

21 PSYCHOLOGY

EXOTERIC AND ESOTERIC PSYCHOLOGY

21.1 Psychology as Scientific Discipline

¹Psychology does not yet live up to its name of “science”. Without the esoteric knowledge of man’s envelopes, the molecular kinds of the envelopes, the kinds of consciousness of those molecular kinds, the different envelope centres and the pertaining energies, reincarnation, the stages and levels of development, the significance of latency, and many more essential facts, psychology and pedagogy do not have the requisite scientific, or objective, basis. The same is true of psychiatry. It applies its methods of treatment completely at random. If you were not “crack-brained” before, you run a great risk of becoming so by those methods.

²All disciplines dealing with consciousness and pertaining phenomena are, and will remain, purely speculative without the aid of esoterics. Psychology as well as psychology and parapsychology can ascertain facts and collect statistics. But where causes are concerned, what is really happening in what seems to be happening, there can be nothing but guesswork. However much they experiment, their hypotheses and theories remain the subjective speculations of ignorance. The same can be said of all speculations on superphysical reality.

³Psychologists have not realized yet that when doing their research on consciousness they practise “metaphysics” or, expressed more correctly: they are active in the field of superphysics. Both emotional and mental consciousness is part of the superphysical. Physical consciousness is just sense perception. Only esotericians know that the nervous system, the brain included, can perceive superphysical vibrations.

⁴They can truly realize these facts only when they have acquired higher objective consciousness and so can simultaneously ascertain the consciousness process and the energy process in the material envelopes.

⁵Swedish philosopher Edvard Petrini published an acute attempt at analysis of emotional life, *Psykologiska dogmer, ett bidrag till känslans psykologi* (“Psychological Dogmas, a Contribution to the Psychology of Feeling”). This work, too, makes it clear that it is futile to expect psychologists to arrive at any results. The significance of this work (which was overlooked, strange to say) lies, however, in its critique of the dogmas that have dominated psychology ever since 1773, when Sulzer, a German, proposed that feeling was an independent function. Previously it had been assumed that feeling was the most obscure of all perceptions. That was the sum of psychology 200 years ago. Petrini demonstrates how little they can understand in our times.

⁶Every psychoanalyst or psychosynthesist capable of independent thought has so much individual experience that he cannot accept the system of any other, but constructs his own speculative one. In course of time the number of systems increases so that finally every seeker has made his own “religion”, his own “philosophy”, his own “scientific theory”. It must go on in this way until they realize that the assumptions about consciousness made by scientists are largely abortive guesswork. By then they perhaps are ready to examine hylozoics. Only there will they have the right solutions of their problems. Only there will they find a working hypothesis which they can all make their starting-point.

21.2 Esoteric and Exoteric Psychology

¹Esoteric psychology (better: the study of consciousness) should not be confused with exoteric psychology, the “scientific” psychology taught at school and the university. They will remain separate. The esoterician and the exoterist have irreconcilable views on everything outside the field of science, and this is more restricted than science can possibly grasp: the molecular kinds

of the “visible” world, 49:5-7. Thus exoteric psychology is and will remain physicalistic psychology. Exoteric psychology is in no position to explain the different kinds of consciousness, for all such things are part of the superphysical reality, which physicalists reject. There is nothing to be done about this until science has definitively accepted hylozoics as the only tenable working hypothesis. This it will assuredly not do within the next one hundred years.

21.3 *Psychologists Do Not Know What Consciousness Is*

¹Psychologists do not know yet what consciousness is. They do not know that all atoms possess consciousness, that there is a continuous series of 49 kinds of atoms, each in succession less composite than the preceding one, and 49 kinds of increasingly intensive and extensive consciousness; that consciousness is one and single, common to all the atomic kinds; that consciousness, therefore, is first and foremost a collective phenomenon and individual consciousness is an ability that each atom must acquire by itself through ever higher natural kingdoms; that consciousness begins in the mineral kingdom and comprises omniscience.

²Where man is concerned they know nothing of his four kinds of physical-etheric, six kinds of emotional, four kinds of mental, to say nothing of the three kinds of causal consciousness. They have not even been able to give tenable definitions of subconsciousness and superconsciousness. Since they are incapable of objectively studying the different molecular kinds in the four aggregate envelopes of man and the manifestations of energy in the centres of these envelopes, all their psychological concepts are subjective imaginative constructions (conjectures and assumptions).

³Psychologists believe that the functions of consciousness are bound up with the organism, with the central nervous system in particular, which is a double error. What functions in brain and nerves are the etheric envelopes enclosing every organic cell. Also “inorganic molecules” are surrounded by etheric matter, but they react in another way (“chemical reaction”). Science has a long way to go before it will be able to comprehend these processes. This requires that causal selves devote themselves to science and elucidate all the relations.

⁴John B. Watson (*Behaviorism*) is one among those none too few writers who should have been given elementary training in logic and psychology. Thus he asserts that “consciousness” is a pure assumption, precisely as indemonstrable and precisely as inaccessible as the old concept of “soul”. The fact, you see, is that the ultimate factors of reality – matter, motion, and consciousness – are directly given, self-evident, absolute. They explain themselves by their modes of being and cannot be further explained, just be ascertained by all. To realize this fact should not be impossible even for a behaviorist.

⁵In their study of consciousness, psychologists have not advanced further than appearing almost illiterate to the esoterician. To the esoterician, the so-called scientific disciplines of ignorance are little more than illusions and fictions by which the learned deceive themselves. Physical disciplines, based on the exploration of visible reality, have made enormous advances within their fields, and their technological application produces such things as theologians used to call “miracles of the Lord” or “delusions of the devil”. But as soon as science leaves the physical world and the recording of facts in physical events, as soon as it tries to explore superphysical reality, including consciousness, it is completely disoriented, generally speaking.

⁶Thus what psychologists know is hardly worth knowing. Perhaps what is said here can give them food for thought, make them examine what they are doing.

21.4 *Psychologists Cannot Classify Consciousness*

¹Psychologists of course find it hard to elucidate what is meant by the “psyche”, hard to differentiate “intellect” and “reason”. Esoterics alone can explain those things.

²Reason is pure mentality (47:4-7). The psyche, or the intellect, is the coalescence of the emotional and mental envelopes (the *kama-manas* of the Hindus), functioning partly as

feeling (vague), partly as imagination (clear).

³Theosophists were the first ones to tell the “psychologists” of the time (when psychology was that branch of philosophy which was called anthropology) that emotionality was a reality of its own, as peculiar as phenomenon (physical reality) and noumenon (mental reality). The anthropologists knew nothing of this. Still their successors, the psychologists, have not realized that urge (will), feeling, and imagination are part of emotionality.

⁴Psychologists do not know what feeling and imagination are, how many kinds of feeling and imagination there are. You cannot know this until you are able (by means of causal consciousness) to objectively study consciousness expressions in the six emotional molecular kinds.

⁵Mental consciousness expressions pass through the emotional envelope on their way to the brain and are unconsciously coloured by emotional vibrations. That, too, is a thing which psychologists are unable to study.

⁶The faculty of apprehension could be divided into three different stages: the incipient one of feeling, the orienting one of imagination, and the clear apprehension of mentality (when put into the right system). Esoteric psychology makes it possible to classify understanding into ten degrees of increase: emotional-mental from 48:7 to 48:2 and mental from 47:7 to 47:4.

⁷The waking consciousness is determined by feeling and imagination. The unconscious is made up of subconsciousness and superconsciousness and is determined by complex, instinct, and “inspiration”.

21.5 Psychiatry

¹The existence of psychiatric hospitals proves that medical science has taken a wrong path. Modern psychiatry is dominated by a completely erroneous ideology, a fact that esoteric psychology will reveal. Psychiatric therapy must be radically reformed.

²Even such a thing as talking about “healing of the soul” reveals that they do not know what the soul is. The soul is in no need of healing, only the envelopes of incarnation are.

³A causal self can study previous incarnations and also follow the processes of matter (accompanying the processes of consciousness) in the patient. A true “mental healer” must either be a causal self or cooperate with one to be able to distinguish those processes. This is necessary if you will not be contented with more or less unsuccessful hypotheses (fictions). All that is of the psyche, mind, soul, or spirit is simultaneously of matter and can be objectively studied by those who have acquired the corresponding kinds of objective consciousness. To be able to “enter into” the consciousness of another you must be an essential self (a 46-self).

21.6 Psychology Concentrates Too Much on Defects

¹Psychologists have a one-sided orientation towards the study of those suffering from psychological defects. In so doing they confine themselves to the matter aspect and therefore arrive at erroneous conclusions. When they begin studying the supernormal, ingenious people, they will enter the right field of study, the consciousness aspect. Moreover they lack that psychological knowledge which can only be had through the study of “normal individuals”, a field that is still unexplored. During the process in which consciousness develops in the different envelopes, the self experiences a number of emotional and mental states which ignorance take to be pathological states (psychiatric disorders), when in most cases they are “crises of the soul” that are perfectly “normal” and which the self has to undergo, manage on its own and without the aid of others.

²Instead of seeing these difficulties as signs of the “awakening of the soul” and furthering its development, which certainly requires explanation and understanding, psychoanalysts try to eliminate these crises and consider that they have cured their patients when the latter feel “released”. In fact, they have hampered the individual in that development of his consciousness which would have been the result if the patient himself had solved that “problem of the

soul” which the crisis was intended to bring up. If the crises have been caused by problems that were not solved in past incarnations and so do not find their solution even in the present life, they will come back in a following incarnation, and the individual’s consciousness development has stopped temporarily. Generally speaking, psychoanalysts and psychiatrists do more harm than good using their abortive methods of treatment. Only esoterics affords the basic facts that are necessary to understanding the “psyche”.

21.7 *Psychoanalysis*

¹Freud’s merit is that he forced psychologists to admit the existence of the subconscious and directed research to that subject. It is still too early to decide to what extent it will be possible to arrive at correct results using introspective analysis only. Most of what has hitherto been produced of that sort, however, may be said to be erroneous hypotheses.

²That being the case, psychoanalysis unfortunately harms more than it heals. It can reach down to subconscious deposits that should not be taken up but, if resuscitated, can have effects similar to those had when old wounds are reopened. Modern psychologists do not understand those deposits and cannot determine with which events in the individual’s life they are connected, since they are unable to study the individual’s past incarnations.

³Knowing nothing about the deposits of past incarnations in the subconscious and man’s different envelopes with their energies, which always make themselves felt in wakefulness or sleep, the psychoanalyst has but small prospects of finding his way out of that labyrinth of factors which can contribute to dreams. Consequently, psychoanalysis is on the wrong track when believing it is able to find a system of revelation in chaotic dream-life.

⁴Psychoanalysis also contains an element of self-deception, namely in the fact that the analyst transfers his fictions to the patient, without being aware of it, so that the latter is forced to discover such things as correspond to those fictions and so creates a connection that appears to have some meaning.

⁵Freud invented the term, the “super-ego”. And at once everybody knew what it was (all those who believe they know everything on which they lack information). It was of course another word for the “soul”, they thought. But it was not at all. By the “super-ego” Freud means those taboos which we have been fed by our parents, teachers, priests, etc., and which have subsequently turned into emotions of moral compulsion, idées fixes, etc., which paralyse man’s freedom to feel and think for himself. As Freud saw it, the super-ego is later in life a constant source of conflicts and neuroses. One of the most important tasks of psychoanalysis is to emancipate man from this slavery. In esoterics, man is set free from this dependence through his knowledge of the laws of life, which can never become prohibitions and can never result in compulsory emotions or obsessions.

⁶Esoterics dislikes psychoanalysis. In exceptional cases it may help by bringing a complex of inhibition to the light and dissolving it. However, such complexes can be done away with by the formation of counter-complexes, a method that promotes the patient’s health.

⁷The public does not seem to have learnt to see the difference between psychoanalysis and psychosynthesis, although Poul Bjerre, especially in Sweden, has sought to clarify the opposition:

⁸In the “scientifically dark labyrinths of psychoanalysis”, the “psyche is reduced to psychic mechanisms and study is confined to exploring the interaction of those mechanisms.” “Freud could work an hour a day month after month, however long, at tearing a person to pieces ... analysing thousands of dreams without discovering the synthetic factor in the subconscious.”

⁹Then it remains always to investigate what the synthetic factor is. Without esoteric psychology it will not succeed.

