



The Upper Triad Material

Topical Issue 2.1

Consciousness

The Context of the Spiritual Path



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Consciousness

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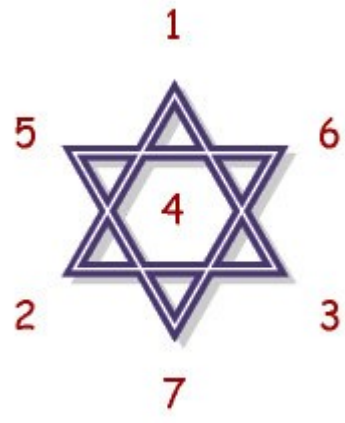
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Chapter 2.1

Consciousness



The Context of the Spiritual Path

- Consciousness is the interaction of spirit and matter, the field of experience, growth, assimilation, and expression. Consciousness is induced by virtue of underlying and/or overshadowing life (spirit). It is the medium through which the purpose of evolution is conveyed and through which evolution is accomplished.
- While spirit is (relatively ultimate) reality and while matter provides the form and opportunity for experience and expression, it is consciousness that lives through and utilizes matter, and ultimately returns to spirit. It is consciousness that embraces knowledge, transforms that knowledge into understanding, and ultimately assimilates that understanding into wisdom.

Consciousness

Consciousness is an induced quality, the intermediate aspect of the trinity, balanced between matter and spirit, and born of their interaction. More properly, consciousness begins as that interaction and develops as a consequence of that interaction. Consciousness is the quality of relationship (relatedness) and the means of equilibrium and evolution, being relatively intransient, potentially more permanent than matter but less permanent than spirit. Matter and spirit are the two extremes of consciousness, being relatively inert save for the activity of consciousness. Consciousness is relatively dynamic, though its domain covers a tremendous range of levels, types, and quality.

All matter (on any level) is infused with its spiritual counterpart (spirit) (from which matter is ultimately derived), but spirit remains a uniform (unitary), all-inclusive essence, while matter is highly diversified and differentiated. Consciousness provides relationship (communication) between matter and spirit, and for all practical purposes represents the life (spirit) aspect. By induction and infusion spirit provides the inherent life within all things, while matter simply provides the elements for the construction of (composite) forms. The life (consciousness) within each form evolves as the consciousness expands and improves in its various characteristics (quality) (its degree of refinement and degree of elevation). As consciousness is manifested on the (relatively) lower levels, the products of experience and manifestation are communicated via the more subtle aspects of consciousness to its higher counterpart. The paradox of material existence is that matter itself cannot exist without inherent consciousness, that every composite form is actually a superposition (integrated or otherwise) of various aspects of consciousness, each evolving on its own level. Consciousness can be defined as internal, self-consistent awareness on some level, having some relative quality. Atomic (and elemental) consciousness is necessarily limited in range and comprehension (compared with higher forms of consciousness), yet nonetheless a means of consequence of evolution on that level. On more human levels, consciousness is defined as the totality of conscious (and unconscious) states of an individual (or inter-related group). The waking-consciousness is normally characterized by sensation, emotion, volition,

and thinking (including perception, cognition, and comprehension). But the (human) waking-consciousness is only the current focus of consciousness, and is therefore only a small portion of the individual's consciousness. That consciousness includes many (simultaneous, transient, and/or continuous) relatively conscious and unconscious states, both subconscious (above or beyond the normal threshold of the waking-consciousness).

Through experience and training the spiritual student learns to expand the conscious awareness far beyond the ordinary human (superficial) consciousness, at will and with conscious direction, being able to deal directly with energy and consciousness, while most of humanity deal directly only with the superficial and material aspects of human experience and expression.

Overall consciousness (the normal state and quality of conscious life (as a personality)) is an indication (albeit independently non-conclusive) of relative evolutionary development (achievement). The significance of consciousness (and its quality) lies in its relationship to evolution. As consciousness is improved on individual levels, so is the group consciousness improved. Consciousness provides the only effective means of health (harmony) (peace), evolutionary development, and liberation (freedom) (perfection).

† Commentary No. 341

Vibration and Consciousness

Spirit, consciousness, and matter are actually a single essence (energy) viewed in distinctly different ways (perspective), with vibration being (in perspective) common to all. The evolution of consciousness is actually a development of the quality of consciousness, and that quality relates (in perspective) to the quality and character of the vibration associated with consciousness. Vibration can be described in terms of several attributes or characteristics, including its frequency, its phase or polarization, its amplitude, and its relative purity.

The frequency of vibration refers to the level or elevation, in temporal terms the number of cycles or oscillations per unit time, but in the frequency domain (which is an altogether different domain than that of time and/or space) there is

only a characteristic corresponding to frequency (but lacking time-dependence). In general (symbolically), the higher frequency refers to a high level of consciousness within any given plane or sub-plane of consciousness (e.g., the physical plane, the astral or emotional plane, the concrete region of the mental plane, etc.). Between each of the various planes or sub-planes is a transition called a phase change or a change in polarity (polarization). Each plane or sub-plane represents (relatively) an order of magnitude change (variation) in frequency, with minor (major) phase changes between sub-planes (planes).

Each phase change represents an inertial barrier, a distinct difference in character from one level (plane) (sub-plane) of consciousness to the next. A vibration (focus) can pass from one level to another only by changing the frequency and phase accordingly to meet the conditions of the subsequent level. Any vibration in equilibrium at some level is considered to be polarized at that level (e.g., a spiritual student may be mentally polarized, meaning the integrated waking-consciousness is stabilized on the mental plane). The amplitude of a vibration refers to its intensity or potency (magnitude), and refers to some extent to the activity of consciousness on some level. Phase changes generally occur at lower amplitudes and are relatively subtle.

Of considerable significance is the purity of vibration. Purity refers to the degree of refinement (smoothness) in vibration (e.g., relatively coarse (less pure) or relatively fine (more pure) at some given level. The purity of vibration is a measure of distortion in the frequency or amplitude components. A truly pure (steady) vibration has no distortion (instability) (perturbations) in either frequency or amplitude. The purity of vibration (and consequently, of consciousness) is a measure of harmony and relatedness (and potential integrity). Vibrations of a given frequency (or harmonic) and purity are attractive, but coarse vibrations are potentially destructive (leading to chaos (unaligned diversity)), while refined vibrations are inherently constructive (leading to integration and alignment) (harmony) (except in the sense that refined vibrations tend to destroy (shatter) (disperse) the lesser, coarse vibrations.

Any given vibration has a characteristic frequency, phase, amplitude, and purity (and other, more subtle characteristics), each of which can vary to some extent. In general, the higher frequency, lower amplitude, more pure vibrations are more

easily controlled (disciplined) and integrated into larger (greater) composite vibrations (or consciousness). Of particular significance to the evolution of consciousness is the purification (in consciousness (vibration) of each of the vehicles (physical body, astral body, concrete mind) and the elevation of the integrated personality consciousness to higher levels.

† Commentary No. 345

Quality and Consciousness

The quality of consciousness refers to its essential character or nature. In a higher sense, consciousness is quality, but in the more practical sense, quality refers to the relative purity, elevation, character, and type of consciousness. The purity of consciousness refers to the refinement or smoothness of vibration. The elevation refers to the level or position within a plane of consciousness, or for a composite (multi-planar) consciousness, to the highest level of the integrating force. The character of consciousness is a function of its relationships to the seven rays (which are seven parallel (equal but distinctly different) qualities of energy (and consciousness)). The type of consciousness refers to the type or character of the life aspect (e.g., in the case of the human being, to the soul, the personality, and the monad)).

Though the particular character of consciousness can be distinguished within the seven ray qualities (or combinations thereof) and though the particular types of consciousness can be distinguished one from another, taken together (life aspect and particular qualification) the various qualifications become interrelated. Another factor is the spectrum of seven planes of consciousness which are each also qualified distinctly by the seven rays (as are the various cyclic factors). The character and type of consciousness each involve distinctions in quality).

Of more practical significance are the relative purity and elevation in consciousness. Pure (refined) consciousness is more harmonious (stable) and is much more easily integrated and qualified than coarse consciousness. Relatively coarse consciousness (i.e., a coarse vibrational component of consciousness) is more reactive (unstable) and, being reactive, is relatively

vulnerable to external forces. Since coarse vibrations are only partially damped, an external force can usually induce a relatively large magnitude (intensity) reaction, which is relatively difficult to moderate. The reactive personality, for example, is easily excitable by external experience (astrological influence) (personal energy), while the integrated personality, being much less reactive, is more intelligently responsive to experience and self-intention. The highly qualified, integrated, and aligned personality is essentially non-reactive and highly responsive to inner direction (via the quality of the soul).

In evolutionary terms, as the overall (composite) consciousness (of some particular life-form) is increased so is the relative purity of the composite aspects also increased. Of the two aspects (purity and elevation), purity is more essential (fundamental), for an elevated consciousness without comparably sufficient refinement is relatively ineffective (transient). A relatively unevolved personality for example, may function (simultaneously) on physical, emotional, and mental levels, but since the consciousness is relatively coarse, the senses and thinking will be distorted by the personal (coarse) energy, while a relatively more evolved personality, being integrated and more refined in consciousness, may function on the same levels but with greater clarity or perception and thinking (i.e., less distorted by personal energy).

Thus greater quality of consciousness refers principally to greater refinement, integration, and elevation in consciousness, while distinctions in consciousness refer principally to the character or qualification in consciousness. The relatively primitive consciousness is largely (coarsely) qualified by one (or two) of the seven rays, while the more progressed consciousness may be effectively qualified by a larger number (or all) of the seven rays, in an integrated (harmoniously interdependent) (correlated) fashion.

Section 2.11



Aspects of Consciousness

- Consciousness varies a great deal, from the relatively inertial forms of coarse consciousness to the relatively dynamic and responsive forms of highly refined consciousness. There are many different types of consciousness, beginning with mass unconsciousness, working through various stages of relative self-consciousness, to progressive stages of group consciousness. Consciousness can be relatively (predominantly) objective or subjective (or balanced between the two aspects). Consciousness can be polarized on (at) various levels, i.e., being polarized or predominately functioning on physical, emotional, mental, or intuitive levels. Consciousness is, ultimately and predominantly, a matter of quality.

Aspects of Consciousness

There are many aspects and attributes of consciousness. Fundamentally, there are discrete (quantum) levels within levels of consciousness, seven-fold, from the most material levels of the dense physical plane to the least material levels of the highest spiritual plane, and there are degrees of quality or purity within each of those levels, while consciousness is more properly an intermediate perspective (comparable to material and spiritual perspectives). There are relationships that exist or are manifested between consciousness at various levels and extent. In order to function on some level of consciousness, one must necessarily possess or exhibit a body or vehicle of consciousness on that level. Thus forms are relatively material manifestations that serve and facilitate activity in consciousness.

From a more material perspective, consciousness is very closely related to the vibration of matter. The matter of "higher" levels or sub-levels of consciousness has a greater relative frequency or magnitude of vibration. Each level of consciousness is a dimension in the overall framework of consciousness, so that each level exhibits a distinctly different phase relationship (in this relatively material perspective). The matter of "higher" quality in consciousness has a lower degree or extent of coarseness or transverse vibration (deviation from its central frequency). In this sense, purity implies cleanness or clarity of vibration. Forms are composed of matter, being integrated or otherwise related through the force (presence) of some consciousness. Thus spirit underlies consciousness, consciousness underlies matter, and matter underlies form. However, forms are artificial, while spirit, consciousness, and matter are more fundamental (more real).

From a more spiritual perspective, consciousness is entirely a matter of quality, where refinement in consciousness at any level is a psychological product of development and experience in consciousness. And that quality is both a matter of purity and nature, relating directly to relative sympathy and collectiveness. There is a broad spectrum of types of consciousness, from mass consciousness (collective unconsciousness), through self-consciousness, to degrees and extent of group consciousness. There are various degrees of

polarization of consciousness at various levels and growth occurs substantially as consciousness is transferred (re-polarized) from one level to another (higher level). There are also more central aspects of awareness, intelligence, and realization.

The purpose of consciousness is to provide a field and framework for evolution. The field of consciousness is the background through which change (adjustment, growth, development, expansion, evolution) occurs. In this sense, the material perspective is that of the underlying relatively static material substructure for consciousness, and the spiritual perspective (proper) is that of the overshadowing and underlying reality that induces evolution in consciousness. Crisis (opportunity for adjustment leading to growth (assimilation of experience)) occurs within consciousness. Only the superficial effects are realized in matter.

Aspects of consciousness thus properly include levels of consciousness, relative coarseness in consciousness, relative collectiveness in consciousness, relative objectivity in consciousness, and polarization in consciousness (as well as various phenomena related to changes in consciousness), leading to increased or expanded awareness, associated intelligence, and ultimately realization.

† Commentary No. 50

Crisis and Consciousness

One of the primary purposes of evolution is the development and expansion of consciousness. As a spark from a great fire, the human monad (spirit) and its reflection (the soul) must be fanned into stable and progressive existence. The inherent and latent powers of the godhead are to be developed in each human life. The original unconsciousness must be developed and expanded through involution into self-consciousness; and that self-consciousness must be expanded and unfolded through evolution into super-consciousness. This development of consciousness may proceed in any one of a number of different ways, each adding its own qualities and epigenetic factors to the eventual product. One of the keynotes of the planetary evolution is crisis.

