

4 DISCIPLESHIP

4.1 Introduction

¹The following commentaries are not intended for disciples of the planetary hierarchy. They know everything that has been written on discipleship, and more. They are given individual instructions and are supposed to have assimilated the reality ideas, facts, and axioms there are in the esoteric literature.

²What has been written on discipleship is intended as an elementary orientation only, not as a stimulation for anyone to imagine himself into states which can only bring him disappointment. We have all of us a long way yet to go. The very future possibility, however, shows us the path that everybody will tread sometime. This knowledge facilitates orientation towards a goal worth striving after for other disorientated seekers such as us. Knowing the requirements is very valuable knowledge.

³The following is just an attempt to give aspirants to discipleship some “words to take with them”, something to ponder on and to analyse, to afford ideas for debate. It is not easy to find the path out of the jungle of those misconceptions, which since millennia have been proclaimed by diverse popes or other blind guides of mankind. It will be the individual’s business to test and to examine, not to accept uncritically. Common sense appears in healthy skepticism of everything that does not correspond to his own insight and experience, the understanding of his own level. If that principle had been applied, then we should have been spared those innumerable sects with their own creeds. Then everybody would have made his own view and, pursuing that path, would grope his way forward to the religion of wisdom and love, that religion which all wise men of all ages have had in common.

⁴This healthy skepticism is desirable also because there exist esoteric sects that do not originate from individuals connected with the planetary hierarchy. As always, the black lodge, when unable to hinder the spread of the esoteric knowledge, which it has tried to the very last, has established its own societies (also usurped ancient names), which parade “masters” who in their expositions are confusingly similar to those of the planetary hierarchy. The black lodge is also working much more intensely, which fact was intimated in the expression, “the children of the world are wiser than the children of light”, a hint that has of course been misunderstood by the learned.

⁵There are many different kinds and degrees of discipleship under the planetary hierarchy. Once accepted, for ever accepted. This does not mean, however, that disciples always know about their status. There are disciples who are unaware of their discipleship. The first time you are definitively accepted, you know it. But that knowledge must then be renewed in each new incarnation. And it depends on the individual whether this will happen. The first condition is that the disciple is living for others, for mankind, for evolution, for all life, and not for himself.

⁶In any case it is not enough to have acquired esoteric knowledge, nor to have become a saint (48:2). Nor is it enough to have reattained the stage of humanity (47:5) in a new incarnation. The requirements for discipleship are continuously tightened up according as the general level of development of mankind rises, and that of the human élite in proportion.

⁷A common misconception should be definitively scotched, namely that the aspirant who is consciously and purposely striving for discipleship can expect to be accepted as a disciple fairly soon. This is an error, as is the idea that the disciple has the fifth kingdom within reach. Everything is individual, depending on a number of different factors, quite apart from the level of development he has reached. The most serious hindrances are: bad sowing not yet reaped and insufficient percentages of necessary qualities, which can be numerous. How many incarnations the aspirant will need in order to become accepted as a disciple is impossible to say. If the disciple will reach his goal within twelve to seven incarnations, then he has worked well indeed. A comfort for the disciple, however, is that his incarnations can be taken in rapid succession:

seven incarnations within seven hundred years.

⁸Whatever has been written on discipleship by the various occult sects before the year 1920 is misleading or in any case insufficient. Naïve minds have imagined that merely because they join some occult sect and accept some esoteric facts like regular believers, they are accepted as disciples, which is a serious error. Their good reaping has brought them into theosophy (the only system which is not positively misleading), so that they have been able to liberate themselves from the ruling illusions and fictions. It is a very long step from there to discipleship, however.

⁹Many people who study the esoteric doctrine have believed themselves ready for discipleship even before they have become “personalities” (have acquired mental will). This has brought the matter into ridicule and discredit. They might ask themselves whether they know their group and are in telepathic contact with its members.

¹⁰It is characteristic of general conceit that, as soon as they hear about discipleship, they believe they are ready to become disciples. They become vegetarians, swear off drinking and smoking and become self-important also in other respects. Their foppiness is comical. Learn first to realize that you are fools and that if you manage to become accepted disciples in some dozen of incarnations hence, then you have not done too badly.

¹¹As soon as people (occultists of all descriptions) hear about discipleship, they are at once to the fore offering themselves. They know neither the conditions nor the price. If they are told that it will cost them everything, they are gladly willing to sacrifice everything. But what have they got to offer and to sacrifice? The sacrifice required is the entire capacity of the perfected first self. How many have reached that point in their development? And the majority certainly have to wait. Because before you are ready for the great sacrifice, you will have many incarnations of assiduous striving and single-minded work behind you. Aspirants, who are old initiates and, theoretically, would possess the qualifications, if they are put to the test, as a rule fail in the relatively simple tests they unwittingly undergo. However often this is said, it is as quickly forgotten – as usually happens with everything theoretical, which needs to be put into practice in order to be retained.

¹²People seem to be expecting a wonder. But no other wonder shall be given unto them but that of the prophet Jonah. They will be rejected when they thought the glory would consume them. Then a new incarnation, and so much for that tale!

¹³People – even those at higher stages whom you would expect to have learnt to see that they are at the idiot stage as to their ability to judge superhuman stages – seem to find it all too easy to consider themselves chosen disciples. Undiscerning admirers of “noble souls” have also thought themselves competent to decide who are disciples. It should be said emphatically that this is nonsense, for of such matters outsiders can know nothing. And those who believe they are chosen may certainly content themselves with being called (with the possibility of being chosen in some future incarnation).

¹⁴Those works which 45-self D.K. dictated to Alice A. Bailey are intended for disciples and thus for those who have a prospect of attaining the fifth natural kingdom within a few incarnations; who have learnt what is to be learnt in the human kingdom; who are ready to become second selves. There is a risk that these books are misinterpreted by those who have not even reached the stage of humanity and do not live in order to serve mankind and unity. Much that the mental consciousness thinks it can grasp has quite another and deeper meaning than the obvious one. Ideas are energies, and of their effects people still know very little. He who does not put them into expedient work, who does not realize that knowledge entails responsibility, has understood but little of esoterics. Not all esoteric literature is for all. Just as in school there is a series of ever higher classes, so in the school of disciples. What is learnt in the highest class is not suited to those in the lowest class. They would just misunderstand it.

¹⁵Those in lower “classes” believe they understand what those in higher classes are taught to comprehend. And it is no use pointing this out, because all think themselves capable of under-

standing everything they manage to pick up. Man's conceit, belief in his own ability to comprehend and understand, is ineradicable before he has reached the Sokranean realization. We positively understand only that which we have first learnt to comprehend by experimental experience. Anyone who "believes", who has not thoroughly learnt the basic difference between knowing and not knowing (which those who believe they know cannot discern), who assumes anything when not possessing all the facts, who trusts to impulses, vagaries, freaks, assumptions without sufficient grounds, is unfit for esoterics. One does not know because one has read it in newspapers or books, because authorities have said it, because it seems possible or likely, because it is handed down by tradition. All academic faculties have in all times vouched for the truth of all manner of follies and will do it yet until esoterics has disclosed their terrible ignorance.

¹⁶Formerly the teaching was given individually. The teacher had not more disciples than he was able to so teach. Nowadays, after esoterics has been publicized, this knowledge has been resuscitated in most of those who were once initiates, and therefore the stream of aspirants has reached such dimensions that new methods must be tried out. Those who are nowadays accepted as disciples of the planetary hierarchy are brought together into groups having consciousness of community. The teaching is done in these groups and no longer individually. Formerly the teacher could take it very easy. The disciple was to a great extent to learn by having opportunities of visualized study of the various processes of manifestation. The teacher made this possible by putting the disciple into such states (a faint resemblance to what may occur under hypnosis) that his otherwise dormant centres of consciousness were put into temporary action. Besides, there were also other ways of "reeling the films" from the atomic consciousness of the emotional world (48:1). Every teacher had his own method. Oral teaching, which can never impart the same knowledge, was thus superfluous in such cases.

¹⁷There ought not to be any need for this, but it has regrettably proved necessary to point out that the collective teaching will be of an entirely different kind than the individual one and that what is intended for a group welded together in concerted work cannot be understood by a single individual.

¹⁸Thus it is possible for groups (but not for single individuals) at the stage of humanity to come into direct contact with the planetary hierarchy. Only 45-selves (superessential selves) and still higher selves are counted as fully authorized representatives of the hierarchy, but neither causal selves (47) nor essential selves (46). Those of the two latter degrees can be deputies but do not invoke any power of attorney or bear witness to themselves and their stage of development. They regard themselves as "disciples" only, which also aspirants to discipleship can do, since they are disciples of disciples.

¹⁹"If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true" holds good for all without exception. This categorical statement by Christos has unfortunately been totally forgotten during two thousand years, with very regrettable consequences. It has obviously not been realized yet how ridiculous it is to bear witness of oneself. That is an attempt to force one's self-esteem on others. However, everybody has an absolute right to his own esteem without other people pressing him. And only such a judgement has any significance as everything else that is independent and comes from oneself.

²⁰That man will reach farthest who does not know where he stands and where he is going, since all speculation of ignorance in that respect will mislead him. The main thing is that we "follow the light we have" and leave the rest to our Augoeides who see the path and also guide the seekers to the goal. We develop automatically by serving in the way we can serve, which also will be done automatically (unconsciously) when there is striving for unity present. Our own work for self-realization will be scamped and illusory, until we learn from our teacher just how we should meditate to develop our consciousness methodically and systematically. That process is individual and without risks only when supervised by that hierarchical personage

who has assumed the task of making the individual enter the consciousness of community. No truly responsible teacher will engage to assign any meditation method for general use. Such a method must entail the increased introduction of energies into the envelopes, resulting in overstimulation with serious consequences.

4.2 From the Fourth to the Fifth Natural Kingdom

¹The transition from the fourth to the fifth natural kingdom has, like everything esoteric, been named by many different terms. Most authors who have written on the subject have had their personal views on it. And so the seeker is as usual treated to confusing fictions and is increasingly bewildered. The following account can perhaps clarify what it really is about.

²Besant and Leadbeater have written much that is misleading about this transition. The “initiations”, in particular, should never have been treated. The planetary hierarchy disapproves of the chatter about “masters”. Discipleship is collective work.

³The greater part of that so-called esoteric literature which came into being in the years 1875–1920 can be regarded as highly unsatisfactory. This was unavoidable, since all too few facts were available to make a satisfactory rational system of orientation possible.

⁴Such impressive terms as initiation and discipleship should really be discarded. We may be glad if we deserve the name of “aspirants to discipleship under the planetary hierarchy”.

⁵The frequent talk about “masters”, about whom the writers just believe they know something, has entailed the definitive cancellation of that word from the esoteric vocabulary. That title has been abused long enough. Anyone who has become a disciple of a 45-self never speaks about his “master” or even of the level of development he has attained. That has been energetically maintained by the planetary hierarchy. Others know better, however. But then they have not made their vow of silence, not even learnt the art of being silent. That much is certain: anyone who has become a disciple does not even hint at it.

⁶All seekers are quite free to call themselves “aspirants”. Most seekers are, not knowing it, and automatically all who have reached the stage of humanity (47:5), even though in this incarnation they be atheists, agnostics, or skeptics. If they are such atheists, etc., it is because they in former incarnations worked their way through the systems of thought offered by religion and philosophy and came to see their fictitiousness. If in addition they came to learn the church’s (when it was in power) interpretation of the teaching of love in a torture-chamber or at the stake, then their attitude is understandable.

⁷Neither philosophy nor science will ever be able to provide a rational working hypothesis to explain reality and life.

⁸Those who want to pass to the fifth natural kingdom should learn about the conditions for this: being in contact with your Augoeides, assimilating the planetary hierarchy’s view on human evolution, acquiring the necessary qualities and abilities.

⁹If you are content to live in the worlds of man; if you enjoy or think you will learn something from the products of culture, if you do not want to do everything to reach the causal and essential stages, then you do not need any one-pointedness of purpose.

¹⁰In this connection karma yoga is mentioned as the only truly practical yoga.

¹¹The planetary hierarchy needs helpers in its work to help mankind. Without co-workers in the physical world the hierarchy can achieve very little. The distress of mankind in all respects is enormous. The greatest obstacles to evolution are the ruling untrue ideologies, which mislead, brutalize, and satanize mankind, engender the repulsive tendency (hatred), strengthen egoism and mania for possessions that deprive others of the necessities of life. If people lived in harmony with the laws of life, then there would be no want. “Nature” too (the lower three natural kingdoms) would then live to serve a mankind that lived to serve instead of exploiting nature for its own self-glory.

¹²We can all help by making our contributions in politics, social work, economy, science, etc.

We must see to it that nobody will be in want or will lack the prospects of acquiring knowledge of reality and life and insight into the conditions of leading a happy life. Life would be a paradise if all lived to serve. That is the level we must reach: to help and not exploit one another.

¹³Anyone who will not or cannot understand this and will not strive to realize this knowledge, is not even an aspirant to discipleship. And that is the least which the planetary hierarchy demands of the individual if he is to expect special consideration in the application of the law of destiny.

¹⁴Despite everything, we really are better off than we deserve according to the law of reaping. It is necessarily so, since otherwise no development of consciousness would be possible for a mankind at the stage of hatred. We must compensate for this better condition, however, by helping in our turn when we have reached that insight.

¹⁵In their naïve individualism, people seem to have great difficulty in learning how to see that everything is collective, that we belong to a collective first of all, that no life and, above all, no development would be possible without collectives. The least reflection should clarify what the individual would be without the help of the collective. His very life, everything he has got for nothing from life, from civilization and culture, everything is made a debt to life, to the collective, a debt that must be paid.

¹⁶Before 1920 discipleship was a personal relation between a member of the fifth natural kingdom and a select individual of the fourth. After 1920 it is a relation between a 45-self and a group of individuals. Thus the condition of discipleship is group community. Everybody in the group is in telepathic rapport with all the others. The purpose of the group is not primarily consciousness development, which rather becomes an automatic procedure, but some sort of concerted work for mankind.

¹⁷Formerly, the transition from the fourth to the fifth natural kingdom was an individual process. One after another had reached the perspective consciousness (47:5) of the humanist stage, so that he could be taught how to acquire causal consciousness (47:3). However, nowadays (from 1925 on) so many clans at the stage of humanity incarnate that individual treatment is no more possible. This has brought about some changes. The requirements for discipleship have simultaneously been tightened up, so that the transition of the individuals to the essential world is done in groups. This means that they must jointly contribute to the forming of an essential group- soul in the essential world. This also has the advantage that they complement the emotional, mental, and causal qualities of one another, in doing which the individuals get a stability that none of them is able to acquire by himself. Thanks to this group-soul they can more easily join the essential collective. Thus the disciples must already in the physical world find “their group”, in which criticism is non-existent, all help each other to develop, all feel that they are “one soul” (precisely what essential “love” means). This also implies a collective consciousness of the group in which everybody knows what the others think and feel.

¹⁸The transition from the fourth to the fifth natural kingdom (world 46) is made in stages.

¹⁹It cannot be too strongly emphasized that it is impossible for man “to come into the kingdom of heaven”, to enter the essential world, by his own endeavours.

²⁰The “nirvana” of the yoga philosophers is at best the causal world, in which they lose their consciousness. The yoga philosophy deals with its own imaginative constructions, which have no correspondences in reality. The yogis have misunderstood Patanjali’s Sutras completely. They read their own findings and experiences into his account, which was intended for initiates, and the result is just one great delusion.

²¹The transition to the fifth kingdom implies that the monad, hitherto centred in the first triad, passes to the second triad. This process is effected during a series of incarnations, in which the monad centres into one after the other of the three units of the second triad: as a causal self in the mental atom (47:1); as an essential self, in 46:1; and as a superessential self, in 45:4

(nowadays in 45:1 of the third triad). The number of incarnations required for this depends on the individual's purposefulness, stamina, and will to unity.

²²Originally the transition implied that the monad in the first-triad mental molecule (47:4) passed, via the inmost centre of the causal envelope, to the second-triad mental atom (47:1), in the process becoming a second self after having been a first self. The planetary hierarchy considers that this is not theoretically impossible without a teacher from the hierarchy, but that such a thing is without precedent. The pertaining processes of activity and consciousness require such a methodical approach that the individual without personal guidance cannot avoid making serious mistakes with disastrous consequences.

²³Therefore, the individual must become a disciple of some member of the planetary hierarchy. The minimum requirement for acceptance is that the individual, after his incarnation as a saint (in which he acquired consciousness in the highest emotional molecular kind, 48:2), has acquired perspective consciousness (47:5) and devotes his life to the service of mankind and of evolution. He has seen through the illusions of power, glory, and wealth, has seen that man is unable to solve the problems of reality (of which the philosophers think themselves able), has seen that science is enormously limited also in physical respect (since it knows nothing about the etheric envelope and its four molecular kinds). By his service to others than himself he shows that he possesses the qualifications of acquiring the common, the essential consciousness and joining group consciousness.

²⁴The requirements for discipleship are constantly tightened up according as the human élite (individuals at the stage of humanity) increase in numbers and also acquire esoteric knowledge and so enormously widened understanding of life.

²⁵One result of the more stringent requirements for discipleship and advancement within the planetary hierarchy is that it is not so much a matter of becoming a causal self, an essential self (46), a superessential self (45) as of becoming a second self and then a third self. The object is to conquer all three kinds of consciousness in the second triad and third triad. Even if for the time being this must be done in stages, it is reckoned that these follow one another so closely that all three are living realities from the beginning, that there are "percentages" of all three even at the first step. It is obvious that this increases the demands on the individual as well as on his Augoeides and Protogonos, and the teachers from the planetary hierarchy.

²⁶The initiative has come from the planetary government, methods have been worked out in the planetary hierarchy in order to enable individuals to receive and assimilate the requisite energies. We understand from this alone the insufficiency of those directions for discipleship which especially theosophist Annie Besant elaborated on the basis of those laid down in the book, *At the Feet of the Master*. They concern but a preparatory stage.