¹⁰Where psychoanalysis in a general sense is concerned, it is sufficient to point out that it is a “human discipline” and not an esoteric one. That says it all. That does not imply that it cannot

get things right sometimes. But it will not amount to much more than that. One thing probably needs to be pointed out in this connection. Students of esoterics should study all other things as well, for nothing human should be alien to them. Merely to know what is correct is not enough. You should also know what is erroneous, for that will clarify to you the huge superiority of esoterics in its conception of reality. By the aid of esoterics you will clearly see errors in what is given out as evident truths, and this in all fields of human life. Also the new brainwaves are of some value, namely in so far as they provide us with constantly new opportunities of analysing the system of esoteric facts thoroughly and so make our basic conception more vital and active in the subconscious, a matter of great importance, since it is the individual's self-acquired synthesis of experience that spontaneously determines his vision and action.

21.8 The Scientific Conception of Superphysical Reality

¹With wonderment, and not without a smile of recognition, the esoterician reads about modern parapsychologists and their attempts, starting from the current scientific fiction systems, at explaining superphysical phenomena. Every parapsychologist has taken pains to improve on the original system with one of his own. They stubbornly refuse to accept, even to critically test, the simplest of all systems, the one we have received from the planetary hierarchy. Consequently they are unable to give a real, rational explanation of the phenomena, those amazingly simple, consistent explanations.

²Another observation to be made in this connection is that whenever some occultist like Steiner succeeds in distorting the one correct system, he always gains a multitude of followers. The one genuine, correct system is left unheeded. It surely is too simple. It must not be that simple. Complication is apparently an indication of correctness. They should take to heart the definition given by the great Poincaré: "A hypothesis is more correct insofar as it is simpler." If they could understand the correctness of that hypothesis, they would not prefer all manner of mishmash.

³People are, as we know (and as is generally recognized), "children of their times", and this means "captives of the prejudice of their times". Everybody willingly recognizes this when it comes to other people, but very seldom when it is said of himself. If he admits it, then this admission is only in theory, because very few realize it. And fewer still work at setting themselves free from that prejudice, since cleaning up in the subconscious is hard work.

⁴In a fundamental sense, this is possible only by seeking to assimilate the view of the planetary hierarchy on the worlds of man. This means leaving the imaginary world of illusions and fictions and entering the world of reality, a world of which most people have no idea.

21.9 Esoteric Psychology is the Science of the Future

¹The disciplines most important to human consciousness development are those of natural science, philosophy, and psychology.

²Philosophers are still busy with their theory of knowledge, the question of the possibility and limits of knowledge. That question can be answered only partially by natural science and psychology. Man can never know anything about its limits until he has acquired knowledge of the existence of the fifth natural kingdom. The old philosophy has finished its two missions of developing the power of thought and of making it clear that all speculation results in nothing but fictions. The real aim of philosophy is to ascertain the ideas in the world of ideas (the causal world), by which process mankind acquires knowledge of reality. This is likewise the goal of human consciousness development. The meaning of life is consciousness development. Therefore, psychology replaces philosophy as a worthy subject of continued research.

³Psychology is the study of consciousness in the five envelopes of man. Present-day physiological psychology is limited to the consciousness of the organism, such consciousness as man has in common with all organisms. For psychology to be exact it is necessary that

esoteric psychology supersedes exoteric psychology. This in its turn requires researchers possessing emotional, mental, and causal sense (objective consciousness).

⁴The applications of natural science are the technological disciplines. Their fantastic achievements have misled many by directing their entire attention to the physical matter aspect as if it were the essence of existence. Certainly these disciplines have a great mission to perform – that of developing machines to set man free from slave labour. But then it remains to direct man to use his leisure time for consciousness development. Using it to “kill time” by rushing about on roads and in the air without purpose, infatuated by the fascination of speed, must be said to be part of a primitive view of life.

21.10 The Coming Psychology Will Have to Fight Its Way

¹Unfortunately modern medicine and psychology are physicalistic and anti-metaphysical disciplines. The result of this is that the exploration of human consciousness must overcome a hard resistance. This struggle will apparently be long and difficult. Unfortunately psychoanalysts and parapsychologists stubbornly refuse to consider esoteric psychology, which could provide them with a superior working hypothesis. Instead they prefer to work their way forward step by step through a series of untenable theories and in so doing inhibit their comprehension and understanding. Psychosynthesist, Dr. Roberto Assagioli of Florence, Italy, has published a number of works, which have been given the silence treatment, of course, since he is an esoterician. It is constantly seen that esoterics must not even be discussed, and that the world view once acquired by the scientists remains ineradicable. The esoterician will have to wait for a new generation of scientists, who will examine the various world views without bias in respect of their resources of a simpler, more general explanation of the phenomena of life.

MANKIND AT THE STAGE OF CIVILIZATION

21.11 Man Does Not Think

¹Academic study consists in finding out and recording what other people have said. When you are able to reproduce the ideas of other people using your own words, then you are a scholar. Anyone who thinks new ideas will fail, will not be promoted, will be ridiculed. The whole of our civilization consists in intellectual parrotry. When will people learn how to think instead of just parroting?

²People mix up time connection with causal connection, since they have never been taught to distinguish the two in all relations. People think that some medicine has cured them, because they became well when they took it. In most cases they would have become well without taking it, which was demonstrated by the Vienna school of medicine. Socialism improved social conditions because technology simultaneously made affluence possible by revolutionizing production.

³Bunglers in literature, art, and music have been considered geniuses. If you point out that the ruling norms are in many respects erroneous, then geniuses appear who preach that “normlessness” is the only right thing. If you say that the “ten commandments of divine law” are no divine commandments, then prophets appear who preach murder, theft, wilful deception, slander, etc. It is beyond them to grasp that the “ten commandments” are the results of mankind’s experience of life during millions of years and are the most elementary conditions of a community without friction.

⁴It is a particular characteristic of the intellectual standard of our time that they use mindless slogans, which apparently have a paralysing effect on their power of judgement already weakened.

⁵Letting your light shine when conversing with others may unmask you: be an indication that you think you comprehend more than those listening; that you underestimate the

intelligence of others. It may become disastrous when a dilettante teaches an expert, which happens more often than people think. It is thoughtless, too, as sometimes occurs, of the listener to explain the point of a story to the teller of it.

⁶It is commonly seen in unthinking people that they consider they can exploit other people by begging, which they call borrowing, by taking up other people's time to while away time, which they do not know how to use. Many people quite naïvely take it for granted that other people exist for their sake and that, as they see it, other people should be grateful for their "company", so grateful that those unthinking ones invite themselves to dinner, to places in the country, etc. A person of good sense does not come uninvited and does not pay visits except by agreement.

⁷It is not uncommon to meet people who consider themselves so full of learning and so important that they take personal offence if you inform them about something they do not know. The opposite of this occurs even more often: that young people teach their elders about the simplest experience of life.

21.12 *Injudiciousness*

¹According to esoterics, approximately 99 per cent of all that which mankind believes it knows is erroneous in some respect. This is so because of the typical tendency of human life-ignorance to make statements quite unnecessarily. As soon as people have learnt how to "think", that is, to draw their own conclusions and not just parrot others, they believe that they are also able to "think right". Subsequently they proclaim their vagaries as truths, so that those who have not learnt how to "think" believe in and parrot those "truths", and these finally become part of public opinion.

²The strange thing is that this tendency is ineradicable until the individual has once attained the stage of wisdom and along with Sokrates realizes (not just parrots the saying) that he does not know enough to be able to think right at all (in all matters outside everyday trivialities).

³All those who are in positions of power seem to be victims of a conceited belief in always being right, and this the more manifest their incompetence is. Then it is more understandable that hyperintelligent people consider themselves infallible when judging things and people. They at least have the experience of being superior in most connections and in comparison with those around them.

⁴Even causal selves fall prey to the tendency to make statements without sufficient ground. Actually this should not need to happen, since causal consciousness can always decide whether it knows or does not know, what it can know and what it cannot know. But they are so used to having the right knowledge that they do not stop before each new idea or fact to examine the matter.

⁵You seldom meet a person who has real knowledge and understanding coupled with realization of man's incredible limitation in most respects. It is not sufficient to know more, to be more able than all you come across. That may certainly be a proof of superiority but not necessarily of right knowledge.

⁶That esoterician who has seen the limitations of human capacity knows that human beings cannot be right and that all are mistaken. After years of meditation he has learnt to tell the difference between what he knows and what he does not know. Therefore, he knows very little in comparison with that which others believe they know. What solidity it affords, however, what reliability and weight, when he is provided with the opportunity of stating his opinion, which is rare among all those intellectual knowers who know everything. The esoterician learns to be silent, not because he may not speak, but because he so seldom has the opportunity of saying something sensible.

21.13 The Intellectual Primitivity of Mankind

¹Anyone who takes a long view on human thought sees division almost everywhere. Racialist ideas, nationalist ideas, religious and philosophic ideas, those ideologies without number contribute to dividing people against each other, arousing hatred, suspicion, slander, and persecution. To an esoterician, who has risen above all of this infantilism, it must appear as one big nursery where all are making noise and slapping each other where they get a chance, or as the “restless ward” of a psychiatric hospital.

²The primitivity of mankind also appears in the fact that people’s “intellectual” interchange consists of gossip. Only certain professionals (psychologists, judges, etc.) seem to have begun to notice how unreliable people’s chatter is. The esoterician considers all oral data as essentially dubious and in most cases erroneous. Gossip poisons the communal life of people as it is dictated by latent instinct of hatred and chronically inflamed emotional repulsivity. Countless marriages have been ruinous because wives by their slander of their husbands have injured them irreparably. Nobody seems to have realized that this is treason and adultery. Gossip must be branded irresponsible.

³It is vitally important to the entire development of culture that the light of esoterics is cast on the pertaining problems. People must learn to see that they are responsible for what they think and feel, which leads to what they say and do.

21.14 Democracy and Equality

¹The psychological and pedagogical mistake of the parlour radicals and so-called adult educators of our times is their fiction of democracy and equality. Their practical mistake is teaching people at lower stages of development such things as they cannot comprehend but believe they understand. The result is, to be sure, the fool’s contempt of everything to do with wisdom. The fool is the master, not only of his own wisdom, but of the wisdom of the wise as well. He does not surmise his ignorance and inability to judge. How could he grasp what Sokrates meant by saying that he was the wisest man in Greece because he knew that he knew nothing, thus was aware of his boundless ignorance and inability?

²All the way up through higher kingdoms, the individual is not taught more than he can understand and realize. It can even be said that wisdom which is not realized is turned into un wisdom and ruin. But that is a truth which only the esoterician can see. It would be apparent from world history, however, if history were a true description of the past, which it is not. We need historians of completely different kinds, who would be able to write history so that people could learn something from it.

21.15 Thinking Must Start from a System

¹In thinking you proceed from generals to particulars. Methodical thinking starts from a system, for that is the only way of thinking with clarity. The absence of system is the ground of the general disorientation and the looseness of people’s work at reflection. However much they analyse, they never arrive at any result. For result (whatever its quality) is agreement with the system. Exoteric learning is made up of fictional systems. Those accepted hitherto have proved untenable but are kept all the same as emergency systems for want of something better. This engenders a feeling of insecurity, however, which leads to spinelessness in a life sense. Since all exoteric systems are untenable, they are equally justified. “And you do not know what to believe.” You have become “like a reed shaken by the wind”.

21.16 Education

¹The most important mission of the school is that of teaching the pupils how to think. That is the condition of their pursuit of self-study after leaving school, which they must do, if they are not to remain uneducable robots who can only parrot others.

²Memory learning is an indication that the individual has easy access to his subconscious, is his ability to easily retell what he has seen, read, or heard. Nothing more is needed to be a shining light at school and to become a professor. This is a particular ability which, regrettably, true geniuses often lack, so that they may seem to be “not gifted” at school. If they fail in their examinations, they may demonstrate their capacity later in life as autodidacts. The faith in examinations, the general assessment of people according to such qualifications, is a proof of ignorance. Examination is a proof that an individual has acquired some learning, not a proof of his power of judgement or capacity.

³“Spiritual advisers” (in the esoteric sense) certainly must possess intuition (consciousness of unity). But anyone whose task it is to formulate a comprehensible world view with the facts put into their right contexts probably has greater use of methodical and systematic logic. This is also true of educators whose job it is to tutor through the procedure of discursive inference.