Through a nearly infinite series of crises, the consciousness is impelled to grow, develop, expand, and undergo epigenesis. Epigenesis is the process of development in new or original ways of talents which were not obviously latent in man, but are included in man's contribution to the developing God of which humanity is an integral part. The major crises in the life (not lifetime) of a human soul include the process of individualization (in which the soul individualizes and becomes self-conscious) and the successive transitions from one plane of consciousness to another. The person of Lemurian (physical) consciousness experiences a major crisis as his polarization of consciousness is transferred from the physical plane to the emotional (astral) plane. Likewise the person of Atlantean (emotional) consciousness undergoes a major crisis as he transfers his consciousness from the astral plane to the mental plane. The integration of the personality by the mind is a crisis, as is the process of alignment between the mind (personality) and the soul. The transference of consciousness from the Aryan (mental) to the buddhic (intuitional) plane (of Christ-consciousness) is also a major crisis. Each of these major crises may take many years to fulfill, and usually bridges between lifetimes.

Within the constant struggle of consciousness with objectivity are many intermediate and minor crises. Intermediate crises include the transference of consciousness from one sub-plane to another. Minor crises include the everyday tensions and pressures of experience, each of which encourages the development of consciousness. The lessons of life can be learned through observation and contemplation or through personal experience; they can be learned rapidly (in the case of the student who has taken conscious responsibility for his own evolution) or quite slowly; they can be learned easily (through awareness) or with considerable difficulty. Through tension (crisis) large or small, intense or gradual, does the impelling force of evolution work, progressively.

The role of the adversary (duality, objectivity, imperfection, limitation, materialism) is to force development (in its own way), even in the case of the gradually evolving and relatively uninspired life. At least this is true for this particular school of experience (there are other worlds and other lifewaves). Attitude toward crisis is a major determining factor for success. With awareness and cooperation (realization) the lessons of each crisis can be learned without pain and without discomfort, learned easily and rapidly.

With resistance (inertia) comes pain and difficulty, and a prolonging of the energies which produce crisis (karma). Crises and tensions are beneficial, for through these pressures come the development of consciousness (awareness), the destruction (transmutation) of glamour and illusion, the mastery of the soul over the limitations of objectivity, and the humble offerings and contributions of human development to the evolution of a greater life.

† Commentary No. 159

Privacy

Privacy is defined as the quality or state of being apart from company or observation. Privacy implies personal secrecy and seclusion. Most people may think of themselves as having complete privacy of thought and feeling; but the sense of human isolation, of independence one from another, is merely a perspective that has no real basis etherically, emotionally, or mentally. Man lives and works in a dynamic field of etheric, astral (emotional), and mental energies, most of which are quite interactive in the superphysical worlds. Thoughts and feelings are continuously being impressed upon the immediate mental and emotional environment. Consequently, there is no real privacy.

As spiritual and psychic sensitivity and understanding increase, the student may become more and more aware of the feelings and the quality of thinking of others. No attempts may be (need be) made, for the properly trained spiritual student will simply be aware of any thoughts or feelings for which such awareness is appropriate, or such awareness may be incidental. The trained esoteric student is as comfortable and capable in the mental world as most of humanity are (apparently) comfortable and capable in the physical world. To the advanced spiritual student, thoughts and feelings are very real energies to be dealt with constructively and intelligently. But before the aspirant can be trusted with such talents and capability, the motives must be purified, and a high degree of spiritual quality and self-control must be attained.

As the spiritual student progresses in self-mastery, his own thoughts and feelings become purified and well-disciplined, almost completely contained (coherent) (controlled). Without such discipline (focus), thoughts and feelings

are usually scattered indiscriminately and unconsciously. The thoughts and energies of the spiritual student should not be wasted, for with each moment comes an opportunity for useful spiritual work, and the effective application of resources and abilities for the good of humanity. Though the spiritual student may need occasional periods of solitude to place the thoughts (and aura) in order (or for serious and undisturbed contemplation), there is still no real privacy. With purified mind and emotions there is simply no basis for compromise or embarrassment; in truth is born true humility and its commensurate fearlessness and selflessness.

The ethics of privacy are actually very well-defined. The spiritual student is seriously warned against the conscious or subconscious (motivated) violation of another's privacy. Though no real privacy exists, there are, however, degrees of privacy; and the esoteric student is pledged to respect the privacy of others. The consequences of the violation of privacy, of interference in the affairs of others, are quite serious. But the esoteric student may still be well aware of the quality of the thoughts and feelings of others, even though he may have no intentions and no realization of particular thought-forms. Such awareness may come simply with the proximity (interaction) of auras.

As human evolution proceeds, everyone must eventually become accustomed to such (conscious) interaction between auras, between minds, as it is already between souls. The personality must be cultivated to accept openness and honesty, for there will someday be no real barriers between the minds and hearts of men. There may still be certain internal and external barriers or mental shields, but even those will be (are) open to view from the higher domain (and even those will pass eventually). There are no barriers between souls; there is only complete freedom (which actually replaces privacy) in open unity. May the minds of men achieve such integrity.

The Island Universal 1

Humanity and human consciousness may be considered from the perspective of the degree, extent, and quality of rapport, and the relative degree and extent of manifested separateness (separativeness). The human evolution includes a crisis of separateness in which the human being achieves self-consciousness (the illusion of independent (separate) or individual existence), progressively develops the ego (the sense of individual distinction), and eventually overcomes that ego, assimilating the accumulated experience and achieving a considerable rapport with the soul and to some extent with life universal, as the sense of separateness and individual distinction is fully transformed.

The first stage of this process is the stage (world) of mass consciousness, in which the self-conscious human being is fully immersed (engrossed) (absorbed) in the mass consciousness of humanity and largely responsive (instinctively reactive) to the mass instinctive nature (peer pressure, maya, glamour, etc.). This stage may last for many, many cycles (incarnations), even well into the mentally-polarized experience. As the individual develops through this stage, the individual gradually develops through the individuality and gradually achieves a degree of freedom from that mass consciousness. During the later cycles of this first stage, the individual begins to think for himself but is still largely qualified by the mass characteristics. Because of the alignment of the individual with the (lower) group (mass) consciousness, during this stage, a considerable (mundane) (superficial) rapport with others (within the bulk of humanity) is generally the case.

The second stage of this process is the stage of isolation or independence, in which the individual breaks loose from the confines and expectations (conformity) of the mass consciousness and lives primarily without any real rapport with others or any great absorption in mass consciousness, though such an individual would still likely be self-centered and worldly. This second stage follows a transition period of increasing independence or sense of separateness (strangeness) (estrangement). During this second stage, the individual is essentially (privately or publicly) somewhat radical (not in accordance with

cultural expectations) in thinking, feeling, and behavior. The individual becomes, in essence, an island within humanity.

From this islandic stage, the individual may proceed in any one of several directions: (1) The individual (the majority) may return to a different aspect of mass consciousness, e.g., instead of playing a passive role the individual may now play an active role in which the developed ego dominates (i.e., mass consciousness includes two factions, those who are relatively undeveloped and passive, and those who are relatively (ego) developed and active). (2) The individual (relatively few) may instead proceed to an extreme position of isolated (rogue) consciousness, living only for himself and having no potential rapport with the bulk of humanity. This is the case for the truly strange (abnormal) (independent) (wholly unresponsive) personality. (3) The individual (relatively few) may, rather, proceed to the fine line between a rapport with humanity (on the lower level (of human mass consciousness)) and a rapport with the universal life (the higher level), and (eventually) on to the third stage, the stage of the island universal.

In this third and (for humanity) final stage, the individual (spiritual student) becomes largely free from the dictates of mass consciousness, yet nonetheless remains in rapport with the deeper aspects of humanity, and, at the same time, with the universal life (the soul of all that lives).

† Commentary No. 448

The Island Universal 2

The second stage (isolation) is generally brief for those who simply allow the ego to emerge dominant and return to the mass consciousness in a more active role (joining the rapport of those who are also ego-centered (within the mass consciousness) (in contrast to the unconscious (collective) rapport of those whose egos are not yet fully developed)). Those who follow this path will eventually come again to the second stage and eventually pass on to the third.

In the (unnatural) case of those who pass on to the extreme position of rogue consciousness, the personality matrix may well have to be destroyed (or radically reconstructed) and a new one developed in order to achieve the

moderation and balance which are necessary for progress beyond the second stage (basic isolation). This involves for such an individual (soul) a considerable evolutionary set-back, but is quite rare. Nonetheless, the spiritual student who has developed a considerable strength of personality must be wary of the ego and expend a considerable effort to moderate and conquer (control) the ego, fully transforming the sense of individual potency into the even more capable (relatively humble and spiritually responsive) sense of unity with all life (and an appreciation (subordination) of the individuality in that greater context).

In the third stage (that of the island universal), a balance is necessary between the rapport with humanity, the rapport universal, and the individuality. Rather than losing the individuality entirely, the (enlightened) (third stage) individual is (has) a well-tempered personality having considerable (albeit cooperative and subordinate) strength of character, quality of consciousness, devotion to duty (the path) (service to humanity), humility, etc., as well as a mental or intuitional polarization of consciousness. The spiritual student, at this stage, is actually closer to humanity than those who are absorbed in the mass consciousness, for such a spiritual student understands and respects the mass consciousness (without being absorbed) (which serves as a basis for basic (conscious) rapport with those so absorbed) and is attuned to the higher (soul) aspects of the lifewave (e.g., its purpose, qualification, etc.).

The rapport universal qualifies the (responsive) spiritual student with considerable (higher) energies, and such a student then becomes an island of light (enlightenment) within the sea of humanity, devoted to humanity without being drawn to the grosser levels of the bulk of human personalities. The island universal is unimposing (and not normally noticeable) (unobtrusive), content simply to share whatever energies and talents are afforded to the extent of the responsiveness of those with whom he is associated in the outer world (or all, via group meditation). The island universal is neither head-centered nor heart-centered, but evenly balanced, with considerable mental (occult) talents and training (self-discipline) (self-mastery) and considerable heart quality (impersonal love) (compassion) (humility).

The role of the island universal is to encourage and qualify humanity, on practical levels, without imposition or attracting attention, remaining relatively free from glamour and illusion, not being absorbed in mundane or personal

matters (consciousness), and remaining aligned with and responsive to the higher (deeper) sources (the soul) (the esoteric group within the context of the planetary (evolutionary) scheme (plan)). The potency (significance) of the enlightened student (servant) (island universal) comes from working from within humanity, rather than from without. As part of humanity and simultaneously as part of life universal, the spiritual student is an inductive force for evolutionary progress, a stimulus and an encouragement, from within.

† Commentary No. 661

Coarseness 1

For the incarnated student seeking to live a proper spiritual life within the noise and confusion of the external, mundane world, there is a problem of relative coarseness. In this context, coarseness refers to the relatively crude matter on physical, etheric, emotional (astral), and concrete mental levels that may be incorporated into or affect the personality and/or its various vehicles of consciousness. Coarseness is a problem to the extent that it is detrimental or impedimentive to achieving or maintaining a meditative disposition (spiritual alignment) during the daily activities.

Matter is naturally or inherently coarse (of relatively coarse or inharmonious vibration) and so the matter utilized by the soul to recreate the personality (physical and etheric bodies, emotions, concrete mind) must be refined to some extent in order to be suitable for that personality (i.e., the matter available must be refined to the level achieved or earned by evolutionary and spiritual endeavor). Thus a relatively unevolved person will have (physical, etheric, astral, mental) bodies formed of rather crude matter, while a relatively highly evolved person will have personality vehicles (bodies) formed of considerably refined matter (i.e., utilizing greater preponderance of matter of the higher (or more refined) sub-planes). As a person develops or progresses (spiritually) in any incarnation, so will the relative refinement of the various personality instruments be improved, particularly as the process of refinement is intelligently and consciously (deliberately) embraced.

The problem of coarseness is compounded by both internal and external factors. Internal factors (that contribute to coarseness) include habits in thinking or feeling (or indulgence) that cause the matter of the personality (on one or more levels) to vibrate more coarsely. Examples are critical thinking, anger, resentment (and the various negative or destructive emotions), listening to coarse or loud music, smoking, allowing the physical body to remain dirty (i.e., insufficient cleaning), eating meat (fish) (fowl), etc. These habits tend to increase the coarseness of the affected bodies by replacing a measure of the material substance of the bodies by matter of lower, coarser vibration.

External or environmental factors (that contribute to coarseness) include all of the negative or detrimental environmental forces and relatively coarse matter of that environment (and the people inhabiting or functioning in that environment). Examples are living or working with or near relatively crude or coarse people, living or working in a noisy, smoky, or dirty place, being susceptible to (particular) negative or detrimental forces on etheric, astral, or concrete mental levels, etc. These (tend to) contribute to the coarseness of the affected bodies by induction, since unless otherwise qualified, each body will naturally incorporate the (relatively coarse or relatively refined) matter of the immediate environment. Being exposed to a coarse environment or coarse people (external forces) is one (potentially detrimental) matter, having disdain merely compounds the problem (i.e., consciously finding (external) coarseness to be repulsive only serves to incorporate coarse matter on astral and concrete mental levels (i.e., disdain in inherently negative)).

Thus coarseness is not a simple matter, particularly in consideration of the relatively coarse world in which we live and the relative stress and strain of living in accordance with the spiritual or subjective world of the soul while being surrounded by the noise and haste (and coarseness) of the mundane world. Since coarseness is the natural state of the unenlightened, it is only (generally) a problem for the spiritual student.