²⁷Long before the aspirant can be accepted as a disciple he must, in his life of service, have proven that he possesses the requisite qualities and abilities, above all be able to forget himself. The right attitude is seen in the following excerpt of a letter from a serving brother on "the path".

²⁸"Personally, I don't ponder on how far I've come, nor how many incarnations remain. I don't think that matters, for when you've finally learnt what love is, then the consequence must be that you incarnate with joy even under the most trying circumstances, however often. The conclusion is obvious: to make the best possible of the very incarnation you've got. To ennoble qualities, not in order to quickly reach the goal but to set up a good receiver for the transmissions of higher powers; and to be a connecting link between others in the wholeness of life. That is a job you can do for any length of time."

²⁹Life on our planet is direful, the worst in our solar system. To incarnate in a mankind which lacks the knowledge of reality and life, which has been idiotized, brutalized, satanized through all manner of emotional illusions and mental fictions, might be called a harsh fate. It is true that suffering exists only in the lowest three physical and emotional spheres (49:5-7 and 48:5-7). It is in the physical world, however, that we learn, and that spells painful lessons. It is in the

physical world that the basis is laid for our illusory and fictitious views. It is in the physical world that we sow and reap. So Buddha certainly had reason for his statement that “life is misery”. Life in the mental world is no full “compensation”, for we do not learn anything there but rather forget our bitter lessons.

³⁰Everybody should be all the more anxious to make physical life a rational life, so that people cease to hate each other and cease to complicate life for each other. Everything else is inessential. Whatever working hypothesis we have accepted in our attempts at grasping the meaning of life is our private business. We accept the one that makes life least difficult to live. When people have made physical life a paradise (as far as that is possible), then human consciousness development will work out in the easiest possible manner. Strange thing that this is so hard to grasp. Hitherto people have made life more difficult for each other, and according to the Law no development is possible with that attitude. We shall just be born into increasingly unsuitable circumstances.

³¹The planetary hierarchy wants no disciples who are thinking of their own development, only those who consider that of others and forget themselves. “He is greatest who is the servant of all.” He is least who is the lord of all. The wise man knows that he “knows nothing” worth knowing. Only the fool is great in his own eyes. These are nought but truisms: everybody knows them, yet nobody cares. The laws of life are simple and easy to apply for anyone who has not got stuck in some idiology hostile to life. Anyone who does not care for these laws and is not interested in applying them, has but poor chances in future incarnations.

4.3 The Stage of Humanity

¹The three stages in the development of mental-causal consciousness are as follows:

the stage of civilization	47:6,7
the stage of humanity	47:4,5
the stage of ideality	47:2,3

²In order to attain the stage of humanity it is necessary to have acquired the power of emotional attraction (48:2,3), the stage of culture proper.

³It is true that, according to the law of self-realization, the individual himself must do the necessary preparatory work for the attainment of higher stages. But at the present general stage of mankind’s development (the stage of civilization: 47:6,7), and without the necessary esoteric knowledge (which remains esoteric), the individual cannot vitalize the centres in his various envelopes in the right manner. Instruction and discipleship are required for that. The first time he is a disciple the individual attains the stage of culture; the second time, the stage of humanity; the third time, the stage of ideality. In so doing the individual has become a causal self and is admitted to the brotherhood of the planetary hierarchy. He will be a full member only on becoming a 45-self and acquiring essential and superessential envelopes. But as a causal self he has concluded his consciousness development in the human kingdom.

⁴The expressions, “mankind” and “general stage of mankind”, used in the following do not refer to all mankind but to the majority (more than 50 per cent) and certainly not to the individuals at the stage of barbarism.

⁵Mankind is at the emotional stage. That is largely true also of the so-called intelligentsia who have acquired principle thinking (47:6). Their goal is the stage of the mystic, and subsequently that of the saint. That is one of the grounds why esoterics will attract the interest of only the all too few and exceptional people.

⁶A person at the stage of humanity has the stage of the saint behind him, has attained it once in a previous life. The ancients expressed this as having taken the “second initiation”. In subsequent incarnations he may be unaware of this himself. This condition will be changed, however. For the intention is that in the future all disciples will acquire continuity of consciousness, so that they will be able to retain their self-identity throughout their incarnations.

This will be made possible by means of the common superindividual “group-soul” to which disciples belong.

⁷Exoterists cannot determine whether a person at the stage of humanity is a saint or not. In order to be a saint one must, according to their opinion, be generally recognized as such. Public opinion gives the verdict. Apparently, the voice of the people is the voice of god.

⁸All who have reached the stage of humanity and have acquired perspective consciousness are automatically aspirants. Utterly few of them are aware of their status. Most of them would categorically deny such a possibility, since they do not have access to their own causal super-conscious. As a rule, they quite appreciate their mental capacity but do not know what it depends on. Modern education affords them no clue. They acknowledge the fabulous triumphs of science and technology. Their common sense demonstrates soon enough that the dogmas of theology and the “metaphysical” systems of philosophy are untenable. Should they happen to come into contact with “occultism”, they will be deterred by its unreliable, often ridiculous quasi-knowledge. Almost inevitably they become agnostics, skeptics in their attitude to the superphysical.

⁹In contrast, occultists are stuffed with all manner of fictions with which that kind of literature is bristling. There are plenty of mystagogues and occult phantasts. Often you find in them a mishmash of religion, philosophy, scientific hypotheses, and Indian yoga.

¹⁰A small minority of those at the stage of humanity are initiates of various knowledge orders since long ago. The latent learning in their subconscious makes itself so strongly felt in their instinct of life that they have remained seekers, despite everything. It is characteristic of such a disciple that he will never accept anything that wars against his common sense, against laws of nature and laws of life, against the basic principles of existence. He cannot possibly accept any of the ruling ideologies but must go on seeking until he finds a working hypothesis that affords the simplest and most general explanations, accords a rational meaning to life, explains the kingdoms of nature as stages of development. He refuses to accept the assertion that man is the crowning work of creation and the end-product of evolution. As for the rest, he is skeptical rather than credulous.

¹¹Sooner or later he will recontact esoterics and will then at once find it to be immediately obvious. Then he will also learn about the prerequisites of discipleship. The most important of them will be detailed in the following, in order to clear away existing misconceptions.

4.4 *Seekers*

¹Anyone who is content with himself, his views, his conditions, has hardly any reason to wish for something different, does not feel the need for liberation from “himself”.

²Man needs balance, certainty, security, harmony, and happiness. If he lacks these things, he will perhaps seek after the grounds and causes of this discord. There may be innumerable causes, outward and inward ones: dissatisfaction with people and things round him, with conditions of life; grief at mistakes made; conflicts between ideals and reality, between new ideas and old, between subconscious complexes, between complexes of inferiority and superiority, between physical, emotional, and mental interests, etc.

³Psychoanalysis tries to bring subconscious conflicts up into waking consciousness and establish their causes, in which process those illusions lose their power.

⁴Conflicts with the surrounding world can depend on deficient adaptation but more often than not on our own vulnerability. The remedy is to acquire the Stoic complex of invulnerability, which makes it impossible for all the attacks of hatred, all the vexations of life, to reach us. It is for most people necessary to liberate themselves from their dependence on the appreciation and judgements of others, which are always erroneous, since man’s unconscious (his true self) is beyond their reach.

⁵Before there is any chance for the individual to embark with success on his process of libera-

tion, he must have seen through many illusions and realized their uselessness in life or hostility to life (their lack of life-value, as the philosophers would call it). Still mankind has not seen the deceitfulness of its emotional illusions and mental fictions. Wealth (belongings), honour (fame), and power with their concomitant elixir of life, hatred, are the incentives of mankind. The individual must have acquired sufficient experience of life (attained to that level of development) to see that human life, at the present stage of mankind's development, is nothing to be desired. He must have seen human ignorance of life and his own inability, must be able "to sell all that he has and buy the pearl of great price" (the pearl of the wisdom of life). He must have acquired that instinct of life (the result of the experience of thousands of incarnations) which tells him that "this" cannot be the meaning and goal of life. He will then become a seeker and goes on seeking until he finally finds the "right way".

⁶Anyone who thinks that the knowledge of reality may be bought at too high a price, need not worry lest opportunities of studying the knowledge will be offered in the future. Only he who wants to sacrifice everything for it, is ripe for it. Only he who sells everything he has got in order to buy the pearl, realizes its value.

⁷What most people say they know is what they think they know and that is seldom knowledge. They are believers and not knowers. They judge without having examined the matter themselves. They constantly offend against the "second law of thought": do not accept anything without sufficient grounds. Public opinion, what "everybody knows", is not a sufficient ground. It makes mistakes in 99 cases out of 100.

⁸University studies might be of great value for orientation. Pursued in the right way, they furnish a better understanding of the general developmental stage of mankind. They help the esoterician to see how little or how much the "intelligentsia" know about reality and life and how he might be able to work among them in order to widen their perspectives on existence. The esoterician refrains from criticism, as this only arouses opposition and so makes it more difficult, or impossible altogether, for him to help them. The important thing is to make them reflect, not so much to give them esoteric knowledge before they desire it themselves.

⁹Those are true seekers who never reject anything without first examining it themselves, whatever public opinion, any kind of authority, and all the apostles and prophets of wisdom preach, praise, or condemn. To have an opinion ready for every new impression evidences too great ignorance of life. To believe you know a thing without having examined it for yourself leads to emotional illusoriness and mental fictitiousness and blocks the way to the knowledge of reality. All too often we are forced to rely on authorities, place our lives in other people's hands. But when there is no compulsion, it is the firm principle of the seeker in life not to accept the opinions of others, but to form his own view. Of course this has nothing to do with the fool's contempt for authority, evidence of the same lack of judgement as the worship of authority.

¹⁰A seeker examines what he is to judge. It should perhaps be added here that there are various categories of judges. Some are incompetent for the task, some just want to have opportunities for rejection under the semblance of expert knowledge. They are the enemies of truth.

¹¹What characterizes the seekers after truth is that they are not believers, that they refuse to accept the ruling ideologies, that they are skeptics, that they have remained seekers despite everything. They realize pretty soon that "it can't be like the learned say". They never stop seeking, for they have an instinctive certainty that the knowledge must exist. That instinct is a manifestation of the subconscious of the self (thus not of the brain), the insight acquired in previous lives. They unconsciously continue their search for the "lost word of the master" or the "philosopher's stone".

¹²When anyone who has once in a former incarnation acquired the knowledge of reality, meets it again in a new life, then this rouses the instinctive understanding he once reached. This does not mean, however, that he in his new brain possesses the facts he will need in order to be able to explain the matter to others. Facts must be reacquired by studying them anew. That

means thorough studies, which in most cases should take a few years. Not until then does the mental system stand out in full clarity, so that using it you can explain thousands of previously inexplicable facts.

¹³By studying esoterics man enters the world of ideas, the world of Platonic ideas, the causal world, the world of real knowledge. It is by working these ideas up into an integrated whole, into a sovereign view on the worlds of man, that the individual acquires the condition of causal intuition.

¹⁴There are two kinds of seekers. The one kind realize the imperfection of the human intellect and the untenability of the ruling ideologies. They try to find the real knowledge of reality, being instinctively certain that such a knowledge must exist – their latent learning makes itself felt. They want to have knowledge in order to liberate themselves from emotional illusions and mental fictions and are content that they have reached clarity. The other category seek for the knowledge in order to serve evolution better, thus do not seek the knowledge for their own sake but for the sake of others. These latter ones are the aspirants to discipleship even though they do not know it themselves.

¹⁵“Seeker” is perhaps the best term for unconscious aspirants to discipleship. That they have remained seekers is clear from the fact that they have not been able to accept any one of the ruling ideologies in religion, philosophy, or science, which all of them are the speculative products of the ignorance of life. Understanding this is the first condition. Many atheists and skeptics are unconscious seekers. They have sought and arrived at a negative result.

¹⁶They are anxious to learn to comprehend and understand more and more, so that they count nothing human alien from them. They have instinctive understanding of all concepts of right, of tolerance, humanity, and brotherhood. As a rule they sense their estrangement in a mankind that is still at the stages of barbarism and civilization with a scanty élite at the stage of culture.

¹⁷Conditions of discipleship are that you are approaching the end of your sojourn in the human kingdom, that you have acquired those qualities and abilities which are necessary to continue your consciousness development in the next higher kingdom, the highest emotional and mental capacity (48:2 and 47:4). The individual then has great prospects of becoming a causal self within just a few incarnations.

¹⁸The planetary hierarchy is not in the least eager to recruit disciples merely to help them pass to the fifth natural kingdom. That is a quite natural, almost automatic process when man is finished as a man. The planetary hierarchy has many more disciples than it needs in order to fill those vacant posts in its “civil service department” which have come about as a consequence of the transition of the 43-selves to the first cosmic kingdom. The planetary hierarchy looks for co-workers in the worlds of man. There is a crying want of “labourers in the vineyard”, individuals willing and able to help the planetary hierarchy in its work to give mankind knowledge of reality, of life and of the Law, to solve the many problems of expedient life in the physical world as a necessary condition of consciousness development, the realization of the meaning of life. That shortage is the one to be made up, and those who do not wish to help in that task lack all the qualifications for life in higher kingdoms, where life is service.

¹⁹That is also the wisest thing a man can do, for it is by leading a life of service that man automatically acquires the essential qualities and abilities required for entry into the fifth natural kingdom. As a principal motive this would strengthen egoism, but as a principal insight it facilitates his striving to become a capable instrument in the service of evolution. The aspirant develops in so far as he grows more inclusive, thus quite the reverse of the striving of self-glory to be more exclusive. By incorporating the consciousness of others into the individual self-consciousness the latter expands.

²⁰Even the man who has succeeded in being accepted as a disciple must be clearly aware of the fact that he is a trying burden to his teacher and to disciples more advanced than he, that he is disoriented more than anything else, that he still makes little but mistakes in his ignorance

and so demonstrates his lack of judgement in totally new tasks.

²¹Many seekers want to have clarity and certainty, want to have knowledge of reality. Having got esoteric knowledge, many want to reach the next higher kingdom quickly in order to escape the compulsion of reincarnation. Those are, however, egoistic motives. We receive knowledge in order to better help others, not in order to feel superior and important. Such individuals are blind to their ridiculous insignificance, however many decorations they parade. All comparison is abortive. But if we would compare ourselves to anybody at all, then it should be to those in higher kingdoms. That is a method of regaining the right balance.

²²According to the Law only those can have a right to knowledge who desire it in order to better serve and help. That is the one right motive. The individual is egoistic as an individual. In order to join a higher kingdom it is required that you join the collective yourself, having ceased to be an isolated individual.

4.5 The Aspirant to Discipleship

¹Many people who hear about the planetary hierarchy and wish to become accepted disciples, wonder how this might be done. They should know that everyone who has reached the stage of culture and has come into contact with his Augoeides is a subject of special scrutiny for that reason alone. There is no risk of being “disregarded”. Any attempt to “force one’s way” evidences immaturity, lack of understanding, and absence of trust in the Law. Nowadays subjective causal consciousness in 47:3 (the intelligence centre of the causal envelope) is required. Moreover you must be able to forget yourself, your own development, in the work for evolution and mankind. And last but not least you must be absolutely free from curiosity about the private affairs of other people and be “divinely indifferent” to your own destiny.

²Those can be called aspirants who have remained seekers after the knowledge of reality and life. All those at the stage of humanity who want to be aspirants, are aspirants. The individual cannot decide when he is able to become a disciple. And, strictly speaking, that is a matter on which he should not even reflect. He knows nothing about the pertaining laws. He knows only that everything is done according to law and that he will become a disciple when he has acquired the necessary qualities and abilities. That much is certain: it is not enough to have reached the stage of the saint.

³You do not make up your mind to become an aspirant. You are one without knowing it, although perhaps not until you think you have a long way yet to go.

⁴The planetary hierarchy encourages nobody but, on the contrary, emphasizes the undreamt-of difficulties that meet the aspirant and warns that his incarnations will be difficult. But if he possesses the will to reach the goal, despite everything, then he will be accepted on probation. He is then brought together with those individuals who make up his esoteric family and whom he has come to know during thousands of incarnations, even though he may not have met any one in his present life. Together they will make up an esoteric group. Molecules from their causal envelopes are brought together into a material form, which is to make up the common group-soul. The disciples are taught how to contact all the members of their group telepathically via this consciousness of community. All their training is collective and is done via the group envelope, which functions as a larger self of the individuals. The condition of this is of course that the expressions of the emotionality and mentality of the other members, which the individual perceives as his own, do not arouse criticism and discomfort, even though they appear “peculiar” or “imperfect”. There must be nothing but harmony.

⁵It is by no means as the aspirant believes: that his next goal is the acquisition of causal consciousness, then contact with the planetary hierarchy, and finally service. Instead, his first task is to acquire the sense of solidarity, the consciousness of community, which lays aside the tendency to exclude anybody (whoever it may be). Then comes the ability to draw others into unity. And thereupon he will take such action as makes it easier for mankind to discover unity.

It is solely a matter of helping others. When you are able to do that and have forgotten yourself, then you will receive the help you need yourself. You acquire knowledge in order to help others, not for yourself. "Forget yourself and live for others; then others will live for you even though you will not know it." As long as there is anything left of your own dear self, you cannot enter unity. That is the reason why so utterly few aspirants have any chance at all.

⁶Also in this case the satanists make the most of the occasion, and many people have joined their lodge with masters confusingly similar to those of the planetary hierarchy, believing they have ended up in the world of Platonic ideas. There are such theatres in the emotional world. And the egoist will always be taken in.

⁷The aspirant to discipleship must learn to see what an idiot and egoist he is. All his calculations of making a rapid career, of accelerating his development, of prompt transition to the fifth kingdom in nature, are basically instances of egoism. If he truly loved (were filled with the consciousness of unity), then he would first of all see to it that all mankind was "saved" before him. All thoughts of appreciation, recognition, reward, compensation, are egoism. "He who does his utmost has not done enough" is certainly a paradox but expresses the right attitude. That aspirant who has not understood the Law and does not keep to it alone in all his trials, strains and seemingly meaningless suffering of all kinds does not stand a chance of passing the tests that meet for discipleship. To become an accepted disciple is not easy. And disciples are "suspended", if it would finally appear that they cannot endure, which has happened in many cases. And to be suspended can mean that they must wait until a new contact is made. "To take the kingdom of heaven by force" is to prove to be a valuable "labourer in the vineyard".