⁴As soon as they have “studied psychology” in secondary school or at the university, the most primitive conjectures on consciousness, they believe themselves able to judge everything psychologically, just as the philosophers believe themselves able to comprehend reality. To the esoterician, this is a typical example of the kind of judgement that is obtained at educational establishments. When, some time in the future, doctors will be able to understand what Sokrates meant by his saying that he “knew nothing”, perhaps rational judgement will be heard from them. Sokrates had learnt the basic difference there is between knowledge and mere belief in one’s knowledge. Our doctors have not learnt that from their academic education.

21.17 PSYCHOLOGY OF COLLECTIVES

¹Sociologists dispute whether the community can be regarded as an organism or not. The esoterician could solve that problem for them. A community is a collective of consciousness and exists as a material thought-form in the mental world. This thought-form dissolves as the community disappears. As long as it exists, however, it exerts a “psychological pressure” on its members. The same is true of races, nations, clans, families. Nobody escapes its influence completely.

²If you are to hit what is typical in Swedish national character, it probably is the Swede as an engineer, his marked interest in everything mechanical. His lack of psychological understanding is striking, which does not prevent his thinking that he is well-equipped especially in that respect. The individual usually lacks that for which he believes himself best qualified. The behaviour of the Swede abroad, however, and his assessment of other nations confirm exceedingly what is said here about his complete lack of psychology.

³“The egocentric type is a product of self-protection against injustices done by the endeavour at socialization in the material field moving into the psychological field, where it turns into pure barbarism.”

⁴“Social altruism is subjection to the majority of the egoisms of other people.”

21.18 Public Opinion

¹The herd tendency is socially valuable as often as it is irrational and inhibits life. That tendency enables all kinds of dictatorship and tyranny of opinion.

²Newspapers are typical of public opinion with its constituents of facts, hypotheses, assumptions, suppositions, guesswork, and gossip at large. So-called facts may be correct in many cases. The interpretation of those facts, however, is determined by the interpreting

person's idiosyncrasies, different at different stages of development. To the esoterician it is inescapable that only causal selves are able to establish what is "true" (in agreement with reality). In most cases something is probably true but seldom has its right interpretation, even if it seems logical and overwhelmingly so, because what lies in the sub- and superconscious (what is behind the "veil") is inaccessible.

³Psychologists ought to study such individuals as are always thought to be wrong, whatever they say and however right they are, and others who are always met with approval, however wrong they are. This is of course part of stereotypical thinking but also of the "judgement of the public" of a person. If someone is thought to be witty, then everything he says is witty, however silly it is.

21.19 Social Life

¹Those people who seek the company of others to "kill time" show in so doing that they are unable to take care of themselves, that they are incapable of cultivating interests that absorb their attention, let it be hobbies, studies, the study or practising of an art, etc. We are here to have experience and to learn from it, not to "kill time" in thousands of unnecessary ways. The first thing taught to an esoteric disciple is to economize on time. It reduces the number of unnecessary incarnations.

²Social life is an emotional kind of life. People are unable by themselves to stimulate their emotional consciousness affording them a sense of life. They need to be influenced by others. People's need of variety is due to the same condition, all of which indicates the general stage of development, the emotional stage. To those who have reached the mental stage, social life of any kind is a sacrifice, and they look with a smile at the ridiculous senselessness of such emotional expressions. Since this is part of emotional life, everything mental is banned, and talk on "serious matters" or intellectual problems only demonstrates "inability of adaptation, lack of culture, of urbanity, of consideration," etc. "Feeding the animals" with stimulants is the essential thing in this connection, to release inhibitions and "give free rein to joy", which further confirms what is said here. Many people skimp on really necessary things to satisfy the demands of social life. Much more could of course be said on this, but it is left to those readers who are interested in thinking for themselves. Voltaire says rightly that "the secret of being a bore is to say everything".

³The retiring disposition of a person, his silence in social life need not in the least indicate (as most people seem to think) ignorance or mental laziness or lack of interest. There are such people as do not think it worthwhile to say anything or observe people so intensively that they seem absent. The latter are also able to listen to what is not being said, yet is significant; something corresponding to "reading between the lines" what the writer does not say but means to say, what he has in mind.

21.20 The Power of Example

¹The statements, opinions, and propositions of most people are false because they are expressed categorically to be true in an absolute sense. The thesis saying that the good example has the power to transform people is an instance of this.

²The power of example is assuredly great. It can contribute to the raising or the lowering of the level. Lowering is incomparably easier than raising. The power of example has often been overrated, however, and enormously so. A psychological examination, preferably supported by a statistical material, is highly desirable. This will show that the thesis is valid only on certain conditions, physical as well as emotional and mental ones. When following the example pre-supposes altruism, idealism, self-sacrifice, more than the mere example is generally required, that is to say, a psychosis. It might be said that most examples have been without effect.

³It is the same with examples as with ideals and idols. They must be within what most people

consider possible, advantageous, worth striving for, not too exacting. The history of the saints rather shows us the powerlessness of example. Not understanding what is possible at the different stages of development, what human beings can comprehend, understand, and realize, the power of egoism, the power of acquired views and habits, well-meaning enthusiasts and life-ignorant idealists will always overestimate the power of example. Faith in the power of a few individuals' enthusiasm to abolish all the relations of life and society is not an indication of common sense and real experience of life, let alone of knowledge of the laws of development.

⁴Many lives can intervene between knowledge and the power of realization. Only blind ignorance of life can believe that ideals can be realized by anyone whatever without further ado. This blindness in life is very characteristic of youthful idealism. There are as many kinds of ideals as there are levels of development. An individual can seldom realize those which are part of his level without single-minded striving, and never those which are part of a higher stage of development.

21.21 *Imitation is the Principal Instinct*

¹Since millennia life experience has taught us that man's principal instinct is imitation. It is typical that our colossal, scientifically trained psychologists have not realized it. More than fifty per cent of mankind are at the stage of barbarism. Descriptions of robberies, murders, and all manner of atrocities do not have a deterrent effect on those individuals but tempt them to imitation automatically and instinctively. This appears especially in children who during the years when they are growing up run through the stages of development that they left behind them in previous incarnations. The general observation of this fact has given rise to the saying, "children are cruel".

²Man's organism becomes such as the food that supports it, and man's consciousness becomes what it sees, hears, reads, etc. Thus this is a law not of the matter aspect only but also of the consciousness aspect. Is it impossible to understand this fact?

³In his play *The Judge (Domaren)*, Vilhelm Moberg depicts a criminal type out of real life. A type need not be typical of a whole category. Unfortunately, however, the spirit of the times is such that there is a risk that this type becomes more and more common. What people cannot see is that the depiction of such a type may have an attractive effect on disoriented minds instead of a deterring one. Information does not always have the intended effects. A predisposition to criminality (and where does it not exist to some extent?) is aroused and informed.

⁴The demand for freedom has been carried to extremes. Limits must be set to brutality, recklessness, and not least stupidity.

21.22 MALE AND FEMALE

¹Since everything arouses hatred that does not arouse love – the everlasting need of variation between attraction and repulsion – this is particularly true of the relation between the sexes. Hatred between the sexes is characteristic of mankind at the present general stage of development, where repulsion dominates.

²The sexes need each other also because of the fact that man and woman have opposite energies in their aggregate envelopes and that the exchange of those energies has a vitalizing effect.

³The ability of women to pretend to understand has caused the ruin of many men: a sign of psychological blindness still ruling. On the part of the woman it need not always be desire for conquest. She wants to please. She also very much desires to understand, not suspecting how insidious this is. True understanding is not to be expected. It is extremely rare; as rare as true self-knowledge.

⁴Schopenhauer and many psychologists after him seem to have observed a lack of sense of

justice in women. How is it possible that a man, who fought for the sake of justice in one incarnation, displays the lack of it in a following incarnation as a woman? That is one of the many paradoxes in human life and a problem for the esoteric psychologists of the future.

21.23 *Sex Life*

¹Sex life is part of normal human life. Condemnation of the pertaining functions on religious grounds is the biggest mistake of the Church (the Catholic Church in particular). Celibacy is against nature. Its practice stunts normal organs. Monastic life in the Middle Ages is the actual cause of the sexual licence of our times, a deplorable reaction even if a normal one. The one extreme turns into its opposite. This phenomenon will soon pass when those who were celibates during several incarnations have had other experiences.

²Another case is represented by such persons as are so completely absorbed in creative activity (artists, writers, etc.) that they have no thought for anything else, live exclusively for this work. In such an individual, all sacral energies are directed to the throat centre so that nothing remains for the sexual function. That is also a measure of the individual's faculty of concentration. In such cases we may speak of "sublimation". And since the pertaining energies then are given their one right outlet, no harm is caused to the sexual organs, as happens when abnormal "continence" is practised. If the person in old age is stricken with dementia, then it is not due to an effect of the sexual energies.

³Psychoanalyst Freud's theories of the subconscious, of the urges, the sex urge in particular, of sublimation, etc. may be disregarded in this connection. They are typical instances how a mentalist can be caught in his own fictions and simultaneously wield suggestive power by means of them. His echoes are typical instances, too; in their case how a mental idea can idiotize people.

21.24 *Marriage*

¹Marriage is a psychological issue much more than a purely physical one. We human beings do not have just physical needs but as important emotional needs, and cultural individuals mental needs as well. In all life together the most important thing is to avoid frictions. The greater the differences between the parties in various respects, the bigger and the more frequent their collisions. If they have no understanding of each other, everything will fail. Those are wise who see to it that the prospects of understanding are as great as possible and the risk of conflicts is reduced to a minimum.

²"Birds of a feather flock together" is a saying that sums up very old life experience that seems to have been totally forgotten in our times with their social mobility (marriages between parties at different stages of development), a phenomenon which will soon pass off. Different life views and social views, engendering prejudice, illusions, and fictions that are hard to eliminate, complicate married life. But then we have so many broken marriages with their tragic results for both parties and especially for the children. The old rule of marrying within one's social class (where the view of life is similar through environment and upbringing) was a wise rule of life.

³Also different races and nationalities involving different racial instincts entail risks for the parties and their children, risks that are unnecessarily great. Mixture of races is always a mistake. It conflicts with the "natural order". Certainly individuals of the same esoteric group may be found incarnated in different races. But then this implies for the esoterician that marriage between two such individuals in that particular incarnation would be a mistake. They have been given other tasks than marrying each other.

⁴To sum up it may be said that the parties should be of the same race, the same nation, the same class, the same culture, have similar world views and life views, and be found on the same level. This is no guarantee, but affords the best possible chance of a harmonious marriage.

FIELDS OF STUDY FOR ESOTERIC PSYCHOLOGY

21.25 Some Important Psychological Insights

¹Esoteric psychology explains the importance of distinguishing the difference between the brain and mental consciousness. If educational science realized this, it would make radical progress and understand why it is a mistake to train only the brain cells and memory, which should be the tools of mental consciousness and not, as is the case now, counteract mental activity. Training people to memorize knowledge, as modern pedagogy does, makes the individual a memorizing robot and paralyzes self-initiated thinking. This has certainly always been the basic error of pedagogy, but now it is being taken to extremes. Well, that method suffices to make a man a professor, an archbishop, or a prime minister, but not to help him acquire intuition.

²What children and adolescents need to learn is thought control, mental control of both emotional consciousness and the brain cells. Education has much to learn before it will realize this essential thing and will have devised the methods for doing it.

³A psychological insight of the greatest importance is the necessity of always occupying attention with something. This is concentration. It develops the “will”, generally the brain cells as well. It counteracts division, unrest of the mind, teaches the individual to decide for himself what he will think, and to become independent of whims, fancies, influences from without (vibrations of the emotional and mental worlds).

⁴What is individual is unique, what is general is universally valid. The solution is to be found in what is general. What is individual is without importance for the collective, which represents what is universally valid in psychological respect. The environment is physical as well as emotional and mental; a fact that is too often overlooked.

⁵Anyone who thinks well does it well. But then it is necessary to always think well. The most important norm of reason says: never accept anything without sufficient grounds!

21.26 Envelopes and Envelope Consciousnesses

¹It is clear from the teaching on reincarnation that the higher envelopes enable the existence of the lower ones. The organism is formed on the pattern of the etheric envelope, which is the “reaping envelope” properly speaking. First the causal envelope is divided into a greater and a lesser one. The greater envelope remains in the causal world. The lesser envelope, also called the triad envelope, containing the lowest triad and the monad, produces the mental envelope and the emotional envelope by vitalizing causal impulses that make the mental molecule and the emotional atom of the triad reassume their activity and to form their envelopes (replicas of the previous ones) by their vibrations. These envelopes penetrate the etheric envelope and the organism.