Coarseness 2

The solution (intelligent response) to the problem of coarseness involves three substantial endeavors (for the spiritual student): (1) a conscious, deliberate effort of personality purification, (2) a conscious, deliberate effort to eliminate detrimental habits, and (3) a conscious, deliberate qualification of the immediate environment and relationships.

Personality purification involves cleaning, qualifying, and uplifting the (matter of the) physical, etheric (astral), and (concrete) mental bodies (vehicles). Purification (qualification) (refinement) exercises should be performed daily (or more often) in conjunction with meditation and periodically throughout the daily activities. These exercises include bathing (daily) (for both personal, physical cleanliness and by conscious association to higher order purification), the sounding of appropriate mantras or affirmations, visualization of light energy sweeping through the various subtle bodies, etc. The elimination of detrimental habits is a straightforward matter of personal discipline as a consequence of intelligent application of the will (i.e., with honest determination, the old patterns are replaced by the new, more appropriate patterns) (these efforts are oft undermined by the independent, subtle self-centeredness of the ego, but with sufficient qualification (intention) even the process of undermining can be transformed into intelligent cooperation).

The qualification of the environment, the qualification of student's relationship to the environment, and the qualification of the student's relationships to people in the environment are all essential aspects of achieving and maintaining a refined state during incarnation. Environmental qualification is simply an extension of self-qualification, visualizing an expanse of light energy extending from the individual (light) aura to fill the immediate environment (room, building, etc.), sweeping (uplifting) all of the intervening matter with that light energy (or through more advanced occult methods) on all levels (etheric, astral, concrete mental). Once this qualified atmosphere (immediate environment) is established, then all who enter that environment will be qualified by it to some extent (depending on their own relative coarseness and responsiveness to the qualified atmosphere) (and likewise is that atmosphere qualified to some extent

by those who enter it, so that the effectiveness of a spiritual student's qualification of his environment may be limited (but nonetheless worthy of effort and continual renewal of effort (qualification) in order to maintain some appropriate balance)). The direct qualification of relationships is often necessary in order to overcome personal attachments and complications and thus should complement these other endeavors.

Any one or some of these efforts will have rather limited success, since the lack in any one will generally undermine the utility of the others. But when all of these efforts are properly undertaken, together, then the spiritual student can constructively and more effectively serve within (almost) any environment and with (almost) any circumstances. The results include improved physical, emotional, and mental health (to the extent that is karmically permitted), a greater feeling of well-being (which is important to subsequent qualifications), and greater spiritual responsiveness.

As the student becomes adept in these efforts (all of which imply need for an integrated personality), then the efforts become rather well-established along more subtle lines (and more occult means) (i.e., the efforts eventually become automatic and without need of (much) conscious attention) and the spiritual student completes the preliminary aspects of the spiritual path.



Section 2.111



Types of Consciousness

- Consciousness begins with the collective unconsciousness and is gradually developed through experience and expression, through individuality (the illusion of self-consciousness), to proper self-consciousness and group consciousness. Another dimension is the spectrum from objective consciousness to subjective consciousness, with the relatively more advanced being able to function effectively both objectively and subjectively.

Types of Consciousness

There are various types of consciousness, with two major spectra. One spectrum is the range from mass consciousness (group unconsciousness) through various degrees of self-consciousness to group consciousness in the higher sense (and ultimately to God-consciousness). Another spectrum is the range or dimension of objectivity, from relatively objective consciousness to relatively subjective consciousness.

The period of involution is marked by mass consciousness (group consciousness in the lower sense of non-self-conscious group consciousness) wherein a collective unconsciousness underlies a higher-order group consciousness. In the case of humanity (the human lifewave), for example, in involutory times, the entire race was collectively unconscious (non-self-conscious) but animated by the being-in-whom-the-human-lifewave-lives. As the race evolved in consciousness, through experience and expression (more properly through the assimilation of that experience and expression), self-consciousness was gradually induced in the majority of "people" (units of consciousness) within the lifewave and the evolutionary period was begun. Those who could not be "induced" at that time simply joined the succeeding lifewave (currently progressing through the animal kingdom).

As the race evolves further, real (true) self-consciousness will emerge as the superficial (lower) self-consciousness (waking-sleep) is transformed through realization of (unification with) the higher Self. That real Self-consciousness is the beginning of group consciousness in the higher sense of "individuals" being aware of and participating in the group collective consciousness. Eventually, even the sense of individuality will be superseded by higher group consciousness. This is not a loss of anything, but a conscious transcendence of the limits and illusions of separated consciousness. The sense of individuality will be recognized as artificial, and a higher reality will be embraced.

The range of objectivity is both a matter of relative immersion in material perspective and a matter of character and nature of focus of consciousness. The human evolution is relatively objective in the sense of being immersed in matter,

suffering the delusion of separateness, etc., while not generally being very objective in the sense of accuracy and honesty in perception and interpretation of sense impressions (which is part of the problem of immersion in matter (form) (personality) (ego)). Compared with the deva lifewave, human beings have objective consciousness. Devas have a completely different character and nature in consciousness, and view the external world subjectively, i.e., without conscious acknowledgement of external reality. By human terms, the devas appear relatively unconscious (objectively unresponsive) (asleep), but in fact, their perception is simply of a different order entirely. In deva terms, humans appear to be wholly unconscious, lacking any perception of their (deva) reality. Devas tend to avoid the clumsy, noisy human beings, without any conscious realization of avoidance (as their focus is elsewhere). Devas are more collective in consciousness and in that sense are in advance of humanity. On the other hand, humanity has developed an objectivity that the devas lack (yet do not need).

As humanity evolves it will become more subjective in consciousness without necessarily losing the ability to function objectively (in fact, as one evolves beyond a certain point along the way, one becomes more objective in objective terms and more subjective in general).

† Commentary No. 252

Mass Consciousness

In the course of human experience, the spiral circuit of evolution leads the lifewave onward and upward through alternating (parallel) cycles of progressive activity. In a sense, the spiral circuit is a progressive pendulum of activity and inactivity, of active experience (expression) and inactive experience (assimilation). In such a way has humanity progressed from unconsciousness to mass consciousness, leading ultimately through self-consciousness to a greater form of (group) consciousness (on a higher turn of the spiral).

The present state of human consciousness is predominantly mass-centered, with some degree of (limited) self-consciousness. The mass consciousness has its roots in a much earlier (major) cycle in which the present (human) lifewave experienced a consciousness analogous to the animal (mass) consciousness. In

the animal kingdom there is no individual consciousness, no self-awareness, and no independence from the influence of the group entity (the animal group-spirit). As a particular lifewave passes from the animal kingdom into the human kingdom, the group-soul is differentiated into many (localized) units of consciousness. This process is called individualization, and it leads to a limited sense of self-consciousness overshadowed by group instincts.

From the purely animal (mass) consciousness, the various lives pass collectively through various stages of increasing (apparent) independence from the lifewave, as the respective (incarnated) personalities achieve greater self-consciousness. From the predominant animal (species) consciousness, the mass consciousness is gradually transformed into predominantly racial, cultural, social, or national polarizations. But with increasing self-awareness (in the lower, personal sense), the human personality experiences the illusion of self-consciousness and independence from the mass influence.

However, the individual consciousness (in the vast majority of cases) is still very much a part of the traditional mass consciousness for patterns of thinking, ideas, glammers, etc. That traditional mass consciousness is inertial, so that habits of consciousness easily dominate. From the higher perspective, the vast majority of humanity are asleep in the massive sea of glamour and illusion, being highly responsive to mass influence while maintaining some degree of self-consciousness. This state of affairs is natural, and is being slowly transformed by higher impression. There is a considerable stimulation for increased self-consciousness and independence (freedom of thought), and many are passing into the potency of self-consciousness and self-determination (though many of these still respond to some degree unconsciously to the mass consciousness).

The objective of the spiritual student with regard to the mass consciousness is to achieve a complete freedom from mass influence while maintaining the ability to relate to humanity in an inclusive manner. Where this is achieved, the student is able to contribute to the process of constructive and progressive stimulation of the lifewave. Care must be taken to avoid (minimize) falling asleep (in the sense of being absorbed in the strictly mundane influence), and care must also be taken to temper the sense of independence with a higher group consideration. Ultimately, the individual must be assimilated into a group

consciousness where the potency of the individual is subordinated to group needs and the talents can be more effectively utilized. The passage of the spiritual student from mass consciousness to group consciousness is a relatively narrow path, a path of freedom and humility, where the personality must be carefully cultivated and properly trained as an instrument of higher (greater) impression.

† Commentary No. 256

Self-Consciousness

Self-consciousness in the ordinary (lower) sense is a state or condition in which a person is conscious of himself as an individual. This (limited) self-consciousness emerges as the soul passes from the animal kingdom into the human kingdom, through the process of individualization. By definition, animals have no self-consciousness, no awareness of individuality. Humans, by definition, do have some (limited) self-consciousness, in the sense that they are aware of themselves as separate, distinct personalities.

The problem of self-consciousness in this lower sense is that it is based entirely in the illusion of separateness and identification with the personality (which is merely an instrument of the true self (soul)). This condition, however, is necessary to the development of objective consciousness.

This necessary experience (limited self-consciousness) is well-founded in the glamour and illusion of (human) mass consciousness. But as the individual assimilates more and more of objective experience, he becomes relatively less dependent upon the massive thought-forms and glammers, and more able to think (independently) for himself. This transition is very, very gradual and serves to strengthen the independence (individuality) (potency) of personality. That illusion of independence is the major factor in human experience (development), but before true self-consciousness can be achieved, the individual must overcome the personality-centeredness and realize (and accept) the subordinate position of mind (personality) with respect to soul. Through continued experience (and assimilation), personality cultivation, and meditation, the student gradually achieves self-mastery (in the lower sense of

the mind achieving complete control of the personality) and his consciousness begins to approach the true self.

Self-consciousness in the higher sense is a product of the merger (fusion) of the soul with its (subordinate) personality instrument. As the mind of the spiritual student approaches the soul, the soul energies become more and more evident throughout the personality, until a complete transformation (reorientation) has taken place. This true self-consciousness is an awareness of the divine potency of the soul along with an identification with the soul and a conscious (subjective) application of soul energies through the personality. Such an individual (who is self-conscious) is free from the ordinary limitations of the personality, free from the imposition of the mass consciousness, and free from the illusions of personality-centered existence. But this (true) self-consciousness is not an objective consciousness; it is a potency derived of realization on subjective levels. The soul itself is a subjective entity, whose objective experience is limited to its reflection as a personality. So the higher self-consciousness remains dependent upon the concrete mind (and the objective focus) for its dealings (interaction) with the lower, human worlds.

Self-consciousness is certainly no end in itself (are ends even possible?), for it is just a stepping-stone to even greater awareness (and ultimately to the passage from consciousness to being). As this self-consciousness is developed, there is gradually achieved a group consciousness of a much higher order than that previously experienced. The soul itself is a gateway to the realization of the group unity that embraces all of life. As the student evolves further, his self-consciousness yields more and more to the subjective group consciousness, and the problems of ego are lost forever (though the individual self-consciousness remains as a potent, contributing factor in group consciousness). Self-consciousness is more than an awareness of the lower self or even of the soul presence; it is the consciousness of that higher self on its own level.

Group Consciousness 1

Group consciousness in the higher sense (in contrast with mass consciousness) can only be experienced through the soul, and consequently requires that the student achieve a considerable degree of self-consciousness (in the higher sense of soul consciousness). Due to the continuity factor in human evolution (where levels of consciousness overlap to a certain extent), the student who can achieve some degree of alignment with the overshadowing (indwelling) soul can also experience a certain degree of group consciousness.

Like soul consciousness, group consciousness is not objective; it is highly subjective and requires the involvement of both the abstract mind and the intuition (buddhi). Group consciousness is actually a function of realization (understanding) on group levels, where individual thought-forms cannot exist. In a sense, group consciousness is the exercise of a group mind (a group mental organism), except that it does not function on concrete (objective) levels. Only subjective energies (abstract mental impressions complemented with buddhi) can exist within the group consciousness. Those impressions are actually energies (ideas) unresolved into thought-forms. However, the group can precipitate concrete (massive) thought-forms on objective levels, provided the group alignment persists. The group can be highly evocative (creative) in providing needed energies for humanity. Group meditation (on concrete mental levels) provides a stepping-stone (training ground) for the participants and simultaneously provides an important link in the energy chain.

Group consciousness depends on the intelligence and individual capabilities of all the members (of the aligned group) and it depends markedly on the ability of the members to pass beyond their individualities into the deeper union of the group. It also requires a natural harmony (energy relatedness) so that the group can function as a single entity (subjectively).

The group consciousness can be characterized as an interdependence of the group mind-soul and the various (blended) participants. The participants remain independent in the sense that each member can function as a localized (individual) consciousness (on group (abstract) (soul) levels), but they are

dependent in the sense that each member contributes to the group effort and actually merges with and draws energy from it. Thus the enlightened individual who experiences group consciousness can be fully aware on both individual and group levels simultaneously; but individual thought-forms cannot be created or related to simultaneously with group consciousness, for that would quite necessarily separate the individual from the group alignment and drop the individual focus of consciousness down onto concrete mental levels (where subjective group alignment (and soul consciousness) is impossible).