⁸The aspirant must expect hindrances of countless kinds: physical obstacles, hereditary disposition, environment, qualities acquired, time and circumstances, national, family, and individual reaping, just to enumerate the most common ones. The only necessary thing in this is: never give up. Failures never prevent success. It is by making mistakes that we learn. It is by meeting with difficulties that we develop.

⁹The intention here is not to deter aspirants from aspiring to discipleship, just to warn against those teachers who dangle easy arrangements before the ignorant. Belief in such things must entail many bitter disappointments. All is demanded, in all respects. You must be prepared for poverty, sickness, abandonment, slander, persecution, and, worst of all, "spiritual darkness", voluntary and joyful sacrifice of "everything", even of the "knowledge".

¹⁰Aspirants to discipleship, who wish to participate in the planetary hierarchy's work for mankind, are encouraged to work, for it is through the very work that they develop, acquire the requisite qualities and abilities, and become ever more competent co-workers. They learn through the old proven method of trial and error. It is by making mistakes that we learn, and the less experienced we are, the more mistakes we shall make. By elimination and constant improvement we become more and more competent co-workers in the process of evolution. We learn humility, grow ever more fit for service and "instinctively" aware of what other people need and how we are to best meet their needs. Where the will to unity remains unaffected we have done our best.

¹¹The aspirant to discipleship does not wait for the "master" to appear and tell him, "now you are good enough". The learning he has gained in the esoteric literature enables him to give people the true knowledge and to free them from their illusions and fictions. He makes his small contribution to the common work wherever he can and in so doing shows that he is fit for greater tasks.

¹²Aspirants recognize each other by their concerted striving for unity, by their practical service, by their understanding of the Law, by their freedom from dogmatism and moralism, illusions and fictions, by their freedom from judging and classing, above all from criticism and valuing. They do not advise people on personal matters. Everything personal is taboo both as regards other people and themselves. Other people's relationships to "god" or to the planetary

hierarchy are entirely their own business, and the aspirant will guide nobody on the “right path”. Everybody must be able to find that path by himself. Otherwise that question has come up too early and the result can just be misleading.

¹³The planetary hierarchy does not care about how aspirants order their private lives. That is their private business. All manner of fanatics, who prescribe to people what they may eat etc., how they should meditate etc., have no right to invoke the planetary hierarchy in these respects. It is quite another matter that special rules apply for those who have been accepted as disciples and are undergoing special training. Aspirants eat whatever suits them best and makes them the most efficient. Everybody’s inherited organism is unique and different from all the others and craves its special treatment.

¹⁴Former initiates of secret knowledge orders strive instinctively for further consciousness development, acquisition of ever higher kinds of consciousness, further activation of the passive consciousness in ever higher molecular kinds. Without knowledge of the right methods of activation it is of course inevitable that this is done without any plan and more or less at random. They seek to ennoble their emotional life and acquire an ever greater insight into reality, not just in order to be more competent in their jobs or to be more successful in life.

¹⁵In his loneliness the aspirant has opportunities of meditation and of acquiring knowledge.

¹⁶The aspirant learns to understand the necessity and functions of his envelopes. Through them he has experiences, learns how to achieve his tasks. He also realizes how they can form obstacles to his further development, if he will not liberate himself from them when he strives to become a causal self.

¹⁷The aspirant has been taught that as long as he identifies himself with his emotionality, as long as he cares about his feelings and moods, yields to his feelings and desires, the result is despair, darkness, doubt, depression, despondency. That is part of emotional illusionism. Many people know this but forget to apply it to themselves. In the *Bhagavad-Gita* the god Krishna advises Arjuna to remember on such occasions the fact that he is immortal, whereas his emotional envelope is out of control; that he can control it with his thoughts.

¹⁸Anyone who can be hurt identifies himself with his envelopes of incarnation. The self in the causal envelope is out of reach of all the attacks of hatred.

¹⁹The aspirant to discipleship must be free from all emotional reactions, such as “sympathy–antipathy”, “liking” or “not liking” a person (conduct, manners, speech, pattern of behaviour). Whenever there is a tendency to personal repulsion in any respect, then the contact with unity is severed. Whenever there is a tendency to personal attraction, then there is no objectivity, no impersonal attitude any more, and judgement is falsified. Emotionality is sentimentality, mawkishness, the falsification of all life values by ignorance. The aspirant is not free from the pertaining kinds of consciousness. He experiences them all but is not influenced by them. They have lost their power. This is part of his knowledge of man. He knows how man reacts at that stage of development.

²⁰Speaking of the impersonal attitude entails certain risks, for such an attitude is easily taken by the individual on all levels, especially at the stage of hatred. True impersonality is no listlessness, no hard-won independence, no attempted escape from responsibility in life, and is possible only at the essential stage (46). Only anyone who is impersonal knows what true love is. That is one of the paradoxes of the essential stage, as is “divine indifference”. We must content ourselves with these hints. Anyone who believes he understands the matter is the victim of his own conceit and presumption.

²¹Another thing which the aspirant must count on is complete and total disparagement. He must be absolutely indifferent to people’s recognition, appreciation, understanding; absolutely invulnerable in all respects. He must be able to see how others forge ahead of him, not just in all human domains but also in the planetary hierarchy, which is a greater test. He must be totally indifferent before such experiences as when others gain glory and wealth from his own work.

²²Not all incarnations are equally important in developmental respect. However, the aspirant cannot possibly decide their true value. Often they are preparations for something essential in lives to come. Many who thought they made great progress have in fact only regained their former level.

²³In each new incarnation the individual must begin from the beginning with the instinct of life he has acquired and his latent predispositions. There is a risk that he will be idiotized anew by the delusions and superstitions of ignorance. If he has a bad sowing to reap, it may happen that he does not have the opportunity of renewing his contact with the esoteric knowledge he once acquired and never has any chance of remembering his ancient knowledge anew. Before the esoteric knowledge has become so widely spread that such a contact is almost inevitable, there is no certainty of his re-acquiring it. Those who understand this fact do all they can to spread esoterics. In so doing they gain the right to a possibility of renewed contact. Those who spread spurious teachings and counteract truth will not just miss it in a future life but will be unable even to grasp it. There are lots of such examples already. Therefore: reject nothing without examining it yourself, whatever public opinion or current authorities say.

²⁴The aspirant must have gained understanding of the significance of consciousness expansion through the acquisition of group consciousness. In the next higher kingdom, the individual has common consciousness with all on the same level of development. Before he has acquired group consciousness and the faculty of telepathic communication with all in his group, he cannot apprehend the consciousness there is in the teacher's mental envelope and learn from it. However, this is a condition of becoming a disciple. It is true that the teacher's mental consciousness is part of his subconscious, but whatever exists in it is always exact perception of reality and life as far as it can be represented in that kind of consciousness at all. It is a privilege to be allowed to use that subconsciousness without having to disturb the teacher in his work.

²⁵Among the incarnations of the aspirant there is one in which he is brought together with his esoteric family. If, at the same time, he has an opportunity to join a group of serving brothers with whom he can co-operate for the same ends, then he will have great prospects of reacquiring his best qualities and abilities. The aspirant cannot become a disciple until he has found his esoteric group, those individuals who wish to co-operate with him for the welfare of mankind. He joins his group in order to learn the methods of co-operation, methods which will prove to be increasingly necessary. It is in his group that he for the first time develops his group consciousness and telepathic faculty.

²⁶Group consciousness (knowing it as a fact) removes the aspirant's sense of loneliness and rouses his sense of solidarity. This "sense" is a necessary condition of the vitalization of the heart centre in the envelopes of the individual. It is in the group that the "group power" is developed, a still unknown power, since people have not understood the conditions: freedom from any kind of criticism, competition, intrusion, doubt, distrust. Thereby is formed an elemental of the capacity of all, which everybody can use when necessary. That energy is irresistible. But it also entails a quite particular strain. In such an environment with higher and stronger kinds of vibrations, all the individual's envelopes are vitalized and there is a risk of overstimulation. There are illusions and fictions of ever finer kinds in the regions of ever higher molecular kinds, and it is not always easy to remain unaffected by these and keep one's simple, sober common sense. Everybody will experience that.

²⁷Three rules for the aspirant: Practise "harmlessness" in thoughts, feelings, words and deeds all day long. Desire nothing for your own self. Seek to discover the "divine spark", the "soul" in everybody.

²⁸You must learn to distinguish between the individual's envelopes and his self. Anybody who does that helps the individual's Augoeides in his endeavour.

²⁹It is unavoidable that we make acquaintances. We must get to know people in order to

examine whether we are able to help them with their problems. The questions we then may ask ourselves are: What ideas does this individual have of: 1) reality, 2) life, 3) mankind, 4) culture, 5) theology, 6) philosophy, 7) science?

³⁰What interests has he got: physical, emotional, mental ones? What kind of literature does he prefer? What kind of problems chiefly occupy his imagination?

³¹If you do not speak the same “language”, then everything you say will be misunderstood. If he is interested in rumours and gossip and is curious about personalities, then he is no acquaintance worth “cultivating”.

³²The aspirant does not discuss the facts of esoterics. What he knows about them he puts forward to those who are able to understand, are ripe for grasping it and prepared to receive it. He makes no propaganda, however, does not try to force his knowledge on others, does not argue. Anyone who is ripe will see that is it correct. Anyone who will not, cannot and must wait for the possibility in future incarnations. Life grants freedom.

³³One difficulty that is constantly met with is to decide in which cases we shall let those whom we wish to help keep their illusions and fiction systems and when the latter must be replaced by the true knowledge. We must take care lest we deprive people of their illusions when they need them. They are often necessary at the emotional stage.

³⁴Many people think they are seekers. Their seeking is often conditional, however, must contain some basic dogma. In case you meet true seekers, who desire clarity and possess the mental qualifications, you may take the risk (it always is one) of giving them the correct mental system. Before doing that, however, you should have made sure that they have so much understanding of life that they clearly see that reincarnation and the law of reaping (karma) are the only possible explanations of the meaning of life. As regards these two basic facts there must be a sufficiently strong instinct of life (reminiscence from myriads of incarnations), let alone mental capacity.

³⁵Esoterics, the knowledge of reality, has been made exoteric but by no means in all respects. You do not put dynamite into the hands of children and bandits. Such knowledge as the black lodge can avail itself of or the “uninitiated” can abuse will always remain esoteric. There really is knowledge which is not for everybody.

³⁶All knowledge is “esoteric” until it has been turned into understanding and life. Everything we do not know is “esoteric”. Everything we cannot understand is esoteric. The superconscious is esoteric. The omniscience there is in our superconscious is esoteric. Perhaps you see how silly it is to sneer at esoterics. It is to sneer at your own lack of judgement. Those who believe they are wise do so.

³⁷It need obviously be pointed out that the study of esoterics, affording us an orienting vision of reality, does not in itself imply a higher stage of development. Theoretical study does not equal wisdom (the power of realization). The learned are seldom wise. And those who have the real knowledge latently may very well appear unlearned and lost among the learned, although they may be on a much higher level of development. Esotericians do not judge people by their social position, by their power, glory, wealth, learning or paper qualifications. They judge by essentials of which mankind has no idea.

³⁸Knowledge is necessary. But it is practically worthless if the consciousness there is in knowledge does not also manifest its energy aspect.

³⁹Everybody has his particular difficulties, his own problems to solve in the one right way. They come up again and again until they have been solved right. They are the only ways in which his unique individual character can develop. The ignorance of life, complaining of difficulties, does not see their function and necessity.

⁴⁰Our difficulties show us our ignorance and our impotence, but also the way we must walk to find that knowledge and power which will solve our problems. It is not enough to “understand”, but we must use the energy there is in understanding.

⁴¹Many difficulties arise because we do not use the energy of our knowledge. All consciousness expressions are simultaneously energy expressions. And if the energies are not released into action, then they must find other outlets, and that will as a rule be detrimental to ourselves in some respect or other. That is one of the reasons why the esoteric knowledge must be kept secret from those who do not know how to put it into action.

4.6 The Disciple

¹The highest a man – though not just a man but also the individuals in all higher kingdoms except the very highest – can reach is to train himself to become an ever more perfect tool for serving evolution. Nobody will reach the fifth natural kingdom who does not place his entire personality with all its qualities and abilities at the disposal of evolution. As long as man is not able or willing to do so he will remain in the fourth natural kingdom. Nothing absurd is demanded, which fanatics always do. Common sense must distinguish between physical dharma (life tasks in the physical world) and higher service. However, when making any choice and when the physical duties are done, the dedication to service must be dominant. Common sense, fixity of purpose, and perseverance are necessary conditions. If we want to be and can be tools, then according to the Law we must also get opportunities. When we have done our work we must acquire the “divine indifference” to its result. It is not the business of the tool to care for that.

²You do not become a disciple in order to learn how to methodically study and use your envelope centres. You become a disciple in order to be able to serve better. And when you have become absorbed in service and have forgotten yourself, then you can without too great a risk use the energies right. Then you will find that the unconscious has done its work. You have knowledge and capacity when you need it.

³The condition of discipleship is that man has had all the experience that is necessary for complete understanding of the realities in the lowest three worlds (47–49). It is clear from the state of affairs in mankind that only a small percentage of it has a prospect of attaining the stage of the disciple during the current zodiacal epoch of 2500 years. All too many believe they are “ready”.

⁴Discipleship means one-pointed determination, endurance, unflinchingness, hard work without any pretensions, freedom from criticism, a realistic life view free from illusions.

⁵Nobody will be admitted as a disciple until accepted by the entire planetary hierarchy. It is certainly not enough that some certain member engages to train the individual in question. Once he has arrived in that world, his consciousness expressions will be perceptible to all, and they must not be disturbed by disharmonious vibrations. He must also be able to use expediently the new energies he will share, and that presupposes knowledge acquired long ago and a working up of that knowledge into understanding and faculty during several, mostly many, lives. It is part of the paradoxes of the higher life that you do not just understand what powers you have been made to share but you can also use them in the right way, because you have unconsciously both understood and used them. This is what is meant by maturity. What is new is rather a confirmation of what you have already understood and a greater ability to use the energies right. The disciple must acquire everything by himself. When he can, he has got the right to have a “certificate” of the fact that he knows and can. This is what has been called “initiation” and has had such an abortive presentation in theosophical literature.

⁶Various esoteric authors have used the term “disciple” in very different senses, meaning anybody from an aspirant to a 45-self. Many call everybody a disciple who was once initiated into an esoteric knowledge order. Others want to restrict the term to apply it only to those who are personal disciples of a 45-self.

⁷Formerly, only those who had been initiated into an esoteric order could be regarded as aspirants. Nowadays, when esoterics has been made accessible to everybody, this is probably

not the case any more. Thousands of people who after 1875 would have been initiated have instead assimilated the publicized facts of esoterics and realized them to be in accordance with reality, and therefore also those people can be called aspirants.

⁸The disciple is a disciple until he can help himself in all respects. And that he does only when a 45-self. Full sovereignty in a world you attain only in the next higher world. And that is not all. The higher the world, the more correctly you can judge things also in such lower worlds where the self has otherwise acquired full sovereignty. The “perspective” is gradually prolonged.

⁹It is characteristic of discipleship that the disciples are in telepathic contact with the planetary hierarchy as well as with each other. There are still disciples who in a new incarnation are not aware of their discipleship. The planetary hierarchy hopes to be able to take measures, however, to ensure that the disciples’ continuity of consciousness will remain unbroken.

¹⁰Discipleship is a personal relation to the planetary hierarchy and to an esoteric group. You keep silent about personal relations. You never testify to yourself. In addition, you always keep silent about your intentions, about your plans. To betray such things is in all too many cases sufficient to thwart them. That is a thing which only “initiates” understand. You do not betray confidences, unless you are a traitor, everybody’s secret enemy. Anyone who has not learnt the art of keeping silent, of judging what may, can, or must be said, is still far from discipleship. You quite simply never answer questions concerning your own and other people’s personal relations. These are no concern of others. You could fill entire libraries with descriptions of all the evil that gossip has caused.

¹¹Different kinds of disciples of the planetary hierarchy must be distinguished: those who were once disciples but in their new incarnation know nothing about the fact; those who prior to their incarnation were given a mission and subsequently, in their new envelopes, know nothing about it and must, like any people ignorant of life, err during several periods of life (as a rule five or six) to revive their latent knowledge; those who have the possibility of contact with their teacher in the hierarchy; and those who are in constant contact with their teacher.

¹²Once an initiate always an initiate; once a disciple always a disciple. This does not mean that the initiate or disciple need to know anything about it in subsequent incarnations. One thing is certain, however. The disciple is in subsequent incarnations put to the test in order to show which of his qualities are so firmly rooted that nothing can induce him to betray the ideals or principles which he once accepted. Reliability is a quality that must be acquired before there can be any question of renewed contact with the hierarchy.

¹³We must in a new incarnation acquire the right to discipleship, until we have become causal selves. Only then are we definitively accepted as disciples. It is our destiny as men “to be born equal” and share the destiny of mankind, until we have realized our joint responsibility for all (the responsibility of the collective). We can never “wash our hands of it”, disclaim the collective responsibility. The higher the stage of development the individual has reached, the more he also realizes his responsibility, which forces him to do all that is in his power. We shall never be free from responsibility as long as we are in the human kingdom. Irresponsibility is the gravest mistake in life. But that does not mean that we are to take unnecessary responsibility. Some people regard it as a lack of loyalty when two “friends” have followed different, disparate courses of development, realize this and do not persist in clinging to perhaps debasing relations of friendship. We are not personally responsible for what life has separated. In this matter as in everything else rules the law of the golden mean. Absolutization in either extreme direction is always a mistake, the characteristic of the fanatic.

