating Ego."

THE LOWER or **PERSONAL** "Ego" is the physical man in conjunction with his **lower** Self, *i.e.*, animal instinctive passions, desires, etc. It is called the "false personality," and consists of the **lower Manas** combined with Kama-rupa, and operating through the Physical body and its phantom or "double."

Key, p. 176

The remaining "Principle," "**Prana**," or "Life," is, strictly speaking, the radiating force or Energy of Atma — as the Universal Life and the **ONE SELF**, — **Its** lower or rather (in its effects) more physical, because manifesting, aspect. Prana or Life permeates the whole being of the objective Universe, and is called a "principle" only because it is an indispensable factor and the *deus ex machina* of the living man.

Key, p. 177

X. ON THE NATURE OF OUR THINKING PRINCIPLE.

The Mystery of the Ego.

The re-incarnating Principle, or that which we call the divine man, is indestructible throughout the life cycle: indestructible as a thinking Entity, and even as an ethereal form. The "reflection" is only the spiritualised remembrance, during the Devachanic period, of the ex-personality, with which the Ego identifies itself during that period. The Ego has to identify itself with the personal consciousness of that life, if anything shall remain of it.

The clue to such changes in mental states by the Ego lies in the double consciousness of our mind, and also, in the dual nature of the mental "principle." There is a spiritual consciousness, the Manasic mind illumined by the light of Buddhi, that which subjectively perceives abstractions; and the sentient consciousness (the lower Manasic light), inseparable from our physical brain and senses. This latter consciousness is held in subjection by the brain and physical senses, and, being in its turn equally dependent on them, must of course fade out and finally die with the disappearance of the brain and physical senses. It is only the former kind of consciousness, whose root lies in eternity, which survives and lives forever, and may, therefore be regarded as immortal. Everything else belongs to passing illusions.

What we understand here by the word "illusion" is well described in Mr. Sinnett's essay on "The Higher Self." Says the author:

"The theory we are considering (the interchange of ideas between the Higher Ego and the lower self) harmonizes very well with the treatment of this world in which we live as a phenomenal world of illusion, the spiritual plane of nature being on the other hand the noumenal world or plane of reality. That region of nature in which, so to speak, the permanent soul is rooted is more real than that in which its transitory blossoms appear for a brief space to wither and fall to pieces, while the plant recovers energy for sending forth a fresh flower. Supposing flowers only were perceptible to ordinary senses, and their roots existed in a state of Nature intangible and invisible to us, philosophers in such a world who divined that there were such things as roots in another plane of existence would be apt to say of the flowers, These are not the real plants; they are of no relative importance, merely illusive phenomena of the moment."

This is what I mean. The world in which blossom the transitory and evanescent flowers of personal lives is not the real permanent world; but that one in

which we find the root of consciousness, that root which is beyond illusion and dwells in the eternity.

When we speak of the "root dwelling in eternity," we mean by this root the thinking entity, the Ego which incarnates, whether we regard it as an "Angel," "Spirit," or a Force. Of that which falls under our sensuous perceptions only what grows directly from, or is attached to this invisible root above, can partake of its immortal life. Hence every noble thought, idea and aspiration of the personality it informs, proceeding from and fed by this root, must become permanent. As to the physical consciousness, as it is a quality of the sentient but lower "principle," (Kamarupa or animal instinct, illuminated by the lower **manasic** reflection), or the human Soul — it must disappear. That which displays activity, while the body is asleep or paralysed, is the higher consciousness, our memory registering but feebly and inaccurately — because automatically — such experiences, and often failing to be even slightly impressed by them.

Key, p. 180

MANAS, although we call it **Nous**, a "God," is often conquered and fettered by its body, for, unless a God descends as an **Avatar**, no divine principle can be otherwise than cramped and paralysed by turbulent, animal matter. Heterogeneity will always have the upper hand over homogeneity, on this plane of illusions, and the nearer an essence is to its root-principle, Primordial Homogeneity, the more difficult it is for the latter to assert itself on earth. Spiritual and divine powers lie dormant in every human Being; and the wider the sweep of his spiritual vision the mightier will be the God within him.

"A God" is not the universal deity, but only a spark from the one ocean of Divine Fire. Our God **within us**, or "our Father in Secret" is what we call the "**HIGHER SELF**," **Atma**. Our incarnating Ego was a God in its origin, as were all the primeval emanations of the One Unknown Principle. But since its "fall into Matter," having to incarnate throughout the cycle, in succession, from

first to last, it is no longer a free and happy god, but a **poor pilgrim** on his way to regain that which he has lost. I can answer you more fully by repeating what is said of the INNER MAN in ISIS UNVEILED (Vol. 11. 593): —

"From the remotest antiquity mankind as a whole have always been convinced of the existence of a personal spiritual entity within the personal physical man. This inner entity was more or less divine, according to its proximity to the crown. The closer the union the more serene man's destiny, the less dangerous the external conditions. This belief is neither bigotry nor superstition, only an ever-present, instinctive feeling of the proximity of another spiritual and invisible world, which, though it be subjective to the senses of the outward man, is perfectly objective to the inner ego. Furthermore, they believed that there are external and internal conditions which affect the determination of our will upon our actions. They rejected fatalism, for fatalism implies a blind course of some still blinder power. But they believed in **destiny** or **Karma**, which from birth to death every man is weaving thread by thread around himself, as a spider does his cobweb; and this destiny is guided by that presence termed by some the guardian angel, or our more intimate astral inner man, who is but too often the evil genius of the man of flesh or the **personality**. Both these lead on **MAN**, but one of them must prevail, and from the very beginning of the invisible affray the stern and implacable **law of compensation and retribution** steps in and takes its course, following faithfully the fluctuating of the conflict. When the last strand is woven, and man is seemingly enwrapped in the net-work of his own doing, then he finds himself completely under the empire of this **self-made** destiny. It then either fixes him like the inert shell against the immovable rock, or like a feather carries him away in a whirlwind raised by his own actions."

Such is the destiny of the **MAN** — the **true Ego**, not the Automaton, the **shell** that goes by that name. It is for him to become the conqueror over matter.

Key, p. 182

The Complex Nature Of Manas.

It is this nature, mysterious, Protean, beyond any grasp, and almost shadowy in its correlations with the other principles, that is most difficult to realise, and still more so to explain. Manas is a "principle," and yet it is an "Entity" and individuality or Ego. He is a "God," and yet he is doomed to an endless cycle of incarnations, for each of which he is made responsible, and for each of which he has to suffer. All this seems as contradictory as it is puzzling; nevertheless, there are many who realise all this perfectly, for they comprehend the Ego not only in its integrity but in its many aspects. Finally, if I would make myself comprehensible, I must begin by the beginning and give you a genealogy of this Ego in a few lines.

