

6 EFFICIENT PHILOSOPHY, OR WHAT IS POSITIVE? WHAT IS NEGATIVE?

6.1 Introduction

¹During the latter part of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th, a number of American philosophers and writers shaped a philosophy of efficiency, an uncommonly unitary system of thought distinguished by optimism, purpose, enthusiasm, joy of life, and the will to win.

²Even though the authors but incidentally hinted at their sources of inspiration, yet these are clearly traceable to yoga philosophy, ancient and modern theosophy. It is obvious to the esoterician that the doctrine of reincarnation and karma forms the basis of their view of life, although it is hardly ever mentioned. The attitude to life would not have been of such immense, revolutionary importance for these teachers of wisdom, if they had intended it for just one incarnation.

³This philosophy of life is a popular philosophy in the best sense of that word. It is intended for all, their various levels of development disregarded. This has occasioned some European critics to consider this school of thought to foment or strengthen egoism. That verdict is hardly justified. There is a clearly intentional and correct educational idea in not beginning by putting forward ideals that appear removed from life and unattainable to the great masses (like those of the Sermon on the Mount, for instance). The more primitive the individual, the lower the ideal that can enthuse him. All the writers, however, have included the highest ideals for those who have reached the highest stages. Besides, any purpose, low or high, that does not counteract development is part of the ideal.

⁴In the following, some ideas of the American philosophers are restated within a more pronounced esoteric framework: the ideas of Emerson, Mulford, Trine, Marden, and Whitman.

6.2 There Is Only One Religion

¹Like all those who have not been led astray by dogmatized superstition, the American philosophers draw a clear line between the teaching of Christ and Judaized Christianity.

²Under the influence of the traditional misconception of the mission and teaching of Christ, Western man has concentrated on the dark sides of life so as to blind himself to its brighter sides, has learned to view nature as an enemy to be subdued and dominated. The original teaching of Christ has been remoulded into a religion that denies the divinity of life, that everywhere sees but what is evil, that looks on the world as though it were in the hands of evil and on man as an incurably evil so-called sinner.

³Christ saw the godhead revealed everywhere and in everything. To him, life and everything in life was divine in essence. There is nothing of the pessimistic Christian outlook in his view of life. Evil is relative imperfection, the outcome of ignorance and inability.

⁴Christ taught the one true religion. There is only one religion. All avatars, messengers from the kingdoms of the gods, have proclaimed the same truths down the ages. Truth is one, the knowledge of reality and life. The individual's partial knowledge and comprehension of it depends on his level of development.

⁵The teachings of all the avatars have been adulterated. Their various presentations of the knowledge had to be adapted to prevalent modes of conception and to the general capacity for comprehension. The essentials of the doctrine have always been lost. At lower stages of development, truth is always distorted by those who are in power, in order to serve their

purposes. The misconceptions also depend on the fact that individuals are on very different levels, that a new teaching is rejected by those who have their views already fixed, that people refuse to change their habits, that the individual's prospect for a right understanding depends on his open attitude to life and his desire to have the experiences that are necessary to reach understanding.

⁶In all historical forms of religion an esoteric and an exoteric teaching can be distinguished. The so-called founders of religions have necessarily chosen the people having the latent prerequisites of understanding, and have initiated them into those deeper experiences of life which the great masses would unfailingly misinterpret. That provided the basis of the esoteric societies. The exoteric, simpler mode of presentation was taken charge of by more or less speculative minds within the priestly caste, and was moulded into dogmatic systems together with a comfortable doctrine of salvation. In this process the essentials of the teaching were lost: the work for and method of self-realization. The teachings of the various esoteric societies are identical in all essentials, although of course the linguistic attires vary, terminologies differ, and modes of expression diverge. Esoterics liberates man from two errors, among many others: The Christian, saying that a man is incurably evil. The Indian, saying that man is god.

⁷All who have reached the stage of unity declare that all life is divine and makes up a unity; that we are all perfect – everybody in his individual character and on his level of development; that we are all on our way towards the perfections of ever higher stages of development; that some time all will reach the highest goal, supreme perfection; that it is up to everybody when they will attain the goal; that no so-called doctrines of salvation will help; that no leaps in evolution are possible even through divine intervention; that man's own self is "the way, the truth, and the life"; that we shall be reborn as men until we have learned everything we are able to learn in the human kingdom; that we shall reap in new incarnations everything we have sown in previous ones.

6.3 All Life Is A Unity

¹All the cosmic worlds that make up our universe consist of monads, which are in process either of descending into the physical world (involution) or of making their home journey (evolution). Those in evolution are found in various kingdoms of nature and aspire towards the supreme final goal: cosmic omniscience and omnipotence.

²All individuals in the universe make up a unity in respect of consciousness. Every individual has an unlosable share in this cosmic total consciousness.

³The individual's consciousness can be divided into subconsciousness, waking consciousness, and superconsciousness.

⁴The subconscious includes everything the individual has experienced in times past. The subconscious cannot forget anything but retains the memory of everything it has experienced ever since the monad entered into manifestation. The collective memories of all monads form the common cosmic memory.

⁵The individual's subconscious is immensely more extensive than his limited waking consciousness will ever be able to apprehend.

⁶The superconscious is our co-participation of the cosmic total consciousness. We continuously increase this part of ours through consciousness activity and work for consciousness expansion.

⁷Through his superconscious the individual receives inspiration – higher beings' light, power, knowledge of reality, of life and of the laws of existence, according as he develops so that he takes an interest in inspiration and is able to perceive it.

⁸The individual is a monad (the least possible part of primordial matter and the least possible firm point for individual consciousness), which is involved or incarnated into

material envelopes, which constantly change according to the law of transformation, and are ever re-formed according to the law of re-formation.