²Both the triad and the envelopes have their respective kinds of consciousness (the mental, emotional and etheric envelopes have in addition waking consciousness, sub- and super-consciousness), a matter that it is very important to be clear about if you want to have psychological understanding.

³If the individual has once incorporated some conception, some concept, for instance rebirth or the law of reaping (karma), with his waking consciousness, then this concept has become a factor in his subconscious and can, without its possessor knowing it, be influenced by corresponding vibrations in the emotional world or the mental world.

⁴Irresponsible behaviour often is a result of the mutual struggle between the different envelope consciousnesses.

21.27 *The Activation of the Envelopes by the Self*

¹It is the task of the newly awakened self to learn how to control its lower envelopes. To begin with, they are robots that are activated by vibrations coming both from without and from the self. In the main they are activated by vibrations entering in an endless stream from surrounding worlds. According as the self reaches higher stages of development, however, the self becomes an increasingly important factor in the activation of the envelopes.

²At the present stage of mankind's development, the self has learnt to activate the organism through the etheric envelope and through the lower molecular kinds of the emotional envelope and the mental envelope.

³The task of the self is to activate the higher molecular kinds of the emotional and mental envelopes. When this result has been achieved, it remains to activate the causal molecules of the triad envelope and in so doing acquire consciousness in that envelope of incarnation.

⁴Doing this requires conscious cooperation between the self and Augoeides. Before this becomes possible, there has always been tension between the two, since the self, being caught up in its illusions and fictions, has "gone its own ways", done all stupidities and made all mistakes that are conceivable at all the stages of development of the human kingdom. Too many of those mistakes have been the result of mass suggestion, the individual's tendency to think, feel, say, and do as all the others, and his inability to form his own conception or unwillingness to "go against the stream" to avoid all the discomforts following from it, the individual's desire to "adapt", be agreeable to others, win their affection, curry favours with them, etc.

21.28 *Emotionality*

¹Emotionality is the "seat of the will" and so of the impelling force, often manifesting itself as aggressiveness. Understanding this is of the greatest importance for psychological assessment. All aggressiveness thus is determined by more or less blind impulses or at best by more or less rational mental ideas.

²Before man has learnt how to control emotionality by mentality, he is the unresisting victim of the feeling ruling for the moment and so is essentially injudicious, which is best seen in the fickleness of emotion. Emotion is either attractive or repulsive, and both have certain advantages and disadvantages, unfortunately mostly disadvantages to the man himself.

³Most intellectuals seem to have difficulty in realizing that they are still at the emotional stage and (if their natural reaction is repulsive) the lower emotional stage.

⁴An impulse that awakens reflection often also arouses the life of mechanical associations, which produces its trivialities. As long as people live in the emotional spheres of repulsive vibrations, the products of consciousness are as might be expected. Emotional unconcern is still a faculty too rarely seen, as is to be regretted.

⁵Before the individual is able to think in purely mental fashion (47:5), he must have the stage of emotional attraction behind him. And that is a rare achievement at the present stage of mankind's development, which keeps most of the individuals who are at higher stages from incarnating, since they have nothing to learn at present. When mankind has reached the higher emotional stage, the time has arrived for those higher individuals to incarnate. And then that culture will be general which we have seen only in some individuals as yet.

⁶Both philosophy and science are still at the lower mental stage (47:6,7), and this stage is connected with the lower emotional stage.

⁷Many intellectuals disdain everything emotional and call all such things "sentimentality", which demonstrates how ignorant of psychology they are. Disdain of emotionality is a typical phenomenon at the stage of civilization and is due to one-sided cultivation of the lower mentality (47:6,7). The emotional stage is not overcome by disdain, which is a typical emotional phenomenon.

⁸Most people are incapable of matter-of-fact, impersonal analysis of an individual.

Attempts at such analysis are taken as criticism, which they are when they apply it. It might be added that matter-of-fact, impersonal analysis in no way lessens our admiration, affection, and sympathy for the person being “criticized”.

21.29 *The Mentalist*

¹The mentalist has learnt how to control emotionality by mentality. He has set himself free from dependence on emotionality. He uses the attractive energies of emotional consciousness only as reinforcement of the “will to unity” and as impelling forces for action in the physical world. The will to unity is that endeavour which some time in the future will enable him to contact essential (46) consciousness via the unity centre (47:2) of the causal envelope.

²Of fundamental importance to his further development is his distinction between three factors: the self (the monad in the triad), mental consciousness, and the “plasticity” (receptivity to mental molecules) of the brain.

³The mentalist often lives in his mental consciousness, being unconcerned whether he gives his experiences the formulations that are linguistically exact. He understands “without words”, which means that he does not pay particular attention to the words conveying his ideas. However, it is through such work at formulation that the brain cells are vitalized and multiplied. The art of formulation is of great importance for his activity among people as well. That is why it is highly desirable that he does not content himself with understanding, but also seeks to “comprehend”, which means to use language for the formulation of exact concepts. This is what philosophers improperly call “learning how to think”. Long before you will be able to formulate your thought in words it has existed in mental consciousness (even though in a “vague form”).

21.30 *Higher Consciousness*

¹Higher kinds of consciousness contain all the lower kinds in an ongoing process of synthesis. The higher kinds fill all the “gaps” there are between the lower ones. That is also why, according to the Law, the higher is responsible for the lower. The greater the insight, the greater the responsibility. The esoterician, who has a faint inkling of what a higher kind of consciousness means, never gives way to the folly of considering himself important in any respect, and is always prepared to help others to comprehend and understand.

²Language is poor in words much because people’s understanding of life is primitive and inflexible. This poverty has the effect that a word is seldom unambiguous but often has different meanings or stands for different things. People pick up a new word and put into it what they believe is its meaning, which is a false belief generally speaking. The word “intuition”, for instance, refers to a faculty which is beyond the possible experience of the majority but which of course all believe they possess.

³Even in esoteric parlance the word “intuition” has been used in reference to different faculties, different kinds of consciousness beyond the mental. If we consider the fact that there are three different kinds of causal consciousness (47:1-3), seven different kinds of essential consciousness (46:1-7), etc., we realize how helpless the term “intuition” is.

⁴That person whose causal superconsciousness was completely passive was called a “soul-less being” by the old esotericians. It is only at the stage of culture that we receive inspiration from our causal consciousness. Inspiration via causal consciousness is (according to D.K.) a process of qualifying in which material energies pouring down stimulate those envelope centres which are above the diaphragm, if they are active. What people call “inspiration” is otherwise transference of emotional or mental consciousness from individuals in the worlds mentioned. Nobody can apprehend inspirations from higher regions than those which are within the range of the kinds of consciousness activated by the self.

21.31 *The Subconscious*

¹The individual's subconscious can be said to make up his individual character and true nature along with the gist of his experience in previous existences. The "power of the past", of the subconscious, is largely what controls the individual.

²The subconscious consists of a series of deposits from the different incarnations. The uppermost layer manifests itself as the most vital instinct. The deeper the layer, the more effort it will cost the individual to remember its consciousness content anew.

³All that is present to the waking consciousness sinks down into the subconscious where it enters into emotional and mental complexes. The subconscious is made up of those complexes. The mental complexes are largely hard to eradicate, the emotional ones are impossible to eradicate. That is why the wise man heeds what he pays attention to.

⁴It is true that the waking consciousness clearly apprehends the consciousness content of those mental atoms or mental molecules that penetrate into the brain cells, brought there through the interest and attention of the self. That does not mean, however, that what remains of the consciousness content in the subconscious is equally clear. The atoms and molecules once brought there are scattered as the brain dissolves. The subconscious makes it easier for the new brain to pick up and assimilate new molecules corresponding to the old ones that carried the ideas and facts earlier apprehended. But such a process presupposes that the individual acquires ideas of exactly the same kind anew.

⁵Certain incarnations can be particularly termed "incarnations of reaping". In such incarnations, many impulses can make the individual say and do such things as he understands to be stupid but come as forces acting automatically. The lives of many highly developed individuals can be so filled with such things that they deem themselves irremediable idiots. Precisely because they realize this shows that it is a matter of bad reaping from of old bad sowing. That realization may help them overcome their grief over their stupidities, pieces of tactlessness, aggressiveness, etc.

⁶The power of the subconscious is a problem that has lately begun to occupy the psychologists. That power is immense. We assimilate what is positive (life-promoting) in the subconscious, when we unconsciously use our latent, innate qualities and abilities. In this lies the life value of the subconscious (its significance in a life sense), but in this only.

⁷Attempts at sounding the depths of the subconscious may entail that individuals, under the pressure brought to bear on them by researchers, spontaneously relive episodes of previous incarnations greatly to the detriment of those individuals. According to esoterics, the individual may and should examine his daily experiences. But after doing so he should strike them definitively from his consciousness, and any retrospection or revival ("reinforcement") is subsequently to be rejected. The individual should not study his past incarnations until he has acquired causal consciousness, so that he sees the path of development he has covered. After he has done so there is no retrospection. What is essential is the future, his further development, and to that he must devote all his powers excepting the care he must take of this common existence and his service. All life is change, is development, if changes are taken in the right way. This basic factor in the life of consciousness has not yet been understood, one more proof that man is ignorant of life.

21.32 *Memory*

¹Quiz shows on the radio are no knowledge contests, just memory contests. Not the one having the best knowledge wins, but the one having the best memory. The monad, the self, forgets nothing. It is wrong to say, "I have forgotten it". You have not forgotten it because you cannot recall it in your waking consciousness. A person having "normal memory" can recall when necessary only an exceedingly small fraction of what he knows.

²When, some time in the future, esoteric psychology will be a subject taught in school,

people will learn how many different kinds of memory there are in man's different envelopes, what is means by such terms as "atomic memory", "molecular memory", "aggregate memory", etc.

³Past incarnations can be studied in two ways: They are accessible in the superconscious of the causal envelope and in the subconscious of the triad. Using hypnosis it is possible to resuscitate the memory of previous lives stored in the triad. According to the planetary hierarchy, such a use of hypnosis is an instance of criminal curiosity. It is resuscitation of the burden of the past, from which the individual has been emancipated through rebirth. Esoterics rejects hypnosis, since it wars against the law of self-realization, prevents the acquisition of self-reliance and self-determination.

21.33 Dreams

¹Dreams are woven together from experiences of the past, arbitrarily combined associations of things the individual has seen, heard, read from yesterday all the way back to thousands of years ago.

²The factors of dream life are those of the subconscious from previous incarnations, the illusions and fictions acquired (real facts in the right contexts probably do not make up even one per cent), and contacts made in the physical and emotional worlds. The exact elucidation in each particular case requires causal sense (causal objective consciousness). It should be pointed out that dream life moreover to a great extent is dependent on the individual's stage of development, horoscope factors, and envelope departments. This should suffice as a warning against dogmatic thinking, probably without effect until hylozoics has been recognized as the only sensible working hypothesis. Dogmatic unreasonableness remains constant however many times it meets with a rebuff. The dogma of the day remains the one true way of looking at things.

³Failures in life, frustrated hopes, often contribute greatly to dream life, especially such dreams as concern ambition, love life and sexuality, thus such dreams as are to be referred to emotional consciousness.

⁴Many dreams are due to thought transference from other individuals, telepathic impressions of what those people have thought or experienced. These impressions are refashioned in dreams so that the dreamer takes them for his own experiences.

21.34 Latency

¹Many people who in past lives attained the stage of culture as well as the stage of humanity can appear rather primitive, since they have ended up in the wrong environment and been fed the illusions and fictions of life-ignorant people in their uncritical childhood years, a condition that has added to their disorientation and insecurity. Most of them did not regain their original level of development until they were about 35 years old. As the understanding of the true knowledge gains ground, this state of affairs should rapidly improve, this and many other ones. Above all, the improvement should be recognizable at the universities.

²Psychologists, educationalists, and other pundits will never comprehend the things said here, since they are ignorant of the individual's stage of development and the pertaining psychological conditions, ignorant of the tension constantly in force between the monad in the incarnating triad envelope and Augoeides in the causal envelope and the second triad, a tension that is reinforced when the individual in physical life has forgotten what he has learnt and goes astray. This tension easily aggravates defiance in those who usually instinctively understand more than the people surrounding them. The tragic conflicts in human life are often caused by this inner conflict. And human beings learn extremely slowly through their incarnations. There are particular difficulties involved in being ahead of the others in development, being older in the human kingdom than the masses. Also those who have become

martyrs because they understood more than other people have experienced this. Mankind will never be able to make a statistical estimate of the number of those martyrs.