With ordinary human consciousness, the individual is absorbed in mass (mundane) consciousness. With some degree of mental self-mastery, the student can intelligently interact with the mass consciousness, but with soul consciousness and group consciousness (in the higher sense), the esoteric group can evoke a considerable (constructive) energy flow with respect to the mass (human) consciousness. Group consciousness can also be extended to an alignment with greater group lives, so that even broader (universal) rapport is possible. Also, once the esoteric student has learned to achieve group alignment on subjective levels, he can guide the (resident) group potency in any meaningful (compatible) application (realization). Thus, the group energy serves as a considerable and potent reservoir that the esoteric student can draw upon and contribute to (impersonally) in spiritual efforts.

† Commentary No. 1159

Group Consciousness 2

Group consciousness in the lower sense is a matter of group unconsciousness or collective mass consciousness. Much of the conditioning of humanity as a whole (and of the human (animal) body) is conveyed through this lower group consciousness. The lower group consciousness also conveys lower instinct, which is the product of humanity having passed through the animal kingdom.

But group consciousness in the higher sense is something else altogether, a matter of all human souls being linked together as an undifferentiated whole (on some level) and distinguished as soul groups (on another, albeit somewhat lower level). In the first case, the entire race is an evolutionary entity. In the second case, each soul (ray) group embodies one or another of the seven rays for

humanity as a whole. In achieving conscious awareness of this higher group consciousness, the spiritual student first recognizes the character and quality of the soul, then that of the soul group, then that of humanity as a whole. But achieving awareness of the higher group consciousness is not the same thing as actually (consciously) participating in that consciousness. In order to achieve that (participation), the student must pass well beyond the ordinary (human) (personality) consciousness, overcoming much of the conditioning, overcoming the illusion of separateness (actually, not merely intellectually), and actually transcending the ego (personality) (intellect).

One of the attributes of (higher) group consciousness is the facility of seeing or perceiving through the eyes (senses) of other group members. This is not a willful matter, for willfulness precludes any such experience. This is also not a matter of invasion of privacy, for the experience (expression) is a matter of cooperation at the soul level, for it can only occur where two souls are linked together (more correctly, where a group of souls are linked together, by virtue of character and quality (substance) (never merely by virtue of circumstances)). And it is not a matter of individuality, for any sense of individualness precludes the experience. In fact, the facility of collective (higher) perception, consciously or unconsciously, precludes the ability to clearly distinguish between the individuals involved. There is a lower form of this, through astral and etheric means, where there is the possibility (danger) of imposition, but in the higher means there is never any merely psychic facility and not any possibility of imposition.

In another sense, the group evolves as a whole, through collective (higher group) consciousness. For one who is functioning in alignment with the soul, to perceive in the lower worlds is to afford the collective group to perceive as well (the distinction being moot). It means that the personality presence (and ego) is largely absent (non-existent) (respectively). It means that the person is so qualified (purified and refined) in the lower consciousness that there is no real (substantive) impediment to the higher consciousness functioning through the lower vehicles. In this way, the disciple is able to serve the race (humanity as a whole) and the group (at the soul level) through experience and expression. Such students evoke and convey considerable higher energies through their daily lives.

Another attribute is the loss of distinction of exactly whose experience is concerned. One naturally draws upon the experience (current and past (and even future)) of all group members and the group as a whole. Thus, at this level, it matters not that an individual lacks certain experiences or talents, when the needed experience or talent is within the group and can be evoked as needed (non-consciously).

† Commentary No. 1296

Radical Consciousness 1

Radical means relating to a fundamental and considerable (extreme) departure from the usual or traditional. But there is "ordinary" radical and there is "radical" radical.

Ordinary radical consciousness is simply consciousness that exists on the outer fringe of "normal" consciousness and relates to people who seem to be substantially different from the mainstream of human consciousness (i.e., through thinking and feeling, and through observable behavior), especially with regard to people who are attempting to influence society (the mainstream). This includes people who simply don't fit into the mainstream values or who do not care to fit into the mainstream. This (lower) form of radical consciousness is ego-based, i.e., centered in the personality, and may or may not have some value with regard to influence.

But true radical consciousness (radical radical) is something else entirely. It is not generally observable with the ordinary, superficial senses. And it is so "radical" that it is incomprehensible to those who are not there in consciousness. But it does not matter that it is incomprehensible because it is not even really observable by non-radical people. Truly radical people appear to be relatively normal, but their thinking and their feeling and their basis for action are substantially, radically different from that of the mainstream. Anyone who thinks he or she is himself or herself "radical" is merely (maybe) radical in the ordinary sense and not in the true (higher) sense. Because truly radical consciousness does not involve thinking at all. The senses, the perception, the awareness, of a truly radical person are all so different, not in some substantially incremental sense, but in some revolutionary sense. Truly

radical consciousness is not merely an extreme range of ordinary consciousness. It is radically different and simply not extensive at all.

Depending on the philosophical framework, ordinary human consciousness (and ordinary radical consciousness) is typically four-dimensional (although sometimes there are a few artificial dimensions (extensions) thrown into the mix). Things are perceived in terms of three spatial dimensions and temporally, i.e., through space-time. Thinking and feeling and behavior are all (normally) conditioned by this arguably four-dimensional focus and perspective. But truly radical consciousness is truly of a higher dimensionality, in which the four normal dimensions are simply not important in themselves. Compare ordinary human consciousness to the perceived (presumed) consciousness of an ant. The ant perceives the universe as a flat planar surface. There is distance (although there is questionably awareness of distance). There may even be a sense of time (but doubtfully so). There are simply conditioned instincts and there is extremely limited awareness of the surrounding "space" ...

Compared with the circumstances in consciousness of the typical ant, the ordinary human being has a vastly, fundamentally (radically) different perspective in consciousness. But the typical ant and the ordinary human being have similar consciousness compared to that of a truly radical human being. The perspective of the true radical is so substantially different it is as if he or she is living entirely in another realm altogether (not in the sense of being tuned out to the immediate (ordinary) world, but in the sense of perceiving the ordinary world in a substantively different manner altogether). Compared to the "world" of the true radical, the ordinary world is like a flat, colorless, piece of paper. And what transpires in that ordinary world is simply a very small piece of consciousness.

Radical Consciousness 2

This is not to say that the truly radical human being is superior to the ordinary human being, any more than the ordinary human being is superior to the ant. They are simply different. But the lessons here are that there are truly radical human beings and that they seem to live comfortably among ordinary human beings, although if one looks carefully one will notice some (relatively superficial) differences in how they express themselves in the world (less intensely, more subtly, substantially more refined in consciousness) (but these characteristics are very not sufficient to determine or define radical consciousness). In other words there are (some, few) people who are simply more refined, more subtle than most, and "some" of them (actually very, very few) are indeed radical in this higher sense.

For the true radical there is a paradox of being simultaneously en rapport with humanity in the higher sense (at the inner, higher level of the soul) and relatively isolated by the differences in consciousness (which are so radical that it is not really possible to consider the differences, because the differences are not even conceptualizable by ordinary consciousness). And yet despite the isolation in consciousness, despite the otherworldliness, despite the completely different (wholly non-rational) sense of things, there is some comfortableness in the world. It is as if ordinary people are one-dimensional and radical human beings are two dimensional. The thinking and feeling and basis for action are not extensive, these things are symbolically orthogonal, radically but immeasurably different.

The problem of the truly radical human being is that of apparent isolation. The presence of a truly radical human being is extremely rare. The coincidence of two such people is extremely extremely rare. So while there may be friends and acquaintances and relators and all (or much of) the trappings of ordinary life, there is more likely to be also a deeper sense of isolation and loneliness, even while these factors are a relatively small part of the consciousness. In order to function in this world, the radical human being must limit himself (herself) and adapt to some (modest) extent to this world. So there is potentially much of the ordinary dynamic range of ordinary human experience, albeit experienced in

some radically different ways. In other words, while there is radical existence and radical consciousness, there is also ordinary (enhanced) consciousness. And one feeds the other, to some extent.

One might be tempted to say that a genius or prodigy is a radical human being, but virtually all geniuses and prodigies are simply on the fringe of ordinary consciousness. They may perceive things substantially differently, leaping forward (or backward) to some nominally measurable extent, but they are not (generally) true radicals. While the genius is not (necessarily or generally) a true radical, the true radical is (necessarily and generally) a genius, at least in some (higher) sense. But that genius is simply not generally apparent to others. Because it is not generally something (a talent) that is generally applicable to the world or to living in the world. It is something applicable to living in some non-extensive undefinably transcendental state.

The real lesson here is simply that one must eventually open oneself to transcending this four-dimensional framework. This cannot be “accomplished” but it can be realized. Through removing all the barriers in consciousness, all the conditioning of ordinary existence, all the habits and illusions of life in the lower world. And transcending the tendency to think.

† Commentary No. 1325

Objective Consciousness

Objective consciousness is the (artificial) consciousness of the waking-mind directed outwardly to embrace the (external) world through the apprehension of sense impressions on various levels (although it can also be directed inwardly but in an objective and limiting manner). It is utilizing the lower or concrete mind in a relatively focused or narrow manner. Thus objective consciousness embraces the sensible world, primarily through the concrete mind and the faculty of thinking.

The measure of effectiveness of objective consciousness is called objectivity. If one is properly objective, one is perceiving and interpreting sense impressions in an objective or relatively unbiased (clear) manner. Thus objective thinking

involves accuracy and clarity and discrimination. It involves embracing the world as it seems to be in some objective sense. Where the mind is properly focused, there is (superficial) apprehension and understanding of the object of consciousness, based on experience and conditioning and ability. While one extreme of objective consciousness is objectivity, the other extreme is lack of objectivity or unconscious recourse to bias and prejudice, where what is observed and apprehended is actually distorted by conditioning, by desire, by expectation, by (non-genuine) feelings.

Objective consciousness on emotional and mental levels is the primary means of experience and learning in the objective world. It is objective consciousness that is first developed as one becomes aware of the objective world and begins to succumb to its illusions. At first one is not very objective, but through the course of many lives one eventually develops more and more basis and capacity and tendency for objectivity. As one becomes more objective one naturally becomes relatively head-centered. In the head-centered person, thoughts and thinking tend to dominate the waking-consciousness. This is a natural consequence of life-in-this-world, of immersion in the world, as the person in incarnation is generally unaware of the true nature of the world and is generally unaware of the true nature of oneself. Thus objective consciousness, while a necessary and helpful tool to apprehending the world and experience in the world, is also a limiting factor in consciousness, because the objective consciousness is relatively narrow-minded or limited in its ability to embrace truth.

The objective consciousness embraces whatever is apparent and not generally what is actually there. In being focused, one is closed to everything beyond the focus. Therefore objective consciousness is ultimately separative. It is sustained by the illusion of the world and the illusion of the individuality (separated self), and in turn sustains these illusions. And yet it is necessary to first develop the objective consciousness before one can learn all the lessons of this world and begin to broaden and deepen in consciousness. If one tries to broaden and deepen prematurely then one simply misses a great deal of what is afforded in the world (necessitating a return to the world, under more constrained conditions).

For the ordinary student of life in the lower worlds of physical, emotional, and concrete mental experience and expression, there is not much need to go beyond objective experience. But for the spiritual student there is a need to both develop and refine (and temper) the objective consciousness and to balance that consciousness with something more subjective. The spiritual student needs to be able to be objective, i.e., to be able to exhibit objective consciousness as needed, but without that consciousness dominating.

† Commentary No. 1335

Subjective Consciousness

Subjective consciousness is not the opposite of objective consciousness, nor the lack of objectivity. Subjective consciousness is in one sense the complement of the (artificial) objective consciousness of the waking-mind. It is in another sense the consciousness directed inwardly to embrace the (internal) world of the soul and conscience, and in yet another sense it is the individual consciousness in a broader, deeper sense than just the objective or superficial consciousness.

Subjective consciousness thus has both higher and lower aspects. In the lower sense it is the unconsciousness or subconsciousness of all of the impressions and energies for which the waking-consciousness (ego) is not really aware. In this lower sense it is still an active player as it contributes potentially substantially to the underlying motivations and qualifications of outer experience and expression, through various personality-level sensitivities (i.e., sensitivities on psychic (mainly emotional or astral) levels). In the higher sense it is the super-consciousness of the soul, or the effect of that higher consciousness on lower levels, through conscience and through other forms of higher, deeper awareness. In this higher sense, subjective consciousness is quite (w)holistic.

While the objective consciousness tends to be focused and narrow, relying on the concrete mind, the subjective consciousness tends to be much less so, relying on the abstract mind and the intuition (buddhi). While the objective consciousness separates itself from its object, the subjective consciousness embraces the object without distinguishing between the embracer and what is embraced. In subjective consciousness there is neither separateness nor any

sense of separateness. The subjective consciousness involves feeling, both on the lower (astral, emotional) level and on the higher (buddhic, intuitional) level, but does not actually involve thinking. Thinking is, in this sense, internally (and externally) disruptive and separative.

The measures of effectiveness of subjective consciousness are sensitivity and awareness. True awareness, not merely having sense impressions and interpretations of those sense impressions, is evoked by higher consciousness. Thus the spiritual student must cultivate receptivity and responsiveness to that higher quality and consciousness. Thus one must temper the objective consciousness to some extent, even while that objective consciousness is helpful, indeed necessary, to effectively embracing opportunities for experience and expression. The objective is to achieve a balance between objective and subjective capabilities, where the subjective influence comes primarily from the higher Self and qualifies whatever is obtained through the more objective senses such that one does not simply accept objective impressions as actuality, nor allow the stream of objective impressions to dominate in any sense.