⁹That portion of the monad's superconscious which is called essential consciousness reveals to us the boundless love that we all long for, both for ourselves and in order to be able to help others. All the great ones have said that it is there and is just waiting for us to take possession of it. Instead of aspiring to expand our waking consciousness in such a manner that we can achieve a contact with this portion of our superconscious, we are content with what we have already acquired. If we seek for that contact we shall find it. Every time we come into contact with it but momentarily, we are relieved of some of that illusory reality which we have formed ourselves by our own thoughts and feelings, the attitude to life we have got in the past; the things we believe are our true self and which stand in the way of our reaching the goal. When experiencing this we become direct and simple, and are spontaneously absorbed in that wondrous eternal now which life grants us with the passing of every moment. Lacking unity we live fragmented in a succession of events, not understanding the interconnection of the parts and the community of all life. It is when finding that we all live in the ocean of universal consciousness that we discover the wisdom, beauty, and power of life. This power finds ever more perfect expression in us the more we open ourselves to it and do not stand in its way, the more wholeheartedly we follow the light we have got and obey the prompting we receive in the silence. Through their false attitude to life the ignorant of life make themselves blind and deaf to the unity of life that reveals itself in the unseen.

¹⁰Life is the simplest of all simple things. Our mentality complicates everything for us. There are no problems in life for those who quit brooding over the complicated oddities we ourselves spin in life by our abortive attempts at explanations. Those who lead simple and spontaneous lives, heedlessly just commit themselves to life find that life solves their problems for them, if they just remove the obstacles to their contact with unity. We have woven ourselves the veil that conceals from us the wondrous goodness and beauty, truth and splendour of life. There is nothing that can separate us from unity.

¹¹The inexhaustible powers of unity act in everything. When we let unity act through our reason, then we call it genius; when it acts through our life of action it becomes goodness; through our emotional life it becomes love. When living below our true level, we live in the subconscious and allow the ignorance of the past to blind us and its impotence to paralyse us.

¹²Sometimes we meet beings who appear to us as messengers from that world of unity which we instinctively suspect exists. In their presence we are liberated from the veil and are allowed to gaze into the world of unity momentarily. We sense that they possess everything thanks to their conscious participation of unity, in which all perfections are the common property of all. We have all asked in astonishment, when we have heard of them, whence they draw that miraculous power, which, like a magic wand, transforms everything it touches on. In those beings' freedom from everything that fetters us, we experience, even but for the moment we are together with them, that which we have always unconsciously yearned to possess. We are transported to the world of wisdom and bliss. When these vibrations have volatilized and the veil is once more cast over, we yet have the enduring certainty that we have beheld that reality which we all shall call our own some time.

6.4 We Are All Perfect, Everybody on His Level

¹We are all out on an "endless" voyage of discovery through the cosmic worlds. We discover them by incorporating them into our consciousness. When through that expansion of consciousness we have reached the highest cosmic world, which embraces and penetrates the entire universe, then our self has identified itself with the whole cosmos, and thereby it has itself become the cosmos.

²The individual's consciousness expansion brings about, subjectively, ever greater knowledge of reality (every fact we incorporate with our consciousness means a minimal expansion); objectively, incorporation into our own consciousness of the consciousness of ever more monads in ever more kingdoms, ever more worlds; as well as increased potency of consciousness activity; that is, the ability to utilize more and more of the omnipotent, dynamic energy of the universe.

³The individual monad ascends from the mineral kingdom through kingdom after kingdom, world after world. In each kingdom we pass upwards through a great number of developmental levels.

⁴The satanic doctrine saying that man is innately, incurably evil, has counteracted the work for self-realization to an unbelievable degree. It has poisoned people's entire lives by being engrafted early in childhood and has thus become an ineradicable feeling of eternal damnation and torture. There is no sin. There are no accusers and judges in respect of life but satanists and moralists.

⁵There is a law governing sowing and reaping. Everything "good" and "evil" we do, every attractive, positive, loving – and every repulsive, negative, uncharitable – thought we have thought, feeling we have nourished, word we have spoken, deed we have done, everything is returned to us, in this or in a future life, with the same effect. There is no escaping, because no god can change a law of life.

⁶Mankind, poisoned by morality, is no enemy of knowledge, though certainly an enemy of the knowledge of life. People do not object listening to noble sayings. But when it comes to themselves and those closest to them, when friends and relatives will earnestly try to live the sayings, then they are upset. Then "that fellow" has turned cranky, thinks he is somebody, a better man or woman than the rest of us. Then they bring up all the mistakes "that fellow" has made, all the so-called faults and failings that gossip has managed to find and malice has been able to invent. At best they say "that fellow", who has been such a wordly-minded person, makes himself out to be better than us, who have been so moral (have managed to keep appearances up so well).

⁷Against all those attacks, hostile to life, which are directed at anybody who makes attempts at self-realization, the knowledge of life asserts that "when a man begins to think, he ceases to be profane; when he begins to study, he ceases to be vulgar; when he tries to acquire self-control, he ceases to be depraved; when he begins to act with uprightness, he ceases to be corrupt," when he lives in order to help and serve, then he has reached man's highest stage. He will never need any forgiveness by a jealous, wrathful, vengeful god for the fact that he has attained where he is standing, and has left behind him all the things that are now below him.

6.5 Knowledge and Instinct

¹Absolute knowledge is omniscience. We are omniscient when we know about all the laws and have the facts that are necessary to understand those laws in every world.

²Knowledge is subjective to all who have not acquired objective consciousness.

³The monad cannot forget anything. It can never again lose what it has itself acquired by working up its experiences of life, even though this becomes latent for lack of a renewed contact with the analogous reality, or idea.

⁴In the three lowest cosmic worlds, it is possible for the monad to lose its knowledge for a long or short time, since its continuity of consciousness can be lost, and so its knowledge becomes latent and cannot be remembered anew but through a new contact with similar things.

⁵Platon enounced an esoteric axiom, asserting that all knowledge is latent and is resuscitated by similar experiences (vibrations).

⁶Every monad must by itself acquire everything that is necessary to its development, knowledge of reality and life, qualities and abilities. The monad receives advance knowledge from beings in higher worlds, insofar as this is necessary to its orientation in life. The knowledge can never become lost even in the lowest worlds.

⁷Those who have reached the causal stage and have acquired objective causal vision are able to study objectively the physical, emotional, and mental worlds, and describe everything in those worlds with scientific accuracy.

⁸Nature in its entirety is subject to law. The researcher seeks for the laws and finds them. Without objective vision extending far beyond the normal, he will hardly have a chance of finding other laws than mechanical laws of nature, not the final or dynamic laws. When we have entered into unity, we shall find what we seek in the omniscience of life.