Try to imagine a "Spirit," a celestial Being, whether we call it by one name or another, divine in its essential nature, yet not pure enough to be **one with the ALL**, and having, in order to achieve this, to so purify its nature as to finally gain that goal. It can do so only by passing **individually** and **personally, i.e.**, spiritually and physically, through every experience and feeling that exists in the manifold or differentiated Universe. It has, therefore, after having gained such experience in the lower kingdoms, and having ascended higher and still higher with every rung on the ladder of being, to pass through every experience on the human planes. **In its very essence it is THOUGHT**, and is, therefore, called in its plurality **Manasa putra**, "the Sons of the (Universal) mind." This **individualised** "Thought" is what we Theosophists call the **real human EGO**, the thinking Entity imprisoned in a case of flesh and bones. This is surely a Spiritual Entity, not **Matter**, and such Entities are the incarnating **EGOS** that inform the bundle of animal matter called mankind, and whose names are **Manasa** or "Minds." But once imprisoned, or incarnate, their essence becomes dual: that is to say, the **rays** of the eternal divine Mind, considered as individual entities, assume a two-fold attribute which is

- (a) **Their essential** inherent characteristic, heaven-aspiring mind (higher Manas), and
- (b) The human quality of thinking, or animal cogitation, rationalised owing to the superiority of the human brain, the **Kama**-tending or lower Manas.

One gravitates toward Buddhi, the other, tending downward, to the seat of passions and animal desires. The latter have no room in Devachan, nor can they associate with the divine triad which ascends as **ONE** into mental bliss. Yet it is the Ego, the Manasic Entity, which is held responsible for all the sins of the lower attributes, just as a parent is answerable for the transgressions of his child, so long as the latter remains irresponsible.

If we remember that the "personality" is the "child," then it becomes clear when the philosophy states that the "personality" dies with the body it does not state all. The body, which was only the objective symbol of Mr. A. or Mrs. B., fades away with all its material Skandhas, which are the visible expressions thereof. But all that which constituted during life the **spiritual** bundle of experiences, the noblest aspirations, undying affections, and **unselfish** nature of Mr. A. or Mrs. B. clings for the time of the Devachanic period to the **EGO**, which is identified with the spiritual portion of that terrestrial Entity, now passed away out of sight. The **ACTOR** is so imbued with the **role** just played by him that he dreams of it during the whole Devachanic night, which **vision** continues till the hour strikes for him to return to the stage of life to enact another part.

Key, p. 184

The Doctrine Is Taught In St. John's Gospel.

We find our doctrine in the Bible if one can read its symbols. The fourth Gospel teaches re-incarnation as also the annihilation of the personality, if we but forget the dead letter and hold to the esoteric Spirit. Remember verses 1 and 2 in chapter xv of St. John. What does the

parable speak about if not of the **upper triad** in man? **Atma** is the Husbandman — the Spiritual Ego or **Buddhi** (Christos) the Vine, while the animal and vital Soul, the **personality**, is the "branch." I am the true vine, and my Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away... As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the Vine — ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch, and is **withered** and cast into the fire and burned."

Now we explain it in this way. Disbelieving in the hell-fires which theology discovers as underlying the threat to the **branches**, we say that the "Husbandman" means Atma, the Symbol for the infinite, impersonal Principle¹, while the Vine stands for the Spiritual Soul, **Christos**, and each "branch" represents a new incarnation.

We bring forward Universal symbology as a warrant for our interpretation for does not Hermas say likewise in the Kabala? There, he says of "God" that he "planted the Vineyard," *i.e.*, he created mankind. In the **Kabala**, it is shown that the Aged of the Aged, or the "Long Face," plants a vineyard, the latter typifying mankind; and a vine, meaning Life. The Spirit of "**King Messiah**" is, therefore, shown as washing his garments in **the wine** from above, from the creation of the world. And **King Messiah** is the Ego purified by **washing his garments** (*i.e.*, his personalities in re-birth), in the **wine from** above, or **BUDDHI**.

In the human system — even according to those philosophies which ignore our septenary division — the **EGO** or **thinking man** is called the **Logos**, or the Son of Soul and Spirit. "Manas is the adopted Son of King _____ and Queen _____" (esoteric equivalents for Atma and Buddhi), says an occult work. He is the "man-god" of Plato, who crucifies himself

¹ During the Mysteries, it is the Hierophant, the "Father," who planted the Vine. Every symbol has Seven Keys to it. The discloser of the Pleroma was always called "Father."

in **Space** (or the duration of the life cycle) for the redemption of **MATTER**. This he does by incarnating over and over again, thus leading mankind onward to perfection, and making thereby room for lower forms to develop into higher. Not for one life does he cease progressing himself and helping all physical nature to progress; even the occasional, very rare event of his losing one of his personalities, in the case of the latter being entirely devoid of even a spark of spirituality, helps toward his individual progress.

One might suppose that if the **Ego** is held responsible for the transgressions of its personalities, it has also to answer for the loss, or rather the complete annihilation, of one of such; but this is not so. Not at all, unless it has done nothing to avert this dire fate. But if, all its efforts notwithstanding, its voice, **that of our conscience**, was unable to penetrate through the wall of matter, then the obtuseness of the latter proceeding from the imperfect nature of the material being used, is classed with other failures of nature. The Ego is sufficiently punished by the loss of Devachan, and especially by having to incarnate almost immediately.

The universe and everything in it, moral, mental, physical, psychic, or Spiritual, is built on a perfect law of equilibrium and harmony. The centripetal force could not manifest itself without the centrifugal in the harmonious revolutions of the spheres, and all forms and their progress are the products of this dual force in nature. Now the Spirit (or **Buddhi**) is the centrifugal and the soul (**Manas**) the centripetal spiritual energy; and to produce one result they have to be in perfect union and harmony. Break or damage the centripetal motion of the earthly soul tending toward the center which attracts it; arrest its progress by clogging it with a heavier weight of matter than it can bear, or than is fit for the Devachanic state, and the harmony of the whole will be destroyed. Personal life, or perhaps rather its ideal reflection can only be continued if sustained by the two-fold force, that is by the close union of **Buddhi** and **Manas** in every re-birth or

personal life. The least deviation from harmony damages it; and when it is destroyed beyond redemption the two forces separate at the moment of death. During a brief interval the **personal** form (called indifferently **Kama rupa** and **Mayavi Rupa**) is carried off to remain in **Kamaloka** and to be gradually annihilated. The spiritual efflorescence of the personal form attaches itself to the Ego, follows it into Devachan, and gives to the permanent **individuality** its **personal** colouring (*pro tem.*, so to speak). For it is after the death of the utterly depraved, the unspiritual and the wicked beyond redemption, that arrives the critical and supreme moment. If during life the ultimate and desperate effort of the **INNER SELF (Manas)**, to unite something of the personality with itself and the high glimmering ray of the divine Buddhi, is thwarted; if this ray is allowed to be more and more shut out from the ever-thickening crust of physical brain, the Spiritual **Ego** or Manas, once freed from the body, remains severed entirely from the ethereal relic of the personality, and the latter, or **Kama rupa**, following its earthly attractions, is drawn into and remains in Hades, or **Kama-loka**. These are "the withered branches" mentioned by Jesus as being cut off from the **Vine**. Annihilation, however, is never instantaneous, and may require centuries sometimes for its accomplishment. But there the personality remains along with the **remnants** of other more fortunate personal Egos, and becomes with them a **shell** and an **Elementary**.