¹⁴Before the year 1925 the requirements for discipleship were not very great. During sleep the disciple could in his emotional envelope call on his teacher. It should be pointed out that the notions of the qualifications for discipleship that are still prevalent in theosophical circles are nowadays misleading. The demands were tightened up as a consequence when the planetary

hierarchy moved from the causal world to the essential world. After the esoteric knowledge was allowed for publication and thus made “public property”, cultural people have had the opportunity of liberating themselves from the ruling fiction systems to a greater extent than before, and the number of individuals who have been able to realize their latent possibilities has increased in thousands. This, too, necessitated drastic measures by the planetary hierarchy: the heightening of the requirements for discipleship. The stage of the mystic must have been definitively covered and the aspirant must have acquired sober, objective common sense which considers all three aspects of reality; he should not live in the consciousness aspect only. No more imaginative excesses in the emotional world. No more expansion of emotional consciousness into infinitude. No more assumptions without the necessary facts.

¹⁵To the disciple who is in contact with the planetary hierarchy and has his self centred in his mental envelope – which is in rapport with his causal envelope – it matters but little whether he is incarnated in his organism or is living in the emotional world or mental world. In the emotional world he is independent of the phenomena pertaining to it with their illusoriness, and in the mental world it is easy for him to come into personal contact with his teacher. This means that his consciousness development goes on unimpededly even after he has finally put off his physical envelopes and that he continues to acquire esoteric knowledge; thus he does not need to interrupt his development in order to continue it in a new incarnation. This explains why the disciple has a prospect of becoming a causal self within just a few incarnations.

¹⁶The planetary hierarchy takes no interest in man’s various envelopes but on the contrary in his triad chain with its three triads. Using it the hierarchy reaches the self in its triad. The new instructions for disciples mainly concern this path of the self to higher worlds and kingdoms. Once the attention has been directed to this path, a perspective is obtained which reduces the secondary envelopes to their right proportions. The more ignorant the individual is, the more interest and undue attention are paid to diverse details, which settle themselves, so to speak, when he concentrates on essentials. The energies effect expansion of consciousness. The higher is conquered by elimination of the lower when the lower has fulfilled its function. If the lower is retained, it will become a tie that prevents the ascent. The self’s purposefulness, initiative, and perseverance are necessary conditions of the impelling force it receives as a gift.

¹⁷The planetary hierarchy takes no interest in other people than those who are fit to be “labourers in the vineyard”. The others are supervised by the planetary organization, which sees to it that the Law has its course and that everybody will reap what he has sown. It is by his work for mankind and for the lower kingdoms that the individual develops his consciousness and receives help to become an ever more capable co-worker in the service of evolution. Knowing this everybody can see that theologians and other leaders of mankind are disoriented in life. What Christos said of the theologians of his time – blind leaders of the blind – has been valid in all times and is so still. “God” has never had any need of churches. They have barred the way to the “kingdom of god” (the causal world and the essential world).

¹⁸It is true that the disciple has “time for everything” and does not know what hurry and rush is. But that is because he has no time for unnecessaries. And to learn to realize what is unnecessary is part of the necessary art of living.

¹⁹Biographies are deceptive as regards the individual’s consciousness development, which is largely dependent on inaccessible individual character and the unknown factors of the sub-conscious. These are unknown to the individual himself and are, besides, unknowable at the present stage of mankind’s development. Those individuals who have reached the stage of culture and have begun to come under the influence of their Augoeides and causal superconscious also are in the main unable to understand what is happening to them. Causal selves would be able to explore the influences that have been promoting their consciousness development. But they do not waste time and energy on such things. They are content to have reached a stage where they can apply all their capacity for the service of evolution. They are

not in the least interested in their own selves. They have learnt the lesson that he makes the quickest progress who forgets his comical insignificance. They do not even care whether their achievements are their own work or the result of superconscious energies using them as tools.

²⁰The planetary hierarchy is not interested in faults or errors of the disciple, as the disciple must be aware of them himself and do all he can to change them or put things right. If he cannot see his faults himself, they may be pointed out to him. However, the hierarchy is interested in everything that can make the disciple a better tool.

²¹One of the proofs of men's lack of judgement is that they almost always wonder at the instruments used by the planetary hierarchy. They imagine that they are able to judge better.

²²They have taken offence at the expression "the disciple is forbidden", thinking that it is a violation of the law of freedom. Of course the prohibition applies to the disciple just in that incarnation in which he becomes aware that he is an accepted disciple. He will be accepted only if there is a prospect of his reaching a higher stage in a certain incarnation: transition from the stage of civilization to that of culture or from the latter stage to that of humanity, etc. In that incarnation he must submit to special training in order to succeed. His envelopes must be able to stand new energies; new centres must be able to function. This will succeed only if he carefully observes directions concerning diet, etc. He receives instructions the importance of which he does not realize, since he cannot discover the effects in his unconscious, which would require objective consciousness in all his envelopes. If these directions are not carried out, the disciple is dismissed, as the intended results cannot be obtained. The teacher does not waste time on the unwilling.

²³In this connection it should be pointed out that the transition from a lower to a higher stage of development, from the stage of civilization to that of culture, from the latter stage to that of humanity, from there to the stage of ideality, implies a complete reorganization of, in the first case, the etheric envelope with a vitalization of certain centres; in the second case, the emotional envelope; in the third case, the mental and causal envelopes, etc. It was these processes which the ancients called "initiations" and about which so many unreliable statements have been made.

²⁴A difficult problem for the disciple is to avoid being dragged down to the levels of other people when in contact with them, which easily occurs if sentimentality or some other magnetic attraction enters into the relation. In such matters the knowledge of the levels of development is of great moment, as is also the living insight of your own goal. You do not benefit others by being dragged down or away from your own task. It often seems easy to raise others by swaying their emotions in a personal way. When intoxication has passed off, however, the mistake is perceived, and too late. This is also the common mistake in "falling in love", the cause of all unsuccessful marriages or relations. As long as emotionality is allowed to contribute, the power of mentality is lost and the judgement is obscured.

²⁵In esoteric writings there is much talk of "sacrifice". Like most esoteric symbols this one is totally misleading, the direct opposite of the theological fiction. Anyone who is not infinitely grateful to be spared "all those things" has still much to learn in the human kingdom. What is intended, however, is not the blasé, life-weary, abortive contempt, but the gratitude of strength, joy, jubilation.

²⁶"It is not easy to be a fool in the eyes of men, a 'fool for Christ's sake' and 'the social set' is one of the cruellest in the world." (D.K. to a disciple.) This brings into immediate focus how the planetary hierarchy looks on the "rulers" in the world at the present stage of mankind's development.

²⁷A member of the planetary hierarchy writes to his group at the stage of the disciple: "I have selected you to be my disciples, partly because you belong to the human élite, partly because karmic bonds unite you and me. You have come as far as you can at the present stage of mankind's development. You all know that I love you all, for I can do no better. But for the

sake of this love and that you might reach true self-knowledge I say to you that you are a lot of rascals all of you. That seems a hard saying to you. But go to the bottom of yourselves. Is there no spiritual selfishness in you? Are there no repulsive emotional vibrations in your emotional envelope? Are there no glimpses of smugness at your mental superiority? And you must go deeper than that into your human envelope consciousnesses.”

4.7 Disciples Unaware of their Status

¹Anyone who was once accepted as a disciple of the planetary hierarchy will always remain a disciple until he has joined the planetary hierarchy as a member of it. His discipleship may extend over many incarnations, and he will, as a rule, be aware of it only in three; upon acquiring the necessary physical, emotional, and mental capacity, respectively. Even as a causal self he may in his physical brain be unaware of his status until he comes into contact with esoterics or is “awakened” by some member of the planetary hierarchy. However, this rule must not be made absolute (like nothing else in esoterics, which people always do). Exceptions are always possible, although never as people think, trusting their brainwaves or clairvoyant experiences.

²The individual experiences his discipleship in three phases. In the first two phases he will have no recollection of it on account of his losing the continuity of his consciousness. There are many people who have been disciples and remain unaware of it in subsequent incarnations, since the percentage of higher molecular kinds in their envelopes does not satisfy the greater demands for a renewed discipleship. This may, in turn, depend on the fact that these people have assumed such tasks in the physical world as require their full effort and do not give any opportunity for higher development, for remembrance or reacquisition. Very seldom it depends only on bad sowing still remaining to be reaped. As a rule nobody who has such a handicap will be accepted as a disciple. In order to be accepted as a disciple for the third time the individual must have reached the verge of the causal stage and have acquired subjective consciousness in the lower two centres of the causal envelope.

³There are disciples in all important areas of human activity: cultural, political, scientific, religious, philosophical, psychological, and financial. They are not aware of their discipleship. Their work, however, bears witness to them.

⁴Many of those who have joined the occult sects are old disciples at the stage of humanity who in their new incarnation are unaware of being disciples of the planetary hierarchy. Their task is, according to the law of self-realization (and also that of reaping), to try to find their way to a renewed contact with esoterics and resuscitate their latent knowledge. As a rule this implies a planless erring and a planless search, which have the effect that their incarnation causes outsiders to wonder and often to be morally indignant and to condemn the “renegade”, who has perhaps erred into churches and sects and out again. In so doing they have necessary albeit hard-won experiences, acquiring qualities as well as psychological and educational capacities.

⁵It might be an interesting item of information that Rousseau was a disciple (and one much appreciated) of the planetary hierarchy. They are often put into impossible situations, retain no memory of commitments they have made, are from the beginning as disoriented as all the others, must grope their way to the knowledge and work as best they can. That is no easy task. Considering all these circumstances one must say that the contribution he made was great and badly needed too. No wonder that such disciples, when looking back on their incarnations, think they have failed. Their intention was good, however, and their task was almost hopeless with such a mankind. One lesson they learnt thoroughly: that one should not have great pretensions.

⁶Dag Hammarskjöld, in his latest incarnation, was not aware of his discipleship. He never came into contact with esoterics, which would have awakened his latent knowledge. That stage of the mystic, to which he attained, was not his proper one. It was quite sufficient, however, to enable him to carry out his mission.

4.8 Discipleship as Group Life

¹What theosophists and so called rosicrucians have written on discipleship is, on the whole, misleading. The same applies to their presentations of the so-called initiations. The path to ever larger consciousness of community goes through ever expanding group consciousness.

²The disciple always belongs to an esoteric group, whether he knows it or not. In any case he must start from this assumption and both think and feel as though he belonged to a group. Sooner or later (perhaps only in his next incarnation) he will experience the group community and will then be ready to step into the group as a living factor in it.

³The disciple belongs to three different groups: his particular esoteric group, the group he has gathered round himself (whom he teaches), and the great group made up of all disciples of the planetary hierarchy. With all these three he must learn to collaborate.

⁴Before the individual can be accepted as a disciple he must have joined his esoteric group, and the group, not the individual, is the “disciple”. The individuals of the group must have formed a common material envelope of causal matter. It is this group which receives “inspiration” from the planetary hierarchy, and every transaction between the hierarchy and the individual is done via the group envelope. It was in the year 1925 that the planetary hierarchy decided that thenceforward the contact should be maintained via the groups. Mankind (and in any case its élite) is nowadays able to comprehend such a procedure.

⁵The group causal envelope exists already but usually in an embryonic state. In this envelope the individual already has an anchorage with a mental atom (47:1) from his own causal envelope. Ever more mental atoms from the causal envelopes of all the individuals go to form one envelope, a living causal elemental. This is how the group envelope is built out. The group will be fit for work in so far as this elemental, this thought form (containing everything that every individual thinks in these respects as well as all the information the group receives from the planetary hierarchy), becomes the property of all in common thought, knowledge, and insight (like a group-soul).

⁶The elemental is not influenced whether the individuals are alive in the physical world or not. It will not be dissolved until the group (all in the group!) has reached the same stage of development as the elemental represents. Thereupon the elemental is dissolved and its atoms and molecules revert to their original states.

⁷Before the disciple can enter the unity consciousness of the essential world, he must learn how to become a unit in his small group. This means that he with his life furthers the ends of the group, builds up the strength of the group, discards everything that may impair the usefulness of the group, and fulfils the task of the group. This also entails the ability to look on his own group as an observer and not just as a participant. The desires of his own personality (the lower envelopes) have by this stage sunk down into the subconscious and have become instinctive.

⁸The group life, the group wish, has become the individual’s life, and his individual wishes are definitively eliminated. From this we see how far from understanding hierarchic life the mystics are when they think that their wallowing in divers “spiritual feelings” is true life. For the disciple all such things have long since ceased and he has identified himself with the “impersonal life”. This was what Paul the gnostician meant by his “I live; yet not I, but Christos lives in me”.

4.9 Initiation

¹In occult literature there is so much that is unreliable in what is written about “initiations” that some corrections would not be out of place.

²“Initiation” has already become an abused word, so everybody knows its real meaning without knowing it. Esoterically the term is variously used to denote: transmigration from a lower to a higher kingdom, transition from a lower to a higher atomic world, from a lower to a

higher stage of development, or initiation into an esoteric knowledge order.

³Initiation into an esoteric knowledge order must not be confused with planetary initiation. As for the latter, what is important is not the new stage entered on but that it marks the conclusion of a stage of development.

⁴There are nine main kinds of energies, corresponding to the three units of the three triads, accessible to the individual in worlds 43–49. The ability to control some one of these is also called initiation.

⁵“Planetary initiation” (self-acquisition of a new kind of superconsciousness) is ascertained by the planetary hierarchy, which supervises the consciousness development of the individuals. This ascertainment also entails an official confirmation (the nearest equivalent being a “diploma”), and this it is which has been misunderstood and has been compared with an ordinary initiation into an order. The hierarchy regrets that those who ought to have known better were not able to observe the discretion implied by the privilege. Good motives are not enough. Permission should have been asked. The understanding of planetary initiation as a quite normal process of development should have been required.

⁶Initiation is a process in which the individual becomes conscious of being a part of the whole, acquires the consciousnesses and energies of higher worlds. Initiation involves the acquisition of group consciousness.

⁷Initiation means the acquisition of a higher kind of atomic consciousness. It is an acquired perception of a higher dimension and mastery of what belongs to a lower dimension. Thus there are in all 49 initiations in the cosmos. Each higher atomic kind implies, where consciousness is concerned, complete rethinking in all respects. Everything you have viewed as reality shows its relativity. In respect of ideas the matter can be thus explained that the lower ideas enter into the higher ones, that each higher idea contains all the lower ones. Each higher kind of atomic consciousness implies a totally changed view on reality in all respects, so that its acquisition makes the individual feel like an idiot and that he has always been one. The three aspects (matter, energy, and consciousness) become things so radically new with each higher degree attained that you realize that this must be something incomprehensible at lower stages but yet is something astoundingly obvious. The conception of space, time, and energy is altered, so that you understand how the expression “illusion” (as regards everything lower) has come about. It is no illusion, only a lower kind of reality, but appears as illusion. It is a drastic but extremely clarifying designation of the hitherto known and limited.

⁸With every higher kind of atomic consciousness everything you have hitherto conceived and thought in the matter of the three aspects is completely altered: with atomic consciousness 45, the concept of matter ceases to have any importance as a factor of life. With atomic consciousness 43, the concept of consciousness is hopelessly unsatisfactory and empty. Trinity (the three aspects) is there all the time but loses completely its lower nature, so that no human concepts are fit for explanation.

⁹“Initiation” is a continuous acquisition of ever higher kinds of consciousness, an ever widening participation in cosmic total consciousness through the world consciousnesses of the 49 ever higher atomic kinds. Initiation can be called a process of consciousness by which the individual acquires knowledge of the 49 cosmic worlds and the ability to apply the pertaining laws right in order to be able to participate in the cosmic processes of manifestation. Everything which the individual is given for nothing for his own self-realization is aimed at making him an ever more efficient co-worker in the great cosmic evolution. Life in higher worlds is no selfish sluggard’s life (with such a life there will be no evolution) but a self-forgetful impersonal life of a 24-hour-a-day effort for the welfare of all.

¹⁰“An initiation is a culminating moment of achievement, and success is a graded series of experiments with energy.” (D.K.)

4.10 Esoteric Teachers

¹That old tenet, “when the pupil is ready, the teacher will appear”, is not quite exact. The fact is rather that the disciple himself chooses the teacher who is able to help. The disciples come to the teacher, the teacher does not come to the disciple, all according to the law of freedom.

²The contact with the teacher (a 45-self) has a direct effect on at least three centres in the disciple. The very contact stimulates his heart centre, the teacher’s mental consciousness influences his crown centre and often his eyebrow centre as well.

³The disciple does not ask his teacher for anything. He knows that this is not necessary but is rather a proof of lacking trust. The teacher is aware of everything in the disciple’s consciousness which is of vital moment in any way. Besides, the supervision is done by his Augoeides, who is “omnipotent in the worlds of man”.

⁴As long as the disciple thinks everything the teacher says is obvious his teaching can go on. When the disciple does not understand it, however, the teacher has fulfilled his task and is superfluous. For no esoteric teacher must force his view on anybody, not even convince him. Everything must be obvious. If it is not obvious, then it remains for the disciple to have those experiences which make immediate understanding possible.

⁵Truth must be immediately obvious. It is the simplest of all things. And that is why it is incomprehensible for those who lack the necessary experience.

⁶Normally the disciple is surprised at everything the teacher says. His fancied (never possible) self-knowledge has told him something quite different, often the opposite. Often he will hear that the very thing he has thought to be his foremost quality is a delusion. It is worse still when the teacher cannot tell him the truth because of violent reaction or such brokenheartedness that the disciple is unfit for life for a long time. In the most favourable case, the disciple realizes at once that the teacher is right and he himself has been an idiot. That is rare, however.

⁷It is typical of all hyperintelligent people that they think they comprehend everything and are able to judge everything. If they seek out a teacher, it will not be long before they understand everything better than he. And if they do not meet with that appreciation by the teacher to which they think they are entitled, then this just shows the teacher’s inability to judge them, if not others. And thereby he is reduced. Such types are constantly met with in life. A drastic example is Rudolf Steiner and his relationship to Annie Besant. After, as he thought, he had learnt from her everything she knew, he believed himself able to know everything better. Another drastic example is that supermind, who offered to be taught by a 45-self. After a short time of teaching he contradicted everything his teacher said, so that the latter wondered why he had been appointed a teacher. Disciples who have been put to the test and are advised against exercises they have been taught often think the master underestimates them and flout the prohibition with catastrophic consequences. Thereupon the teacher is accused of all absurdities that such failures can invent.