⁹Four instincts lead the seeker aright until he has entered into unity: the instincts of life, of reality, of right, and of logic. The higher the level of development, the more reliable these instincts are.

¹⁰We need certainty to be able to live and act. Without certainty we are passive tools, victims of those who are bold enough to dictate their laws to us.

¹¹Common sense is the result of self-acquired experience of life. It affords certainty. If, believing blindly, we accept the opinions of others without checking them, then we lose the ability to orient ourselves and we hinder the development of our common sense. Whatever we have not examined or experienced will be a weak spot in us.

¹²The instinct of logic is the ability to survey quickly and to co-ordinate facts correctly in the domain of a given subject.

¹³The instinct of right, or of law, is the most valuable of the four instincts. It develops partly from the instinct of logic (and then it is called conscience), being a logical reaction to the failure of observing taboos, partly from the experiences of painful violations of rights. From this arises the sense of right, which is gradually educated into uprightness (right, unselfish, impersonal judgement), righteousness (right impersonal action), and instinct of law. Those who approach the stage of ideality are well on their way to personify the law. The instinct of law is the most reliable pathfinder in the jungle of lawlessness. Without it, we shall remain ignorant, disoriented, and lawless.

¹⁴A truth that finds no response in the individual is no truth for him. He would destroy his instinct of truth by accepting it.

6.6 Life Task and Guidance

¹Nobody's existence is unimportant. We are all instruments of the divine, whether we know of it or not. Anybody who voluntarily offers himself as an instrument does the best and most he can and sows the best sowing possible.

²"The universal soul" knows what instruments it needs. We need not worry about its purpose with us, what we shall do or what will become of us. We are guided by our divinity, if we listen to the voice of the silence and obey its prompting, if we prove faithful to the ideals we can discover. Life reveals our task to us. The efforts of our worry make us more and more confused. In states of worry we do not discover those conditions which harmonize with our being. Our natural instinct of life leads us aright. Our interests show us in which direction our aptitude is to be found.

³Every individual has a task that awaits its fulfilment. It is determined by the sum total of his being, by the manner in which the world consciousness can find expression in him and in nobody else. There is no competition, because individual character, being unique, performs a work that nobody else would be able to do. Man's true mission is the one in which he can be absorbed with true dedication.

⁴The genius of man shows in his particular sensitivity, understanding, selective tendency. It unites him with everything that is kindred to his being. Our being sees always right. What man does, that he owns. Everybody finds what belongs to him. What our heart considers great is great. This makes the bounties of happiness exhaustless. He has an indisputable right to everything that is in harmony with his aptitude and character. Everywhere he can take what belongs to his spiritual sphere, and nothing can prevent his receiving that of which he is the spiritual owner. A secret he can claim as his can but vainly be withheld from him. It reveals itself.

⁵Everything in life bears its witness. Anyone who acts shows his nature. Anyone who is sitting still or sleeping betrays his. Many people consider they have said nothing when they have been quiet. But their silence was a loud answer. What a man is speaks out so loudly that you do not hear what he says.

6.7 Genius and the Science of Levels

¹Man sees just what he already knows, and is wholly familiar just with what he has done himself. He cannot acquire anything more than what he is himself. What he, when emancipated from moral clichés, calls good or evil, depends on his level of development.

²There are many kinds of genius, there are geniuses at all but every stage of development, depending on how many incarnations the individual has used for his specialization. The higher the level that the genius has reached, the nearer to unity he has attained, the more clearly he realizes his dependence on the higher life. His dedication to his task results in humility. The genius knows that he has done his work with a sense that “in any case I did not do this”. If he senses his community with those who exist in unity, then he puts his ornaments aside and becomes genuine, simple, and spontaneous. Self-assertion would prevent his performing at his highest.

³The problems that occupy mankind are chiefly problems of fictions and illusions. We construct lots of them in order to occupy our restless reflection, which can never get enough stuff to work on and which, for want of sensible things, occupies itself with worthless trifles and futile unessentials. Lots of such childish things we foist off on generation after generation, just because they were said once in the past. Those who find thinking a difficult procedure gratefully accept that piffle in order to avoid thinking. We fill our consciousness, and thereby our invaluable memory, with sheer drivel, although there exists so much to take in that is of irreplaceable importance. If we did not waste time “killing” it, but instead took to exploring reality and life, applying the knowledge in a sensible way, then we could easily halve the number of incarnations. We still have enormously much left undone before we have acquired all insight and understanding, all qualities and abilities, all that can be learnt in the human kingdom. At school we learn such things as we hasten to forget after leaving school. We do not have the instinct of the child for what he will need to learn and what he has incarnated to pick up.

⁴The bestsellers of today, which enthuse people and are hailed as masterpieces, tomorrow end up in the waste-paper basket. What our contemporaries praise is not worth its cost of printing. The true genius writes because he has to, not in order to earn money. Often he does not suspect his greatness. Centuries can be needed to bring this into light. Anyone who writes for himself, writes for an undying circle of readers. At any given time there are hardly more than a dozen people who read and understand Platon, never many enough to justify the costs of a new edition of his works. And yet they are at the disposal of each new generation.

6.8 The Life of Unity

¹The riddle of man is remarkably easy to solve if he is but true to the highest things within him. His inmost nature is one with the boundless life and its powers. By his living with this in his consciousness, the divine gets an opportunity to reveal and realize itself. Occasionally we meet in history somebody who has lived in conscious rapport with unity from early childhood. The new thing with Christ's message was that he declared openly what until then had been communicated just to the elect few in the inner sanctum of the temples.

²All life is divine and makes up a living unity. The kingdom of god is within man. The only thing the individual need do to live in community with the divine is to consciously link up with unity. Thousands of people in history witness that such a life is possible. If man holds to this thought and makes the sense of the unity of everything always fill his being, then he penetrates ever deeper into community. The so-called fall of man is that he steps out of unity and thinks that he can live outside it. His so-called salvation is that he gives up his isolation, returns to his father's house and links up with unity again.