True, "**Isis Unveiled**" was construed as being against Reincarnation by those who misunderstood it. At the time that work was written, re-incarnation was not believed in by any Spiritualists, either English or American, and what is said there of **re-incarnation** was directed against the French Spiritists, whose theory is as unphilosophical and absurd as the Eastern teaching is logical and self-evident in its truth. The Re-incarnationists of the Allan Kardec School believe in an arbitrary and immediate re-incarnation. With them, the dead father can incarnate in his own unborn daughter, and so on. They have neither Devachan, Karma, nor any philosophy that would warrant or prove the necessity

of consecutive re-births. But how can the author of "Isis" argue against **Karmic** re-incarnation, at long intervals varying between 1,000 and 1,500 years, when it is the fundamental belief of both Buddhists and Hindus?

As to the effects of spiritualism, **seances**, etc., they are harmful. Take the last fifty years of spiritualism in America — and judge for yourself whether it has done its votaries more good or harm. Pray understand me. I do not speak against real Spiritualism, but against the modern movement which goes under that name, and the so-called philosophy invented to explain its phenomena.

Like attracts like. There are several high-minded, pure, good men and women, known to me personally, who have passed years of their lives under the direct guidance and even protection of high "Spirits," whether disembodied or planetary. But **these** Intelligences are not of the type of the John Kings and the Ernests who figure in **seance** rooms. These Intelligences guide and control mortals only in rare and exceptional cases to which they are attracted and magnetically drawn by the Karmic past of the individual. It is not enough to sit "for development" in order to attract them. That only opens the door to a swarm of "spooks," good, bad and indifferent, to which the medium becomes a slave for life. It is against such promiscuous mediumship and intercourse with goblins that I raise my voice, not against spiritual mysticism. The latter is ennobling and holy; the former is of just the same nature as the phenomena of two centuries ago, for which so many witches and wizards have been made to suffer. Read Glanvil and other authors on the subject of witchcraft, and you will find recorded there the parallels of most, if not all, of the physical phenomena of nineteenth century "Spiritualism."

All this dealing with the dead is **necromancy**, and a most dangerous practice. For ages before Moses such raising of the dead was regarded by all the intelligent nations as sinful and cruel, inasmuch as it disturbs the rest of the souls and interferes with their evolutionary development into higher

states. The collective wisdom of all past centuries has ever been loud in denouncing such practices. Finally, I say, what I have never ceased repeating orally and in print for fifteen years. While some of the so-called "spirits" do not know what they are talking about, repeating merely — like poll-parrots — what they find in the mediums' and other people's brains, others are most dangerous, and can only lead one to evil. Your best, your most powerful mediums, have all suffered in health of body and mind. Think of the sad end of Charles Foster, who died in an asylum, a raving lunatic; of Slade, an epileptic; of Eglinton — the best medium now in England — subject to the same. Look back over the life of D. D. Home, a man whose mind was steeped in gall and bitterness, who never had a good word to say of anyone whom he suspected of possessing psychic powers, and who slandered every other medium to the bitter end. This Calvin of Spiritualism suffered for years from a terrible spinal disease, brought on by his intercourse with the "spirits," and died a perfect wreck. Think again of the sad fate of poor Washington Irving Bishop. I knew him in New York, when he was fourteen, and he was undeniably a medium. It is true that the poor man stole a march on his "spirits," and baptised them "unconscious muscular action," to the great **gaudium** of all the corporations of highly learned and scientific fools, and to the replenishment of his own pocket. But *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*; his end was a sad one. He had strenuously concealed his **epileptic fits** — the first and **strongest symptom** of genuine mediumship — and who knows whether he was dead or in a trance when the **post-mortem** examination was performed? His relatives insist that he was alive, if we are to believe Reuter's telegrams. Finally, behold the veteran mediums, the founders and prime movers of modern spiritualism — the Fox sisters. After more than forty years of intercourse with the "Angels," the latter have led them to become incurable sots, who are now denouncing, in public lectures, their own life-long work and philosophy as a fraud.

Key, p. 196

What kind of spirits must they be who prompted them, I ask you?

If the best pupils of a particular school of singing broke down from overstrained sore throats, would you not infer that the method followed was a bad one? So I think the inference is equally fair with regard to Spiritualism when we see their best mediums fall prey to such a fate. We can only say: — Let those who are interested in the question judge the tree of Spiritualism by its fruits, and ponder over the lesson.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS

*An Inquiry into the Scope of Bare Attention
and the Principal Sources of its Strength*

Nyanaponika Thera

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Part V

[Continued from *Supplement #7*, July 17, 2002]

The influence of slowing-down and sustained attention on subconsciousness, memory, and intuition

It need hardly be pointed out how important all these three aforementioned points are for "seeing things according to reality," in other words, for the development of Insight (*vipassanā*). Their *direct* influence is obvious, but there is also an *indirect one* which is no less powerful and important. Those three results of sustained attention, achieved with the help of Slowing-down, are also instrumental in influencing the quality and nature of *subconsciousness, memory and intuition* which, on their part, will again be aiding, nourishing and consolidating the progress of liberating Insight. Insight aided by them

will be like the mountain lake (of the canonical simile) that is fed not only from without, by the rains, but also by springs welling up within its own depth. Similarly Insight will be nourished not only through external experience but also from the “subterraneous,” *i.e.*, subliminal resources of the mind: by memories, other subconscious material, and by the strengthened faculty of intuition. Meditative results of an Insight that has such deep roots will not be lost easily, even with unliberated worldings (*puthu j jana*) who are subject to relapse.

1. If perceptions or thoughts which have been objects of sustained attention, sink into *subconsciousness*, they will occupy there a special position by reason of their stronger impact on the mind and the greater distinctness of their characteristic features. As to the first reason: it will certainly not remain without any effect upon the structure of subconsciousness, if the end-phase of a moment of consciousness or of a cognitive series, being immediately followed by subconsciousness, is not weak but of a strength equal to that of the preceding phases. As for the second reason: if an impression or idea, marked by numerous and distinct characteristics, sinks into subconsciousness, it will not so easily be absorbed into the vagueness of other subconscious contents or dragged into false subconscious associations with superficial similarities of passionate biases. And also the last of the aforementioned three facts — the correct comprehension of the object’s “relatedness” — will have similar effects: there will be a greater resistance against a merging with inadequate subconscious material. If perceptions or thoughts of that level of intensity and clarity sink into subconsciousness, they will be more

“articulate” and more “accessible” than contents of subconsciousness originating from hazy or “stunned” impressions; they will be more easily “convertible” into full consciousness, and less unaccountable in their hidden effects upon it. If, through an improvement in the quality and range of mindfulness, the number of such “matured” impressions increases in the mind, it seems quite possible that a subtle change in the structure of subconsciousness can be achieved in that way.