⁸The individuals belonging to the first department often possess the courage needed to fight hypocrisy and the cult of appearances. They defy infantile public opinion consisting of parrots and imitators without individual power of judgement. They deliberately arouse moralist indignation in order to uphold the individual’s right to his own course of action.

⁹Most esoteric teachers will have pupils who want to gain superiority and power over other people and who, when they find they have been “deceived” in their expectation, accuse the teacher of fraudulent methods, etc.

¹⁰Proud people find it irritating that they must learn and even more irritating that they have been given something for which they should be grateful. They relieve themselves by subsequently depreciating everything they received and those from whom they received it.

¹¹If the moralists possessed the slightest power of judgement, then they should see that those who have dedicated their lives to service, who have placed themselves under the law of unity, cannot be measured by the small measures commonly used by the moralists, not to say those

used by hatred.

¹²The great ones of mankind, geniuses and pioneers in knowledge and life, who have sacrificed themselves for the furthering of consciousness development, have always been persecuted, insulted, despised. This the great ones know. They know the martyrdom that awaits them from an idiotized and malicious mankind. And then appear the doctors of literature (those intellectual grave-plunderers), who pry into everything in order to be able to make the great ones as small as possible. Their pride is to reduce greatness, and their great scholarly discoveries, which qualify them for readership and professorship, consist in discovering human weaknesses. These faults and failings are incident even to individuals at the stage of humanity, who in developmental respect are thousands of incarnations ahead of their detractors. By their findings they satisfy the hyena interest in other people's private lives, making the moralists happy, who constantly must have something to be indignant at in order to feel their own righteousness the better.

¹³You can also hear "esotericians" say that, for instance, a 45-self must economize on his energies, supposing that he has just a certain amount of them at his disposal. It is not the lack of energy, however, but the lack of time that forces higher beings to weigh which tasks are the most important and must be done first. Indeed, the planetary hierarchy has (because of an idiotized and brutalized mankind which by and large only makes mistakes) an immense burden of work, for which they quite simply never find enough time. Their disciples, who could assume some of the easier work and thus relieve the 45-selves, all too often become extra burdens. It is by no means remarkable that they are not particularly anxious to have such extra hangers-on. The disciple must see to it that he is fully capable of his discipleship. In this century, too, so many people have qualified for discipleship that only those who are in all essentials ready for the higher kingdom are eligible, since it is necessary to make selections also in this matter. Competition makes itself felt.

¹⁴It may seem strange that two disciples of K.H., Leadbeater and Bailey, never met at their teacher's. There are several possible reasons for this. They were accepted as disciples at different periods while K.H. was still a 45-self. According to the old, now abandoned methods, disciples received individual training and treatment. Leadbeater was an extravert (belonging to the 1-3-5-7-line) and Bailey an introvert (the 2-4-6 line); because of this fact they would have had difficulties in understanding one another. Disciples of a 44-self cannot count on being allowed to resort to their teacher's capacity except under extreme circumstances, and so Leadbeater and Bailey never had any opportunity of meeting in their most recent incarnation. It was only after 1919 and after she assumed the task of being the secretary of D.K. that Bailey became aware of her status of being an old disciple.

4.11 Realizations Necessary for Discipleship

¹The following information is by no means intended to deter any aspirant from striving after discipleship. But it may perhaps give food for thought. There are many who are at a level of development where it would be meaningless for them to consider themselves even aspirants. That is the risk of putting everything forward before the ignorant and undiscerning public. History is full of stories about coxcomb prophets who have lacked the most elementary qualifications of judging and who have become victims of the Messiah complex just because of that.

²What above all characterizes latent esotericians is the Sokratean realization that "one is an idiot", thus genuine humility in respect of truth. That is the first step on the path of wisdom. Anyone who feels important (or feels "ready") is far from reaching that insight. Another great mistake is any kind of comparison with those at lower levels. We are all brothers of the same kingdom in nature, and even though the path to the next higher kingdom be of different length, yet it is exceedingly short compared with that remaining for us all. When those of the fifth and

sixth and still higher kingdoms call us their brothers, then we have every reason to try to assimilate that view of life: that all living beings make up a universal brotherhood. Anyone who has realized this understands, too, that hatred in all its thousand manifestations is the very perversion of life.

³The planetary hierarchy does not seek individuals in order to “save them”. Such ones as pray for salvation must, after physical death, follow the ordinary path through the emotional world to the mental world, where they are to lead an egoistic life in endless bliss, until they are fed up with it and begin to long for “reality” again. The self cannot enter unity as “self” but only as “all”. Self-identity remains but isolated self (me and you and we) is no more.

⁴The planetary hierarchy seeks for co-workers who live for unity and forget themselves, who live in order to serve and not in order to develop. Their own development is left aside, being an automatic matter. The hierarchy seeks for individuals who have gained self-reliance and self-determination, have freed themselves from any emotional and mental dependence and are “divinely indifferent” to whatever happens to them. They know the Law, its incorruptibility, its unerring justice, and the inevitable final result: the next higher kingdom. They seek for co-workers who do not demand help, do not pray for light and power, do not cry for the “master” but who try to develop the “dynamic will to good”, who methodically and systematically and to the best of their ability do what they can. They know about higher kingdoms but live without caring for them (as though they did not exist). That is the truly divine indifference. The individual does his part, and then things must go as they like. Only in that way can he become that “perfect tool” which the planetary hierarchy needs. He does not pray for power, no more than the engine does. He knows that he is the engine which receives what it must have in order to function. He does what is in his power to become the perfect tool. He considers that to be his task.

⁵To this should be added an important insight, which 45-self D.K. inculcates on his co-workers: “I am seeking here to divorce your minds from the *idée fixe* that the initiate works because he knows. I would reverse the statement and say he knows because he works. There is no point of attainment at which the Initiator says to the initiate: Now you know, and therefore you can work. Rather it is: Now you serve and work, and in so doing you are embarked upon a new and difficult voyage of discovery: you will discover reality progressively and arrive at whole areas of expression, because you serve.”

⁶It is in practical work that we learn what we do not know and cannot do, what we lack in order to better succeed the next time, that we get to know the individual needs and how we are to meet them. We learn through experience and experiment.

⁷According to the Law, he has a right to be helped who lives in order to help. Anyone who lives for the consciousness development of all has a right to the knowledge which furthers this. Anyone who lives for the unity of all in so doing enters unity automatically. The essential qualities are acquired unconsciously in the work for all, since the right consciousness energies then pour into the right consciousness centres and perform their work there.

⁸It is not the disciple who needs the teacher, but the teacher seeks for a suitable tool for the work he has planned. If the disciple is developed all-round, has the stage of the saint behind him, is well oriented at the stage of humanity (thus is a “personality” with perspective consciousness), then there is always some member of the planetary hierarchy who will have use for his capacity.

⁹The disciple does not ask the “master” for anything. He must acquire everything himself according to the law of self-realization. As long as anybody thinks he needs a teacher he is unfit to be a disciple. Then he has not acquired the necessary trust in self and trust in life. Everything the individual needs he will be given automatically according to the Law, without conscious contact with “higher beings”.

¹⁰The disciple must see himself what work he can accomplish. He is never given any

directions. That was an error of President Annie Besant, who became a dictator in the end.

¹¹Discipleship means hard work, pioneering and guiding work. Many aspirants fail, since they fail to make the best they can do, fail to say what should be said, fail to do the work assigned by the circumstances.

¹²Discipleship implies a never-ending training of all the envelopes. The organism and etheric envelope must acquire the highest possible vitality in order to be able to perform all their work, vitalize organs and centres. The strain is enormous. Unsuitable food, poisons, etc. are absolutely forbidden. Otherwise the disciple is disconnected until he has gained greater understanding.

¹³According as the disciple develops, the laws of life become immediately obvious, because they belong to the reality experiences of the various stages of development, enter into the understanding of the very process of development as necessary conditions of it.

¹⁴The disciple does not think of himself. He has rid himself of self-glory, self-importance, self-conceit, all kinds of Messiah complex (and, with them, complexes of both inferiority and superiority). Most people are victims of self-pity. They feel so sorry for themselves. People never appreciate them right, never show them gratitude for what they do. They are always underestimated, unappreciated. They are never given any chance, etc., in infinitum. However, all this is thinking of yourself.

¹⁵The disciple lives in order to serve, and in so doing all his personal problems disappear. In the process of this liberation, he becomes receptive to causal ideas which he himself works up into a fund of experience to use whenever opportunities present themselves.

¹⁶We should be infinitely grateful for having opportunities to serve. It is no merit of ours.

¹⁷The disciple demands no reward and never cares about the result of his work to help. He knows the Law.

¹⁸“He is the greatest who is the server of all” is a saying intimating that the motive is not our own development but that of others.

¹⁹Anyone who does not do “everything” to fight lies and hatred in the world cannot count on any discipleship.

²⁰The path of the disciple is the path of “sacrifice”, of liberation from the lower in a seemingly endless series. You do not renounce in order to benefit. You are grateful that you can “leave all that”, without any thought of compensation, reward, etc. You gladly sacrifice your emotionality, mentality, causality, when you have acquired consciousness in higher envelopes. Having that perspective you see through the error of thinking of yourself as being somebody, whatever level you are on.

²¹According to a 45-self, “sacrifice” means to give up egoism in the service of evolution and mankind. He goes on to say that when people hear that sacrifice is the first condition for real knowledge, then they wonder what personal reasons the teacher might have for saying this. When they hear that freedom from everything debasing is the condition, then they try hard to get away from that demand with the least possible elimination. When they hear that they have duties to the teacher, then they seek for all manner of reasons to depreciate the value of what they have received and to seek for imperfections in the teacher which could justify their ingratitude. And such people consider themselves aspirants to discipleship.

²²If the individual has realized that he is not his envelopes but a self which must learn how to use these envelopes and envelope consciousnesses in the service of evolution, then he also sees that trust in himself, trust in life, and trust in the Law are required for this. With these qualities follows “divine indifference” to whatever happens to his envelopes, his tools. They are loans which he has learnt how to use in the right manner. He is free from anxiety and fear, from sorrows and concerns, from everything that befalls those envelopes which he has hitherto believed to be his self. Whatever happens to his envelopes is according to the law. He is ready for discipleship.

²³“Nobody is important in the eyes of the planetary hierarchy, just a more or less fit tool and

the more fit the less important he thinks he is.”

²⁴The planetary hierarchy has not given us the knowledge in order that we may feel important and superior but that we may be better able to help.

²⁵We make nothing but mistakes, since we lack the knowledge of practically everything in life. Mankind is not further advanced, since it has accepted such things as it should have realized to be absurd. We block the way for ourselves by our illusions and fictions, all the brainwaves and idiotic explanations of ignorance, all assumptions and conjectures and creeds, all manner of imaginative ideologies.

²⁶It is a great mistake to count on help from the teacher or our Augoeides in anything that concerns our own personalities.

²⁷Nobody will ever be put in a position to make any demands on the planetary hierarchy.

²⁸The teacher does not hinder the disciple from making mistakes, “does not abolish any law”, not even the law of self-realization.

²⁹In case the disciple should make the mistake of wanting to tell something which he has promised his teacher to keep to himself, then those mental molecules in his brain are removed which contain this information. Of course, the disciple has also broken off his connection with the planetary hierarchy.

³⁰The disciple learns by making mistakes. This is what “uninitiated” (exoterists) can never learn to grasp. “Most dreadfully attended” by all with whom he comes into contact, all his mistakes will be established, so that nobody will think that he understands anything more than others, nobody will consider him to be other than a charlatan and impostor.

³¹The disciple knows, however, that such is his destiny and such is mankind at its present stage of development. He cherishes no illusions but has long ago learnt that the worst possible construction is put on everything he says and does, does not say and does not do.

³²We should be grateful for having opportunities to learn. For only so do we have the necessary experiences and are able to develop. It is our lessons that push us forward. The pessimist looks to his mistakes. The optimist looks to the lessons gained from his mistakes. And the aspirant is happy to be able to learn, even though it be through mistakes. The only thing asked of the aspirant is that he will learn from his mistakes.

³³It is not, as many think, that the disciple can have his own problems or those of other people solved for him, or those problems which it is the duty of mankind to solve itself. Anyone who is given the solution to his own problems never learns how to solve any problems, and our entire existence is a series of problems which everybody must solve himself. Many personal problems are solved by themselves when the individual ceases to be the centre of the circle of his personality.

³⁴By solving their problems the individuals acquire abilities and qualities which otherwise would remain undeveloped. Those who are capable of it also have a right to solve their problems and to learn that which develops them as well as to sow that good sowing which follows from the fact that, in so doing, they help people. Moreover, the planetary hierarchy calls attention to the laziness and unenterprisingness prevalent in most people. They leave it to others to solve the problems they can solve themselves. Like parasites most people live on the results of other people’s work. They do not even care to put into practice what they have learnt but content themselves with having both the knowledge and the work of others given to them. They are simply drones. They are mistaken if they think that such an attitude does not have consequences. What ideas of the justice of life do they actually have? Anyone who will not do his very best has no right to special favours. Anyone who neglects opportunities offered will be without such ones in the future.

³⁵Vegetarianism refines the organism. A meat and fish diet coarsens it. The same holds good for alcohol, tobacco, etc. Asceticism is no merit in itself. Thus writes a 45-self to an aspirant: “True, you have offered several times to give up meat and drink, and I have refused. Since you

cannot become a regular disciple, why should you?" The point is the ability to be independent of animal cravings. The organism ("Brother Donkey") should be treated well but must not rule. The disciple frees himself from the dependence on his feelings, his sentimentality, his emotionality.

³⁶It is not a question of killing out emotionality but of controlling it, not of killing out desire (as is commonly believed) but of giving it a right direction. Emotionality is as necessary for the disciple as mentality. Emotionality is a force, and all forces are taken care of and put to use in service.

³⁷Finally the disciple learns how to see through the mental fictitiousness of teachings that do not accord with reality. Being self-determined he is independent of public opinion and the authorities of ignorance in religion, philosophy, and science. But he wastes no time on fighting these things. They are superseded by others in the course of evolution. However, he does not keep to himself what he thinks of them, since there are those who are able to see that his criticism is just, and they should not be misled by spurious ideas but be liberated from illusions and fictions. The "immature" may hold whatever opinions they like.

³⁸The disciple accepts nothing that conflicts with his common sense, with his knowledge of reality, life, and the Law. If he nevertheless is mistaken (which he often is), then he has still done his best and benefitted from it. Blind acceptance of even "divine decrees", if that were the case, evidences lack of insight.

³⁹Even an agnostic can serve the kingdom of god. It is better to be a skeptic than a "believer", for that may be a proof of common sense.

⁴⁰The disciple learns that any kind of fanaticism harms the cause he wants to serve.

⁴¹The esoterican does not force his knowledge on people. But he answers questions that serious seekers ask him. It is no use discussing esoterics with exoterists. Those are two worlds (the world of reality and the world of illusions, of appearances) which do not have any points of contact.

⁴²The study of past lives does not benefit consciousness development. There is instead a risk that such study strengthens the power of the past with its fictions, and fosters curiosity.

⁴³The value of the experiences of the past lies in the greater understanding and capacity they may afford. We gain nothing, just lose, by reviving our old mistakes, for the ignorant generally make nothing but mistakes. We are attracted to whatever we look at, whether we know it or not. We expend energy unnecessarily on constantly fighting the old anew. Before the individual can become a disciple, he must have learnt to "let the dead bury their dead", never to look back. The power of the past is then gone once and for all. (That was also the original meaning of the "forgiveness of sins".)

⁴⁴Comprehension is a result of the new brain in the new incarnation. Understanding is a result of the self's own achievements in past incarnations. You can comprehend without understanding and understand without being able to explain why.

⁴⁵Memorized knowledge does not develop the ability of judgement.

⁴⁶Esoterics can be studied at the stage of barbarism. Study is not ability, however; learning is not wisdom; and the teaching is not life. What is essential is our own experiences. The importance of knowledge is that, when possessing it, we need not grope in the dark.

⁴⁷The disciple must see that "life is energy", and he needs that insight in order to use energies expediently. Without knowledge, they have a destructive effect both in his own life and in his environment.

⁴⁸Without energy there is no life.

⁴⁹Happiness is an emotional faculty, joy a mental one.

⁵⁰The disciple does not identify himself with his envelopes and their interests that the ignorant of life take to be their true selves.

⁵¹The disciple minimizes his needs. He has no time for unnecessary things. He considers

everything that is not necessary for consciousness development an unnecessary burden.

⁵²He has no time for other things than the sole essentials except the care he puts in on the fulfilment of personal obligations, which he has taken on him or which life has laid on him.

⁵³The disciple does not take on any new obligations.

⁵⁴Good advice from 45-self D.K. to aspirants to discipleship: By methodically ordering your affairs you learn to economize on time in the right way and to use it expediently. By discarding everything of secondary importance with a sense of right proportion you learn exactness and purposefulness. By aspiring in the right way at fixed times you get the necessary contact and inspiration. By consistently applying self-made rules your envelopes are gradually refined to become suitable tools.

⁵⁵The disciple must acquire “divine indifference” to whatever happens to him, not let himself be befooled by seemingly hopeless conditions, be befooled by appearances.

⁵⁶We must accept ourselves just as we are. That is merely common sense. Faults and failings disappear automatically when the laws of life are applied.

⁵⁷We are all idiots but not of the same degree in all respects.

⁵⁸Morality belongs to the stage of barbarism.

⁵⁹The laws of life are no prohibitions. Anyone who does not see their validity may wait till another incarnation.

⁶⁰We win freedom by applying the laws of life.

⁶¹What we dislike in others is found in ourselves. Otherwise we would not notice it. What we detest and judge in others is what we have latently ourselves.

⁶²You help people more with love and understanding than with your intellect.