³With unity before his eyes as his norm and guide, he spontaneously comes into right relations with all living beings. There is but one way for the individual as well as for mankind to solve all their problems, and that is the will to unity. There is but one true religion, the one which says that we are all united in the all-embracing unity of life. Those who had their eyes opened to this one true view of life were called the "children of god", newcomers into the kingdom of god, longing to come of age soon. The divine life surrounds us and waits but that we set aside whatever prevents the divine powers from working in us. There is in our inner being a sanctuary of quietude and silence, whenever we draw the veil aside and enter into it.

⁴All life is divine and a unity. It is only in man, however, that this fact can become an insight and be realized purposefully. All people seek happiness. They seek it everywhere but find it only for short moments, until they learn from their experiences of life that enduring happiness is found only in unity, that all living beings make up one all-embracing brotherhood. What we call evil is evil since it is separated from unity. It ceases to be evil when it has fulfilled its purpose to teach us the necessary understanding that unity alone is good. For anyone who has entered into unity there is no longer any evil, no fear or anxiety, no doubt, uncertainty, or darkness. He is living in the present, not in the future or the past. Living in the present we know how we shall act.

⁵Anyone who has entered into unity and has remained in this living perception of unity has no longer any sense of opposition. The individual has no other wishes than that the divine shall be realized. But he is also conscious that, as for himself, he must do everything that is due to him in order that the divine be manifested. As soon as the divine is living in the individual's consciousness, he enters the service of the divine life. Only when all are united in the common aspiration to unity will the meaning of life be realized.

⁶The life of unity, such as it reveals itself in the intensity of divine love, fills man with joy. He forgets himself in helping others to find the same everlasting happiness. Divine love is the mightiest driving force of life. It is in harmony with all the powers of life and attracts all other powers to itself. Sincerity is the best way of cultivating happiness, of forgetting all egoistic wishes, of spontaneously coming into the simple, direct, and therefore right attitude to everything in life.

6.9 The Positive and the Negative Attitude to Life

¹A characteristic of the American philosophy of life is its emancipated, sensible conception of right. Abandoning traditional, often incomprehensible, irrational moralisms and taboos as being hostile to life, they have started from an overall view of existence which is entirely defined by its practicality in life. The terms "good" and "evil", which are misleading on account of abuse, vague, confusing through arbitrary legislation, misleading due to customs

and manners, have been replaced; the new terms being the “positive” and “negative” attitude to life.

²The positive attitude tells us what is sensible and leads to happiness, what is in accordance with the laws of life, what is of advantage to mankind and its development and thus purposeful; the negative attitude, what is irrational or hostile to life. The positive attitude tells us what should be thought, felt, said, or done by anyone who wishes to reach higher stages of development; the negative attitude, what should be avoided by those who wish to lead sensible lives.

³This philosophy of life does not need to prove that its attitude is rational. That can be ascertained by everybody immediately.

⁴In the following, a brief summary of the essentials of this life view is attempted. Then anyone is to decide for himself whether these claims are justified or not.

⁵Our attitude to life and everything we meet with in life is either positive or negative.

⁶The positive attitude includes everything that promotes unity, development, and self-realization; everything which enables us to reach higher levels, widens our understanding of life, strengthens our trust in life and trust in ourselves.

⁷The positive includes everything attractive, everything which helps us to discover the true, the right, the beautiful, everything which strengthens optimism, courage, confidence, energy, endurance, purposefulness, everything that counteracts suffering.

⁸The positive includes everything that makes us glad and happy, content with ourselves and with others, everything that proves right and good, everything that increases our courage and will to live.

⁹The negative attitude to life includes everything that counteracts unity, development, and self-realization. Actually, everything has been said by this. Because that is negative which does not bring us nearer to unity, which prevents us reaching higher levels or acquiring qualities that are necessary in life.

¹⁰During thousands of years mankind has been fed with religio-moral ideas of sin, guilt, and shame which are thoroughly hostile to life and negative. Mankind has been taught to see everything the negative way, to view everything as faults, failings, and imperfections; all of which increases the hatred of life and has brought mankind to the verge of destruction, has deprived the individual of his divine self-reliance, and hindered him in his work for becoming a better man.

¹¹The negative includes everything hostile to life, repulsive, everything that makes us unhappy, deprives us of our trust in life, our courage, confidence, trust in our victory.

¹²The negative includes resignation, pessimism, and misanthropy, which are the negative view of existence taken by the ignorance of life and the repulsive basic tendency. It poisons our consciousness, breeds despair and hopelessness, makes everything heavy and meaningless, prevents us from meeting our reverses and disappointments of life in the right way.

¹³The negative includes all suffering. We have incurred it through our negative attitude in lives past. Everything evil that we meet with is our own work. Nothing can befall us which we have not deserved. Through suffering we learn eventually, after thousands of lives, to avoid everything negative, everything that can make others suffer.

¹⁴The negative includes the hatred of life, our repulsive attitude to life and everything in life. Everything which is not love is hatred. The manifestations of hatred in life are our negative emotions.

¹⁵The negative includes everything that is below the level which the individual has attained, all egoism and egotism, everything that makes life ugly, base, small, petty, mean, everything that stunts, paralyzes, poisons our lives.

¹⁶The negative includes being vulnerable. At lower stages everybody speaks ill of everybody else. Gossip and slander, which nobody escapes, are expressions of the universal hatred of life. To be dependent on what other people think, believe, and say about everybody is to renounce those rights which the law of freedom grants to all and which are necessary conditions of self-reliance and self-realization. To pay undue regard to other peoples' views on what you should say or do is to be a slave to public opinion, itself hostile to life, is to submit to all manner of arbitrary conventions, is cowardice. Children who have been brought up in that spirit easily become timid, diffident, inhibited, and frequently unfit for any work among people later in life.

¹⁷The negative includes the critical attitude that just seeks out faults and failings everywhere, that criticizes, grouses, complains about everything.

6.10 How Our Attitude to Life Forms Our Destiny

¹Our destiny falls under the law of destiny, which determines, among other things, how our attitude to life relates to the laws of life. Destiny is the result of all acts of consciousness in present and in past incarnations.

²Ever since our monad acquired its own soul (its causal envelope) and in so doing left the animal kingdom definitely, and until it enters into the kingdom of supermen, it will incarnate as a man in order to learn everything that can be learnt in the human kingdom.

³As a man's physical existence can be divided into days and years, so his sojourn in the human kingdom is divided into incarnations and series of incarnations. An incarnation can be said to correspond to a day. The future has an unbroken connection with the present as the present has with the past.