2. It will be evident from our earlier remarks that those impressions which we have called “matured” or “more easily accessible and convertible,” will lend themselves more easily and more correctly to recollection. More easily: because of their greater intensity; more correctly: because of their clearly marked features which will give them a fair degree of protection against being distorted by false associative images or ideas. If, in addition, they are remembered in their “context” and “relatedness,” it will work both ways, for easier and more correct recollection. In that way, *Sati* in its meaning and function of Mindfulness, will help to strengthen *Sati* in its meaning and function of *Memory*.
3. From that very influence on subconsciousness and memory also a deepening and strengthening of the faculty of intuition will naturally follow, and particularly of intuitive insight which concerns us here chiefly. Intuition is not “a gift from the unknown,” but, as any other mental faculty, it arises out of specific conditions which, in this case, are primarily the latent memories of perceptions and thoughts “stored” in

the subconscious¹. It is obvious that memories which have the aforemen-

¹ [Here Nyanaponika Thera seems to be using "subconscious" as *The Secret Doctrine* uses the "Higher Ego." Madame Blavatsky gives the Trans-Himalayan Arhat use of Intuition like this:

Every one of us possesses the faculty, the interior sense, that is known by the name of *intuition*, but how rare are those who know how to develop it! It is, however, only by the aid of this faculty that men can ever see things in their true colours. It is an *instinct of the soul*, which grows in us in proportion to the employment we give it, and which helps us to perceive and understand the realities of things with far more certainty than can the simple use of our senses and exercise of our reason. What are called good sense and logic enable us to see only the appearances of things, that which is evident to every one. The *instinct* of which I speak, being a projection of our perceptive consciousness, a projection which acts from the subjective to the objective, and not *vice versa*, awakens in us spiritual senses and power to act; these senses assimilate to themselves the essence of the object or of the action under examination, and represent it to us as it really is, not as it appears to our physical senses and to our cold reason. "We begin with *instinct*, we end with omniscience" says Professor A. Wilder, our oldest colleague. Iamblicus has described this faculty, and certain Theosophists have been able to appreciate the truth of his description.

"There exists," he says, "a faculty in the human mind which is immeasurably superior to all those which are grafted or engendered in us. By it we can attain to union with superior intelligences, finding ourselves raised above the scenes of this earthly life, and partaking of the higher existence and superhuman powers of the inhabitants of the celestial spheres. By this faculty we find ourselves liberated finally from the dominion of destiny (Karma), and we become, as it were, the arbiters of our own fates. For, when the most excellent parts in us find themselves filled with energy; and when our soul is lifted up towards essences higher than science, it can separate itself from the conditions which hold it in the bondage of every-day life; it exchanges its ordinary existence for another one, it renounces the conventional habits which belong to the external order of things, to give itself up to and mix itself with another order of things which reigns in that most elevated state of existence."

tioned qualities of greater intensity, clarity and richness of distinctive marks, and thereby of greater accessibility, will provide the most fertile soil for the growth of intuition. Here too the preserved "relatedness" of the respective impressions will contribute much. Recollections of that type will have a more organic character than memories of bare or vague, isolated facts, and they will easier fall into new patterns of meanings and significance. These more "articulate" memory-images will be a strong stimulation and aid for the intuitive faculty. Silently and in the hidden depths of the subliminal mental processes, the work of collecting and organizing the subconscious material of experience and knowledge goes on until it is ripe to emerge as, what we call an *intuition*. The breaking-through of that intuition is sometimes occasioned by quite ordinary happenings which, however, may have a strong evocative power, if, in previous occurrence they had been made objects of sustained attention. Slowing-down and pausing for Bare Attention will discover the depth-dimension of the simple things of every day, and will thus provide potential stimuli for the intuitive faculty. This applies also to the intuitive penetration (*pativedha*) of the four Noble Truths that culminates in Holiness (*arahatta*). Many instances are recorded of monks where the flash of intuitive penetration

Plato has expressed the same idea in two lines: "The light and spirit of the Divinity are the wings of the soul. They raise it to communion with the gods, above this earth, with which the spirit of man is too ready to soil itself. . . . To become like the gods, is to become holy, just and wise. That is the end for which man was created, and that ought to be his aim in the acquisition of knowledge." ("Le Phare de L'Inconnu")]

did not strike them when they were engaged in the meditative practice of insight proper, but on quite different occasions: when stumbling, when seeing a forest fire, a fata-morgana, a lump of froth in a river, etc.

We have met here another confirmation of that seemingly paradoxical saying that ‘intentionally’ an unintentional state may be won, or at least aided, by deliberately turning the full light of mindfulness even on the smallest events and actions of every-day life.

Sustained attention not only provides the nourishing soil for the growth of intuition, it also makes possible the fuller utilization and even repetition of the intuitive moment. Men of inspiration in various fields of creative activity have often related and deplored their common experience that the flash of intuition strikes so suddenly and vanishes so quickly that frequently the slow response of the mind scarcely catches the last glimpse of it. But if the mind has been trained in observant Pausing, in Slowing-down and sustained attention, and if — as indicated above — also the subconsciousness has been influenced by it, then the intuitive moment, too, might gain that fuller, slower and stronger rhythm. This being the case, its impact will be strong and clear enough for making full use of that flash of intuitive insight. It might even be possible to lead its fading vibrations upward again to a new culmination, similar to the rhythmic repetition of a melody rising again, in harmonious development, out of the last notes of its first appearance.

The full utilization of a single moment of intuitive insight might be of decisive importance for one’s progress toward full realization. If one’s mental grip is too weak and those elusive moments of intuitive insight are allowed to slip away without being utilized fully for the work of liberation, then it might well

happen that they will not recur before many years have passed, or perhaps not at all during the present life. Skill in sustained attention, however, will allow the full use of opportunities, and slowing down and pausing during meditative practice, is an important aid in acquiring that skill.

Through our now concluded treatment of Pausing, Stopping and Slowing-down, one of the traditional definitions of Mindfulness found in the Pali Scriptures will have become more intelligible in its far-reaching implications: that is its function of *anapilāpanatā*, meaning literally, ‘not floating (or slipping) away,’ — ‘like pumpkinpots on the surface of water’ add the commentators; and they continue: ‘Mindfulness enters deeply into its object,’ instead of hurrying over its surface only. Therefore “non-superficiality” will be an appropriate rendering of the above Pali term, and a befitting characterization of Mindfulness.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Wherever Thought has Struggled to be Free

The revolution started before “History” marked it and is still in full tilt.

BYSTANDER

The American Revolution never really ended. It’s a continuing process. I think we’re approaching the revolution of hope. We have the country that makes it possible for people, if they’ve lost control of the government, to regain it in a peaceful way. Through the ballot box. Before I got into politics, I didn’t know whether what I was doing even mattered. Now I know. One person can make a difference. I think it’s something every person can learn. The main thing is, you can’t be afraid.

CONGRESSMAN KUCINICH

Our “Fresh-off-the-Boat” people are the ones with great chunks of “bravery,” so much so, that they set fire to rest of us. Here’s an interesting slice of American History:

Common Sense is the most brilliant pamphlet written during the American

Revolution, and one of the most brilliant pamphlets ever written in the English language. How it could have been produced by the bankrupt Quaker corsetmaker, the sometime teacher, preacher, and grocer, and twice-dismissed excise office who happened to catch Benjamin Franklin's attention in England and who arrived in America only **14 months** before *Common Sense* was published is nothing one can explain without explaining genius itself. For it is a work of genius — slapdash as it is, rambling as it is, crude as it is. It “burst from the press,” Benjamin Rush wrote, “with an effect which has rarely been produced by types and papers in any age or country.” Its effect, Franklin said, was “prodigious.” It touched some extraordinarily sensitive nerve in American political awareness in the confusing period in which it appeared.