Subjective consciousness is not simply a matter of feelings, for one also needs to make sense of one's (higher and lower) feelings. One needs eventually to be able to properly discriminate between the higher and lower sources and sense the higher qualities to be embraced (affording their power and influence) and the lower qualities to be (effectively) ignored (thus removing their power and influence). Thus objective consciousness, properly refined (and tamed) is an instrument for more effective subjective consciousness. This does not require thinking objectively except in the preliminary or preparatory sense, but goes beyond that to allowing the objective mind to clarify impressions without thinking (and therefore without distortion).

Section 2.112



Polarization

- Polarization of consciousness refers to the preponderant level of consciousness at which a person is focused. This varies from physical polarization to emotional polarization to mental polarization and beyond. People who are polarized at the emotional (large majority) and mental (small minority) levels are referred to as emopols and menpols, respectively. Very few people are functioning predominantly at the physical level. And very few human beings are able to function predominantly at the intuitive level (buddhi).

Polarization and Consciousness 1

Although consciousness is a continuum of states (levels), and although particular (focused) (individual) (group) consciousness varies in quality, intensity, character, etc., and although the (particular) level of consciousness may vary considerably, the consciousness of an individual (or group) is normally and naturally polarized or stabilized at some (general) level. That focus (consciousness) may fluctuate within (about) that general level according to circumstances and temperament (character), and will, generally, progress in its stabilized level, quality, etc., as the individual progresses (evolution is the evolution of consciousness within a greater consciousness). Thus, "polarization of consciousness" refers to the stabilized (generalized) level of consciousness that dominates an individual's experience and expression.

The "level" at which some particular consciousness is stabilized (polarized) is generally some sub-plane of consciousness, while the dynamic range of the level (focus) of consciousness may be limited to a few sub-planes (about the general focus) or it may be somewhat broader, extending over one or more planes of consciousness. A person who is physically polarized (whose consciousness is predominately physical (Lemurian)) may experience a range of consciousness into the emotional plane, but because of the physical predomination, there will be little if any mental activity. A person who is physically polarized is predominately reactive, physically and instinctually. Any feelings are normally heavily biased by the physical awareness (in such a case).

A person who is emotionally polarized (whose consciousness is predominately emotional (Atlantean)) will experience mostly on emotional levels, but may range (to some extent) (temporarily) to physical and/or (concrete) mental levels. Such a person will generally be reactive to emotional experience (external stimuli) but may or may not be personally (defensively) reactive. The emotionally polarized person generally has a wider, more dynamic (interactive) range of focus (of consciousness) and is therefore, generally, less stable than one who is physically or mentally polarized. In the case of an emotionally polarized individual (group), any physical or mental activity will (normally) be heavily biased by the emotional temperament (feelings and attachments (values)). In

such a case, the thinking processes will tend to be much less objective than is the case for a (properly) mentally polarized person.

A person who is mentally polarized (whose consciousness is predominately mental (Aryan)) will tend to view all experience biased by the mental character and temperament. Physical and emotional experience (character) (temperament) may provide some bias, but the mental character will dominate. Though a person may be polarized at some level of (physical) (emotional) (mental) consciousness, and though the focus of consciousness may have some (dynamic) range, the awareness that the focus of consciousness may embrace may extend much farther than that dynamic range or focus, particularly in the case of higher (mental) polarization. In the Lemurian and Atlantean consciousness, awareness is necessarily limited, while not necessarily so with Aryan consciousness.

With properly mentally polarized (balanced) consciousness, there is normally awareness on all (personality) levels, with the focus of consciousness properly stabilized at some (relatively high) level. This distinction (combination) (of a stable focus and awareness on multiple levels of consciousness) means that awareness can be an effective tool of stabilized consciousness, rather than the less coherent case of a wide dynamic range of focus (in which the focus is vulnerable or limited to awareness of the particular level).

† Commentary No. 402

Polarization and Consciousness 2

The human personality consists of three components (physical, emotional, and mental), and most people experience to some extent all three levels of consciousness. Except during the transition from one major level to another (repolarization), the consciousness will tend to be stabilized (polarized) at some particular level. As the individual progresses (evolves), that level will naturally progress (be refined, elevated, repolarized) through the various sub-planes and planes of consciousness. As the quality of consciousness is improved, so will the level of consciousness tend to be raised.

The process of repolarization in consciousness is the crisis in consciousness of transferring the focus of consciousness from one level (sub-plane) (plane) to the next higher. That process is a source of considerable (necessary) (internal) experience, and is evoked naturally by the soul in response to the individual's progress. Periodic repolarization engenders flexibility and intelligent response to circumstances and opportunities in accordance with the natural law of cyclic progression (activity, assimilation, reorientation, new (progressed) activity, etc.). Though major repolarization (between planes) is a major crisis in consciousness, so is the struggle (crisis) of integration (and the subsequent, much more subtle crisis of alignment).

The major step of actually integrating the three elements (components) of the personality requires that the person be mentally polarized. A person who is physically or emotionally polarized is incapable of integrating the personality, for only the reasonably developed mind can integrate the two lesser components within the context of the third (the mind). The integrated personality is much more stable than a personality merely polarized at some level, meaning that such a personality has a greater opportunity for assimilating experience (more directly). The polarization (stabilization) of consciousness at some level is necessary for extended (necessary) experience at that level, but that experience will not normally be assimilated in real time (or near real time) unless the personality is also properly integrated (and even then not necessarily).

Though necessarily (at least) mentally polarized, an integrated personality is not necessarily well-qualified, for an integrated personality may be polarized on some concrete mental level, without (necessarily) having a balance of head qualities (mental abilities) and heart qualities (responsiveness to the higher (soul) nature). An integrated personality, though necessary for advanced experience and proper expression, is not necessarily particularly intelligent and does not necessarily have considerable (intelligent) (coherent) awareness. Ultimately however, the evolving individual will achieve the proper balance and the proper qualifications (quality of consciousness) (intelligence) (awareness) and achieve alignment (of soul and personality). From that point onward, the individual actually becomes less mentally polarized and more aware (and more stable) on higher (intuitive) (soul) levels, so that the consciousness is no longer properly described as polarized, but as synthesized and responsive to higher (soul) qualification.

In addition to the (natural) concept of polarization (stabilization) of consciousness, there is another (unrelated) sense of polarization in consciousness. That sense is the fixation of consciousness along some particular line, on physical, emotional, and/or (concrete) mental levels. This sense of polarization (fixation) relates to bias and prejudice (intransigence) (on whatever level or levels) (ultimately to be overcome) and not to the stabilization of consciousness on some level.

† Commentary No. 611

Polarization and Consciousness 3

The evolutionary force which impels the successive repolarization (re-stabilization) of human consciousness (from physical to emotional to mental to intuitive polarization (stabilization) of consciousness (and beyond)) is bipolar in the sense that it is a dual force, each aspect of which oscillates (progressively) in a complementary manner with respect to the other aspect, the sum of the two forces in manifestation being relatively constant. One force (aspect) dominates during the stage or cycle of physical polarization (for each person and for humanity as a whole) and again during the stage of mental polarization (and again after the stage of intuitive polarization), while the other force (aspect) dominates during the stage of emotional polarization and again during the stage or cycle of intuitive polarization (and so on).

When the first (occult) (head-centered) force is ascending (descending) (in this context of polarization of consciousness), the second (mystical) (heart-centered) force is descending (ascending) (respectively) in intensity (manifestation). Major crises in consciousness (repolarization) occur when both aspects of this evolutionary force are in substantial manifestation at the same time (albeit with neither actually dominating). The human consciousness is (relatively) stable during the periods of polarization (and (relatively) unstable during the (crisis) periods of repolarization). The bulk of humanity (and humanity as a whole) are emotionally polarized, with some (relatively few) being mentally polarized (and some (very few) being intuitively polarized), and with increasing numbers of people experiencing the crisis of repolarization from emotional to mental polarization.

This evolutionary (bipolar) force is qualified by the evolutionary plan and specifically for each incarnation by the soul (which (together with the general (karmic) qualification) determines the balance of forces acting upon and within the (particular (individual) (group)) consciousness). In (current) practice, the key to polarization of consciousness is the qualified mind, and in particular, its strength and quality (development), balance relative to the emotions, and balance relative to the soul.

In principle, the key to polarization of consciousness and consciousness relative to the whole is the relationship of the (bipolar) evolutionary force to the seven planes of consciousness, the seven rays, and the seven streams of life. All of evolution can be viewed as the internal dynamics of manifestation, where a single (underlying) force is manifested in many (complementary) ways, each with respect to and with qualified regard to the underlying purpose. Thus while in practice the seven planes (etc.) may be viewed as relatively independent, in principle (actuality), the underlying evolutionary force (and its induced fabric) provides fundamental relationships which mask (indicate) the unified force of manifestation (i.e., the seven planes are the result of a single underlying force (qualification) as are the seven rays and the seven streams of life). The differential and integral perspectives are both valid, but the integral perspective is more fundamental (the seven are three and the three are one).

Thus all septenary (triple) (dual) forces are merely convenient. The one is all, and each contributes to the one. However, the mind must eventually embrace both perspectives at once, the wholeness of inclusive (integrated) vision (realization) and the diversity and relationships and details (structure) of manifestation. Only then can the mind (and soul) balance the requisite forces and achieve self-mastery.

Physical Polarization

A physically polarized person (or lifeform) is one whose consciousness is stabilized (polarized) on one or another of the physical or etheric sub-planes of consciousness and whose experience and expression is predominantly physical. Physically polarized people may experience a range of consciousness into the emotional or astral plane, but because of the physical predomination, the emotional experience will be relatively dull and there will be little if any mental activity. A person who is physically polarized is predominately reactive, physically and instinctually. Any feelings are normally heavily biased (and subdued) by the physical awareness (inertia) (in such a case).

Physically polarized consciousness is sometimes referred to as Lemurian because the Lemurian root-race was primarily physically polarized. However, the Lemurian experience was more properly the crisis of transference of consciousness from the physical plane to the emotional plane (at least for the pioneers of the race), and therefore the Lemurian experience was largely a matter of developing the capabilities of physical and emotional experience and expression. Thus the root-races prior to the Lemurian experience (i.e., the Polarian and Hyperborean root-races) were more properly physically polarized. Of course, someone who is physically polarized is not (really) self-conscious, for there is little if any conscious awareness. Physical polarization implies the greatest (deepest) absorption in matter (material existence) and consequently the greatest (longest) timescales for experience (development) (i.e., due to the tremendous inertia of physical matter).

Physical polarization (human or otherwise) is characterized by very limited sensitivities, very limited range of experience or expression, and an almost overwhelming and impenetrable (wholly unconscious) attachment to (identification with) physical matter. If a person dwells on physical experience and activity he or she is probably emotionally polarized along relative coarse lines, so that it is the "feelings" of physical experience that matter. A physically polarized person has (virtually) no feelings per se, but simply dwells dreamlessly within physical consciousness. There are very few (if any)

physically polarized people today, with the great bulk of humanity being emotionally polarized.

Experience on physical levels is markedly different for one who is physically polarized compared to one who is emotionally polarized (and similarly different for one who is emotionally polarized compared to one who is mentally polarized). For the physically polarized there is virtually no sensation in physical experience; for the emotionally polarized there are substantial sensations (absorption); for the mentally polarized there is relative detachment. Thus one (who is mentally polarized) who (merely) projects the consciousness upon (onto) physical and etheric levels can learn a great deal by observation and perform considerable (occult) work by manipulating physical and etheric matter; one who is emotionally absorbed in physical experience is merely dreaming (by comparison); and one who is truly physically polarized has no real activity at all.

The gap in consciousness between the soul and its reflection is greatest for the physically polarized person, quite considerable for the emotionally polarized person, and less considerable for the mentally polarized. In short, physically polarized experience is either strictly involutory (passive) or a matter of indirect assimilation (by the soul) in adapting to the physical world, learning to deal (indirectly) with physical forces (i.e., within the physical form), and overcoming (indirectly) the inertia of physical matter.

† Commentary No. 619

Emotional Polarization

An emotionally polarized person (or lifeform) is one whose consciousness is stabilized (polarized) on one or another of the astral (emotional) sub-planes of consciousness and whose experience and expression is predominantly emotional (astral). Emotionally polarized people are generally active physically and emotionally (and to some extent mentally), but being emotionally polarized generally means that physical and mental activity (experience) tends mainly to stimulate the emotions. Thus emotionally polarized people are generally reactive (rather than responsive) to experience on any level.

Emotionally polarized people generally have a wider, more dynamic range (fluctuation) of focus of consciousness and are therefore, generally, less stable and less coherent (less sensible) than those who are physically or mentally polarized. Emotionally polarized people are generally enslaved by their biases and glimmers (being heavily biased by their emotional temperament (feelings and attachments (values))) and therefore tending to be much less objective than (properly) mentally polarized people (although most mentally polarized people are comparably limited by their opinions). Emotionally polarized people tend to be vulnerable to external forces and impressions. Consequently, emotionally polarized people are relatively easily manipulated by the unscrupulous (who themselves may be emotionally or mentally polarized). Even for those emotionally polarized people who have well developed minds, it is difficult (for them) to actually think for themselves, since their mental activity is generally driven (biased) by emotional experience (feelings).