³It takes time to mentalize the brain with mental and causal molecules. Before this process is concluded, the child is like any other child, being ignorant of his true status. The corresponding is true of mental selves, although the difficulties facing them are immensely greater. The self has lost its continuity of consciousness, and so its memory has become latent. The self must get into contact with its old knowledge again, in so doing recognize it, and introduce into the brain the requisite mental molecules from the skandhas of its new mental envelope. When mankind has developed so far that those nine tenths of the brain which are as yet incapable of functioning are in full operation, the transference of mental molecules to the brain becomes a mere child's play. As it is now, most children must develop even the very machinery of thought ("the little grey cells"), and that takes a long or a short time, depending on the opportunities of learning offered to the child. A very good reaping is required to be born into a family that may provide the individual with a predisposed brain and let him grow up in an environment that affords him opportunities of mentalizing the brain and receiving facts of reality and rational ideas even in childhood. Such a child was, to cite a well-known example, Dag Hammarskjöld. An amusing anecdote may be told here: Dag's father, Hjalmar Hammarskjöld, who was in succession professor, governor, prime minister, etc. stated of his son: "If I had had a brain such as Dag has, I had gone far."

21.35 Trance

¹A prominent sociologist talks of trance and catalepsy as if they were the same condition. Catalepsy is a state of apparent death which is due to a partial extrusion of the etheric envelope out of the organism. Trance is a state of profound sleep where the emotional envelope (together with higher envelopes) has left the organism and does not allow itself to be called back by outsiders without risks to the "patient". Emotional, mental, and causal trance is distinguished depending on which of the three envelopes mentioned is the one in which the self is present. Ordinary trance is emotional, since higher kinds of trance are possible only for those who have reached the causal stage or have been taught the method of mental trance by some member of the planetary hierarchy. Mental and higher trance states are very "rare", namely in the sense that the esoterician practising them carefully sees to it that no one may "disturb" him. He is not at the service of science. He could tell what is happening to him, if science could understand it. So there will be no "scientific experiment" in his case.

21.36 Levels of Development

¹It is beginning to be more generally realized that "if two people do the same thing, it is not the same thing they do." It remains to be realized that if two people say the same thing, it need not mean the same thing. Everyone puts into the same manners of speech his own understanding of life, and these individual syntheses may be mutually very different. It is easy to pick up manners of speech that are far above one's own level.

²Determining the level of an individual is a difficult matter. There are people who evince far-reaching understanding of life in certain respects and who in other respects are blind even to essentials. This would be easier to understand if individuals of one-sided experience and education were concerned. It is much more difficult in the matter of such people as have acquired an unusually all-round orientation in culture. It is obviously not enough to have intelligence, energetic mental activity, and desire to be oriented, when there are gaps in the fields of experience of past incarnations. Until, as causal selves, we shall be able to determine the general level of an individual, we must keep to the understanding of life he has demonstrated in special fields. We can determine the stage of development with certain probability, but not the level within some one of the different stages.

³The most difficult matter of all is even the discussion of these problems, as long as those who hear about stages and levels of development believe themselves able to assess the stages and levels of other people, whether they know them or do not know them. This complex of problems is soon so idiotized that the esoterician refuses to have anything to do with it, since it is impossible to bring about correction. Assessing stages and levels is the business of those who desire to help all people, not of those who believe themselves capable of elevating or degrading them. No esoterician takes the judge's seat.

21.37 *Humour*

¹The sense of proportion develops with the experience of life. The sense of caricature, comedy, irony, satire, humour are different stages of development. Even children and barbarians understand grotesqueness. But even irony is beyond most people, and that is why newly-employed journalists are advised never to use irony when writing, because the masses take everything literally. Satire is seldom understood even by the so-called educated. And true humour (the word "humour" has been democratized and so idiotized, of course) are only for the "select few".

²Anyone who has a sense of humour, a sense of proportion beyond the grotesque proportions that people are able to grasp, has many opportunities of smiling when hearing people making statements on things of which they know nothing, let alone things of which they can know nothing.

21.38 *The Power of Language*

¹Ambiguous words (too common) are often misunderstood. This is demonstrated by countless discussions where everyone has his own idea of what a certain word means. If discussions are to be fruitful, those taking part in them must begin by defining the terms they will use. Often enough they have held the same view on things they otherwise dispute. An etymological dictionary should be found on the bookshelf of every educated person (etymology = the study of the original meanings of words).

²A perfect translation from one language into another cannot be made, since two words having apparently the same meaning in the two languages generally have different contents of consciousness and experience. The difference between comprehension and understanding can be clarified in this respect as well. The same phenomenon obtains where people are concerned. Actually everybody speaks his own language, different from those of the others, since everybody puts his individual conception into the words he is using. That is one of the causes of innumerable misunderstandings between people. This also explains why "birds of a feather flock together" (referring to people who have grown up in the same kind of environment). The greater the differences in experiences had, the more easily misunderstandings occur.

³The choice of words is very important. It makes quite another impression on people if you tell them that "the truth exists in the causal world" (and only there) than "the knowledge exists in the causal world". Truth is knowledge in accord with reality. If you insist on distinguishing the usage of the two words, you may refer the concept of truth to life view, and that of knowledge to world view.

21.39 *Theory and Practice*

¹An exam is no proof of competence. It only indicates a certain degree of education or training. Theoretical knowledge and practical competence are two quite different things. Only the person who has an "innate aptitude" for a certain profession is the right professional, and this is true of all "professions". It remains a serious mistake to make theoretical education determine the choice of people to be employed, for it guarantees nothing. It is incredible how many employees as well as persons practising a profession are "inferior", unfit for the job

they have chosen.

²More and more people appear unfit for “practical work”. A contributory cause of this is the great number of “courses” being given and promising the acquisition of expertise; a gross misuse of the confidence of ignorant people. They do not seem to have realized yet that real expertise is acquired only through many years of practice after a theoretical education. Anyone who thinks that his theoretical learning makes him especially suitable, that he “is fit for anything”, often is fit for nothing thoroughly.

21.40 *Genius*

¹Talent is ability to remember anew. Genius is ability to contact the world of ideas. What people call “genius” is sovereignty in a certain field, complete mastery of the form, of the means of expression, virtuosity, a perfect technique. That is talent, however.

²There are “geniuses” who were born with such brains as make them are unfit for any other work than precisely that which constitutes their genius. All “tests” yield negative results, and to psychologists and educators, etc., they appear “untalented”. It may happen that they walk through life as non-entities until they find their sphere of activity through a so-called coincidence.

³The ignorance of life, which is always the victim of the “revelations” of its whims, speaks of “degeneracy” when the children of a genius do not turn out to be geniuses as well. Certain physiological predispositions may be inherited, just as the “intellectual atmosphere” in childhood may facilitate the development of latent qualities. Genius cannot be inherited, however, since it is self-acquired through a series of incarnations. Neither the family nor the nation has any right whatsoever to boast of its geniuses.

⁴A striking demonstration that nationalism is ignorant of life and lacks judgement is the boasting and bragging of the nations about their geniuses. Genius is not the merit of the nation but a personal sacrifice by some great individual. Those old souls chose by themselves to help that nation and so incarnated into it. As a reward for their work they were declared “great” by ever rampant envy after they were sent off to the other world. No one is as good as the one who is “dead”. Caracalla’s words, “Let him be a god as long as he is not alive”, seem a pertinent expression of the general attitude. The greater the great were, the longer time it took to grasp their greatness, usually only after they began to be appreciated in other countries. Many have never been appreciated.

⁵All pioneers have been rejected by the ruling authorities. It is dangerous to point this out, however, to a mankind that is without power of judgement. For then everyone becomes wise and proclaims his fancies, is taken for a genius and a forerunner. This is what we are witnessing in our times. The world is thronged with unappreciated geniuses in all spheres. They think that if they had only been accorded opportunities of education, etc., then they would have become great. In fact, there is only one ground of assessing people: their achievements.

21.41 *Extravert and Introvert Types*

¹Mankind can be divided into two distinct psychological types: extravert and introvert. Of course there are mixtures of the two types due to the departments in the envelopes of the individuals. Generally speaking, the individual who has any one of the odd departments – 1, 3, 5, or 7 – in his causal envelope is an extravert, and the person who has any one of the even departments – 2, 4, or 6 – is an introvert. The extravert are more interested in the matter and motion aspects of the existence; the introvert, in the consciousness aspect. Extraverts on higher levels generally have a strong need of a basic world view; introverts, of a life view.

²These interests are of course important when the individual is about to choose his future job and education preparing for it. Naturally, a common world view and life view are necessary. When mankind has developed so far that such a common view will be possible, the

corresponding school subjects can be reduced to a minimum quite sufficient to afford the requisite perspectives on existence. Educators will then make instruction concentrate on systems and not, as now is the case, stress the learning of unsurveyable, inexhaustible details. Anyone who wants to be an expert on everything will be one on nothing. Not the quantity of knowledge is essential, but the quality of it promotes consciousness development.

21.42 Physical Factors

¹Disease occurs even in the mineral kingdom, but has its principal origin in the vegetable kingdom. That is a fact which even the exoterist should have been able to figure out: plants can be afflicted with so many kinds of visible disease. However, this Platonic idea has not yet flashed in the brain of any exoterist. Besides, esoterics does not make such a difference between “organic and inorganic” life as science does. Even mineral molecules have consciousness. And the cause of an “organic” disease may exist in any “inorganic” envelope of incarnation.

²Alcohol influences the organism as well as the centres of the etheric envelope and the emotional envelope. In a state of intoxication, scarcely even mental vibrations of the lowest kind (inference thinking) reach down to the brain to be correctly perceived by it. It is easy to ascertain this in other people but not in oneself. The less the intellectual capacity (the fainter the mental vibrations), the sooner judgement is weakened.

³Vegetarian food refines and strengthens the etheric envelope. The quality of that envelope largely determines the individual’s power to resist disease of the organism.

21.43 The Healing Power of Thought

¹Every consciousness expression also entails a manifestation of force which affects the environment always in some way. Therefore, thought wields a certain influence on the organism. This may manifest itself in two opposite ways: Thought may aggravate the disease or alleviate it. Until the esoteric knowledge of mental healing has been allowed for exoteric publication, you are wise not to believe yourself able to use it. Therefore, it would be best for the person suffering from an illness not to pay attention to the afflicted part of his organism, as far as he can, but instead try to ignore his disease.

²Another condition will obtain when the knowledge of the different envelope centres and their different kinds of energies will be more common. Then it will be possible to cure disease by the use of mental energies, but not in the way as Christian Science and other healers blindly believe. This requires knowledge of what kind of mental energy is needed for a particular disease, the amount of energy needed, in what way the energy should be directed, and many other things. According to esoterics, the point of origin of all disease is to be found in the emotional centre of the afflicted organ.

³Ignorant people think that they can draw energy from some inexhaustible source of power and the power itself will know the cause of disease and how to cure it. “As well might one ask a school boy why he does not perform a difficult operation,” says 44-self H.. In the many cases cited as examples of “miracles” there were favourable conditions of cure without assistance from without or the diagnosis was erroneous.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SELF-REALIZATION

21.44 The Meaning of Life

¹The meaning of life is consciousness development. We are here to have experience and to learn from it. Everybody has experience. But very few there are who learn from it. Often they do not even realize that they have experience, do not surmise that the simplest experience may

be vitally important. Of course a certain power of observation, of individual reflection, individual elaboration is required. Experience is efficient only when one has stopped parroting what other people have said or written, stopped using the expressions of public opinion, slogans, proverbs, stopped quoting and is capable of independent thought, individual thought.

²Even if you have succeeded in solving a problem of life right, yet the solution brings fresh problems with it implying new difficulties. Most people are contented with temporary solutions and, besides, are unable to see beyond them. When making their decisions, the far-sighted ponder upon these things, too. The wise-are see nothing but appearances and their own fictions.

³The proof that you have acquired a certain measure of life experience is your ability to learn from observation of the experience of other people. Most people do not learn from the experience of others, do not even realize that they can learn something from it. The wise man spares himself from an immense amount of unnecessary and dearly-bought experience by studying people. Disrespect for the experience of others is a proof of injudiciousness and immaturity. That man is wise who while young profits by the life experience of his elders. This need not imply that he will accept their conclusions. But he has gathered a material on which to reflect and has received suggestions of observation, for “you see only what you already know”.