⁴In past incarnations we have by our acts of consciousness largely determined our future destiny for several lives to come. What we have sown but have not reaped we must reap in the future. It is part of the "ways prepared" by ourselves, our destiny.

⁵The destiny of the individual lies in the necessity of circumstances combined with his consciousness emancipation. Even his prospect of emancipation is determined by reaping in most cases.

⁶Qualities and abilities acquired and reaping apportioned manifest themselves in circumstances and in our attitude to life. Our freedom appears in our possibilities to acquire both outer and inner conditions through energy and purposeful work.

⁷Opposite wishes neutralize each other. Occasional wishes or weak wishes, or such wishes as counteract earlier wishes or our very attitude to life, are powerless. "Good luck" is a combination of unshakable purpose, assiduous effort, thorough preparation in previous lives or in this life. Sooner or later we are given what we have lived for, as a gift or in some other way. Often the result lies within reach but cannot be achieved, because we give up, do not hold out, allow ourselves to be cast down by setbacks, do not stand up again each time we have been defeated.

⁸The more unitary our attitude to life, the clearer our thought, the more intense our desire, the more quickly the result will be visible. If we can concentrate all our powers and live but for one desire without hesitation, then we will also reach our goal in most cases.

⁹In a similar way we can change a destiny that is otherwise unchangeable. This is true especially if we change our attitude to life radically and thereby introduce energy factors that are incomparably more powerful than previous ones.

¹⁰An example will clarify how the individual can reach his goal. In several incarnations he has desired to be rich; he has worked for it and gained ever greater affluence in life after life, thereby developing ever greater capacity to do business, until he has become a genius of finance. In some one life he realizes his desire to become immensely rich. He is born with all his acquired abilities concentrated, with all the necessary conditions under such circumstances

that all the requisite latent qualities are actualized. If he has a good reaping, he receives wealth, or the prospect of acquiring it easily, as a gift. If previously he has not been very particular about the choice of means, then he will get the opportunity to acquire his wealth unlawfully. He is looked upon as a favourite of Fortune, one having fabulous luck in life. According to the reaping he has brought over, he reaches his goal in a relatively easy or difficult manner. Often he will get an opportunity to perfect certain pertaining qualities one hundred per cent, and this spells hard work. Often the reaping is such that he must spend his childhood and young days in hard circumstances. Then even more energy and endurance are required. He will reach his goal, however, and become a prince in the world of finance. If he will find happiness in it is quite another thing, however.

¹¹Everybody is the architect of his own fortune or misfortune. We have made ourselves what we are. We shall be what we make ourselves. Everything that happens to us is our own doing. Nothing can befall us which we have not deserved. We attract powers, influences, people according to the thoughts and desires we cherish. We transform ourselves into likeness to the thoughts we think.

¹²To understand how our attitude to life forms our destiny through all our incarnations, we must know about the effects of our consciousness manifestations.

¹³With our thoughts we build our aptitudes, our nature; with our motives, our character (the sum-total of all our qualities). It depends on our motives whether we shall be happy or unhappy in the future.

¹⁴With our desires and wishes we provide possibilities and opportunities of satisfying them.

¹⁵With our actions we shape our external conditions, environment, circumstances, etc. Our organism is the result of actions (benevolent or cruel) that can find organic expression (beauty or defects). Besides, we have the gene substance of the parents we should have, according to the law of reaping.

¹⁶Thought is the mightiest factor of destiny. In most cases, thought is the origin of all other consciousness manifestations, and is continually changing our states of consciousness.

¹⁷Everything we think takes shape sooner or later. The will acts through consciousness. Energy follows thought. What we think we become. Those who think of a certain quality regularly will soon find it in their spontaneous thought and action.

¹⁸Every thought has its effect and makes its contribution, positively or negatively. Also the powers that rush down from higher worlds follow the paths of our thoughts, reaching us through our unconscious. The sum of forces, the sum-total of every particular thought or emotion determines the effect; the basic attitude gives the direction, the result.

¹⁹With our thought we master our circumstances instead of their mastering us. Thought is at the bottom of success and failure. Thought builds up and thought pulls down. Everything is prepared in man's thought: health, happiness, success, wealth.

²⁰Everything we fix our imagination on, strongly and persistently, we build into our future lives. The power resources of our consciousness are inexhaustible and are utilized through resolution, certainty, consistency, persistence, constancy, perseverance, and intensity. Just longing for it is not enough, but our desire must be alive, in our thought and feeling, to our inner vision day and night.

²¹With our imagination we can make our attitude positive or negative, we can make life beautiful or ugly, rich or poor, a heaven or a hell. Anyone who just looks to the positive things in life, in himself or in others, makes the very best of his life. Imagination, the power to create, is mightier than that which ignorance calls "the will". Most people use their imagination in the worst way.

²²For anything to become an emotion, a word, an action, a habit, it must first have been a thought. As we have acquired habits by our thought, so we can change our habits by our thought. By acquiring new habits of thought, we change our attitude to life and, thereby, our

entire life. There is no quality which we cannot acquire by thinking methodically. By systematically holding in our consciousness what we desire, we finally acquire it.

²³As does thought, desire also attracts its object, drawing us to it. Persistent wish brings about its own fulfilment. Our desires are not under the control of our reason or “will”. They are determined for the most part by qualities acquired previously. And we can alter them if we work for it.

²⁴Our thoughts and desires become actions whenever they are directed outwards. Thought, incited by desire, plans the action. Desire eventually becomes the power that is directed to execute it. Through desire action first takes shape in the emotional consciousness. Then action follows automatically when the opportunity is offered. Often desire is not even necessary. If an action has been prepared in imagination long enough, it will be released automatically at a favourable opportunity. Many people have committed crimes thoughtlessly, unintentionally, having long been playing with their possibility.

²⁵A man’s attitude to life surrounds him with a certain atmosphere, depending on the constant vibrations of his mental and emotional habits. These vibrations are received by others and evoke similar ones in them. The result is that they often think of us what we think of them, unless there is a great difference in levels and the basic tendencies differ.