Emotionally polarized people are not integrated (do not have integrated personalities) and therefore suffer several (or numerous) centers of competing consciousness (within the form or personality). Only a person who is at least mentally polarized has the strength, clarity, and stability of mind to enable personality integration. In order to achieve such a state of consciousness (mental polarization), the mind must be cultivated as the dominant center of personality consciousness; the emotions must be subdued and overcome (disciplined and stabilized) (refined and elevated as well, if within the context of the spiritual path); and the personality must achieve a considerable ability for detachment (since all emotional attachments must be overcome) (i.e., a considerable measure of self-control and self-discipline is necessary).

The emotions (the astral body) naturally seek further emotional (astral) stimulation. For as long as a person entertains the emotions (allows the emotions to dominate the personality consciousness) (by emotional indulgence), such a person cannot become mentally polarized or (subsequently) integrate the personality or (subsequently) align the personality with the soul. Many lifetimes are generally required to develop the mind, and many more lifetimes are generally required to overcome the emotional nature and achieve the measure of self-discipline that leads to mental polarization.

While the vast majority of humanity are emotionally polarized, the principal objectives of the present humanity are to successfully pass through the crisis of consciousness implied by transference of polarization from emotional to mental levels. The pioneers of the (human) race are mentally and intuitively polarized and provide a means of encouragement (induction) for people (and humanity as a whole) to achieve mental polarization. But that crisis (transference) (repolarization) is a rather formidable undertaking, and much (if not all) of the world turmoil (subtle and otherwise) is an indication and manifestation of (the crisis of) an emotionally polarized humanity.

† Commentary No. 625

Mental Polarization

A mentally polarized person (or lifeform) is one whose consciousness is stabilized (polarized) on one or another of the mental sub-planes of consciousness and whose experience and expression are predominantly mental (manasic). Mentally polarized people are generally active physically and emotionally, but physical and emotional experience (activity) is generally overshadowed (and integrated) by the mental focus. A mentally polarized person can still experience and express himself (herself) with feeling (emotion) and can still have a desire nature, but these things simply do not dominate the consciousness or provide such a distraction as in the case of emotionally polarized people.

Mentally polarized people are generally more mature and relatively more stable (coherent) than physically or emotionally polarized people. They are far less vulnerable to external (astral) forces but may still be subject to (worldly) thought-impression. Mentally polarized people are (in almost every case) integrated personalities (the achievement of mental polarization implies the integration of the mind, the emotional nature, and the body under the central qualification of the concrete mind), and are therefore relatively stronger from the perspective of the soul (physically and emotionally polarized people can be just as loud or noisy, but lack the coherence on the mental plane to be perceived by the soul). Although a coarse personality cannot be properly integrated, being mentally polarized does not imply considerable refinement nor any particular spiritual sensitivity or responsiveness. In fact, most mentally polarized people

are not spiritually responsive because the process of integration and polarization upon the mental plane tends to strengthen the ego (which is a measure of separation from the soul).

While emotionally polarized existence is rather dynamic, concrete mental existence (mental polarization upon concrete mental sub-planes) is relatively stable and therefore vulnerable to concretion (inflexibility) (rigidity) in thinking. The spiritual student must endeavor to preclude or overcome mental attachments and cultivate adaptability and flexibility in thinking. The cultivation of the matrix approach to thinking is necessary for effective abstraction (joining of concrete and abstract minds). The mind must learn to be comfortable (in relativity and uncertainty) without attachments, that the utility of the trained and disciplined (refined) mind can be extended.

The challenge for the mentally polarized student is just as great as that of the emotionally polarized student; it is just different, and relatively more subtle. While the emotionally polarized student seeks to cultivate the mind and conquer the astral nature (and its various appetites) (without much being obvious to the waking-consciousness for the simple reason that it (the mind and the waking-consciousness) is imbedded in the (non-discerning) emotional nature), in addition to concretion, the mentally polarized student must contend with the more subtle problems of ego (and the strength of the mind).

The (concrete) mind naturally seeks to sustain itself as an independent entity (just as the emotional nature naturally seeks entertainment on its level) (without realizing its own transitory existence). But as refinement proceeds (largely through the discipline and qualification of meditation), the various subtleties are dealt with and overcome, the bridge to the abstract mind (and thence to the intuition) is cultivated, and the personality as a whole is gradually assimilated by the soul (becoming so infused by soul quality that the mind and the personality cease to function independently).

Intuition

Intuition is defined in the general (orthodox) sense as the power or faculty of attaining direct knowledge or cognition, without rational thought or inference; it also refers to the act of such apprehension and to the knowledge thus gained. There are three distinct mechanisms which can produce (apparent) intuition, though only one mechanism (buddhi) is the true (spiritual) intuition. The most common mechanism is that of astral (emotional) (psychic) sensitivity. The astral sensitivity is common to all human beings, in various degrees, though women are generally more sensitive in this respect than men due to the (female) polarization of the astral body. The astral sensitivity may resemble the (true) intuition, but depends upon the passive (psychic) processes of perception (coloring due to character (quality) of the aura), and is therefore largely undependable (or at least subject to misinterpretation).

The second mechanism that meets the orthodox definition is abstract mental cognition. By definition, the intuition does not depend on any (concrete) reasoning. But where the bridge (continuity) between the concrete and abstract minds is well-developed, the abstract mind (of the soul) can provide correlative insight to supplement more objective reasoning processes. Scientific (philosophical) insight (revelation) generally falls into this category and information obtained via the abstract mind is generally much more dependable than that obtained via astral sensitivity (perception) or reasoning (analysis) (logic); but the information gained via the abstract mind is still subject to interpretation by the concrete mind (and dependent on mental training).

The true (spiritual) intuition is a function of an even higher process and involves the second aspect (buddhi) of the soul rather than the third aspect (manas) (abstract mind). The true intuition is quite rare and depends a great deal on the (reasonably complete) refinement of the integrated personality with the soul. The spiritual intuition requires a considerable quality of consciousness (and a blend of the head-centered and heart-centered nature), while the second (lesser) mechanism requires only a well-developed (abstract and concrete) mental development (which does not necessarily imply any spiritual consciousness

(quality)) and the astral sensitivity requires essentially no qualification (though qualification is necessary to any useful sensitivity).

Buddhi involves a higher plane of consciousness than that of mental (manasic) or astral (emotional) experience, and is the most dependable (pure) mechanism since the personality (mind) must be properly trained and responsive (qualified) before the (true) intuition can flow.

True (spiritual) intuition is principally heart-centered (though mind must also be properly qualified) and provides the basis for (consistent) mystical experience (revelation) (self-realization) (for those who are qualified); it also provides occasional insight for those who are temporarily aligned (i.e., occasional mystical experience). True insight (intuition) is not communicable to others, for it is quite subjective and difficult to translate into objective terms. Drug-induced (pseudo-mystical) experience is astral (psychic) (personality-centered) in nature and unrelated to intuitional experience. True intuition is a communion of soul and purified mind. Real intuition is the basis of the heart, the second aspect (buddhi) of the soul, and is related to the (qualified) heart center. Communion implied by spiritual intuition is unimpeded by the personality or by any personality consideration. Although lesser (mental and emotional) experience predominates, students of all faiths (rays) are gradually cultivating the alignment (buddhi) which brings soul infusion.



Section 2.12



Awareness

- Awareness is a characteristic or dimension of consciousness that expands and is refined as the work of evolution proceeds. One of the principal objectives of evolution in consciousness is increased awareness. Consciousness that is mired in the inertia of matter (e.g., in the case of a human being absorbed in personal interests (self-centeredness)) inhibits awareness. Consciousness that is relatively free from attachments and absorptions encourages and facilitates awareness. Awareness produces real learning and facilitates assimilation of that learning.

Awareness

Awareness is the state (condition) (quality) of having knowledge, perception, and/or realization, particularly in the sense of alertness (conscious and/or unconscious vigilance in observation), recognition, and qualified (realistic) inference from direct and indirect experience. Awareness is an aspect of consciousness and, though qualified by consciousness, the extent (character) of awareness does not necessarily correlate directly with the character or quality of consciousness. Awareness as an aspect of consciousness must be developed and qualified in addition to the development and qualification of the overall consciousness; one does not necessarily follow from the other.

Awareness may be conscious and/or unconscious, objective and/or subjective, on any or all levels of associated consciousness. Each aspect or element of consciousness has an associated extent (character) (quality) of awareness. While awareness depends to some (indirect) extent on quality of consciousness, it also depends on mental, emotional, and physical training and abilities. Awareness on some level (and some aspect) may be consciously (deliberately) programmed (cultivated) or it may be programmed unconsciously as a consequence of conscious or unconscious experience. Awareness needs to be intelligently cultivated, properly qualified, and properly integrated and aligned with the higher focus of consciousness.

Ordinary human awareness is a combination of instinctive (subconscious) awareness, unconscious outer (objective) (external) awareness (the totality of sense-impressions and their unconscious evaluation), and conscious (objective) (external) awareness. This ordinary awareness is largely a function of (and related to the quality of) the concrete mind, the aura, and the associated activities in (lower) consciousness, and is limited (distorted) by the personality (personal energy) (concrete-mindedness). Awareness (perception) is largely determined by intention and responsiveness. Most of humanity are absorbed in their own (mundane) consciousness and sense things only to the extent of their own habits in thinking and awareness. Relatively few are truly aware of their own external environment, let alone their own condition in consciousness. Most are aware only of what they have (unconsciously) trained themselves to

be aware of, and therefore miss a great deal of potentially meaningful observation (perception) (knowledge) (experience).

The spiritual student is encouraged to develop this aspect of consciousness (awareness) through self-discipline and conscious application, learning to be an effective observer on all levels (higher and lower, inner and outer, conscious and unconscious) and to the extent of consciousness and its quality. The spiritual student should cultivate and qualify both a general, broad awareness (integrating numerous aspects) and the ability of focused awareness, that should enable the student to be aware of the internal and external environments, of activities, energies, forces, etc., and their implications (as a consequence of experienced awareness). This implies an increasing, qualified (stable) sensitivity and a constructive (effective) expansion in consciousness.

While consciousness is a function of vibration (quality), extent (focus), and activity (interaction), (enhanced) awareness (particularly in being aware of conditions in consciousness) is a function of the quality (and field) of consciousness, the will aspect, and the overall integration (alignment) (and degree of impersonality) of the personality. As the student properly cultivates consciousness (and awareness), the student develops an occult awareness, being able to intelligently project the focus of consciousness at will.



Commentary No. 491

Awareness and Consciousness 1

The distinction between awareness and consciousness is an important one for the spiritual student, since the methods and approach for development and qualification of awareness and consciousness are distinctly different.

Awareness is that aspect of consciousness which provides for qualified and (relatively) conscious perception and realization. Awareness is qualified by consciousness and is more a matter of cultivation and training than is the case for consciousness per se.

Awareness is developed within the framework of consciousness. The human being (by definition) (as a consequence of evolutionary development) has a mind,

an emotional (astral) body, and a physical (etheric) form, providing a means of focusing (expressing) mental, emotional, and physical consciousness, respectively. Having consciousness at some level does not mean necessarily that that person is conscious or aware on that level. Each human being has a mind and an astral body (for example), but few are actually conscious on emotional levels and fewer still are actually conscious on mental levels.

Following aeons of evolutionary development leading to some instrument of consciousness (on some level) (e.g., a mind), there are five stages of subsequent development: (1) having consciousness on that level, (2) being conscious of (some) phenomena on that level, (3) having awareness on that level, (4) being fully-conscious on that level, and (5) having mastery of that level.

Having consciousness on some level simply follows from having an instrument of consciousness on that level and the ability (albeit primitive) to use that instrument. Being able to feel emotion indicates having consciousness on emotional levels. Being able to think indicates having consciousness on concrete mental levels. In neither case does it mean (necessarily) being conscious of feeling or being conscious of thinking (or being conscious of any other's feelings or thoughts). Being conscious of feeling (thinking) or being (superficially) aware of another's feeling (thinking) indicates the second stage (at that level). For example, a person might have true physical awareness (third stage), but be merely conscious (second stage) on emotional and mental levels. The superficial awareness of the second stage is normally based upon awareness on the next lower level of consciousness (e.g., being conscious of emotional phenomena by virtue of physical observation of physical indications (which implies the danger of interpretation of perception)).

Having awareness (proper) on some level is the third stage, where recourse to observation on the next lower level of consciousness is not necessary (in fact, not even desirable as it is generally less clear). Having awareness on some level implies a relatively true perception of things on that level, but that does not mean necessarily that the observer can properly interpret that perception, it just means (hopefully) that sense impressions are recognized as sense impressions, at that level. The fourth stage, being fully conscious on some level, is simply a much better extent of awareness on that level, with considerable understanding and realization. The fifth stage, having mastery on some level, is the

culmination of development in consciousness (for that level), in which the student is able to effectively wield the forces inherent in the matter (consciousness) of that level. The bulk of humanity have awareness on the physical plane (third stage), are conscious of emotional phenomena (second stage), and have (some) (concrete) mental consciousness (first stage), being emotionally-polarized (and therefore not integrated) but having no real awareness of the fact of their emotional polarization.