⁴We learn by having contacts; and according to esoterics, we learn the most from that to which we are not attached. The path of development is the path of emancipation, and any attachment makes emancipation more difficult or impossible altogether. Emotional attraction and mental interest are both necessary but must not attach us. Personal impersonality is a faculty that we must acquire if we are to further our development and that of other people.

⁵When you have once made it clear to yourself that the number of incarnations required to attain the fifth natural kingdom is your own business, then you will realize by the by that it is important to use your time to acquire the knowledge of reality, life, the laws of life and to apply those laws right. Then time will be your most valuable possession and you will be grateful for all the opportunities to learn that life affords you. In any case you will have “no time” for unnecessary, least of all for that unnecessary talk that takes most of the time in the lives of the ignorant of life.

⁶Those who have not even reflected on the “meaning of life” in so doing show that their “souls are asleep”.

21.45 Esoterics Affords Insights for Self-Realization

¹Sokrates’ dictum, “virtue is knowledge”, of course has been misinterpreted, because they have not understood what he meant by knowledge. Theoretical learning does not suffice for practical realization. The art of realization presupposes knowledge of a psychological technique of which the psychologists and educators of our times are ignorant.

²In esoterics, man is advised against “looking back”. The power of the past is great, and we strengthen it by paying attention to what should be forgotten.

³Esoterics gives us the assurance that “everything is good”, the assurance that everything must be well in the end, whatever happens, however black, however hopeless the future looks.

⁴It also shows us that circumstances are not essential, but the ways in which we face circumstances are. “There are no desperate situations. There are only desperate people.” Whatever we meet with, everything will be well in the end. That insight will lead to “divine indifference” to whatever happens to us. An incarnation is like a day in a five-hundred-year life.

21.46 “You See Only What You Already Know”

¹“You see only what you already know” is ancient experience, which Goethe and others sought to clarify. The subjectivists have always exploited that saying to make it refer to our objective perception of physical matter. That may be correct in certain respects, but then it

depends on deficient power of observation such as, for example, when you have to point out to a person the existence of an object that is under his very nose, or when you have to point out subtleties in objects of art, etc. Many examples of this sort may be cited.

²Instead, this saying has reference to the fact that human beings look at the realities of life through the spectacles of their theories. This ultimately depends on what is logically inevitable in thought, on the fact that we apprehend particulars through generals. The logical consequence of this is that we unfailingly “live in appearances” until we have received right reality concepts, and the latter have received their mutual agreement in a system of facts of reality.

³The content of our intellect is made up of our learning, and this is the basis of our judgment from which we start. There is nothing to be done about this. It should induce us, however, to make constant attempts at increasing our learning. Unfortunately, in most people this learning is no real knowledge, but fictions which they have accepted as if they were right.

21.47 Positive and Negative Attitude to Life

¹In most cases, optimism and enthusiasm are necessary to the enterprising spirit and to success. The pessimist makes everything unnecessarily difficult for himself. It is better to be a “realist”, to ponder all the conditions calmly and matter-of-factly. The rule to be followed is not to take any risks without compelling reasons. The starry-eyed optimist, the sanguine person, may succeed many times. But if he lacks common sense, he will need an uncommon amount of good luck (an incarnation with exceptionally good reaping) lest it will end in “disaster”. The sanguine person also finds it easy to forget that he may be responsible for others.

²Love of criticizing is a true vice. People must criticize everything they do not grasp, do not know, cannot do. That is a peculiar way of brightening one’s life. Many people read to criticize, find faults and errors. Anyone who wants to learn something concentrates on that in which the writer is right and leaves the rest to forgetfulness.

21.48 Individuality

¹It is inevitable that all thinking human beings should have their own religion and philosophy. This has nothing to do with logic and acuity, but is psychologically conditioned. They can agree on a system of facts correctly compiled. Beyond that, however, the views they hold are purely personal.

²Besides, there are probably exceedingly few fields accessible to research that will ever be completely explored. Until this is the case there will always be disagreement on how the knowledge of the things incompletely explored should be complemented with hypotheses and theories to furnish the basis of a system for the time being.

³Even from these viewpoints they should be able to realize the utter logical and psychological error of demanding that a “belief” should be commonly held in all respects. The more the intellect develops and research advances, the greater are the personal divergences in everything beyond certain basic facts or fundamental principles, the more the principle of tolerance must be upheld. People will eventually realize the absurdity of disputes in these matters.

21.49 Tolerance and Intolerance

¹There are compromises of two quite different kinds. The one kind is similar to so-called logrolling in politics. The other kind is the adaptation of the ideal to mankind’s prospects of comprehension and realization. It is always a big mistake to try to force ideas on people which they are unable to understand, let alone to apply.

²You should never try to teach fanatics anything. They are impervious to new facts, dead certain that all their facts have ended up in the one right context. Their mental molecules are firmly embedded in the “cabinet” that prejudice, illusions, and fictions have carpentered to make a storage-room, the “form” of the system for the adapted content.

³“If one is never justified in identifying a human being with the good he represents or is supposed to represent, then one is even less justified in identifying him with the evil with which he appears to make common cause. But that is precisely what all the different forms of fanaticism do. The constant amount of potential fanaticism goes on poisoning the world.” (Gunnel Vallquist)

⁴Psychologically, intolerance often is due to irritation at the fact that one’s co-workers are so stupid in many respects. But we are all stupid, even if we do not notice it. We should only care whether the individual is fit to do the work he is to do. As for the rest, he has a right to be however stupid. That is how the planetary hierarchy looks at its tools among human beings. If they had to use only perfect tools, then they would have to do without tools, for the perfect ones have left the human kingdom.

⁵Some people assert that “every Englishman has a screw loose”. A wise man opined that everybody is quaint in some respect. Yogananda smiled and added that we are all a little bit crazy but that the main thing is that we patiently learn how to understand our various crazinesses and learn from them.

21.50 Mistakes

¹The mistakes we make as human beings are due to ignorance of life, bad reaping, and the lack of qualities in a life sense. Human beings take their mistakes in the wrong way. They do not realize that those mistakes were more or less unavoidable and they could learn much more from them if they examined what were the failings as to their own qualities and abilities and began to remedy them.

²Whether you fail or succeed in life depends on the factors of the law of reaping; factors on which we cannot make definite statements in individual cases, least of all as to the future.

21.51 Qualities and Abilities

¹The concept as concept is absolute. That is the psychological ground for the fact that ignorance takes everything as absolute. We speak, for instance, of a quality or an ability in terms of its existence or non-existence. We do not consider that we must make estimates in percentages: we have a certain quality so and so many per cent. Take intuition, for example. We may have it in certain respects and perhaps ten per cent. Then we cannot say that it does not exist in us, that we are without it. It takes a second self to determine whether higher faculties exist in an individual and how many per cent.

²Sokrates in the market square, surrounded by his disciples, was badgered by a phrenologist, newly arrived in Athens, who offered to examine Sokrates’ skull. This was granted and the disciples laughed exceedingly at the phrenologist, who enumerated the one bad quality after the other in the subject. But Sokrates said that it was no laughing matter. He really had had all those bad qualities but had overcome them all. Whether true or not, psychologically speaking the story is not implausible.

³Qualities are part of emotionality, abilities of mentality. Good and evil are always emotionally conditioned, as are good and bad motives. Where mentality is concerned, the distinction is between true and false. Or to express the same matter in another way. Goodness is one thing, knowledge a quite different one.

⁴It is a great and very common error to assume an intelligent person to be especially fit for life thanks to his “talent”. There are such intelligent people as are completely blind in a life sense and make nothing but mistakes. Generally they are recklessly selfish as well.

⁵Magnanimity, generosity, noble-mindedness, etc., are necessary qualities and enter into the twelve essential ones. Applied without common sense, however, they do more harm than good. We must not disregard their expediency, fitness for the aim pursued. That is the dilemma of the mystic. He possesses the noble qualities but does not know when and how to

use them in the right way.

⁶Everything higher draws us above, everything lower draws us below.

⁷Anyone who has learnt how to ask and how to listen will profit by the learning of other people; most people talk about the things that interest them. Not “loving to hear yourself talk”, not making yourself too prominent, where esoterics is concerned not making propaganda among the ignorant but preferably just answer the questions people ask you, are good tactics. The “art of being silent” is not that of being silent but of knowing when to talk.

⁸The last remnant of human “weakness” from which a 45-self is liberated is “irritation”. What is meant by this of course is something else than liberation from emotional or mental irritation, namely the acquisition of perfect unconcern, which consists in the 45-self’s inability to experience vibrations from the worlds of man (47:4–49:7) unless he directs his attention to them especially, in which process he can be affected by them only if he wants to be affected.

⁹It is important for the esoterician to acquire the faculty of vision, a sense of proportion, and synthesization: to discern his goal and what he needs to reach it; to see his own limitation and what he needs for his further development; to understand more and more people ever better.

21.52 Understanding

¹It has not dawned yet even on psychologists that there is an immense distance between comprehension and understanding. A sufficiently intelligent individual at the stage of civilization may very easily pick up ideas belonging to the stages of culture, humanity, and ideality and pass tests of oratory on them. But in fact he does not know what he is talking about. For you can understand, really understand, only that which you have realized and incorporated with subconsciousness into latent capacity, which can be actualized anew in given conditions.

²There are many different kinds of understanding. Where other people are concerned you may for example distinguish between what you understand of what others understand and what you understand of the particular way of seeing that is in their individual characters.

³For a discussion to be fruitful those participating in it must have a common basis from which to start. If not, they will be talking at cross purposes. Where understanding of a common ground is lacking, discussion will be meaningless, as is often the case.

⁴We assess other people according to ourselves, which is a big mistake. Everyone is unique, and that is why understanding of others is impossible until we have entered unity and experience others as parts of ourselves. What we understand is what is analogous. We all wrestle with similar problems, but that does not mean that they are “congruent”. Those problems are solved only in the individual way. Rough solutions are never true solutions, only pseudo-solutions in which individuality has been pushed aside for a time, short or long, perhaps for an incarnation.

⁵Understanding of people, the ability to assess them, presupposes “intuition” (causal consciousness). Before you have acquired this, you are reduced to attempts at arriving at “insight” by using mental analysis. That is a very unreliable procedure, since too many factors remain unknown. It is true that there are those who can instinctively assess people better than the majority. That is a kind of genius acquired through many incarnations of specialization in assessment of people. It never suffices for infallible assessment, however, least of all concerning individuals on higher levels. On this matter esoterics supplies facts of priceless importance, as it does in most respects. It affords us knowledge of the different stages of development of consciousness. It sets us free from the illusory and fictitious criteria used by morality, criteria which always confuse people. It clarifies to those who can use that insight that the individual’s level is best seen in his general understanding of life and above all in his conception of right, understanding of right and wrong.

21.53 *Insight and Realization*

¹Long before the individual can reach a higher stage of development, it is (should be) possible for him to comprehend the realities of that higher stage. This is a fact that intellectualists have never clarified and educators have never understood. Comprehension is one thing, the ability to realize is a completely different thing. There are orators who can make brilliant speeches on qualities of which they have acquired just a few per cent, and who deceive themselves and other by feigning to possess them almost one hundred per cent.

²There are millions at the stage of civilization who may read the writings of humanists and praise them highly although they are very far from being able to be humanists themselves. Priests preach every Sunday on qualities which are familiar to all and are approved of and admired by everyone but which no member of the congregation is able to realize. That is why sermons, despite constant repetition, do not lead to any result. Now and then an attempt is made at starting a “revival”. They arouse a psychosis that raises the members of the congregation a few hundred levels and keeps them for a time on the higher level. Then the psychosis wears off and they sink down to their old level again.

³One of the risks involved in studying the esoteric knowledge is that students seldom learn to distinguish between knowledge and reality. They have a typical tendency (typical intellectualism) to believe they are what they know (have assumed, believe they know). Our knowledge is just working hypotheses, however, which we must test in real life. If these working hypotheses do not agree with reality, then we learn that they are untenable by making mistakes. If the hypotheses are too primitive (as those of theology are), they cannot be “refuted”, since failures can always be explained away. Where such hypotheses are concerned it is necessary that a large portion of mankind through a long series of generations of failures eventually discover that they are untenable. Those individuals, however, who have developed their common sense, so as to be able to think for themselves and not just to parrot the thoughts and words of others, can experiment with hypotheses which they have accepted after independent testing of all the arguments for and against. In life upon life, through experience and work at that experience, they eventually come to distinguish between knowledge and ability, learn that the dictum of Sokrates, “virtue is knowledge” (anyone who knows what is right does what is right), is true only if the individual has already acquired the capacity requisite to the realization of what he wants.