⁶³D.K.: “Watch with care your thoughts anent each other, and kill out at once all suspicion, all criticism, and seek to hold each other unwaveringly in the light of love. You have no idea of the potency of such an effort.”

⁶⁴“Love brings all earthly karma to an end.”

⁶⁵We foster love by cultivating the thoughts pertaining to love every day. Anyone who loves in the right way will not be bound by the person he loves.

4.12 General Conditions for Discipleship

¹Discipleship is a personal relationship between teacher and disciple about which no outsider, whether in the hierarchy or in mankind, may know anything. When accepted, the disciple is given the necessary instructions. In the following, only those general conditions are intimated with which the aspirant should be familiar. They are well known and constitute that obvious basis which it is even considered unnecessary to point out to true aspirants. Yet some of these conditions perhaps need to be repeated. Most people so easily forget whatever does not suit them.

²Theosophists are mistaken, if they think that the planetary hierarchy eagerly desires to recruit disciples. They have “more than they can manage”, if the expression is permitted. You will be accepted as a disciple when you are ready, when you have acquired perspective consciousness (47:5), the highest kind of imagination (48:2), and the lowest kind of subjective causal consciousness (47:3:7) and demonstrate that you are fit to be a tool. Then you also achieve something. Nobody is accepted for his own sake or because of his noble character, or genius, or other qualities, because he is so “highly developed”. Anyone who imagines that he is important, “wanted”, a fit tool etc., is a victim of his own conceit.

³The qualifications for discipleship are constantly tightened up according as mankind develops and the influx of aspirants increases. Still in 1875 it was sufficient if the aspirant had acquired the qualities of attraction. After the publication of the esoteric knowledge the qualifications were tightened up so that the mental was to dominate the emotional, man was to be an integrated personality. Nowadays, after 1925, it is required that the individual has built

the bridge between the mental molecule of the first triad (47:4) and the mental atom of the second triad (47:1). Thereupon it will be a simple matter to acquire essential consciousness (46) in the second triad (45:4, 46:1, 47:1).

⁴Thus nowadays it is required that the individual has by himself acquired both causal and essential (46:5) subjective consciousness. This he has done by serving mankind as well as by studying the esoteric literature thoroughly. Of course, the first condition is understanding that the ruling ideologies are untenable and useless as working hypotheses.

⁵The esoteric knowledge has made it clear to the aspirant that the knowledge of reality is not found in the present so-called sacred books of mankind, and he has also clearly seen that these scriptures have been the curse of mankind throughout history.

⁶The Sokratean insight that mankind cannot solve the problems of existence marks the transition from the stage of ignorance to the stage of wisdom. It must, however, be an insight you have reached yourself through the experience of all your incarnations. That insight is something quite different from the usual agnosticism or skepticism.

⁷The most important thing after that is your refusal to “believe” in anything you have not examined yourself, to accept anything without sufficient grounds. And then service and willingness to co-operate on the basis of equality.

⁸Absolutely forbidden is everything that can be classed among curiosity, interest in the private affairs of other people, gossip, criticism of other people’s views and manners of living. Still the occultists have not learnt the art of being silent, closely related to the insight as to what should be said. In any case you are wise to be silent if you do not know what is best to say.

⁹A basic requirement for discipleship is that the individual has given proof of collective consciousness. He must have entered into service, so having learnt to disregard the different stages of development and learnt how to serve mankind in man. The will to unity must rule and the “welfare of all” – unity – must be the determining motive in the individual’s actions.

¹⁰A condition for discipleship is to have seen the illusoriness of “all earthly glory” (power, fame, material possessions, hunt for pleasure, etc.).

¹¹A general condition is to have learnt whatever is to be learnt in the human kingdom, to have acquired the qualities and abilities that are necessary for higher development. All of them must be there one hundred per cent before man is finished as a man and has paid all his “debts” according to the law of reaping. Perfection is not required for discipleship. The ignorance of life is still too great for that. But whatever is lacking must be easily acquirable.

¹²The two greatest shortcomings in most aspirants are perhaps their lack of courage to dare and their psychological misjudgement of people.

¹³We want to be good and think well of everybody. But that must not imply that we trust their loyalty before we have made sure that they are “dependable”, are truly worthy to be trusted, have passed the “tests”. As a rule, this is not the case until they have reached the higher emotional stage.

¹⁴Even that aspirant, who has reached so far that he cannot for any great length of time lay aside his decision purposefully to strive for discipleship, often lacks that courage which is one of the most important conditions for success.

¹⁵He must have courage to decide to tread the path, to break with his past and everything which that implies in terms of personal interests, habits, people’s altered attitudes, to sacrifice it all for the one essential thing. Even if the disciple would stand alone, he has not got time to feel this, for he has not got time to think of himself.

¹⁶The aspirant learns not to identify his monad consciousness with the consciousness of his envelopes, a condition for making these envelopes his obedient and efficient tools.

¹⁷In order to become a disciple, the individual at the stage of humanity must have acquired the ability to control the emotional energies, have acquired purposefulness, love and understanding, unselfishness, insight into law and obedience to law, foresight and understanding of

where he may best make his contribution, endurance, divine indifference and trust in the Law.

¹⁸The teacher cares about the reactions of the disciple. What they depend on does not interest him. That belongs under the law of reaping. Nobody can excuse himself. It is a matter of firmness under all conditions.

¹⁹Many incarnations ago the individual liberated himself from such qualities as belong to the stage of civilization (for instance, envy, vengefulness, desire to hurt, delight over other people's misfortunes, etc.).

²⁰In order to be accepted disciples it is required for those at the mental stage that they cultivate "harmlessness" and also strive to observe three directions. By harmlessness is meant that you do not harbour any feelings or thoughts of evil towards or of anybody. That sounds simple but is beyond the powers of most people. The three directions are: Enter thy brother's heart and see his woe. Help him with good thoughts. Blend with thy brother's soul and know that he and you are one for ever.

²¹The aspirant sees the necessity of being patient with himself as well as with others. The mass of bad qualities, which he has acquired during myriads of incarnations, is not discarded through good resolutions but through the acquisition of the opposite qualities one hundred per cent. One of his tasks is to facilitate this acquisition also in others.

²²The aspirant must acquire the quality of unconcern as regards himself. The self is the monad and nothing that "befalls him" befalls his self but only his envelopes. If it hurts him, this shows that he identifies himself with his envelopes, and for so long does he lack the ability to liberate himself from them, as well as the ability to acquire higher envelopes.

²³Impersonality is not possible until the individual has acquired essential consciousness and has entered unity. Before that, impersonality will be distorted into an attitude of irresponsible aloofness. Long before there can be any question of impersonality, the individual must have liberated himself from emotional attraction and repulsion, liking or disliking anybody in the superindividual, esoteric family group (at his own stage of development). All such things as make you prefer someone in the group to another must be superseded by the consciousness of community and the work for common objectives.

²⁴The greatest ability is acquired through meditation. And the right esoteric meditation consists in visualization and in the use of "creative" imagination for the acquisition of qualities and abilities. Without daily meditation on the requisite qualities, they will remain undeveloped.

²⁵Before the individual can become a disciple he must have discovered his esoteric group, that group with which he is journeying until he will become a 45-self. When he has discovered this group, he knows that he is not an isolated individual, alone and abandoned, but a member of a still larger group, which in the essential world merges with ever larger groups until "the whole world is his home" ("Seid umschlungen, Millionen!").

²⁶The aspirant cannot reckon on being accepted as a disciple until he has a prospect of becoming a causal self. Before that he has received what he has been needing from his Augoeides and from disciples of the planetary hierarchy. When the hierarchy considers that the aspirant is capable of joining the esoteric group, and after he has passed tests to prove his capacity and stability, he will then be introduced into the group.

4.13 The Ability to Be Silent

¹The first condition for discipleship is the ability to be silent. That implies much more than what ignorance imagines. Curiosity, interest in the private lives of other people ("everything private is taboo"), gossip, and other expressions of hatred are unthinkable and definitely impossible. The disciple acquires the ability to see the past of other people quite unintentionally, to read their thoughts and feelings. All such impressions must be effaced at once from his consciousness and memory.

²The esoteric expressions, "to be silent" and "the art of being silent" (misleading like most

ancient esoteric terms), refer to the insight into the importance of knowing to whom you are speaking, what should be said on that particular occasion or in that connection, what cannot be said (since it would be misunderstood), why you should not “cast pearls” (speak to the unknown on things that are incomprehensible to them, which makes yourself a fool and harms the cause you wish to further). The whole thing is a matter of judgement, and anyone who is not sure of his point is wise to keep his silence. The freemasons’ pledge of silence has given that order its good name. The theosophists’ chatter has brought their society into ridicule.

4.14 Self-Criticism

¹It is certain that anyone who considers himself ready is not so. That belief evidences an enormous self-esteem, and such lack of judgement and lack of self-criticism alone become obstacles. For nobody is “worthy” of becoming a disciple. And those who are accepted are surprised indeed. For they see how little they know, realize, understand, and can achieve. And they are right. The newly accepted disciple is for a long time a heavy burden on the teacher and also on senior disciples. It is true that anyone who is accepted has been under special scrutiny during a series of incarnations, and it is also true that the aspirant unsuspectingly is put to a series of hard tests designed to establish how he will act in cases of direst necessity. However, the distance between a newly accepted disciple and the one who, on the completion of his final test, has been received as a member of the planetary hierarchy is nevertheless enormous. As a rule this will have required a series of incarnations of intense purposefulness, manifesting itself in the wish to serve mankind and development in some manner.

²In this connection it should also be mentioned that disciples who have once been accepted always remain disciples but need not therefore know anything about it in their new incarnations. As a rule they find their true sphere of activity, the one intended for them, only when about 35 years old. In exceptional cases they remain disoriented their entire lives. That may depend on several factors: the individual in question is to strengthen insufficient qualities and abilities, eliminate unsuitable ones, make good neglected duties, and many more obstacles that must be removed before the continuation of his training will be possible. Those individuals, whom mankind persecuted during their life-time but afterwards considered pioneers, have mostly been disciples. That is not true, however, of the saints at the emotional stage canonized by the church.

³There is a thing which esotericians call “blindness”. Rather often the aspirant wants to make a “rapid career”. The risk is always great that this entails superficialness. Thoroughness in all respects is essential, however. The disciple must have personal experience of everything. The esoteric knowledge he has picked up proves to be superficially comprehended more often than not; so with everything that does not tally with the experience of life he has acquired. And then it will appear different when subsequently tested out in the experimental laboratory of daily life. The disciple, believing himself to understand, will have many a lesson turned by life, will experience over and over again that what he believed he understood was not apprehended right. Eventually he learns to see that he cannot himself decide when it is finally “right”. We truly understand only what belongs to a lower stage of development than our own. The bold must expect lessons in humility. But if the disciple thinks that this can be used as an apology for mistakes he has made, then it is an even more serious mistake with sorrowful consequences.

4.15 The Serving Attitude

¹There are plenty of aspirants to discipleship who have acquired the esoteric knowledge of reality and can lecture on the conditions for discipleship, having learnt the theory of everything publicized on the subject. In order to become a disciple, however, infinitely more is required: the ability to realize, to expediently apply the consciousnesses and energies they know so much about. And that is quite another matter. Study is not wisdom. Knowledge is not ability, just the first theoretical condition.

²Aspirants think that they are supposed to acquire causal consciousness and come into contact with the planetary hierarchy in order to be able to serve after that. This is the usual misconception. Instead, they are supposed to acquire the sense of non-separateness and community with all, and then the ability to arouse others to understand the unity of all. The important thing is everybody's development, not my development. The sense of self disappears in the work for everybody's understanding of the unity of all. The motive in the acquisition of knowledge, insight, and capacity is to become an ever more useful tool in the service of evolution. Nobody enters the fifth natural kingdom alone but must, even if he does not know it himself, have helped thousands of his fellow men to develop, and in the right way.

³The aspirant must have realized that all in the human kingdom make up a unitary collective, irrespective of their levels of development, and that anybody who for any reason whatever excludes anybody from this community cannot possibly become a disciple.

⁴The aspirant must be alive to the fact that the planetary hierarchy has no interest in "saving" anybody before all the others. All shall reach the goal. What the hierarchy needs is tools for its work for mankind, since it can achieve nothing without these. Anybody who strives for discipleship shows that he is thinking of himself only, and that is a big mistake. The disciple has but one wish: to be able to serve. Anyone who desires knowledge and power for himself, will not become a disciple. Anyone who believes himself ready for discipleship, is certainly not ready. Without exception, those who receive the "call" are surprised and consider themselves unworthy.

⁵The aspirant lives in order to serve, to help, to liberate in the way he is able to. We can all contribute to bringing about right human relations, remove causes of friction. Everybody has a right to his own view. But nobody has a right to violate the right of others, to infringe on the sphere of other people's freedom.

⁶There are untold opportunities to serve evolution, life, mankind, individuals. Service also includes the deliberate acquisition of qualities, abilities, knowledge, insight. In this work as in any other, the essential thing is our motive.

⁷A remark by the future world teacher, "Pythagoras", is of paramount importance for all who purposefully strive to reach the next higher kingdom: "He who is on the path (to the essential kingdom) exists not for himself, but for others."

4.16 The Sense of Proportion

¹One of the most important abilities is the sense of proportion. The aspirant is on his way to discipleship, and the disciple has a long way to go before he is "through". Whatever concerns the disciple need not concern the aspirant. Common sense, reasonable application at all stages, is required.

²The disciple is an individual in the human kingdom, thus above all a human being in his relations to people with everything which that implies as for insight and understanding, sobriety, moderation, and balance. His status in relation to the planetary hierarchy concerns but the hierarchy, which is abundantly clear from the experience of all the theosophical sects from 1875 on. The esoterician has to observe silence on all esoteric matters, however much they might excite public curiosity.

³A necessary condition, too, is the absence of any kind of fanaticism. The aspirant may learn by going to extremes. It is his own business. But he has no right or duty whatever to make any demands whatever on other people, prescribe anything for others, force his views on others. We quite simply lack any right to judge others. They have a right to be left in peace even from our thoughts. The moralist does not stand an earthly chance of becoming a disciple, any more than the fanatic.

⁴It should perhaps be added that you are not a fanatic just because you are consistent in your private affairs.

⁵The aspirant works to unite increasingly more people in more and more respects in common work for all mankind. But all such activity must be done voluntarily, in a spirit of unity, which precludes all actions that curtail freedom. If mankind could unite through everybody's dedication for evolution, then rapid development of consciousness would be possible, which would bring mankind over into the fifth kingdom in an unbelievably short time. The more individuals' energies that co-operate, the more the concerted effect is heightened in kind and degree. A group of nine people, united in consciousness of community, could achieve more than a thousand people working separately.

4.17 Mental Sovereignty

¹The aspirant must have acquired the qualities of attraction and the higher mental consciousness (perspective consciousness, 47:5). Then mental consciousness controls the feeling and imagination of emotional consciousness. This means that the aspirant has even the highest emotional stage (the stage of the mystic and the saint) behind him and has become a mental self.

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

³The aspirant, therefore, has acquired common sense with the independent judgement concomitant to it. He is independent of the ruling ideologies, authorities and the pertaining kinds of paper popes, "sacred writings". Later, as a disciple, he learns that the planetary hierarchy will never teach anything on which that patent stamp, the "word of God", may be put. No god preaches to men any "word of god" any more than he lays down prohibitions to them. It will be their own business to seek and to find the "truth". They should not accept anything that does not agree with their common sense (such as it be). The great Law secures the right of every individual to hold his own views within the limits of the equal (inviolable) right of all.

⁴The task of the aspirant is first and foremost to become what D.K. calls a personality. Then the self in the monad envelope controls the lower three envelopes (the mental, emotional, and etheric), which means that the mental is sovereign. Thereupon follows a re-orientation, which has the result that the monad can centre itself, at least spontaneously, in the lowest centre of the causal envelope. (The centre mentioned is the organ of the intellect. The two others are the organs of unity consciousness and "will", respectively.) Only then is it possible for the aspirant to become a disciple.

⁵Esoteric students need not in the least be even personalities. They may very well comprehend the esoteric mental system without having reached beyond the stage of civilization.

⁶If man wants to try his prospects for discipleship, then he ought to ask of himself "how he thinketh in his heart". That will indicate his level.

⁷The individual must be "through" with physical and emotional experiences, so through that nothing in these worlds has any attraction whatever for him. This is something quite different from the abortive weariness of life. It is voluntary renunciation of all the world's glory in his possession. When his Augoeides sees that all the requisite qualities exist latently in the man's subconscious and that he wishes nothing but to serve mankind, then his Augoeides will step in powerfully and then it will be possible for the man to concentrate, with one-pointed purposefulness, all his energies (physical, emotional, and mental) on the methodical acquisition of what "is lacking in his equipment" for the attainment of the goal. This does not mean that the individual may settle down to a quiet life and wait for the "call from on high". The concentration, intensity, dynamics must be applied by the individual himself in order to contact his Augoeides. It is an error to believe that he will let himself be easily found; it is a vain attempt if not total indifference to whatever happens to the personality prevails, indifference even to the failure or

success of the “experiment”, if not complete “harmlessness” in thoughts, feelings, words, and deeds has been acquired.

4.18 Control of Consciousness

¹As long as the individual prefers living in his envelopes of incarnation to seeking to become a second self, so long he will be unfit for discipleship. When nothing physical, emotional, or mental fascinates, entices, attracts, and attaches, then he ceases to live for his first self and begins living for others, embarks on the path of service, the path to discipleship.

²The envelopes of man are extremely easily activated by vibrations from without or by impulses from his subconscious. The quality of the vibrations in the emotional world should soon be a matter of common knowledge. They are repulsive and are directed by illusions and fictions, the idiocies of ignorance; and the subconscious consists of what the individual has felt and thought during all his incarnations, such things as he has every reason to examine carefully. This is why nobody can become a disciple who has not acquired “control of thought”, learnt how to control the consciousness content of his emotional and mental envelopes. Those envelopes must not determine anything.