²⁶We always influence our environment by our thoughts. We cannot always help other people by actions. But we can always help everybody by our thoughts. If we are positive we communicate joy, courage to live, harmony. If we are negative we spread discomfort around us. We can by one evil thought incite others to commit crimes. If anyone is in such an unstable frame of mind that an impulse from without can release a planned action, then our thought can be decisive of an action, the effects of which may extend over several lives. We are responsible for them accordingly.

²⁷We are born with a certain character, acquired during thousands of incarnations. Of course, it will not be changed just because we get a new life view. An entire life, often many lives, are necessary to make a total change.

²⁸All consciousness manifestations are either positive or negative and reinforce either attitude. We strengthen anything we contemplate, anything we attend to. By cultivating either tendency, by living in the pertaining states of mind, we automatically acquire the corresponding qualities. If we wish to work for our freedom, then we shall exercise the control of our consciousness and learn how to decide the content of our consciousness.

²⁹We do not get more out of life than what we demand of ourselves. The more we demand, the more life will give.

6.11 The Importance of the Positive Attitude to Life

¹The positive attitude to life is both a condition and a result of the work for self-realization. It comes originally from, and aims ultimately at, unity.

²The positive attitude is a necessary consequence of trust in life and trust in self.

³The esoteric knowledge gives us the firm conviction that:

everything is divine

all life makes up a unity

life is formed, developed, and re-formed by divine beings in accordance with laws of nature and laws of life that are eternally immutable

everything is planned so as to serve development, self-realization, and unity

everything is planned for the best

life is happiness and everything will be well in the end

life is bliss in the mental and all higher worlds, only in the two lowest worlds (the physical and emotional) is suffering possible

our happiness depends on ourselves

there cannot be any injustice
good will finally overcome
evil must serve good
we serve life best by being instruments of the godhead of higher worlds
light and power pour down to us through our unconscious from the worlds of unity.

⁴Trust in life is the prerequisite of trust in self. The basis of trust in self is the firm conviction that:

every primordial atom is an immortal monad, which by the end of the cosmic process of manifestation will have reached the highest stage of divinity

every monad develops through all the kingdoms of nature from the mineral kingdom to the highest cosmic kingdom

we incarnate as men until we have learned everything we can learn as men

every individual (monad) has an inalienable right to life, freedom, and happiness within the limits of everybody's equal right.

⁵That trust in self which does not let itself be subdued makes the individual the master of his own destiny, whatever happens. Without trust in self nothing of any importance is achieved. Nobody will be great without thinking highly of his indwelling possibilities.

⁶With a positive attitude to life we live smilingly, happily, confident of our victory, we are in harmony with the laws of life, we can make use of the opportunities of life in the best way, we can open up all the channels to our unconscious sources of light and power, we can liberate ourselves from negative complexes, hostile to life, that we have been inoculated with.

⁷A positive attitude to life will encourage, stimulate, elevate, strengthen us. It is the secret behind health, success, happiness. The positive is stronger than the negative. Anyone who is positive will not be influenced by the negativisms of other people.

⁸Anyone who lives positively, thereby serves development and can never more be put by destiny into insuperable difficulties, even though the stress can come near the breaking-point many times and situations can seem hopeless. Everything heavy and difficult has the purpose of making us stronger, teaching us to use our thinking so that we can overcome our repulsive emotionality by the power of our mentality.

⁹A positive attitude to life attracts us to what we aspire at and what we need in order to reach our goal. It makes life incomparably easier to live.

¹⁰Good resolutions will not be enough to form positive complexes opposite to the dominant negative ones. Persistent work and daily contemplation are necessary. Especially anyone who has imbibed pessimism and nihilism (from the Latin word for 'nothing': the opinion saying that no values are worth having), thereby has laid the basis of negative emotional and mental habits that are hostile to life and can only be cured by a radical change of one's attitude to life.

6.12 How We Become Fit for Life

¹A positive attitude to life makes us youthful, healthy, strong, cheerful, happy. The greater enthusiasm we can mobilize, the sooner we reach what we strive for. Without a firm resolution, decisions are practically worthless. We must work on our positive complexes daily, so that they feed our waking consciousness with invigorating impulses.

²What we think of ourselves, that we become; whether it be our health, ability, future. Those who dream of, live for, are obsessed by, the thought of an ideal will also realize it. Persistence and intensity must yield results.

³With a positive attitude to life we can lose everything today and start afresh tomorrow, as certain of our victory as ever. We learn from every mistake. Difficulties, adversities, suffering make us stronger if we take them in the right way. They help us to be increasingly independent of all externals and increasingly confident of the powers there are in our

unconscious. There is no insurance against misfortunes. But a positive attitude to life gives us the guarantee that we can take them with calm confidence.

⁴In times of doubt, insecurity, uncertainty, despondency and darkness, argumentation and brooding increase the existing uncertainty, perplexity, disorientation. The best thing is to relax resolutely, to refuse to pay any attention to those things even for a second, to occupy yourself with some sport, athletics, hobby, or be absorbed in devout meditation.

⁵We do not get more out of life than what we demand of it in our imagination. A positive attitude will provide us with constantly fresh opportunities, open up doors, find ways out, increase our capability many times over. Every wish brings us nearer the thing wished for.

6.13 How We Make Our Lives Happy

¹We can be happy only if we have a positive attitude to life. If we have that attitude our lives will be rich. Being happy we make ourselves enormously easier to live with for those around us. Joy vitalizes, dispels sorrows and worries, affords a richer personal life, a greater fitness for life. With a happy, cheerful, dashing, vigorous mind we make life more joyous and the world better.

²True happiness is independent of externals. Circumstances do not make us unhappy, but rather our negative, wrong way of taking them. If we are not happy, then it depends on ourselves and on the fact that we relapse into the mental and emotional habits of our negative complexes. We can acquire the ability to be happy in spite of everything if we work for it vigorously. The slave and cripple, Epiktetos, was happy in spite of poverty, sickness, maltreatment, because he would not allow any other feelings than the positive ones to exist in his consciousness.

³We acquire happiness by making our powers of attraction strive for unity, by living positively, forgetting ourselves, making other people happy.

⁴If we look upon mistakes as necessary experiences, regard failures and reverses as necessary lessons, valuable opportunities of acquiring positive qualities, then we convert illusions into wisdom in the most gentle way.