† Commentary No. 495

Awareness and Consciousness 2

Consciousness is improved by qualification, by continued cultivation, refinement, and discipline. Awareness is improved within that framework of (qualified) consciousness, is limited by the extent and character of that consciousness, and is developed through the proper exercise and training of consciousness. The qualification of consciousness is programmable as is the vigilant discipline of awareness, but awareness is improved primarily as the waking-consciousness exercises the point of focus (of consciousness). True awareness requires an integrated personality and a considerably refined (and stabilized) personality.

Having consciousness on some level implies some degree of activity on that level, but not necessarily any degree of awareness or control. Most of humanity are quite active physically and emotionally, with only mental activity limited and dominated (heavily biased) by emotional forces. A growing number of people are achieving some degree of control over the lower nature, tempering the emotions, and freeing the mind for (relatively) unbiased activity. Upon the spiritual path, the student consciously refines the consciousness, raises the polarization (level of focus) of consciousness, and develops an intelligent awareness on mental and intuitional levels.

As a faculty or attribute of consciousness, awareness begins as an unconscious perception that is very difficult to assimilate because it is unconscious. Awareness is developed through the activity of the focus of consciousness, from unconscious perception to semi-conscious perception, to conscious awareness,

and ultimately to conscious realization. The main distinction is between perception and awareness and realization. Perception does not imply discrimination or insight (understanding) or wisdom. Perception merely implies the receipt of sense impressions without (necessarily) any real measure of discipline (meaning those impressions will likely emerge in consciousness heavily biased by the coarseness of the outer consciousness). Conscious awareness implies some degree of being aware of being aware, and (hopefully) some measure of discipline (clarity), discrimination, and understanding. If the personality is not properly refined and integrated, then even this (preliminary) conscious awareness will be limited in effectiveness.

Conscious realization follows the further development and refinement of consciousness and conscious awareness, where the instrument of awareness (consciousness) is refined, stabilized (disciplined), and qualified (clarified). The significance of proper (conscious) awareness and (conscious) realization is limited to the extent of any allowance of personal energies (bias) (distortion). The existence of personal or mundane energy in (the focus of) consciousness precludes realization and severely limits the integrity of any awareness. In effect, proper awareness (realization) depends not only on the ability to interpret properly, but also upon the ability to filter out any distorting tendencies or distractions.

Thus awareness depends on the quality of consciousness and upon the discipline achieved within that consciousness. The spiritual student must learn to be aware on a number of levels simultaneously, without being distracted by any of them. One should eventually be very effective mentally and intuitively (contemplatively) while being aware and functioning effectively on all appropriate levels. This can only be achieved through the overall process of self-mastery and subordination of the individuality (ego) to the dharma of the spiritual path.

Awareness and Learning 1

The entire human experience is intended to contribute to the evolution of consciousness and the extent of that contribution depends necessarily upon the learning process and the relative awareness of the individual. Thus learning is a central focus of individual and group experience, particularly so in the context of the spiritual path of accelerated evolution in consciousness.

There are a number of factors and relationships that affect learning. The principal impediments to learning are a relative lack of awareness, a lack of interest in learning, and the preclusive ego. Conversely, where awareness is properly cultivated, where a positive (open, honest, active) attitude toward learning prevails, and where the ego is properly qualified for learning, the individual (student) is able to learn much more effectively (with greater depth (correlation), breadth (integration), and relative ease (expedience)).

The bulk of humanity are asleep in the mundane (personal) drivel of self-centered (material) existence. For the bulk of humanity, real learning (assimilated experience (wisdom)) is an indirect, relatively unconscious (sleepy) process whereby the soul gradually integrates and assimilates the experience of the personality, with little feedback (qualification) during incarnation and the bulk of assimilation occurring between incarnations. That learning process is enhanced and accelerated where the individual mind is properly developed and trained for learning, where the student earnestly seeks to learn, and where the ego is not a significant impediment. Such a person naturally (unconsciously) (indirectly) cultivates the requisite awareness.

On the spiritual path, learning is further accelerated and the individual becomes more active (more conscious, more aware) in learning, with more and more of the assimilation occurring within the incarnation (and ultimately in real or near real time). This is a direct result of the consequences of commitment to the path (those consequences being accelerated and intensified karmic pressure (more rapid evocation of karmic consequences) and increasing qualification of the (responsive) personality by the soul (which includes direct stimulation of consciousness and expansion (depth and breadth) of awareness)). But even on

the path, there are impediments to learning that must be (systematically or otherwise) overcome, by degrees (else considerable conflict (in consciousness between the ego and the path) will ensue).

The more obvious impediments to learning include preclusive habits (attachments and distractions) (absorption in personal or mundane matters) (which require deliberation (persistence) (self-discipline) for overcoming), lack of observational training (proper mental focus) (which simply requires training in observation and analysis), closed mindedness (the preclusive habits (rigidity) (linearity) of the concrete mind) (which require some intensity (determination) to overcome), and lack of earnestness (which simply requires realization of need). The less obvious, more subtle impediments to learning involve the ego and relative awareness, and include concerted (unconscious) resistance to learning, personal bias (in perception and interpretation) (compounded by inertia and lack of awareness of that bias and inertia), and limited (relatively narrow) perception (awareness) (again without realization of same). All of these things and more preclude or inhibit effective learning, and all of these things and more must be faced and overcome (eventually), by the earnest spiritual student. One who actively (honestly) approaches these issues with some determination (will to succeed) will indeed progress in improving the disposition toward and capability for effective learning.

† Commentary No. 590

Awareness and Learning 2

The principal key to effective learning and to improving the capability for effective learning is awareness. In general, the greater (broader) (deeper) (less personal) the awareness, the more effective will be the learning process. Awareness is related to the path in the sense that (extent of) awareness is a broad consequence of evolution in consciousness and in the sense that the awareness of the student is stimulated to the extent of the student's relationship to the spiritual path.

To complement (supplement) (integrate) the relative awareness evoked (or potentially evoked) by (upon) the path, the student must endeavor to utilize that awareness (or potential) or suffer degradation in awareness (a dulling of the

capabilities through lack of exercise and consequent absorption). Properly exercised (energized) awareness will deepen and broaden naturally, and enable the student to learn (and serve) more effectively.

The real key to overcoming all of the various (obvious and subtle) impediments to learning (preclusive habits) is the application of awareness to those various impediments (i.e., to be aware of a particular impediment (in the sense of conscious realization of that impediment and its effects) as an impediment to learning (or to consciousness (awareness)) is to evoke energies inherently qualified to overcome that impediment (energy follows thought)). As awareness is properly applied (i.e., as the conscious mind and its subconscious correspondence are programmed to trigger conscious realization of any impedimental process in real or near real time), then the energy (and associated forces (applied energies)) of the soul is brought to bear on the problem (impediment) and the problem (weakness) is gradually transformed into strength.

The first step to proper conscious awareness (in this context) is conscious realization (knowledge) of all the various habits and preclusive tendencies. The second step is the conscious realization (recognition) (assessment) of the magnitude (depth) (breadth) (presence) of particular impediments. The third step is periodic self-analysis in which each such habit or preclusive tendency is evaluated in terms of how it manifests (i.e., under what conditions in consciousness) and what are its effects or consequences. The fourth step is periodic (e.g., daily) qualification for learning (i.e., impersonal (individual) meditation, philosophic and psychological study, and continued self-assessment). The fifth step is the simple realization that the fourth step continues indefinitely, as the active resistance of the personality (ego) becomes more and more passive (more subtle) and less obvious.

Dealing with attachments (distraction) (absorption) (closed or narrow mindedness) (lack of earnestness) (personal bias) (limited perception) is relatively easy (at least straightforward) as long as the student (waking-consciousness) is aware of their existence and operation. Dealing with the various subtleties of the ego (i.e., concerted resistance to learning and other inherent inertia) is another matter altogether, since layer upon layer and aspect upon aspect of dynamic self-deception must be faced, realized, and overcome.

The ego is fully capable of pretending to cooperate while deliberately undermining the various noble attempts of the conscious mind. This capability is further complicated by the personal nature of the conscious mind (and feelings) which tends to see (hear) (feel) (believe) whatever it wishes, often regardless of contradictive indications. Thus the only real solution to dynamic self-deception is the cultivation of proper humility (that cultivation being a necessarily indefinite process (never fully achieved)).

† Commentary No. 842

Awareness and Thinking

A principal and recurring theme within the philosophy is that of steadiness of mind, which deals with the practical relationship between awareness and thinking. Awareness and thinking and consciousness are all distinctly different although related concepts. Consciousness refers to the relationship between spirit and matter and is the medium of quality and qualification.

Consciousness is not an activity nor is it a process. Consciousness is an aspect (albeit one that induces processes in consciousness). There can be aspects within aspects, as in states of consciousness. But awareness and thinking are activities with associated attributes (and are not aspects), within consciousness (although things which are not aspects may have aspects).

Awareness and thinking are virtually mutually exclusive activities, or at least one (awareness) grows at the expense of the other (thinking). Of course awareness comes in a number of different forms and most if not all of those forms may be expressed simultaneously in different ways or on different levels (i.e., subconsciously, consciously, and super-consciously). But conscious awareness is inversely proportional to thinking, i.e., as one thinks one's conscious awareness is thereby lessened, and as one grows in conscious awareness one naturally "thinks" less and less (as one learns to rely on awareness rather than thinking).

In the beginning of its existence (manifestation), the human animal has very little conscious awareness and virtually no mind with which to think (and must therefore rely on instinct and (emotional) feelings). In the end of human

expression, the master has evolved beyond thinking to the greater awareness of non-thinking. In between these two phases lies the bulk of more familiar human experience and expression as well as the (more real) changes in consciousness that mark (real) progress. Some five stages and four transitions mark the progress between no thinking and non-thinking.

The first stage of thinking is non-dependent thinking or no thinking, i.e., the absence of thinking because the mind is rudimentary and a person has simply not learned to think. Then as the mind is developed the process of actually thinking is begun. The second stage of thinking is passive, externally-dependent thinking, in which a person allows others to do his thinking for him. This stage is necessary as "thinking" must first be imposed or induced by external means before one can even begin to function mentally. The problem lies in the unfortunate extension of this stage well beyond its intended purposes (i.e., many (most) people, who should be thinking for themselves, are still passively accepting ideas and thoughts from others without any exercise of real discernment or discrimination). But as a person progresses, he eventually and necessarily learns to think for himself. That transition, between passive (externally dependent) thinking and active (independent) thinking may consume many lifetimes and is a magnificent struggle in itself.

Yet a greater struggle comes to the (spiritual) student, as he gradually becomes more and more internally dependent in his thinking (i.e., more and more subject to awareness, higher impression, etc.), as his ego is gradually overcome. This fourth stage (internal) gradually gives way to a fifth stage of non-dependent thinking or non-thinking in the active (most positive) sense of conscious awareness. These higher transitions (between active thinking, internally-dependent thinking, and non-thinking) constitute a most difficult undertaking, but the student (disciple) ultimately learns to truly think, without thinking, as awareness comes to full fruition.

Section 2.121



Aspects of Awareness

- Aspects of awareness include the presence of the soul, the relationships between awareness and truth and ethics, the distinctions between objective and subjective awareness, and the price of awareness.

The Presence of the Soul

The soul, as defined and understood in the context of the esoteric philosophy (i.e., as the upper triad of atma-buddhi-manas), is always present, within the human being, whether a person is in or out of incarnation. However, the presence of the soul is generally not felt or sensed until the personality nature (physical, emotional, intellectual) has reached quiescence. Or, in other words, the presence of the soul is perceived to the extent of the absence of personality-centeredness (ego).

While many people refer to the soul, they generally refer to the inner feelings of the personality, or the deeper aspect of the lower nature, which is not the soul (atma-buddhi-manas) or higher Self. While the soul manifests in relatively subtle ways, to the extent that the personality will allow (unconsciously), the soul is not involved or entangled in the day-to-day life and experience and expression of the ego (personality). Until the person matures sufficiently, through tempering the personality nature and achieving some degree of non-entanglement (in the senses and the world), the soul does not have any direct influence on the personal life. But once the personality is tempered, once the ego is transcended to some extent, once the lower consciousness is refined sufficiently, then the soul will gradually make its presence felt on the lower (more objective) levels.

The presence of the soul is not exciting. Being excited precludes the presence of the soul. The presence of the soul is a quiet, rather subtle joy that goes well beyond and tempers even more so the personal experience. The presence of the soul also generally evokes considerable pain, as the remnants of ego work to obstruct and resist that higher presence. The soul brings a sense of otherworldliness, of not really belonging in this lower, outer world, yet brings also love and light to qualify the lower experience and thereby make it more meaningful (not meaningful in the ego-sense of importance but meaningful in the subtle sense of balance (dharma)). There is evoked both a strong, inner (real) sense of unity, with humanity and all of life, felt not merely experienced through intellectual appreciation, as well as a sense of distance, from the worldly nature of humanity entangled in sense experience (asleep in personality-centeredness).

The presence of the soul is a very quiet, very subtle experience. Whenever the personality emerges into manifestation (through thinking or feeling) then the presence of the soul is lost. But when the emotions are calmed and aspiration is subtle, when the mind is clear and quiescent (merely observing without thinking or judging), then the presence of the soul can be felt. The presence of the soul is felt during (true) meditation (rarely achieved by the preponderance of people who meditate) but the objective of the spiritual student is to so feel or sense the presence of the soul that that presence dominates the waking-consciousness, even while the student is engaged in worldly non-entanglement (i.e., going about his or her business in the world, without being absorbed at the personality or worldly level).