It was written by an **Englishman**, not an American. Paine had only the barest acquaintance with American affairs when, with Rush's encouragement, he turned an invitation by Franklin to write a history of the Anglo-American controversy into the occasion for composing a passionate tract for American independence. Yet not only does *Common Sense* voice some of the deepest aspirations of the American people on the eve of the Revolution but it also evokes, with superb vigor and with perfect intonation longings and aspirations that have remained part of American culture to this day. . . . It undoubtedly caused some of the hesitant and vaguely conservative who had reached no decision to think once more about the future that might be opening up in America.

For it appeared at what was perhaps the perfect moment to have a maximum effect. It was published on January 10, 1776. Nine months before [its publication] the first skirmishes of the Revolutionary War had been fought, and seven months before, a bloody battle had taken place on Breed's Hill, across the bay from Boston, which was the

headquarters of the British army in America, long since surrounded by provincial troops. Three months after that, in September 1775, a makeshift American army had invaded Canada and taken Montreal. In December its two divisions had joined to attack Quebec, and though that attack, on December 30-31, had failed miserably, the remnants of the American armies still surrounded the city when Paine wrote *Common Sense*, and Montreal was still in American hands.

There is something extraordinary in this pamphlet — something bizarre, outsized, unique — quite aside from its strident appeal for independence. . . . For its prose alone, *Common Sense* would be a notable document — unique among the pamphlets of the American Revolutions:

“Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built upon the ruins of the bowers of paradise.” As for the “so much boasted constitution of England,” it was “noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected;” but that was not really so remarkable, Paine said, for “when the world was overrun with tyranny, the least remove therefrom was a glorious rescue.” . . .

But it is in the third section, “Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs,” that Paine's language becomes most effective and vivid. The emotional level is extremely high throughout these pages and the lyric passages even then must have seemed prophetic:

“The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. . . . ‘Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the context, and will be more or less affected even to the end of time by the proceedings now. Now is the seed-time of continental union, faith, and honor. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound will enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.”

Or again this passage:

“O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare to oppose not only the tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.”

In the pamphlet literature of the American Revolution there is nothing comparable to this passage for sheer emotional intensity and lyric appeal. Its vividness must have leapt out of the pages to readers used to grayer, more stolid prose. ...

The great intellectual force of *Common Sense* lay not in its close argumentation on specific points but in its **reversal of the presumptions that underlay the arguments**, a reversal that forced thoughtful readers to consider, not so much a point here and a conclusion there, but a wholly new way of looking at the entire range of problems involved. ...

Common Sense ...sparked into flame resentments that had smoldered within the American opposition to England for years, and brought into a single focus the lack of confidence in the whole European world that Americans had vaguely felt and the aspirations for a newer, freer, more open world.... (Excerpts from Bernard Bailyn's essay on the pamphlet *Common Sense*.)

Don't Click on that Icon!

*A Canadian High School
Teacher exposes students to
"meditation" with the following
item. Congratulations for such
a brave entry into unknown
territory!*

Meditation

If you have ever felt the need to meditate, even once, congratulations, for it is genuine evidence of evolutionary development. Not until a certain point in the reincarnational process, which is spread over many lives, does the soul (your "higher self") begin to take real interest in its vehicle or instrument, the personality (the "you which you think you are, currently") and begin to bring it into line through meditation. This process is designed to make "you" a much happier, freer person and has many benefits. It improves personal relationships (because it removes the "friction" caused by egotistical and selfish behaviour), stimulates health and vitality (for it releases much energy into the body and removes blockages to its flow) and helps you find a sense of direction, meaning and purpose in life (because the higher self is the source of these things). So, if you have ever felt a call to practice this, take it seriously and learn how to do it properly.

Before attempting to practice meditation, it is essential to understand how it works and what it does to you. Take time to read and allow the following to sink in; it will aid you greatly in your efforts. Read, and re-read these instructions as you practice.

You, no doubt, are familiar with the concept of "virtual reality," where you don a set of goggles and headphones, etc, and it simulates such real life experiences as flying an airplane, etc. You may also have had the experience of "waking up" in a dream (lucid dreaming) where you know that your head is on the pillow and all you see is a dream, but it keeps on happening anyway and you can even manipulate it and change it. In both of these instances, the "real" you is apart

from and behind, detached from, what you see, hear and feel, and you are not so "caught up" in or identified with what is going on. The movie, the matrix used this concept extensively to suggest parallels between the "earthly life" we experience from day to day (the matrix) and our real existence as "souls" (the life aboard the ship).

Imagine you are now wearing virtual reality goggles, but, like in the movie, *THE MATRIX*, your "real" self is back behind all this, just watching. Or imagine all you now see is a dream, and your head is really on the pillow. Thus, anything you see, hear, feel, even think, is part of the virtual reality program or dream. You can't, in fact, even find "you" at all in a way that lets you **LOOK** at you, because the goggles or the dream won't allow this. No matter what you focus on, it's not you: it is part of the "matrix," part of the dream.

Yet, you still feel as though "you" are there, looking. Just what is looking, you are not sure, because it can't be anything you can identify. Actually try this. Get the feel of it. The idea of being back behind this physical body you see, those emotions, those thoughts, and seeing them all as "not you," not the "real" you, but some projected image, is the idea we are looking for. The idea of being back behind this whole panorama of sight and sound, this "matrix" we call "reality," is what we seek to experience in meditation.

Before we incarnate on earth, we exist in a condition "out" of this "matrix" of three-dimensional reality we call "daily life." Then we existed as "souls," in soul realms. The idea of meditation is to reconnect with this level of consciousness and identity. Shakespeare observed that "all the world's a stage, and

all the people on it merely players." Prior to incarnation, we, with the cooperation of the other members of our soul groups, "write" the "script" for this earth-"play." Meditation is about getting in touch with this script and realizing the purpose of our existence on earth.

But how to do this, you ask. To do this, to "reconnect" with soul consciousness and soul identity, we must first "disconnect" (detach) from our **IDENTIFICATION** with our **PERSONALITY** identity. The "personality" is made up of three separate "vehicles" or "bodies": The **PHYSICAL**, **ASTRAL** (or emotional) and **MENTAL**. (Clairvoyants can actually see these as 3 separate "layers" of the aura, and we use the astral body separately, each night, leaving our physical body on the bed and "astral travelling" (consciously or unconsciously) on the astral plane. Our remembrances of these travels, we call "dreams." If you have ever felt yourself falling in a dream and jerked awake in bed, this is the astral body re-entering the physical, and your consciousness transferring quickly between the two) the long and short of it — strange as it may seem — is that your personality is made up of these 3 bodies meshed into one during waking life. The combined "input" from all three of these bodies (the sights, sounds, feelings and thoughts) creates the "virtual reality" of earth life, which is even more powerful than the "virtual reality" the characters in the movie experienced when they put on the "matrix" goggles. We take it for real. We "believe" in it. But, think for a moment: don't you also "believe" in your dreams while you are dreaming them? The only way you know they are dreams is when you "wake up." Meditation is about "waking up." "Enlightened beings, like the Buddha or Christ, have

"awoken," and it is from beings like these that we, in fact, learn that we ourselves are "asleep."