⁴There is lamentable ignorance of these things even among esoteric students, since mankind is almost completely ignorant in psychology and education is dominated by fictions.

⁵Irrespective of the fact that one is not able to do because one knows, that a good resolution is something quite different from its realization, there is another side to the matter. Knowledge carries responsibility with it. We have received the esoteric knowledge of reality from the planetary hierarchy to realize it and to serve unity, not to be contented with our wisdom.

21.54 *The Middle Path*

¹The middle path in everything consists in avoiding all exaggerations to either extreme, an attitude that the fanatic never understands. Both the “lower” and the “higher” exist and must be taken into consideration. Man is both beast and angel. Also the needs of the beast must be considered.

²This is often heard: “If I act, it is wrong. If I do nothing, it is wrong. If I do it this way, it is wrong. If I do it the opposite way, it is wrong.” Then we find it easier to understand what Buddha meant when saying that the middle path can be compared to a sharp razor’s edge.

21.55 *Self-Knowledge*

¹People speak of self-knowledge and lack the most elementary prerequisites of it, which is clear from their almost complete ignorance of the consciousness aspect.

²By “self-knowledge” is usually meant knowledge of what we have thought, felt, said, and done, of the different tendencies in our “psyche”, of our habits and views. But all of this amounts to very superficial knowledge of yourself. Self-knowledge is knowledge of your level of development, of what you have latently and what you can realize; what you may be induced to do if you gain power, honour, wealth, or in the most trying conditions, etc.

³Esoterically, an individual is said to have acquired the “requisite self-knowledge” when he knows that he is an individual on a certain level of development in a universal collective of individuals at different stages of development. But this means that he knows, not that he merely believes that he knows, a distinction that most people have yet to learn. All who believe, believe they know. Only when faced with the necessity of action must the esoterician be contented with “assumption”, a state of uncertainty opposite to the “certainty of faith”.

⁴How could the self possess self-knowledge when it does not know that it is a primordial atom, that it is involved in 48 ever lower material worlds, has passed through the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, has thousands of incarnations behind it at the stages of barbarism, civilization, perhaps culture, knows nothing of its higher envelopes and their kinds of consciousness? What the self believes it knows is what it has learnt from what others believed they knew, and that is principally fictitious.

⁵The individual possesses the qualities and abilities he has succeeded in actualizing (for the most part thanks to his environment), the “knowledge” he has succeeded in picking up, plus the energies that according to his horoscope are put at his disposal. Only the esoterician understands this, however.

⁶It is important for self-assessment to understand that the individual cannot determine to what extent he is the victim of collective and individual illusoriness and fictitiousness. Self-knowledge is possible only in a very superficial sense. Psychoanalysis should have explained at least that much. According to esoterics, true self-knowledge is impossible.

⁷Psychological ignorance induces the individual the belief that he can know himself and the belief that he is different from all the others. However, the qualities and abilities that man is able to develop in the human kingdom are limited by their given nature. We are all basically similar, even if the form, the appearance, the expression is unique. Human beings criticize in each others the faults and failings which they all have, even though in different percentages, being ignorant of the fact that the percentage is connected with the level and with the possibility of remembrance and reacquisition afforded by the incarnation. The esoterician gets to know himself by getting to know people. When others feel different, he knows instead that he is such a one and gets to learn his dispositions even if they have not manifested themselves in this life.

21.56 *Assessing Other People*

¹When psychologists have understood the fact that mankind is made up of individuals who are at different stages and levels of development, they will stand on firm ground. Without that understanding, which is the primary one, their assessment of people will be based on the erroneous, conventional way of looking at things. It is infinitely typical of the general inability to assess a human being that he is assessed according to the judgements of other people, according to gossip, slander, according to the conception of people at the stage of hatred.

²It is necessary of course to know much more than the individual’s stage of development: his different envelopes, the departments of those envelopes, the energies acting on the envelopes and on the different centres of the envelopes. If they know that human consciousness development evinces a long series of ever higher levels from the lowest level of the stage

of barbarism to the highest level of the stage of humanity (at the verge of the fifth natural kingdom), then they also realize that those who are on the highest levels are the pioneers of evolution, those who are leading the way.

³Of course we have a right to try to assess other people, provided we make our analysis only as an exercise in assessing people and an attempt at ascertaining the stage of development to be able to help the better. Assessing other people is always a difficult thing, however, even when we do it with a good purpose and with honest intentions. It easily turns into criticism and judgement, and we may also question whether it is of any use considering our scant qualifications for assessing at all, however much faith we put into our own capacity; the individual's ability to assess is generally inversely proportional to his self-esteem.

21.57 HINDRANCES TO SELF-REALIZATION

¹Fear is the most distinctive trait of human beings. They fear having to answer for what they say and do, defending freedom and what is right, doubting their fictions and their own certainty. They fear the judgement of the world, their own noble inspirations, their own powers for noble deeds. They fear ghosts.

²Self-analysis destroys the certainty and surety of the unconscious. Self-analysis affords no knowledge, picks the growing life to pieces, pulls up the plant to look at the roots. Self-analysis never gets at what is hidden in our essence, but ruins the germ.

³Many individuals are victims of both a complex of superiority and a complex of inferiority. When examining themselves critically, they see their ignorance and impotence. But that does not prevent them from thinking themselves very important when comparing themselves with other people.

⁴The individual's recognition of his faults and of mistakes he has made is a sign of progress. By grieving over them he counteracts a possible correction, since "energy follows thought" and by paying attention to one's faults one strengthens them.

⁵When people do everything they can to hinder someone from improving, everything they can to complicate his overcoming, it is surely part of human hatred, which can never forget ("forgive") the mistakes of other people, but strengthens the faults by their gossip poisoning everything, or their constantly recurring thoughts (which are telepathically transferred) of past errors.

⁶Diversion, recreation, amusement can be defended as "relaxation", but what is in excess of recovery is a waste of life's precious opportunities of development and service of life. A man's interests in life indicate his level of development or, at any rate, his understanding of life, which as a rule is indicated by his level, however.

⁷People who during their childhood and adolescence have been crammed with the prevalent illusions of emotional consciousness and fictions of mental consciousness are ruled by these factors in their envelopes automatically and spontaneously. If, later in life, they succeed in learning about the knowledge of reality and life, the rest of their lives will be an unremitting struggle between newly gained insights and tendencies already acquired, a struggle the result of which seldom appears until in the following incarnation. That is a thing which moralists are utterly unable to comprehend, let alone understand.

⁸Those who cannot or must not (because of other people's hatred) adapt, cannot change their external conditions and feel unhappy in them, resort to imaginative escape from reality as a final expedient.

⁹When mankind has developed so far that those individuals who have attained the stages of culture and humanity have a prospect of incarnating in nations and families where the esoteric knowledge is brought to life, their potential for self-realization will be able to manifest itself without restraint.

¹⁰Many people have wondered how Nietzsche, who had the stage of the saint behind him,

could become that confused in his “moral orientation”, expressed better: conception of right. The explanation is that he saw the perverseness of moralism (the expression of latent hatred) and of people’s moral judgements, but in his enormous hypersensitivity overreacted to it so as to accept the reckless contempt of everything that the ignorance of life had erroneously mixed up with moralism.

21.58 Overestimating and Underestimating Oneself

¹Man easily either overrates or underestimates his own abilities. Those who overrate themselves generally lack self-criticism. Those who underrate are too acutely aware of their shortcomings and have no faith in their potential because they have experience of their actual abilities only. Since nobody can know himself (except in the common, superficial sense), right assessment is out of the question (but in the respects in which he has already passed the tests). Human self-importance is an interesting phenomenon to study. It recurs in many forms. Religious people, who believe that there is salvation and that they are saved, look down with icy contempt on the poor sinner who has not cared for his salvation. The academic with his hat, tails, and ring has an elevating feeling of mastering his discipline explaining everything. Artists, who are capable of putting into people’s heads that daub is art, laugh at the philistines who are to pay their bills. And the Nietzschean, who believes he is a superman, is comical, too. They have received all this from other people for nothing and think they are important. You could call such behaviour infantile. They are like children bragging: “I know something that you don’t know.”

²Besides the many people who overestimate the range of their judgement, there are others who underrate their judgement. This underestimation probably is mostly due to their cognizance of mankind’s immense ignorance of reality and life and their awareness of the absence of the facts necessary to correct judgement. They find underestimation to be better than overestimation, since at any rate it is impossible for them to be certain of their judgement. They also have too many daily demonstrations of prevalent injudiciousness in all kinds of public statements and the extravagances of subjectivism in the current authorities. However, this inferiority complex in relation to their own judgement does not at all prevent a complex of compensation from manifesting itself when they assess the judgements of other people.

21.59 Inferiority Complex

¹The inferiority complex exists in everybody, even if very few are able to ascertain it in themselves. It asserts itself against everything that is on a higher level than the individual is. Psychologists are clear about the fact that physical disability or some other noticeable physical defect predisposes the individual to the formation of a complex of compensation. Actually just such a thing as shortness of stature may be sufficient for this. A keen observer can ascertain that this is true of the consciousness aspect as well (talent, character traits, etc.). The sense of inferiority always finds expression in some way. Envy as a rampant social phenomenon is as old as the hills. It is universally human and will remain ineradicable until mankind has reached the stage of humanity and acquired the quality and ability of attraction.

²It is typical of many people who are at higher stages that they suffer from an inferiority complex. This is less due to wrong upbringing than to their latent subconscious knowledge of the fact that “nothing is as it should be” and their instinctive surmise that “one ought to be different”. They understand nothing, since nothing agrees with what they possess latently. They are disoriented and live in the sense of being in the dark, feeling uncertain, unfulfilled.

³Besides, probably less their parents than their playmates (the majority of whom are on lower levels) contribute to their inferiority complex by their scorn and contempt of everything that does not belong to their stage of barbarism, attitudes and behaviours which those on higher levels instinctively feel to be “unjust”.

⁴An inferiority complex can be formed when the individual receives knowledge of consciousness development in ever higher natural kingdoms, knowledge of the fact of the remoteness of the perfection painted by imagination. They consider themselves non-entities that comprehend and understand nothing. The individual sets himself free from that complex by developing the sense of proportion, acquiring the insight that such a complex hampers his own development, the insight that one should not look at oneself but forget oneself and one's comical insignificance and be contented with being a tool in the service of life.

⁵The inferiority complex causes the individual to overestimate the power of judgement of other people too easily. But there is a huge difference between those who have assimilated the current learning and display their wisdom without restraint and those who have the same learning but are trammelled by their instinct telling them that this learning is fictitious.

21.60 The Tendency to Speculation

¹An amazing faith in their own passing fancies characterizes those untrained in logic and method. They have discovered the existence of the consciousness aspect, and at once so-called researchers have dogmas formulated on things of which they actually can know nothing. Consciousness may be likened to a boundless ocean where man knows neither cardinal points, nor positions, or depths. But we already have a number of schools of psychology that proclaim their assumptions as though they concerned essential realities. To an esoterician who has been taught somewhat of that consciousness all these attempts at exploring consciousness appear puerile.

²The tendency to speculation degenerates in life-ignorant mankind into a mania. All whims and brainwaves are considered rational, and the result is an exhaustless manufacturing of sheer pseudo-problems that are gone over again and again in all kinds of absurd connections. The problems of reality are extremely few compared with the countless pseudo-problems that occupy people's attention.

³Even worse is the fact that these pseudo-problems affect the instinct for reality, which becomes increasingly disoriented and unserviceable, that instinct which can be observed working in the animal kingdom and which guides animals with unerring sureness where all other means of orientation are lacking.

21.61 Illusions and Fictions

¹Individual fictions arise even because of the ambiguity of ordinary words and the one-sidedness of the individual's comprehension of them.

²Most people accept their illusions and fictions as correct without further ado and are often deeply shocked if you dare to doubt that they are undisputable.

³Illusions and fictions often cause crises in the individual's psyche when he is faced with problems or situations where these lead to conflicts in consciousness. Many people then resort to psychoanalysts for help to solve their "life problems". Unfortunately, those analysts often have an established pattern according to which they try to explain the facts that their analysis bring to light. But if the analyst is relatively free from the illusions and fictions of life ignorance, he perhaps sees in what way he can liberate his patient from them. In most cases the individual finds the solution by himself, when he has an opportunity to discuss his problems thoroughly until they have been clarified.