³The aspirant must have discovered that it is his self which observes thoughts, feelings, and sense perceptions, and that these phenomena are not the self but manifestations in his envelopes. The very fact that he can look upon them as detached phenomena demonstrates that his self is something else. He says to himself that these envelopes are not his self but instruments used by him in the various worlds. The consciousness, activated by vibrations from without, of these envelopes is opposed to his own intentions more often than not. If these external vibrations are stronger than his own, then he will be the slave of his envelopes. The self’s work on the envelope consciousnesses and their “innate” tendencies (the self’s own work in previous incarnations) is often difficult, sometimes fruitless. If the individual must resign himself to “superior force”, then he ought at least make this clear to himself: “my envelopes desire this but I desire it not”. When the individual has developed far enough, he will be sovereign in his envelopes and they will be his obedient tools. Not all moods and depression, not all phenomena in his envelopes are provoked by himself. More often than not they are the result of vibrations from without. If he has provoked them himself, then he should also be able to liberate himself from his dependence on them.

⁴The constant discrimination between the self and its envelopes is one of the methods for liberation from the envelopes and from the interests of these envelopes in their worlds. The monad in the causal envelope is independent of the mental, emotional, and physical envelopes. These lower envelopes are indeed detached on the conclusion of every incarnation. If they have held the self captive, then the self will have to incarnate until it has learnt to live in the world of causal ideas. The lower worlds are called the worlds of appearances, for when being in them the self sees only the effects of unknown causes. In the causal world the self sees the causes of those effects. Only then the self knows that it has knowledge of reality. The self sees the meaning of life, sees that all are on the path leading to the same goal and, therefore, all are fellow wanderers on the path; that it is the task of all to help one another; that holding the life view of unity and acting on it is the quickest way of reaching the goal. All this has been said before, expressed in innumerable ways. Only now it is living insight.

⁵By daily analysis of your motives you clarify to yourself why a certain motive should be the strongest. Thereupon you give that motive special attention until one day it will make itself felt spontaneously and automatically. In this manner you can make any motive whatever the strongest. “Energy follows thought.” All consciousness expressions also have an energy aspect. And the energy aspect is the essential one once you have gained knowledge of reality, life, and the laws of life.

4.19 The Twelve Essential Qualities

¹The esoteric tale of the twelve labours of Hercules, totally distorted in exoteric legend, was meant to symbolize the various stages of discipleship. Only a titan could become a “demigod” and thereby gain entrance into the fifth natural kingdom.

²The genius thinks himself important, is puffed up with pride and conceit. That evidences that he has a long way to go before he has acquired those qualities and abilities which make him “human”. We must have acquired all human qualities at least 50 per cent, before we have any chance as aspirants to discipleship. No quality must be below 50 per cent, a minimum. But 50 per cent for all will not be enough. We must have become so-called geniuses in several respects without thinking ourselves important on that account. The following is a summary of some of the qualities that enter into the twelve essential ones. For a fuller and more systematic presentation the reader is referred to the essay on *The Conception of Right*.

³Trust in self and trust in life.

⁴Courage in physical as well as in emotional and mental respect.

⁵The disciple must be able to stand alone against the world.

⁶The old saw about “occult obedience” should be changed for a more exact term, which is impossible to misunderstand, conformity to law. Anyone who wants to develop his consciousness and to acquire the kinds of consciousness of higher matters must learn to conform to the processes that are necessary for this, learn the pertaining laws of nature and of life and learn how to apply them in the right manner.

⁷Uprightness.

⁸Sincerity, which in no wise means that it is your duty to inform others as to your opinions or to yield to unjustified trespasses or to answer inquisitorial questions. However, you never dissimulate but are simple-hearted and natural.

⁹Self-criticism and self-forgetfulness imply no contradiction, and are both equally necessary.

¹⁰Self-forgetfulness: your envelopes always try to make themselves felt but have no say.

¹¹Humility, or seeing your own insufficiency, your own great limitation.

¹²Invulnerability, the inability of being insulted, of feeling hurt, etc.

¹³Unconcern as to whatever happens to you.

¹⁴Independence of other people’s opinions of you.

¹⁵Anyone who considers himself ready for discipleship certainly is not. On the contrary, the chosen ones are surprised and feel unworthy. That is no false modesty but proof of a certain measure of self-knowledge.

¹⁶Another condition for discipleship is the acquisition of total indifference as to whatever happens to the disciple and whatever becomes conscious in his emotional and mental envelopes. Those are phenomena which he witnesses but which do not influence him.

¹⁷Loyalty means to an esoterician much more than ordinary law-abidingness and uprightness. It means reliability and faithfulness. Lack of loyalty equals treachery.

¹⁸Control of thought is acquired by constant attention to the expressions of consciousness.

¹⁹The ability of being silent is among the absolutely necessary ones. And for initiates that implies much more than just to avoid gossiping and blabbing. There are things of which you do not even think. The mental vibrations go out in the mental world. And thereby the thing thought is broadcast in the mental “radio”.

²⁰The ability always to be happy. It is necessary in order not to be a burden on the people surrounding one.

²¹Always being glad and spreading joy around one. Anyone who is unhappy thinks of himself.

²²Since we are here in order to have experiences and to learn from them, the ability to use time right is necessary. Those who have a need for amusements are not even aspirants.

²³Harmlessness in thoughts, emotions, words and deeds. That sounds easy to anyone who has

not tried to practise it all day long and in all situations.

²⁴The will to unity.

²⁵The ability of admiration, affection, sympathy.

²⁶You are not blind to the undesirable qualities there are in other people but you want to consider only the possibilities of good.

²⁷Love loneliness.

²⁸There is no loneliness, since all are partners in collective consciousness. Anyone who feels lonely cannot learn the art of forgetting himself.

4.20 Abilities to be Acquired by the Accepted Disciple

¹In the following are intimated some of those abilities which the disciple must acquire. The knowledge of them helps the aspirant to judge how great his prospects of discipleship are. Be it carefully noted that the disciple must acquire these abilities by himself. He is given some hint but no instructions.

²Full understanding of these abilities is possible only through the individual's own experience of them. Speculation on them avails nothing, for nobody can "guess right". And all guesswork is definitively over and done with. The disciple knows or he knows not. And what he knows is reality. It is part of his training already as a mental self to learn how to tell what he knows from what he does not know. The less you are interested in assuming anything at all without due cause, the better. The disciple emancipates himself from all emotional illusions and mental fictions, is skeptical about all vagaries and freaks, assumes nothing without sufficient grounds. The total fiasco of philosophic speculation has been a salutary lesson. Using that method they actually have not found one single "truth".

³The great significance of philosophy lies in the logical education it provides and, above all, in its discovery of the fictitiousness of all speculation. What is valuable in it is not the opinions of the philosophers but the mistakes they made, the errors in their thinking. We learn to avoid such mistakes for the future. The history of philosophy must be rewritten. Such as it has been treated hitherto it is misleading. As for semantics, it, too, must be called speculation of an even more disorienting kind, typical of the process of mental dissolution of our times in all domains. The fundamental reality concepts there are in philosophy have been given to mankind by initiates of the esoteric knowledge orders. It is certainly true that the philosophers have misinterpreted them. But without them we would be living in a mental chaos, to which semantics leads. There are still people possessed of common sense. And common sense will prevail as it has always prevailed despite all philosophy.

⁴The disciple wishes to pass from the fourth to the fifth natural kingdom, wishes to become a second self after having been a first self. Common sense says that in order to become a second self you should become like them, at least strive for it as far as it is possible. That is the model. Those who ask, are at a loss what to do, want to know what they "may" or "may not" do, what they "should" do etc., might use their imagination and try to understand what a second self would do in their place. Would he eat such food, read such literature, seek such "amusements", allow his envelopes to decide?

⁵The disciple has learnt to differentiate between himself as a personality (in his triad envelope), as a causal being (in his causal envelope), and as a causal self (centred in the highest centre of the causal envelope, the will centre). As a causal being he has subjective consciousness in two of the three centres of the causal envelope, as a causal self in addition objective self-consciousness in all three. It is important to have these distinctions entirely clear, which most occultists do not yet have. Neither is there any hurry about such clarity before the individual experiences the pertaining realities himself. For the clearer the concepts the aspirant has acquired, the greater is the risk for self-deception, since the inexperienced individual all too easily confuses mental clarity with subjective reality. That risk is avoided if the individual

comprehends that he in fact does not understand the realities which esoterics describes until he has become a disciple of a member of the planetary hierarchy. Even this furnishes no real guarantee, since the individuals of the black lodge often parade as such teachers. However, this is possible in the physical and emotional worlds only, not in the mental world. Clairvoyants, who imagine that their clairvoyance (or, as they often believe, “cosmic consciousness”) affords them the possibility of judging, unfailingly become victims of the black ones. The members of the planetary hierarchy never appear in the emotional world.

⁶Necessary rules for the disciple are to acquire impersonality, divine indifference to whatever happens to him, to whatever others say of him and do against him, never to look back, to be harmless, and to live in the present.

⁷“Impersonality”, personal impersonality, is one of the twelve essential qualities, which the causal self must acquire. Before this is done attempts to be impersonal will just amount to escape from reality, so called non-attachment, dodging responsibility. The esoterically ignorant misinterpret all such terms as “impersonality”, etc., since what is intended is beyond their experience of life and is misunderstood. That is one of the difficulties in esoterics. It is only at the stage of humanity that the beginnings of the conditions for not misunderstanding irremediably are seen. And that was one of the reasons why the knowledge used to be kept secret.

⁸Impersonality is “love”, essentiality, unity with all, something which he does not understand who is still speaking in terms of me and you and we.

⁹It is above all divine indifference to one’s own self, connected with the realization of one’s responsibility for everything, thus the direct opposite of the irresponsible indifference to “what will happen” in any respect.

¹⁰“Your capacity for suffering is abnormal; this must be ended through the cultivation of that divine indifference which changes the present violent emotional reactions into understanding, compassionate wisdom.” (D.K.). We can even better satisfy the need for compassion by our understanding than by self-destructive, meaningless sentimentality. Energies of higher kinds have quite another effect.

¹¹The disciple lives in the present, not in the past, never looks back. By living in the present and working up his present experiences he utilizes what the present can teach him. Anyone who lives in the moment develops simultaneously both concentration and control of thought, two abilities that are necessary before thought is allowed to become “power”. The recollections of the past are all more or less different and falsified. Anyone who lives in the present has no time for living in the world of memories, where the self lives in its own circle instead of forgetting its own insignificance.

¹²Thought produces in mental matter material forms, which at the same time are charges of energy with their effects. The disciple is initiated into the science of meditation and also into the art of visualization.

¹³Esoteric meditation is to visualize and to picture vividly in imagination whatever you wish to think of. In so doing you objectify the subjective and gain the possibility of objective control. It is by visualization that the disciple adds link to link in his triad chain, develops objective consciousness in ever higher worlds, acquires ever greater capacity for synthesization and becomes a co-sharer in the consciousness of community, all of which entails increased consciousness capacity both extensively and intensively.

¹⁴The esoterician who has acquired the knowledge of reality and who has a vision of the “totality”, has another kind of system thinking (47:4) than has the philosopher or scientist. That vision is obtained through the discovery of the symbol of the four cardinal points, meaningless to the “uninitiated”. Upwards = higher kingdoms. Downwards = lower kingdoms. Outward = mankind. Inward = the cosmic total consciousness.

¹⁵The esoterician develops new qualities and abilities. They enable him to understand, and to

make, his own contribution in the ongoing process of manifestation with everything this implies in the matter of his own prevision and self-assumed task of life for future incarnations, a constant attention to circumstances in the present and understanding of their importance.

¹⁶Before the individual has become a causal self, his love for mankind and sympathy for its general needs are of course noble but rather occasional attempts. What he does is not yet his nature but the result of reflective sacrifice and deliberate renunciation. It still remains for him to acquire the personal decentralization and automatic attitude to others without a thought of his own self.

¹⁷Among his new faculties are telepathy, mental communication with others, apprehension of the vibrations from his Augoeides or his teacher. The ideas of the causal world are accessible to an increasing extent, which entails his ability to know whatever he wants to know in the worlds of man with the certainty of vision even without vision. He also begins to utilize the purposeful energy of the second triad (the only energy so far that the planetary hierarchy considers to deserve the name of “will”), which entails insight into the inevitability of evolution and his own participation in it and, above all, what is of immediate importance for mankind.

¹⁸The disciple learns how to identify himself with all “forms” (the various kinds of consciousness of the different forms) and experience them as his own consciousness. In that way he learns to see that he constitutes an integrated part of the whole. That is an exercise preliminary to his acquisition of higher kinds of consciousness and discovery of the fact that all consciousness is one, or rather: a continuous series.

¹⁹There are many kinds of vibrations which the disciple must learn to perceive and distinguish. There are physical, emotional, and mental vibrations, later those of the different molecular kinds. There are vibrations in his various centres. There are vibrations from his Augoeides, his group, from his teacher.

²⁰Every individual has his particular “vibration” or “unique character”, and the disciple is taught how to identify the vibrations with the individuals so that he can distinguish where the various vibrations come from, like we recognize our friends by their voices.

²¹During his entire training the disciple is taught how to use energies in order to further evolution, the different departmental energies of the different centres. The disciple discovers that he is a point of energy in an ocean of energies. That implies a series of “revelations”, a word which has been misunderstood by the church. It has been erroneously interpreted in an egoistic sense as the mystic’s reward for his search after god, a transcendent god. The true revelation, however, is the result of immanent divinity, the individual’s identification with ever higher kinds of consciousness.

²²The disciple has to learn the significance of his centres, how they are to be vitalized and utilized.

²³The integration of his envelopes is, among other things, intended to enable the corresponding centres of the different envelopes to contact each other, so that the energies pouring down can function expediently and without friction. When the disciple has succeeded in this, he is taught how to attach his triad envelope to his causal envelope, whereupon the causal energies are led down into the physical and to the respective centres of the etheric envelope. The etheric envelopes of the brain cells are influenced by the energies running through these centres.

²⁴The disciple is warned of such mistakes as the ignorant make. They learn about the situation of centres in the etheric envelope and try to arouse perceptions in these centres in order to become aware of their positions and qualities (kinds of consciousness). When they succeed in this, they try to contact superconscious causal consciousness. This is the wrong approach. It is not the energy of the first triad (the synthetic personality of the lower envelopes) that is to vitalize the centres, but the causal consciousness. If the triad vitalizes them, then they will counteract the causal energies. If this occurs, then in the subsequent incarnation the personality will be even more opposed to the causal than before.

²⁵Now we perhaps understand why the yogi, who has begun by vitalizing his centres himself, must fail and end up in irremediable illusionism. That he succeeds in attaining the stage of the saint is quite another matter. Without the aid of his Augoeides he will never reach the causal stage, and that aid he declines, for he believes that he can and must achieve the “divine stage” by himself. He does not know that his Augoeides alone has knowledge of reality and that the monad acquires it only as a causal self.

²⁶According to Leadbeater the individual’s sojourn in the emotional world between incarnations seldom exceeds one hundred years. The word “seldom” seems rather too strong. At all events it can be safely stated that this is no rule and that the disciple’s sojourn there is considerably shorter. If the disciple proves to be an eminent mentalist, he may even be instructed as to how to scatter his emotional envelope and pass to the mental world. Being a mentalist, he also knows how to acquire objective mental consciousness in the mental world, which enables him to move freely in his world and help people (in the consciousness of their mental envelopes) in the physical as well as emotional world with their mental problems. He becomes a “mental angel”. Of course, his assistance may be counted on just in the matter of problems whose solution will benefit mankind and the evolution of consciousness.

²⁷The individual acquires the ability of continuity of consciousness, so that he will recollect what he has experienced during sleep. This has nothing to do with “remembering one’s dreams”.

²⁸Long before he has become a perfect causal self and aware of this fact in his physical waking consciousness, the disciple must be able to leave, during sleep, his triad envelope with its envelopes of incarnation and move to his causal envelope. When in it, he must then be able to move in the causal world, for only in his causal envelope will he be able to meet his teacher and receive personal instruction. Before he has acquired continuity of consciousness, so that, upon awakening (and back in his triad envelope) he can recollect this nightly experience, the information he has received will remain in his superconscious and inaccessible to his waking consciousness. It is part of the preparatory training for discipleship to learn the art of moving the first triad from the triad envelope to the greater causal envelope and gain the necessary continuity of consciousness. From this one understands that the newly accepted disciple often is a burden rather than a help to the teacher, and that the individual in order to be accepted as a disciple must have become a mental self.

4.21 The Self-Determination of the Disciple

¹There are many people who read the will of god out of sacred writings and accept it blindly. There are many “spiritual” schools that preach the will of god. There are many people who, like Sokrates, listen to the “voice” and obey it. There are even so-called esoteric schools that speak of the desires and advice of the master. The planetary hierarchy asserts emphatically that all such things conflict with the law of self-realization. It is the individual’s business to acquire self-determination, learn to trust his own common sense, and make himself independent of influences of any kind, no matter how “enlightened” the sources. No member of the planetary hierarchy issues commands even to disciples. There is no such thing as “order” in higher kingdoms. That is against the law of freedom. Any assertion that “the master desires ...”, for instance, evinces either misapprehension or deception. That has been definitively stated by the secretary of the planetary hierarchy, D.K. The teacher makes up a plan for his disciple, his own plan. In that case the disciple is entirely free to see where he can make his contribution. But that is done on his own initiative and on his own responsibility.

²That has been firmly declared, since the Adyar theosophical society has asserted another opinion, which has had very deplorable consequences. The following statement by a theosophical leader (George Arundale) witnesses a fatal misconception of the Law (several laws of life): “I would rather be wrong with my leaders than right by myself alone.” In so

thinking one has given up his divine right of self-reliance and self-determination. The firm basis for self-realization is then lacking. You cannot throw your responsibility on others. No member of the planetary hierarchy gives advice as to what the individual should think or do. They present facts for the individual's own judgement, nothing more.