6.14 How We Become Winners

¹We are born to win and we can win. By living in the feeling of victory, we activate all our powers, we can do the incredible. We always underestimate our possibilities, being ignorant of our latent abilities. We should imagine ourselves capable of the highest things. The powers that lie dormant within us are roused to life by the firm certainty that there can be no insuperable difficulties. Everything great is unworkable in most people's eyes.

²They can never be defeated who never let themselves be broken down, never give in, never lose heart, always get on their feet again, never admit they are defeated, never for a moment doubt their success, who have decided they will win. We cannot fail, however dark the picture appears, if we stay positive and do not lose our will to win. Poverty, slander, persecution, scorn, ignominy, disgrace have no power against the will to win. We cannot lose until we have given in ourselves. We become winners by facing everything with courage, joy, and confidence.

³Efficiency presupposes a correct knowledge and an intense will. Knowledge, ability, the most brilliant talent are useless without the will to win. If we are certain of our victory, then we shall look on all difficulties as means for the development of abilities. Our errors bring us forward. Defeats are pathways to victory.

⁴Our certainty of victory gives us a wonderful stimulation and provides us with dynamic power. We master our circumstances if we rely on the exhaustless powers of our unconscious mind.

⁵Palaces on earth grow out of castles in the air.

6.15 How We Make the Best of Our Day

¹We can make every day a perfect day. Everything we experience has something to teach us. We are here in order to have experiences and to learn from them. Everything that happens to us gives us necessary lessons, and is for our own good. The place where we stand is the best place for us. The people we meet hold a task for us. Our work provides us with the right opportunity to learn what we need for the future. The better we perform it, the more valuable qualities we acquire. By being purposeful we learn the most, we reach the farthest, we succeed the best.

²By bearing our destiny as the best one for us, with willingness to learn, humility, gratitude, heroism, we have learnt one of the secrets of life: to convert everything negative into positive. Another secret is to let the powers of higher worlds stream forth unhindered through our unconscious to everything and everybody in life. Most people close their channel with their wrong attitude. The more positive we are, the more we serve life.

³Everything external is unessential. Our attitude is the only essential thing. Our greatest ability is to make others and ourselves happy, however our destiny be shaped, and without such things as others think necessary to happiness.

⁴There is no higher ideal than unity, which is the goal of everybody. The closer we come to unity, the longer we can remain in unity whenever we elevate our minds, the richer our lives become.

6.16 How We Keep Fit and Recover Our Health

¹If we live hygienically, supply our organism with the right nourishment, abstain from any poison, think positive thoughts, harbour positive feelings, then we cannot become ill.

²Anyone who refuses to be ill, overcomes most illnesses. Vitalizing cosmic energies pour through all our envelopes every moment. With a positive attitude we can utilize them in the right way and cure ourselves.

³It is very important that we always have our meals and go to sleep in positive states of mind, with feelings of joy and kindness. We charge our food with vital energy, if during our meals we think health and power into the cells of our body.

⁴Intensely positive emotions are dynamic forces that have a salutary and invigorating effect on the organism; they vanquish fatigue and vitalize all the cells of our body.

6.17 How the Negative Attitude to Life Works

¹“He knows what is good who knows what is evil.” That does not mean that we need to pay especial attention to the negative which we have sufficient experience of. But the knowledge of what is negative affords wider perspectives, makes for a more comprehensive elucidation of the antagonism and makes us see more clearly how valuable for our lives is the positive and how hostile to life is the negative.

²On account of the general negative attitude to life we have unsuspectingly imbibed negative suggestions and acquired dominant negative complexes from early childhood. Every negative thought we have thought, negative emotion we have felt, has automatically reinforced these modes of reaction and, thereby, negative tendencies and qualities. Most people are in fact negativists, so reducing their viability to but a fraction of what would have been possible otherwise.

³“We see just what we already know.” Since we notice whatever we have once learnt to discover, we see chiefly the negative, that which our conventions, our moralism hostile to life, our common distrust of others, have put into our view of life and declared to be the only right one. The positive is called foolishness if it is considered at all.

⁴We make ourselves unfit for life by remembering whatever belongs to the past, the lower which we have left below, the mistakes of our ignorance, the failures of our inability.

⁵We make ourselves unfit for life through everything that deprives us of our trust in life and trust in ourselves, everything that paralyzes our judgement and our life of action.

⁶We become ever more unfit for life, ever more dependent on other people, by seeking help outside ourselves. All the light, all the power, everything that makes us stronger, pours down to us through our own unconscious.

⁷A negative attitude to life neutralizes all our ambitions. It checks, divides, stunts, deceives us, devitalizes all vital functions, disease being the result.

⁸If our minds are filled with negations, thoughts of misfortunes, disease, poverty, adversities, grief at what cannot be changed, then we become ill, poor, helpless and subjected to misfortune, and our life will be a burden.

⁹Our negative attitude is our one real enemy. Other so-called enemies are the agents of our inevitable destiny and do us the favour of paying off our debts to life and provide us with opportunities to learn what we must learn.

¹⁰Through our negativity we increase the suffering in the world, we transfer our pernicious thoughts to others, we make life harder to live for all whom we reach by our vibrations.

6.18 How We Invite Misfortunes

¹Everything depends on our thoughts. By our negative thoughts we poison our existence, draw down misfortunes on us. Everything negative is an enemy of our happiness.

²We attract what we fear and make ourselves defenceless against the misfortunes when they come. If we think of evil, we strengthen and attract it. Be done to you as you think!

³Our thought of the possibility of failure may be sufficient to make us fail. The wavering, doubtful, spineless man is beaten beforehand on account of his irresolute attitude.

⁴The coward will not gain anything by being a coward. He will just be a still greater coward and finally the victim of what he sought to escape or what he believed he could profit by.

⁵Negative moods bring about negative effects. They call forth vexations, troubles, disappointments, hardships, and make them harder to bear. By expecting sorrows and worries we invite them.

⁶Whatever we suspect we thereby work to materialize. The more we suspect, the sooner whatever we “believed” takes shape. And it is our work.

⁷The more we try to liberate ourselves from anything we fear, the more firmly we are being bound to what we sought to escape.

⁸If we open the door to the furies of terror, they complete the destruction and make us wrecks.