⁴Also the esoterician finds from personal experience that as human beings we shall never become free from illusoriness however great efforts we make. This is especially true of our conception of another individual's personality, which suffers from the same incurable defect as well. It is a case of a unique consciousness trying to grasp another equally unique consciousness. The only possibility of fully understanding other individuals is to become those other ones. And that is possible only to anyone who has acquired the consciousness of

community, has become a 46-self.

21.62 Knowledge and Belief

¹Most people have been taught the difference between knowledge and belief – to see when they know and when they just believe they know. We are all dependent on authorities in fields we have not examined and mastered ourselves. We must also be clear about the fact, however, that authorities may be mistaken and must not be invoked as if they had the final say, but that they remain just temporary authorities of the day who may have another view tomorrow because of the exhaustless supply of new facts. We can only say that this is the view held by the authorities today.

²Regrettably, most people are contented with the conception they have once acquired and are unwilling to change it. They make up that opposition to progress against which almost all pioneers have to struggle.

³Then there are those who accept all the new fancies and conceits being proclaimed as if they were truths. They are keen on everything new, as if the latest craze were the one and only right thing.

⁴All of this has been said before, is nothing but truisms. But it seems as if it could not be said too often. From the rising generation there is a daily addition of people who have not heard it. You constantly find that what one generation thought self-evident (“things that need not even be said”) is rediscovered after a couple of generations and treated as new and unheard of. Mankind easily forgets very dearly bought experience and therefore makes the same fatal mistakes over and over again. Therefore, make good use of the “truisms”, do not forget them, and do not get annoyed when they are unceasingly repeated!

21.63 Particular Hindrances to Psychological Studies

¹Language does not have words for most states and processes in the different kinds of molecular consciousness there are in man’s different envelopes, or even words for the expressions of those molecular consciousnesses. The esoterician is impotent and helpless when faced with the task of elucidating and explaining the experiences connected with those consciousnesses. This being the case with such things as are within the range of the experience of most people, we should realize that it is impossible to enter into a discussion of what is beyond the majority. It is important, in any case, that this is made clear and that the ignorant have an inkling of their great ignorance, for that is the very condition of further study.

²That is not all, however. Those who pursue esoteric studies and have succeeded in interpreting “intuitively” those symbols to which there is no other terminology often find that they have reached the limit of their understanding, if a further advance of their conception would imply encroachment on domains closed to all who are able to use the power conferred for their own good under any circumstances whatsoever.

21.64 Ignorance of Life Makes Us Unfit for Life

¹In his almost total ignorance of reality and life, man is largely unfit for life, unable to lead a fulfilled life. The worst thing, however, is that he believes he is able to comprehend, understand, judge; that he has this quite unjustified faith in his own insight and understanding. It appears perhaps best in young people who in their typical conceit make categorical statements on everything of which they have no idea and holds everything in contempt that does not dovetail with their acquired illusionism and fictionalism.

²The lack of psychological understanding, both theoretical and practical, is a serious problem. General wrong assessment of both adults and children is due to this shortcoming. This is particularly the case with assessments of individuals at the stages of culture and humanity. An individual experienced in life becomes increasingly cautious in his statements, since these are

misunderstood more often than not. Such a careless expression as, “I can take care of myself”, is interpreted as “you don’t need to consider that person any further.” Exceptionally you will find a person of intelligence who, guided by his instinct of life, will have arrived at the Sokratean realization at forty years of age (seldom earlier), become a skeptic as to man’s possibility of knowledge and a pessimist regarding man’s ability to lead a rational life. That individual would be particularly suited to esoteric study and would probably realize its overwhelming probability, if he could be made to examine the resources of the hylozoic system to explain the previously inexplicable. Until mankind has seen this, it will probably not see how thoroughly erroneous the traditional ways of looking at things are in all life respects, that those old ways of viewing things could go down into the slop pail without further ado if there were something to be put in place of the those old views. How about examining hylozoics?

21.65 Psychological Understanding and Discipleship

¹When human beings receive knowledge they believe themselves finished, not understanding that they have received the knowledge to use it for their development. However often you quote the warning of the planetary hierarchy, “fools rush in where the wise fear to tread”, they neither hear nor see or they believe themselves wise enough to rush in. If they are told that the teacher appears when the pupil is ready, they sit down to wait for him to discover how much more than ready they are. If they are told that the disciple must himself seek the teacher, they apply at once and incessantly. If they are warned against experimenting with their lives, it appears to them as an encouragement: now you may begin! The result of what is said here is that they must wait some incarnations unnecessarily or they destroy their tools so that it will take them many lives to repair that damage, for whatever we ruin we must restore by our own work. All debts must be paid in all respects (also the “debt” of laziness). What is not in conformity with the Law is mistake, and life sees to it that balance upset is restored, even if it will take ten, a hundred, or a thousand lives. Nothing is forgotten, no single consciousness expression.

²The esoteric groups are characterized by telepathic communication between the individuals composing the group. This must be said since otherwise, as soon as people hear about the “group”, they believe in their habitual conceit that they are able to form groups, and the idea is botched, as usual. Esoteric groups are formed under the supervision of the planetary hierarchy and a 45-self. Many people who are not even mental selves imagine that they are both causal selves and 46-selves. Their megalomania has not yet carried them so far as to make them imagine that they are 45-selves. So that remains for them.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ESOTERIC STUDIES

21.66 How to Reach People with the Knowledge of Life

¹An important thing to consider when being together with people is the degree of understanding in those you are talking to. Many people speak of things that cannot possibly be of interest to others, often of such things as must be misunderstood, since the conditions of right conception are absent. We put our own experience into our words and do not consider the fact that other people may be far from having had the corresponding experience.

²Another important matter is not to fob knowledge off on people, not to force it on such ones as do not comprehend or understand it, as take no interest in it, do not have the sense to appreciate it, do not care to apply it. Nor have they ever grasped the fact that knowledge carries responsibility with it.

³We must discuss with inquirers to elucidate the problems. But we do not dispute, since in such a case we have to do with a believer who has definitively ended up in a theory. Discussion is a concerted attempt at analysis of concepts on which they all have questions they ask humbly. Anyone who is finished has stopped asking. He has then arrived at “certainty”, and that is considered by many people as a proof that their conviction is correct. Certainty, however,

proves nothing but the fact that he has found a system that corresponds to his emotional and mental needs. It cannot become more than a system until the man has entered the world of ideas and experiences reality himself. There is a difference between system and system, however. What system you accept depends on your stage of development. Then there are many people who do not know what is meant by system. "Everyone is master of his own wisdom."

⁴The human élite, those who have reached the stage of humanity, should be able to realize that consciousness can be developed, that there can be higher kinds of consciousness than the mental one, that Platonic idea thinking, or intuition, is a faculty worth striving for.

⁵How should we make people interested enough to examine the reality content of esoterics? Make them realize that it explains thousands of otherwise incomprehensible things? Make them realize that to understand people they must have esoteric knowledge of different stages of development, man's different envelopes and consciousness in the different molecular kinds of those envelopes? Make them realize how irremediably disoriented the current ways of looking at things are, that man cannot arrive at the knowledge by speculating? These and similar questions arise for anyone who desires to spread information about esoterics. They can be suitable subjects of meditation and perhaps be answered in that way.

⁶Since the meaning of life is consciousness development, we help people by making it easier for them to acquire knowledge and understanding of the realities of life. The esoterician seeks to impart the knowledge of reality, life, and the laws of life to people, and to liberate them from their emotional illusions and mental fictions. The work of liberation will try his patience exceedingly, since he must do it one step at a time, alluding to any new fact in a new way of looking at things in such a manner that it cannot be construed as criticism or "moralism". The psychological method consists in gaining people's hearing by showing them affection, sympathy, helpfulness, spreading joy around him, and easing the burdens of life. That is what could be demanded of all teachers, too.

⁷Hylozoics is a mental system in accord with reality such as it can be ideally understood in the worlds of man. Many people do not need a world view, however, but only a life view. They want to know how to live in the most expedient way. You cannot help such people by giving them a description of reality. Needs are individual. Anyone who wants to help people with their problems must be able to enter into their individual views. This calls for loving understanding, no theoretical explanations. Anyone who is to help in such cases must have the experience of life that makes it possible to understand the psychological situation of the one in need. Esoterics helps us better understand the feelings and thoughts of other people and analyse their problems on their level and with their resources of understanding.

⁸Personal contact between an esoteric writer and his readers is by no means as important as many of them think. Too human factors manifest themselves, usually influencing the personal impression. As incapable of forming a correct opinion as almost everybody is (that they believe the opposite is the very proof of incompetence), all conventional views of which most people are victims only become hindrances to the requisite impersonality and objectivity. People are not psychologically as understanding as they imagine. The final impression is too subjective and misleading

⁹It is certainly true that the disciple exists for other people. This is necessary as he is to learn much that he needs to be able to enter the consciousness of community in due time. But this does not mean that outsiders have any right whatsoever to demand anything, a right that people in their unchecked, blind egoism would exploit at once. Unmoved by irrelevant considerations, the disciple decides for himself where, when, how, and whom he will serve.

21.67 *The Acquisition of Esoterics*

¹The esoteric world view and life view is not acquired as easily as most students appear to think. It is not sufficient to learn the mere “skeleton” of the system: the three aspects, the kinds of matter, the worlds, etc. The system should become a “living whole”, so that the students are able to draw the right conclusions from it and give right explanations of what they previously found inexplicable. Experience has shown that most students are contented with a superficial conception of what they have read and so cannot reason on the basis of the system and explain existence.

²It is also a sad fact that even such people as have acquired the esoteric knowledge of reality and life seem incapable of solving their own problems of life, appear not only incurably self-blind but also seem to lack psychological understanding in a general sense. Even in such people, theoretical learning brings about a stereotyped thinking, a thinking in clichés, without individualization, in its assessment of concrete cases.

³How difficult it is to “live the life” is seen in the case of the most advanced individuals at the stage of humanity and even at the stage of ideality. They can make mistakes that appear completely incomprehensible.

21.68 *The Ability to Read*

¹People forget too easily what they have not engraved into their brains themselves. Mentality is the most volatile of all volatile things, since the self is not yet centred in the mental envelope.

²Some people read in such a way that afterwards they do not know what they have read. They have not even seen what the text says, as appears from the many misconceptions. They say, “yeah, that’s right”, put the book aside, and only inessentials have stuck in their memory. They are amazed when told what it says in the book, “what they have not seen”.

³Others are able to read and to restate the content of the texts without understanding it. Frequently they can visualize what they have seen, a kind of automatic reproduction.

⁴Finally there are those who reflect when they are reading and on the things they are reading. Those are the only ones to profit by their reading.

⁵Esoteric books are textbooks that you study and analyse until the ideas contained in them have been engraved into your waking consciousness. The casual reader may as well leave them unread. Better than reading in that way is to omit reading altogether. Anyone who reads “stupidly” grows increasingly stupid. It is necessary that people learn how to read. Thus mere reading is not enough. They should also know why they read. They should read in order to learn, and they should learn in order to have material to ponder on. Thus one should learn how to think for oneself, learn how to ask oneself what, how, why; learn how to analyse what one has read. Otherwise there is a danger of one’s turning into an intellectual monkey and a victim of all manner of irresponsible writers.

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Endnotes by the Translator

21.15.1 “A reed shaken by the wind.” The Bible, The Gospel according to Matthew, 11:7.

21.19.2 “The secret of being a bore is to say everything.” In the original French, “Le secret d’ennuyer est ... de tout dire.”

21.29.4 “Inspiration via causal consciousness is (according to D.K.) ...” *Glamour: A World Problem* by Alice A. Bailey, page 259. The Bailey text says: “Inspiration is a process of qualifying, vitalising and stimulating the reaction of the personality – via the centres – to that point of tension where soul control becomes present and apparent.”

21.40.4 “Let him be a god as long as he is not alive.” (In Latin: “Sit divus dum non sit vivus.”) Allegedly said by Roman Emperor Caracalla upon having his brother and co-emperor Geta murdered.

21.43.3 “As well might one ask a school boy ...” *Teachings of the Temple*, Halcyon, Calif., p. 31.

21.66.3 “Everyone is master of his own wisdom.” Tibetan proverb quoted in *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, Letter No. 22.