So now, let's try: What follows will be a series of "hints," or "directions." Some will "speak" to you; others will not. Fasten on those which make sense to you immediately, and leave the rest for later. If you find it helpful, read the follow-up teachings to attain a deeper understanding of the concepts involved. Meditation is probably the hardest thing there is to learn on earth. Be patient. It may take lifetimes to master, but no step along the way is ever lost. What you gain in this life, you keep forever, and can build upon in the next. And, take heart: all human beings must learn this part of the human "curriculum" some day. By learning it yourself now, you put yourself in a position to help others, when they also become ready.

Sit upright comfortably in a chair, on a pillow or in whatever upright position will allow you to totally relax and yet remain poised and alert. During the meditation you should not move around, so be sure the position is comfortable. Try it for 20 minutes at first and then increase this to 30. Keep your eyes open. Direct your gaze ahead of you, fixed in general direction, but not necessarily on one spot. Don't shift your gaze or move your body. You may blink as you need to.

Your attitude is like one of the matrix crew, about to put on the "virtual reality" goggles: You need to remember who you really are, and not get "lost" in this "illusion." Self remembering is a keynote in several teachings and is very important, but what is Self? You probably don't think of your body as the "real" you, but rather as something you "use." However, when it comes to your

feelings and thoughts, we are probably getting pretty close to what you think of as "you," correct? I mean "what's left?" You say, well, that "what's left" is the **HIGHER Self** (The **real** you, which is running this whole show, and the purpose of meditation is to get you to, **first**, become conscious of this, and **next**, to identify with it as the "real" you, like you now do with your feelings and thoughts). Here is the point: you already are conscious of, and in, this **HIGHER Self**. There is nothing new you need to achieve or develop. It is simply to realize it and recognize it, (That's why it is called "**self-realization**" and not self development). Your higher self is reading these words, through your eyes, even now, but you are no more aware of it than of your breathing for the last few seconds, yet both are there, if you look. (Yes, I know, the higher self is a lot harder to detect-at first). But, there is nothing to achieve; you are already there. Have you ever gone off in a daydream and suddenly come back to where you were and "snapped to?" It's like that: You are already here (in your **Higher Self**), only you are too caught up daydreaming (with the phantasmagoria of daily life) to see it. Once you strip away all the "clutter," (your identifications with your lower vehicles and the phenomena they produce for your senses), you will realize: "Oh, I am here!" (But when you say this, the "I" you mean won't be the one you **now** would refer to, yet will feel **totally familiar**.) Sorry this is so hard to get, but if it were easy, you wouldn't have to meditate to get it now, would you? This is **self-remembering**, remembering you are the higher self (the soul) and not the lower self (the personality). Being identified with the **higher self** is not "selfishness" because all of our higher selves are totally open,

telepathically, to one another, and totally loving. This is their very nature.

Your three "bodies" or vehicles (physical, astral, mental) are actually composed of myriads of little lives, and each body, as a whole, has its own composite "identity" (we call these the three "**BODY ELEMENTALS**"). These elementals have their own "agendas" which are very different from your own. Imagine getting in your car (your "vehicle") with the intention to go to the library, and your car going "No, we are going for lube and oil; we are going for gas!" The "desires" you think are "yours," are not yours at all, but theirs. By getting you to **identify** with these desires, they get their way: (It is not "you" — the soul — who is "hungry;" it is the **body elemental**). The soul does not have fits of rage or passions or depression; it is the **astral elemental** who does. The soul does not have "chattering, wandering thoughts which jump from thing to thing like a monkey; it is the **mental elemental** who does. When this begins to dawn upon you, you begin to detach and break this "spell" the senses have put upon you. You begin to "wake up." Can you believe this? Can you believe "you" are not your body, not your feelings, not your thoughts, but that they are "sources of input" for the "virtual reality " machine (the senses)?

If you can, you are ready to do battle: You must sit there and watch them all — watch them without getting "swallowed up" by them (*i.e.* "identifying" with them and with the "you" they tell you, you are). You must constantly (from one second to the next) "**remember**" who you are. And who is that? "You" are the **SILENT WATCHER** "behind" all this — the eyes behind the goggles, the head on the pillow. Can you do it? Can you just sit

there and "watch" everything you now think of as "you" as if it were an **OBJECT**?

Try this: look at your physical body as an "object." Got it? Now "add" to this your "feelings" as though they were an "object" in front of you. Now add your "thoughts" to this composite "object." Body, feelings, mind, together, we call the personality. Can you hold the whole personality "out there" all at once? Like a composite object? Well, if you can, where will you be? What will be left? What will be watching this "object"?: the real you — the **Silent Watcher**; the **Soul**. You will be "standing" in **soul consciousness**. This is the aim of meditation: to arrive at this. You do it by the process of elimination (as one teacher says, by the process of "netti, netti": not this, not that": not the body, not the feelings, not the thoughts. What's left? **The Soul**.)

The essence of this meditation is to **be here now** — to remain entirely in the present moment, without thinking. When you think, you pull away from attending to the present moment.(you get "swallowed up" in the matrix), it was for a good reason that the lord warned Adam and Eve not to eat of the tree of knowledge in the garden. As soon as one knows (*i.e.*, thinks) one is instantly expelled from paradise, which you will find is the present moment (you've just never really experienced it fully). Can you see why?: By thinking, you will have slipped into identification with your "mind" (your mental elemental). No longer will you be "looking" at it; you will be in it, all caught up in its thoughts. If you want to "get back to the garden" consciously, you must be aware, without thinking.

But, you say "How can I stop thinking? You don't have to stop thinking; you simply have to detach from it and it will slow down and stop of its own accord. Pretend your thoughts are icons moving across your computer screen: You see one come from right to left. You know it is a thought about school or work or the weekend (the icon has a title). Be aware of it but **don't double-click on it!** It will slide right off the screen, no click, no identification. But, once you click, you open the "icon" and it fills your screen. Get it? Observe it from **outside** and it simply slides by. Your job is to keep the "screen" of your mind clear.

To use another analogy, you may have observed how slowly your computer runs when you don't have much ram, and you are multi-tasking (e.g. downloading music, printing and trying to do emails all at once). When you meditate, no multi-tasking! Don't be running "programs" in the background (e.g., be working on a relationship problem in the back of your mind while meditating.) You need **ALL** your "**ram**" for this one task!

Here is how it works: All "wandering thoughts" (daydreams) arise from **desires**. Your astral or emotional body initiates a "prompt" or a "command" and the mental body "responds" by creating appropriate "thoughtforms" (ideas) to carry out this command. To stop the wandering thoughts, you must **CUT THE ROOT OF THESE DESIRES**. The "root" of all these desires is **THE SENSE OF SELF**. Once you have a "belief" in self, you "desire" to protect it and keep it alive at all costs. Life seems threatening, so it becomes a never-ending process: a continual stream of desires for self-protection and perpetuation, giving rise to a never-

ending stream of thoughts about how to do this. Simply examine the stream of your own wandering thoughts at any given moment, and you will see that they all, indirectly lead back to self to keeping "you" going.