6.19 How We Ruin Everything for Ourselves

¹Negative thoughts bring about negative results and have harmful effects. Many people destroy with their thoughts what they build with their work. Our negative attitude ruins everything for us, makes us more or less unfit for life.

²Adversities and misfortunes do not harm us as much as our wrong, perverse way of taking them. We are the victims of our own and other people’s negativity. Almost everything we hear and see in this still more primitive mankind is negative, hampering and hostile to life. However, we are not here to complain about them but to make us all better, not worse. If we seek out faults and failings, then we discover more and more of them, they grow bigger and bigger, and paralyse our lives more and more.

³We counteract ourselves through our lack of trust in ourselves. Nobody will trust anyone who does not trust himself. Anyone who doubts his possibilities has half failed. When underrating ourselves we prevent ourselves from being what we can be, we put limits to our

ability and instil the sense of inferiority into ourselves. If we look on ourselves as poor wretches, then we will indeed be such poor ones. If we think we are worthless, then we shall gradually lose the worth we have. Whenever we think something disparaging of ourselves, we undermine our self-confidence. If we say we cannot, then we cannot indeed.

⁴If we think of poverty, pinch and scrape, grudge anything beyond the necessary, then we shall stay in or end up in poor circumstances.

⁵If we think evil of other people, then we become subject to similar thoughts. Their unconscious records these vibrations, reacts automatically, and forgets nothing. They will become our secret enemies instinctively. Every negative thought is unfailingly sent back to us with the same effect. If we degrade others, then we shall be degraded ourselves.

⁶With every disparaging thought of ourselves or of others we strengthen our negative complexes, make ourselves powerless and defenceless, poison our minds, paralyse our striving and remain incurable.

6.20 How We Make Ourselves and Others Unhappy

¹Negativism desolates our lives, makes them dark and cold, these lives that could be made glorious and happy. Our feelings of discomfort make us judge all and everything in the negative way. We transfer these feelings of discomfort to other people, spreading discomfort around us. That is an efficient method of making ourselves and others depressed, discouraged, unhappy.

²We deprive ourselves of our courage to live and of our joy in life, we make ourselves and others unhappy, if we dwell on the inevitable unpleasant sides of life, the difficulties, reverses, sufferings which nobody escapes. Our negative imagination blackens our world, makes everything unbearable and insufferable.

³We make ourselves unhappy and increasingly sensitive to all kinds of suffering, if we cherish our worries, cultivate our sorrows, get annoyed at mistakes, misfortunes, vexations.

⁴A negativist who criticizes everything, complains about everything, is opposed to everything, makes use of everything to poison his life with.

⁵If we allow ourselves to be insulted, then we help to embitter our own lives. Other people can never harm us. They can only hurt our pride and vanity. In so doing they help us to liberate ourselves from those absurdities. The more insignificant we are in other people's eyes, the easier it is for us not to be in the way of ourselves. Those having a negative attitude to life imagine they have a duty to be offended and then they lay the blame for it on others.

⁶The perverse attitude to life traditionally nursed has imposed negative tendencies on us, which make us more or less unhappy and more or less unfit for life. These tendencies include fear, anxiety, doubt, hesitation, discontent, depression.

⁷Fear is the worst product of our imagination and is useless, since it can never help, just harm us. We cannot escape the inevitable. In any case we make it more probable by our fears. Most people fear everything in life, which is clearly seen in the general unrest. They fear the blows of fate, other people's judgement, that justice does not rule the world, that good is powerless. Fear paralyses energy, initiative, and abilities; blinds judgement; destroys our courage to live and our joy in life; kills the sense of honour. Fear impairs our health, reduces the vital functions, obstructs the renewal of body cells and tissues. One hour of fear and worry tires more than a week of hard work.

⁸There is no other ground for fear than our own imagination. Fear is overcome by trust in life, trust in self, indifference to our earthly fate. Why fear when wisdom and love rule the world and lead the destinies of nations and individuals to the foreseen happy end?

⁹“Our doubts are our traitors.” They betray us and poison our lives. They ruin what thought has built up. They make efficiency impossible. They bring about hesitancy, indecision, diffidence, inconstancy, spinelessness, cowardice, ever growing insecurity. We counteract

ourselves by despair and discouragement. Without the will to win there can be no victory but instead every prospect of our defeat. Anyone who tries to escape from troubles just increases their number and strengthens their power. It is better to fail with the will to win than with anxiety and despair. Distrust destroys what trust has built up.

¹⁰Discontent is the common fault of our times. People are discontented with everything, with themselves and with others, with their circumstances and conditions, with life itself. Discontent breeds envy and grief, the love of criticizing, and increases the prospects of our failure.

¹¹Depression, despondency, gloom, and melancholy are states of weakness that sometimes occur at fatigue, relaxation, or as consequences of negative thinking. The best thing is to react positively at once, for these emotions strengthen themselves.

¹²Anyone who wishes to be happy can be so by working for it.

6.21 How We Contract Disease

¹Seventy-five per cent of all our illnesses are the outcome of a negative attitude to life, wrong habits of thought, wrong emotional states.

²Our inner states react on our organism. The negative ones reduce our vitality, paralyse our vital functions, cause disturbances in the entire nervous system, poison our organism, and bring about weakness and insomnia. They ruin our faces, beauty, and complexion, stunt our figures, fret the cells of our organism.

³By taking our food in negative states of mind we take away our appetite, impede our digestion, and ruin our digestive system.

⁴Read this ode to the trust in life so many times over that its content becomes alive to you; not critically but mechanically until it is automatized. That will give you the positivity which this Efficient Philosophy wants to encourage. Read it just once and you have not read it.

Endnote by the Translator

To 5.5 and 7.4. I used the Greek form, Platon, instead of the Latinized one, Plato, simply because Lauryency himself was very much against Latinization of Greek names.

To 13.2. I used the Greek form, Epiktetos, instead of the Latinized one, Epictetus, for the same reason as stated above.

The above text constitutes the essay Efficient Philosophy by Henry T. Lauryency.

The essay is part of the book *Knowledge of Life Five* by Henry T. Lauryency. Translated from the Swedish by Lars Adelskogh.

Copyright © 2006 by the Henry T. Lauryency Publishing Foundation.