³Only the man or woman who has gained self-determination can become a "disciple". Not even your own "higher self", your Augoeides, assists in personal problems or in such matters as concern the law of reaping. The self is thrown back on its own experience in this life and in others. Man has got the possibility of free-will and shall also learn how to develop it. This is counteracted, however, if he is entirely under the "guidance of god" and obeys spiritual authorities. Only the individual who has acquired self-determination is able to develop his mental consciousness into contacting causal consciousness. It is his task to liberate himself from emotional illusions and mental fictions, and that he will be able to do only by relying on his own common sense. This is no self-assertion but knowledge of the law, and entails the true humility before the problems of life. It is of course well consistent with the calling of the educator to guide until the child has developed his common sense. There is nothing to prevent you listening to the advice of others, as long as you decide for yourself.

⁴You can learn from everything and everybody, not just from everything in the human kingdom but also in the lower three kingdoms. It is a learning process which you never complete.

⁵What does it matter if a "teacher" believes he has reached a higher level than he actually has? You learn from him because he has had experiences that you have not had. You will never be misguided by a teacher if you take Buddha's advice never to accept anything which you do not realize to be true yourself. Everybody has his own common sense and should follow it, for it is his "criterion of truth". What you do not understand is above your level and is not for you. Soon enough that day will come when you too will be able to understand. Your common sense is the bedrock on which you should build. It is not just the most stable ground. It is also the quickest way to learn. Those who "believe" against their common sense will constantly have their lessons turned in life after life. Such people will be very slow to develop. In their case there is an apposite simile: the one about the tortoise that reached the goal before the hare. Anyone who is eager to "advance rapidly" has not the right motive and is sure to relearn in respect of development. The one right motive is to learn in order to better help others to advance.

⁶The disciple, who in addition to his hylozoic study has of course assimilated the general education available and the results of scientific research, is allowed to discover, under the guidance of his teacher, the centres of his envelopes and the kinds of consciousness and energy that belong to them. Then it is the business of the disciple to find by himself the path to the causal world and to assimilate the causal ideas to the extent that his work for evolution requires it. Esoteric knowledge must be self-acquired. Nothing must be accepted that has not been firmly founded on the bedrock of the disciple's own experience and experiment. The disciple must definitively eliminate hypotheses and theories. In the causal world he is able to study the history of our planet: its genesis and all subsequent processes (of course the involution and evolution of the monad through the lowest three atomic worlds: 47–49). His thinking is no longer mental comprehension but intuitional vision, and so the mental concepts are dropped as being unnecessary tools. He knows because he experiences not just once but every time he wants and needs to know. He understands why higher selves find it difficult to communicate what they know to mental selves with their enormously limited and always unsatisfactory concepts.

4.22 The Disciple as a Worker

¹In order to be able to do something in the human kingdom the planetary hierarchy must, according to the Law, use human beings. In order to implement a certain plan the hierarchy needs co-workers whom it can inspire for the execution of the plan where such co-workers are necessary.

²Before the individual has acquired subjective causal consciousness the planetary hierarchy cannot use him as a tool in its work, and only such people can expect to be accepted as disciples. It is a grave error to think that the planetary hierarchy is especially interested in anyone who is not fit to work for the hierarchy in the physical world. Only he can be a fit tool who has acquired the twelve essential qualities. For unfit tools (and all who think they are fit are such ones) the hierarchy does not have any use.

³The individual's own development in order to enter the fifth natural kingdom does not interest the planetary hierarchy. They do not care about what a man knows or is able to do but what contribution he makes for evolution, how he realizes brotherhood. Until he qualifies in that respect he is to pursue the ordinary path of development under the supervision of his Augoeides, who for the individual represents the Law with everything which that implies. The individual must, according to the law of self-realization, find the methods of development himself, and in this the evolutionary energies are at his disposal. Development goes on automatically in the great evolutionary process during millions of years and according to the law of self-realization.

⁴Before the disciple can be of any great use to the teacher, his etheric envelope must be entirely reorganized, so that it will be able to receive the vibrations from the causal envelope. The conditions for this are integration of the envelopes of incarnation, mental dominance, and knowledge of the method of reorganization. Thereupon the disciple can begin to learn about the energies that pour in, their origins and expedient application.

⁵When science has discovered and recognized the existence of the physical etheric envelope, the esoteric knowledge of the relations between the centres of the etheric envelope, the nervous and glandular systems of the organism will be allowed for publication. That will bring about a total revolution in medical thinking.

⁶The disciple never works alone at the implementation of a hierarchic plan. Before this will be possible, he must have joined a permanent group of disciples with consciousness of community. Within this group, criticism is precluded and full harmony prevails.

⁷The planetary hierarchy works with causes. The disciples in the worlds of man are enmeshed in the effects of these causes hidden from them and cannot therefore judge them right. Not until the disciple has achieved constant contact with his causal consciousness will he be able to liberate himself from the illusions and fictions and discover the causes of events. It is the very ability to see the causes that makes prevision possible, "the prevision of the future" (about which so much balderdash has been talked).

⁸"Service" is activity in accordance with the law of unity, the law of development, and the law of freedom. All three laws are engaged. Service is an expression of the unity of all beings. Service aims at the development of consciousness in all beings. Service does not imply the forcing of one's opinion on others but appeals to their possibilities of apprehending facts and relationships. This activity in accordance with the laws of life brings ideas with widened perspectives to the worker. In service you find the way to develop most quickly. Anyone who in his egoism keeps the knowledge to himself, stagnates or becomes the victim of fictions. There are untold kinds of service (political, social, scientific, cultural, etc., in addition of course always individual service when opportunities present themselves, and no seeker or inquirer is "unworthy".) The essential thing is that the activity intends to benefit the whole.

⁹"The disciple exists not for himself, but for others." He errs if he thinks that the deeper insight he gains by serving is for his own development. It is intended to make him a more able worker in the service of the planetary hierarchy. The insight he experiences is in accordance with the temporary plan for the consciousness development of mankind and thus is limited to some certain domain.

¹⁰The disciple need not seek after opportunities to serve. They present themselves and are often very obvious; they exist in his immediate surroundings. Anyone who wants to is able to

discover the needs that exist everywhere. Everybody is to serve in the way in which he can best serve. Imitation is always abortive. In any case service is not done on the orders of any authority whatever. “Spiritual leaders” who issue orders and commands are in error. A typical example of such a mistaken attitude was the theosophist Annie Besant, who with her dictatorial manners occasioned a great deal of harm.

¹¹The disciple who in a new incarnation is again accepted as a disciple receives information about the plans of the hierarchy concerning the immediate future. The plan is presented in such a manner that he gains insight into that part of the plan which the department he belongs to is estimated to be able to implement, as well as into the contribution which he himself thinks he will be able to take on. Thus he is not charged with a task, but must judge his own possibilities himself. Never is he exhorted to any work whatever for the hierarchy. Wishes, prescriptions are unthinkable as from any “authority” whatever in higher kingdoms, for that would conflict with the law of freedom. It is quite another thing that anyone who wants to gain something for his own part (attain a higher stage) must observe the necessary prerequisites.

¹²It would be completely abortive to think that the disciple is to be robotized in order to become a suitable tool for the planetary hierarchy. A more apposite analogy is that of an ambassador sent out by his government on a most demanding and delicate mission.

¹³It is no easy work that the disciple takes upon himself. He receives no directions, no advice. The only assistance he can count on is that the requisite energies are placed at his disposal to the extent that he understands how to use them expediently. It will be his business to see what he is able to do with his qualifications, where he can make his contribution, how he will best adapt it to the prevalent conditions. He must not shirk responsibility. He must not force his view on others, just dispassionately account for his view on the matter. A fanatic is unsuitable as a disciple. He must consider other people’s stages of development, possibilities of understanding. All this he will learn through daily experience in all kinds of relationships.

4.23 Hindrances to Discipleship

¹Hindrances to discipleship are all those qualities that derive from repulsion (hatred in the widest sense of that word). All such “negative” qualities as are acquired at the lower emotional stage (the stage of repulsion, of hatred) must have been replaced with “positive” (attractive) qualities.

²The egoism of most people amounts to 95 per cent, that of the disciple, 5 per cent (necessary to make the envelopes efficient tools).

³It is man’s “duty” to be happy. At all events, happiness is an indispensable condition for discipleship. The planetary hierarchy has no use of useless servers, and that category includes all who are emotional burdens on their fellow men.

⁴Necessary physical and emotional needs must of course be satisfied. They are reduced to a minimum, however, which everybody is to determine himself according to his individual character. It is enough to point this out.

⁵Everything that is part of the cult of appearances with its dishonesty, untruthfulness, deceitfulness, is a hindrance. In this connection it may be pointed out that the individual has no duty whatsoever to give out information as to his private life and his person. He has not only the right but also the duty to repel encroachment on anything that constitutes the sphere of the personality. This includes that he never testifies to himself.

⁶A real hindrance is interest in other people’s business, curiosity, and gossip. Other people’s private life is taboo. What our fellow man says or does is his own business, as long as he does not encroach on the right of others. Everybody has a right not to be attacked or assailed. Other people’s mistakes are never of our concern. We have more than enough to learn from our own mistakes, which are many more than the individual knows. We lack any right to moralize on others. Anyone who does that has not even reached the stage of culture. Those who have not

learnt to tell eagerness to learn from curiosity are too primitive. Gossipers do (even though, with incredible self-blindness, unintentionally) the same harm as spies and traitors. This cannot be said too emphatically nor too often.

⁷Being human we are full of faults and failings. They disappear in the course of evolution. Only moralists, who are always hypocrites, condemn people for them.

⁸Intolerance is an absolute hindrance.

⁹Hindrances to discipleship are: unmastered envelopes of incarnation, a weak intellect, self-assertion and self-conceit, any kind of “creed”. You do not believe anything. You know or you do not know. The mental system you accept as a working hypothesis for the time being must afford mental clarity and exactitude and must explain more things more exactly than any other system.

¹⁰For the disciple there are no paper popes, ideologies, dogmas, just working hypotheses. Common sense is his highest authority.

¹¹Anyone who seeks the knowledge of life for his own part, for his own development, for his own superiority, will not get far.

¹²There are aspirants who hamper their development by overestimating themselves, by under-rating others and believing that they are “much more advanced”. There are indeed examples of many a “tortoise that has got ahead of the hare”.

¹³The tendency to know, to know better, to be certain before you have been accepted, is one of the ways of slamming the door shut.

¹⁴The aspirant is warned not to take any interest in his centres. It is the teacher’s business to give instructions in such matters. This is one of the mistakes which yogis make and by which they retard their development, although they think they accelerate it.

¹⁵You are very wise to postpone breathing exercises until you have become accepted as a disciple. Only then will it be entirely without risks. Using all manner of occult methods the aspirant can arouse energies, which he does not understand sufficiently to use right. The aspirant is warned not to experiment with things that he does not fully understand. The “light in the head” is becoming an increasingly frequent phenomenon. Manipulations with it can result in blindness.

¹⁶Innate etheric objective consciousness is a “gift” that is abused if it is used to satisfy curiosity and the desire to encroach on the privacy of others.

¹⁷Innate “clairvoyance” (emotional objective consciousness) strengthens emotional illusoriness, since the individual is unable to judge the reality content of what he sees. The wisest thing is to refuse to pay attention to such an ability. Those who put it on show deserve no credence, a fact about which the ignorant should be enlightened. Besides, there are quite a lot of occult impostors among mediums and clairvoyants. The public is warned. Lower occult faculties (below causal consciousness) are no evidence of a “high spiritual level”.

¹⁸Many an aspirant to discipleship is so wrapped up in the sense of his own importance that he believes himself to be a regular find for the planetary hierarchy. Those who are so conceited have a long way yet to go. Those who think they are “called” have no prospect of being “chosen”. The planetary hierarchy is not the least interested in the individual, even though he be a genius in the eyes of people. Human grounds of valuation are as a rule the most perverse, which the esoterician can ascertain daily. All newly accepted disciples are a particularly heavy burden on the hierarchy before they have relearned in all respects. And in that case the “geniuses” are as a rule among those who find it most difficult to relearn. The planetary hierarchy has no use for geniuses. It does not have any use for fanatics either, as they lack a sense of proportion. The planetary hierarchy needs those who have acquired that rare faculty: common sense.

¹⁹It does not seem to have dawned on those who eagerly work to make a rapid “spiritual” career that this is a form of selfishness. They want to be “saved” and before others. Swedish poet Lidner was of the right spirit when writing: “Though in an abyss I would call me happy, if

there were no unhappy mortal left but me.”

²⁰And finally – a hindrance to discipleship is failure to say what ought to be said, or to do what ought to be done, any kind of compromise in the matter of right and wrong.

4.24 *Occult Curiosity*

¹The occult exercises a most unhealthy attraction on many people. There would not be so much deception, if harmful curiosity were not so uncritical and credulous.

²They want to know their future and have their fortune told from cards and coffee-dregs, etc.. That is not the right way of doing research into causes.

³All responsible teachers of esoterics warn against the mischief practised with breathing exercises in the manner of Indian yogis. Such exercises are done under the guidance of an experienced teacher and upon completion of sundry preparatory work, which takes many years. The foolishly presumptuous will meet with catastrophic results. But every dupe believes himself to be an exception.

⁴No esoterician ever displays uncommon faculties he might possess, in order to satisfy people's curiosity or to convince the skeptics, for money least of all.

⁵Dabbling at the occult is like careless play with unknown explosives. The results come sooner or later and are catastrophic.

⁶There are many things the curious want to know, which are not for the immature to know, however, and this they always find hard to understand. They imagine that this is unnecessary secrecy and get annoyed at the reserve of initiates. But everything that confers power must remain esoteric. There are all too many people who would abuse it for their own purposes.

⁷In our times increasingly more people become both subjectively and objectively conscious of phenomena in the emotional world. It is important to clearly see that one is wise not to occupy oneself with such manifestations and phenomena but as a counter-weight direct one's attention more energetically to physical life. Disciples of the planetary hierarchy are warned from the very beginning not to pay attention to anything that has to do with the emotional world. It is the world of illusions, and to pay attention to its phenomena is to become a victim of ever more illusions. There is no possibility for others than causal selves to understand the phenomena of the emotional world. Others will inevitably misunderstand, with consequences that often will be deplorable. “Clairvoyance” affords no knowledge of reality. The emotional world is the particular world of the black lodge, and anyone who, despite warnings, out of curiosity seeks to penetrate into it, cannot count on help from the planetary hierarchy, even though such help can be given in exceptional cases.

⁸Curiosity wants to know how to get into communication with the “dead” and how to maintain such communication. Those who pass to the emotional world are from the very beginning completely disoriented, if they are not unconscious, and sleep through the time needed for the dissolution of the emotional envelope. The latter is the happiest case, for the world of thousandfold intensified feelings is, as a rule, anything but comforting, except its higher three molecular layers (48:1-3). The newly arrived thus should strive to reach those higher layers. They are hindered to do so, however, by contacts with physical existence. This is due to the fact that, if the consciousness of the lower molecular kinds of the emotional envelope (48:5-7) is activated, then this will counteract the dissolution of this matter, and the emotional being will be prevented from reaching the higher it is striving for. One does the greatest possible disservice to the “dead” by trying to maintain communication with them. Besides, they are unable to give us any information to orient us in a world that is strange to them, that they will be able to comprehend fairly well only at the end of many years. And the more oriented they are, the more they lose their understanding of the physical world they have left. Their communications are less and less comprehensible. No knowledge of the emotional world is gained in that manner. That world must be explored by physical people having

emotional objective consciousness.

⁹The spiritualists have their own theories and refuse to listen to the warnings of the planetary hierarchy. We live in the physical world and should live in it and not occupy ourselves with things over which we have no control and which we cannot judge by ourselves. If people want to “help”, then they should know that there are untold possibilities of helping people in the physical world. Those in the emotional world who need help receive help from those who are there and are better able to judge what help is needed.

¹⁰Curiosity wants to know how beings belonging to other lines of evolution are constituted, how you get into communication with them, etc. Some of these beings shun men’s egoistic vibrations of hatred. Others trifle with men, those equally ignorant and conceited beings. A minority belonging to the higher emotional world (48:1-3) may intervene once in a while and help a human being, pretty much like we help an animal in distress. But they do not associate with men in other respects. They have other things to do and know that men follow another path of evolution. In summing up it might be said that we are wise in leaving them alone. A possible association will not bring the least benefit for either party until men have reached the stage of ideality.

¹¹Curiosity wants to know how to come into contact with higher beings. The answer given to that question is that they are always to be found in the causal world, and anyone who wants anything from them may seek them there. Until then any contact would be utterly meaningless.

¹²All this which curiosity wants to know is not the least important for the individual’s development. We receive knowledge of everything we need in order to comprehend reality and understand the meaning of life.

¹³There is in “occultism” so much fraud, so much superstition, that he gives proof of common sense who remains skeptical about everything the public and the press have to tell in such matters. The esoteric remains esoteric.

¹⁴Anyone who wants to acquire correct reality concepts has to seek for them in the causal world, the world of Platonic ideas. In any case they do not exist in what human authorities proclaim. These authorities include geniuses, as the public conceives of them, and saints, as the church believes in them. They are part of the “all too human”. To the esoterician it is obvious that the individual in the human kingdom is still burdened with defects. The hierarchy, too, says emphatically that constant mistakes in physical as well as emotional and mental respects are possible for disciples, that their physical lives are by no means perfect, that there is much lacking in their understanding and experience of life. When the individual has become a causal self and the monad has entered the second triad, then the individual deserves to be called genius and saint, not before.

¹⁵Once more: Refuse to pay attention to phenomena from the “other world” until you have become causal selves.

4.25 Conclusion

¹We need not be ignorant. We need not be impotent. Knowledge and power are at the disposal of anyone who strives for them in the good resolution to apply them lawfully. These are age-old truths but are now formulated in a manner that is understood by our age. The old truisms have lost their power over people’s minds, have become worn-out clichés, because they have been cast before those who have neither understood nor been able to apply them. This is the fate of “pearls cast”. They are not for others than those who see their value. That is the reason why the knowledge should not be taught to others than those who are “ready”. That is why the knowledge is esoteric. To “preach before the people” is to profane the sacred, to “cast the sacred before the dogs”. Do we finally understand something?

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