Now, if you could get **RID** of this sense of "self" you could stop that stream of desires and end that stream of thoughts, couldn't you? Well, this is where this Matrix / virtual reality idea comes in. If you, back behind this all, detached, see this "self" like a character in a virtual reality video game, you will be seeing your personality the way your soul sees it: Identified, **to a degree**, (i.e., you care what happens to it) but not obsessed (and thus **compulsively** generating thoughts designed to protect it, non-stop.)

Feeling this way about "you," you can **DISTANCE** yourself from any thoughts that **do** arise, and see them as icons on your screen which you could, but don't need to, open. With enough "distance" or **detachment**, the personality itself will start getting the message and will relax and stop generating this compulsive stream of desires and thoughts altogether. It will stop taking itself so seriously, and start "sharing" the soul's perspective.

Now, let's go back: You are sitting comfortably in your chair: Start with **SOUND**, get something that **TICKS** and **keep up** with the ticking. Don't miss a beat. At every tick, **REMEMBER**. Really listen. Now (keeping this going) add an awareness of your **BREATH** until you are keeping up with **BOTH**. Next throw in an awareness of what your **EYES** see (in a general way — don't mentally name objects — just see the whole field clearly). Then add an awareness of your body against the chair.

Finally, include stray noises as they occur. What you want to be is a perfect mirror: A mirror that reflects things perfectly as they occur and **LETS THEM GO** instantly when they have passed. You will see that our usual minds cling to things in thought or memory and this clinging prevents us from perceiving the **present moment** because we have overlays of the last moment still on our screen.

Be like a TV camera. Try to send back a perfectly clear picture. Don't add anything. Don't subtract anything. As the buddha says, "in the seen there should be only the seen, in the heard, only the heard" — **NO OVERLAYS OF YOUR COMMENTARY.**

HINT: You will probably get some of these "**signs**" when you are doing it right: Your breath will slow and eventually stop altogether (for up to a minute; no, you won't die!) and you will get a "rush" of energy through your body. You may feel your consciousness centre in the brow chakra (between the eyes) or in the heart.

HINT: The "self" (your personality) is like a **VIRUS**; it knows you are trying to "**KILL**" it (*i.e.*, become **UN-"self"-ish**) and it will do all in its power to stay alive by adapting to every strategy you use to stop thinking. It will seek out and find the **highest ideals** you have, those just **below** becoming "unselfish" — which is the highest possible ideal — and use these to **TEMPT** you to start thinking again. It is being starved to death by you not thinking, you see. Thinking feeds the "**self.**" Do you understand this? (If not, reread the above. You must get this.) So, the personality will make you believe this thought or that thought is just **ESSENTIAL**, and soon you will be swallowed up. **GONE.** Or, if that doesn't

work, it will start on the **VISUALS:** colours, visions, apparitions: "Hey, something is happening to **ME!**" (Did you get that? **ME!** It has you **thinking** and focused on self again. Tricky, isn't it? **DON'T FALL FOR THIS STUFF! NO EXCUSES. STAY STRONG.**

Now, when we say "kill" the personality, this must be understood correctly: It "dies" to its old "rulership" (the 3 elementals) and is "born again," this time under the rulership of the soul. It is the same old puppet with a different master pulling the strings: **YOU**, instead of "them" (the body elementals, or your "selfish." personality desires.(if you can't get with the "elementals" concept, just think of 3 "sets" of desires, ok?: physical desires, emotional desires and mental desires.) It does not need to become withered or beaten out of shape. You **NEED** a good personality to be **USEFUL** in the world, and to be of service. It is like breaking a horse: the personality on its own is a bucking bronco, totally rebellious and of no service. Tamed, it is like a partner to its rider; they make a team. Soul sits astride personality, guiding the reins, and you go somewhere useful in life.

Hint: If you find yourself saying "I'm not getting much out of this meditation; it doesn't work for me," you can be 100% sure **YOU ARE NOT DOING IT.** You are doing something else 99% of the time (*e.g.*, letting your mind wander). This meditation contains the essence or common denominator of all the world's "top-of-the-line" meditations: zen, mahamudra, raja yoga, dzogchen, vipassana, etc. It works, and has worked, for thousands of years, all over the world, and was even at the core of the buddha's own practice when achieving enlightenment it is **YOU** who "aren't working." But don't give up. And don't

settle for an "easy" one (like visualizing yourself on a pleasant hillside) for that is the equivalent of painting a room inside the "**matrix**" (the world of "self" or the "personality life") all pretty colours instead of getting out of the matrix (becoming UN-selfish) altogether. If you are going to invest time and energy over many years, why not go for the "gold," — the ultimate: liberation (from self): Enlightenment (knowing you are **NOT** lower self but life or god ("I and my Father are One" as Christ put it).

HINT: To extend your meditation practice into the realm of daily life (which you should increasingly try to do if you want to live **CONTINUALLY** in a higher state of consciousness), try this: following your "sitting" practice, choose an activity you do privately (showering, brushing teeth, etc.) and continue practising while moving around. About 10-15 minutes per day is good for this. Jogging and walking (alone) are perfect. (Alone, because you aren't going to be great company while doing this, until you get good at it.)

Our **TRUE NATURE** (higher self) is like a mirror. The mirror is **VOID-EMPTY**. It has no content. When you look into it, you don't see it; you see things. The mirror contains these things but is not these things. You are not young or old, male or female. These are qualities that your consciousness can manifest, but these things are not you.

When you were "dead" (out of the body between lives) you (as a soul) were something like **PURE ENERGY** without form (the **SILENT WATCHER**). Isn't this the way we think of god? As pure, formless, infinite energy? Every religion says we are a "spark" or "piece" or "part" of god. In meditation, you begin to feel your "divine" nature.

Your **PERSONALITY** is the cat. Your true nature is the **MIRROR**. You normally identify with the **CAT** looking in the mirror. Now try identifying with the mirror itself.

When you identify with anything out there, you distort the mirror; you distort your true nature. You mislead yourself into believing you are something. That is very **LIMITING!** Even being a male or a female cuts off half of human experience. Why do this? You have been male, female, young old, black, white, fat and thin. You are a god in the making; you are unlimited, immortal! (Your current **BODY** is not immortal; your current personality is not immortal, but you, the **SILENT WATCHER**, observing this, is immortal. Just think: Was it not "you" who looked out of your own 7-year-old eyes? Yet, if you saw that 7-year-old in the mirror **TODAY**, you would say "that's not me! When you are 70 years old, the **SAME** silent watcher will be looking out, but the body again will have changed completely. In the next life, and the next, the **SAME** silent watcher will look out of **OTHER** eyes in **OTHER** bodies! So get with the program! Identify with the **WATCHER** — the one who **STAYS** — and not the **BODIES!**) It would be like the mirror bulging into the shape of a cat. That destroys the mirror's clarity. It is biased. It wants to be **SOMETHING SPECIAL**. Just **REFLECT**; don't **CLING**. Keep up with the moment. When you think (or play video tapes in your head) you are adding to reality something from somewhere else — something that is **NOT** there **NOW**, and **SUBTRACTING** all you **MISS** while **DOING** this.

We are always compulsively doing. We can't just be. Meditation is just **BEING**, without **DOING-Anything!** Thinking is compulsive doing, it just

HAPPENS to you (wandering thoughts). what you want is a **NOT MOVING MIND**, as **ZEN** expresses it — a **KNOW NOTHING MIND**.

When you do this meditation correctly, you will experience a condition of complete purity. T. S. Eliot calls it a "condition of complete simplicity, costing not less than everything." He is right. It costs. But it is worth it. Keep at it. Like an ice cube, each time you expose the ego to these higher vibrations, it **MELTS** a little. What has taken time to build up takes time to dissolve, and when it is gone, you are free. You are like a rocket that has broken free of the earth's gravity and floats free in space, effortlessly. You are beyond the "clutches" of self, free from the virtual reality of the senses, out of the "matrix," and into reality.

QUICK CHECKLIST:

1. Attitude of detaching from "virtual reality"
2. Three "vehicles/bodies/elementals" in front of you.
3. Self-remembering: Don't get "swallowed up"
4. Be silent watcher: Just stare, keeping "bodies" in your sights at all times.
5. Whole **PERSONALITY** "out there" as object: netti, netti.
6. "Be here now." Keep up with present moment.
7. Be clear mirror/tv camera: no additions or subtractions.
8. No compulsive "doing"
9. Not-moving mind. Don't click on icons.
10. Beyond clutches of self: Effortless bliss and freedom.

Good Luck!

The Ship Sails or Sinks on Motive

"To Live to Benefit Mankind is the *first step*." The rest of the journey is commentary..
ONLOOKER

The Secret Doctrine teaches no *Atheism*, except in the Hindu sense of the word *nastika*, or the rejection of *idols*, including every anthropomorphic god. In this sense every Occultist is a *Nastika* (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, 279)

The hierophants and some Brahmans are accused of having administered to their epoptai strong drinks or anæsthetics to produce visions which shall be taken by the latter as realities. They did and do use sacred beverages which, like the Soma-drink, possess the faculty of freeing the astral form from the bonds of matter; but in those visions there is as little to be attributed to hallucination as in the glimpses which the scientist, by the help of his optical instrument, gets into the microscopic world. A man cannot perceive, touch, and converse with pure spirit through any of his bodily senses. Only spirit alone can talk to and see spirit; and even our astral soul, the *Doppelgänger*, is too gross, too much tainted yet with earthly matter to trust entirely to its perceptions and insinuations.

How dangerous may often become *untrained* mediumship, and how thoroughly it was understood and provided against by the ancient sages, is perfectly exemplified in the case of Socrates. The old Grecian philosopher was a "medium"; hence, he had never been initiated into the Mysteries; for such was the rigorous law. But he had his "familiar spirit" as they call it, his *daimonion*; and this invisible counsellor became the cause of his death. It is generally believed that if he was not initiated into the Mysteries it was because he himself neglected to become so. But the *Secret Records* teach us that it was

because he could not be admitted to participate in the sacred rites, and precisely, as we state, on account of his mediumship. There was a law against the admission not only of such as were convicted of deliberate *witchcraft** but even of those who were known to have “a familiar spirit.” The law was just and logical, because a genuine medium is more or less irresponsible; and the eccentricities of Socrates are thus accounted for in some degree. A medium must be *passive*; and if a firm believer in his “spirit-guide” he will allow himself to be ruled by the latter, not by the rules of the sanctuary. A *medium* of olden times, like the modern “medium” was subject to be *entranced* at the will and pleasure of the “power” which *controlled* him; therefore, he could not well have been entrusted with the awful secrets of the final initiation, “never to be revealed under the penalty of death.” The old sage, in unguarded moments of “spiritual inspiration,” revealed that which he had never learned; and was therefore put to death as an atheist.

How then, with such an instance as that of Socrates, in relation to the visions and spiritual wonders at the epoptai, of the Inner Temple, can any one assert that these seers, theurgists, and thaumaturgists were all “spirit-mediums”? Neither Pythagoras, Plato, nor any of the later more important Neo-platonists; neither Iamblichus, Longinus, Proclus, nor Apollonius of Tyana, were ever mediums; for in such case they would not have been admitted to the Mysteries at all. As Taylor proves — “This assertion of divine visions in the Mysteries is clearly confirmed by Plotinus. And in short, that magical evocation formed a part of the sacerdotal office in them, and that this was universally believed by all antiquity long before the era of the later Platonists,” shows that apart from natural “mediumship,” there has existed, from the beginning of time, a

mysterious **science**, discussed by many, but known only to a few

The use of it is a longing toward our only true and real home — the after-life, and a desire to cling more closely to our **parent spirit**; abuse of it is sorcery, witchcraft, *black magic*. Between the two is placed natural “mediumship”; a soul clothed with **imperfect matter**, a ready agent for either the one or the other, and utterly dependent on its surroundings of life, constitutional heredity — physical as well as mental — and on the nature of the “spirits” it attracts around itself. A blessing or a curse, as fate will have it, unless the medium is purified of earthly dross.

The reason why in every age so little has been generally known of the mysteries of initiation, is twofold. The first has already been explained by more than one author, and lies in the terrible penalty following the least indiscretion. The second, is the superhuman difficulties and even dangers which the daring candidate of old had to encounter, and either conquer, or die in the attempt, when, what is still worse, he did not lose his reason. There was no real danger to him whose mind had become thoroughly spiritualized, and so prepared for every terrific sight. He who fully recognized the power of his immortal spirit, and never doubted for one moment its omnipotent protection, had naught to fear. But woe to the candidate in whom the slightest physical fear — sickly child of matter — made him lose sight and faith in his own invulnerability. He who was not wholly confident of his moral fitness to accept the burden of these tremendous secrets was doomed.

The *Talmud* gives the story of the four Tanaïm, who are made, in allegorical terms, to enter into *the garden of delights*; *i.e.*, to be initiated into the occult and final science. (*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I 117-119)

“According to the teaching of our holy masters the names of the four who entered the garden of delight, are: Ben Asai, Ben Zoma, Acher, and Rabbi Akiba....

“Ben Asai looked and — lost his sight.

“Ben Zoma looked and — lost his reason.

“Acher made depredations in the plantation” (mixed up the whole and failed). “But Akiba, who had entered in peace, came out of it in peace, for the saint whose name be blessed had said, ‘This old man is worthy of serving us with glory.’”

“The learned commentators of the *Talmud*, the Rabbis of the synagogue, explain that the *garden of delight*, in which those four personages are made to enter, is but that mysterious science, the most terrible of sciences *for weak intellects, which it leads directly to insanity*,” says A. Franck, in his *Kabbala*. It is not the pure at heart and he who studies but with a view to perfecting himself and so more easily acquiring the promised immortality, who need have any fear; but rather he who makes of the science of sciences a sinful pretext for worldly motives, who should tremble. *The latter will never withstand the kabalistic evocations of the supreme initiation.*

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