The role of the lower self is to provide a vehicle for the manifestation of the higher Self. Yet the preponderance of experience and expression in the world is merely preparatory to that manifestation. Preparation is essential. Without preparation, the presence of the soul would overwhelm the personality. Yet as the personality-centeredness is overcome, as the student becomes more and more attuned to the soul, then the presence (energy) (quality) (value) of the soul comes streaming through the purified, refined, uplifted lower self.

† Commentary No. 1421

Intelligent-Perceptive Awareness

In general, there are two kinds of awareness, namely awareness through the senses and intelligent-perceptive awareness. Most people are aware in the first sense, of seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting, and touching, with their physical-plane senses. Some are aware on more psychical levels, on etheric and/or astral levels, likewise, with their etheric and astral senses. But that does not mean, necessarily or generally, that they have any appreciable intelligent-perceptive awareness.

The problem is making sense of sense-perceptions, of developing intelligent-perceptive awareness. This is as true on the physical plane as it is on non-

physical levels. The mind (waking-consciousness) is the key to apprehension of sense-impressions. If the mind is unfocused then the impressions from the senses will not be sensible. If the mind is improperly focused, likewise. If the mind is cluttered with presumptions of knowledge and understanding, then the apprehension of sense impressions is lessened and much will be missed. If the mind is self-absorbed, likewise. And of course there are various biases and conditioning that also greatly limit the ability to apprehend whatever is observed through the senses. It is the uncluttered and unfettered mind that truly opens the senses to realization of truth.

Knowledge has value. But if one is attached to knowledge, if one believes that one knows something, then that knowledge and that belief tends to limit or preclude any broadening or deepening (or clarifying) of knowledge and understanding. The open mind "has" knowledge but not attached to knowledge. The open mind is thereby able to acquire additional, clarifying knowledge. The open mind is able to transcend knowledge and assimilate knowledge into understanding. But most people know too much and are simply unable to see the truth of their own nature and surroundings.

The ego is another complicating factor. It is the ego that sees and hears and feels whatever it wants to. It is the ego that engages in self-deception and biases the perceptions. Thus (artificial and natural (experiential)) bias and conditioning, the ego, and (attachment to beliefs (attachment to knowledge) are all limiting factors. Most people are so conditioned by these things that they experience the physical world in a substantially superficial and self-centered way. And most people who are "psychic" or "perceptive" on etheric and astral levels are also substantially biased and conditioned, untrained, and unable to perceive things clearly (even if (though) one "believes" that one is seeing clearly).

Thus the spiritual student must (properly) be trained to perceive clearly on physical levels as much as on non-physical levels. This involves the elimination of much of the ordinary bias and conditioning, reducing and eliminating the role of mind (intellect) and ego (and self-centeredness). And for the most part, it also means transcending the lower psychic senses (etheric and astral and concrete mental). Indeed, one of the keys to true awareness is non-reliance on the lower senses (physical and non-physical). To sense things on lower levels

without being entangled in or distracted by them (or by the interpretive process). Thus the key to higher (intelligent) perception is quiescence (of body and emotions and mind). True intelligent-perceptive awareness is intuitive in the higher sense (of buddhi, not astral). True intelligent-perceptive awareness is non-presumptive realization of truth. The true perceiver is an observer who does not interpret or judge or make any assumptions. The true perceiver is simply aware.

† Commentary No. 1485

Truth and Awareness

Perhaps most people think that because they are self-conscious in the ordinary (superficial) sense, they have therefore awareness. But this is not awareness in the higher sense of perceptive realization. It is simply the crude awareness of the physical plane, dimmed by conditioning and one's expectations. It is also not the crude awareness of non-physical levels exhibited by untrained and unqualified psychics. True awareness requires some not inconsiderable development in consciousness, and not inconsiderable refinement of consciousness. And true awareness does not necessarily involve any form of psychic or super-physical awareness, which is after all, only a wider range of superficial awareness. True awareness is something much deeper. Much more based in quality of (higher) consciousness. Based in realization rather than perception.

One of the most significant keys to this (proper) awareness is embracing truth, being dedicated to embracing truth and actually embracing truth. It is not sufficient merely to be so dedicated or to believe that one is embracing truth. One must actually develop and embrace all of the prerequisites (such as honesty and humility) and be actually open to truth. Most people are not really open to truth, even though they are more or less honest. They think they are open-minded but in fact most people are simply conditioned to see what they want to see, whatever is comfortable to see. Most people do not realize that their illusions and their assumptions and their biases and their conditioning are all barriers to their being truly honest, with themselves and with others. And this is a great preclusion of (true) awareness.

Knowledge is a barrier to awareness simply because most people are unconsciously attached to what they know, instead of being free to embrace the truth. Even understanding is a barrier to awareness, if one thinks one understands something then that is a barrier. If one is truly humble, then one is not attached to either knowledge or understanding. A humble student has no opinions or other attachments or delusions. But most people suffer the ordinary delusions of physical existence, the illusion of the physical world, which is real, superficially, but actually merely only a shadow. Most people suffer the illusion of independence, of separateness, even if they believe otherwise. The barrier of (the illusion of) separateness is compounded by ego and personality-centeredness. An intellectual understanding of these illusions is helpful, a stepping-stone, but it is not the same as perceiving and realizing things without having the actual illusions.

Most people think that “little white lies” are not harmful, or that inaccuracies are not significant. But these are barriers to truth. And to awareness. Indeed, inaccuracies are not really significant any more than details are significant in some broader perspective, except to the extent that they undermine one’s ability to perceive the truth. Inaccuracies, exaggerations, distortions do undermine things, subconsciously. It does not mean that one must be always accurate, only that one must understand, really understand, that what one says may not be entirely accurate, i.e., being honest with oneself, striving to be as honest as one can be, is important. It is about overcoming one’s conditioning (illusions) (biases). Only if one is as honest as one can be is there then the possibility of greater realization.

The purpose of life is evolution in consciousness. And that evolution is perhaps best measured or manifested through deepening and broadening awareness, based on both honesty and humility.

Ethics and Awareness

Ethics are a behavioral extension of actually embracing truth that is also quite important. In a sense ethics amount to truth-in-action on all levels. One's ethics are both a reflection of quality of consciousness (and conscience) (and understanding) (and wisdom) and potentially a limitation in consciousness that undermines awareness.

If one's ethics are not consistent with the truth that is embraced and understood, then that inconsistency tends to undermine one's (deeper) awareness. If one's ethics are questionable in the context of the spiritual path, then that also tends to undermine awareness. It is a practical matter, in the sense that one's behavior has import in consciousness. And the propriety of one's behavior likewise. It is also a matter of becoming and remaining awake, which is the real import of (true) awareness. Most of the people in the world are of the world and are asleep. Their perception, their awareness is really quite limited (to immediate personality-consciousness and proximate environs conditioned by that personality-consciousness). To begin to awaken to the underlying reality and to begin to awaken to truth requires a considerable impulse in order to overcome the very substantial (ordinary) conditioning that binds most people to their routine patterns of behavior.

One's ethics can have a potentially considerable influence on one's conditioning. One's ethics can either strengthen one's place on or approach to the spiritual path, or one's ethics can weaken one's place or undermine one's approach. It is not about the details of how to behave in particular circumstances or how to interpret anything. It is not even ultimately about judgment. It is about being true to one's conscience (insight) (understanding) (wisdom) (higher senses). Of feeling or sensing what is right, and living accordingly. If one is dishonest in any way, to oneself or others, then that dishonesty creates a psychological barrier that in turn undermines the embracing of truth and being (more) aware. If one is harmful in any way, to oneself, to others, or to other lifeforms, then that similarly creates a psychological barrier that dulls the (inner) senses or sustains the sleeping state. If one is killing animals and/or eating their flesh then that generally precludes

any real understanding of propriety with regard to humanity and the animal kingdom. One's actions, one's ethics are driven by one's values, however unconsciously and self-serving.

Of course ethics are inclusive of thinking and feeling. One must not only behave in an ethical (harmless, honest, humble) manner on physical levels, but also be ethical on emotional and mental levels. Every feeling and every thought is a projection of energy which evokes force. And every such evoked force has consequences, effects on the immediate environment and upon the object of one's feelings and thoughts. For the spiritual student ethics therefore include the ethics of feelings and the ethics of thinking. Ultimately, one learns how to feel deeply and harmlessly and honestly and with humility, and to think not at all (but simply to be aware and to act from that awareness).

So the spiritual student is ever encouraged to embrace the truth at all levels of his or her capacity. The spiritual student is ever encouraged to embrace ethical behavior to the extent of his or her capacity (conscience). And to improve one's ethics according to spiritual teachings even before there is conscious realization of their import. Ethical behavior, and understanding of ethical behavior goes a long way toward encouraging deepening of consciousness and greater awareness (realization).

† Commentary No. 1488

Objective Awareness

Awareness generally means conscious objective awareness, perceiving the external world, through the physical senses, subject to one's various biases and conditioning, but without conscious awareness of those limitations or biases. Most people take their conscious objective awareness for granted, without appreciating that true awareness is both conscious and unconscious, objective and subjective, and that what most people exhibit is very limited and conditioned awareness.

Objective awareness is in principle both common and verifiable perception of the external environment. But objectivity is variable and subject to conditioning, so that not everyone perceives the external world in the same way

or to the same extent and that perception is not “processed” in the same way or to the same extent by everyone. Highly objective awareness is more consistent, more rationally definitive, than less highly objective awareness. Highly objective awareness is simply less distorted by bias and conditioning, by feelings and values. But objective awareness is still a matter of being focused on the external environment, perceiving or sensing people and places and processes external to one’s inherent consciousness. Some people are more focused in this sense than others, and some people are focused in this sense only some of the time or to some extent. In short, some people are more aware of their external circumstances than others, and some people are more objectively aware of those circumstances than others.

So the main variables in objective awareness are the extent that one is conscious in one’s objective awareness, the extent that one is objective in one’s conscious awareness, and the extent that one is focused in one’s objective awareness. Many are not really conscious in this sense, and perceive things more or less passively. Many have perception that is substantially biased by attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and values, such that there is little in the way of objectivity. And some people are simply not really focused. But those who are more fully conscious, who are more properly objective, who are focused, are much more able to embrace experience and expression meaningfully, in the sense that they are much more effective in learning and growing and doing useful things.

Another aspect is the physicality of one’s objective consciousness. Most people have sense perception that is consciously or objectively limited to the dense physical world, without appreciation for or cognizance of etheric or astral (emotional) or concrete mental levels. Psychic awareness is simply the extension of the (limited) objective awareness to these higher, non-physical levels. Psychic awareness in itself does not convey any understanding or wisdom and so virtually all who have psychic awareness are substantially untrained and lack objectivity. Most people have some psychic awareness, but usually they are not conscious of this. If a person is consciously psychic, but untrained, then the psychic impressions have relatively little intrinsic value because they cannot be placed properly into context, despite whatever is believed.

Almost everyone has some (limited) objective awareness. Almost everyone has some (limited) (unconscious) psychic awareness. But few have the experience and training and understanding to effectively process objective sense impressions. Most people are simply asleep. They think they are conscious (self-conscious) but they are not. They think they perceive things accurately but it is not so. It is the challenge of the path to overcome these limitations and embrace awareness in some deeper, broader sense.

† Commentary No. 1489

Subjective Awareness

In addition to objective awareness or realization of one's surroundings, there is subjective awareness. This should not be confused with a lack of objectivity in awareness. Most people exhibit objective awareness with a lack of objectivity. Subjective awareness is another dimension altogether, being aware in the inner sense of one's deeper nature, feelings, connectivity, and the workings of the mind.

Most people have some subjective awareness but are largely unconscious of this. They are not consciously aware of their feelings or what the mind is actually doing. They tend to identify with the mind so much that there is no conscious realization of the distinction between themselves and the mind. The spiritual student is trained to make this distinction and to more fully realize the artificial nature of the ego, the entangled nature of the mind, and the proper place of the personality. The spiritual student is encouraged not only to be more conscious, more objective, and more effective (less biased) in his or her objective awareness, but also to be more conscious in subjective awareness. Indeed, it is the combination of conscious awareness on objective and subjective levels that is most effective. But while objective awareness can be improved even with the presence of ego (personality-centeredness) (illusion), subjective awareness cannot properly be improved without the tempering of the ego, without a considerable refinement in consciousness.

That refinement in consciousness helps with objective consciousness as well, but especially in the sense of achieving balance and allowing the inner senses to

emerge into the arena of waking-consciousness. It is not enough simply to have feelings. One must also recognize them and understand them. One needs to see where feelings come from, either induced by the outer senses (experience, sense impressions, thinking, and conditioning) or evoked through higher consciousness (conscience, intuition in the higher sense). When the two aspects of awareness are working properly, in balance (with the ego and mind and personality tempered at least somewhat), then one can become consciously aware of one's true state in consciousness. One can begin to see how the mind actually works and achieve more effective tempering (true mental quiescence that allows the (true) intuition to shine through unimpeded).

If one relies almost entirely on objective awareness, whether or not one is actually objective, then one is nonetheless relatively shallow. If one relies largely on subjective awareness, then one is relatively isolated and ineffective. But where both are properly developed and balanced then one can embrace oneself in the higher sense. One can deepen in consciousness. One can find God-Christ within and bring that divine nature (energy) (qualification) to the surface. Without some competence at objective levels, and without the depth of subjective awareness, this is simply not possible. Depth is not about education or intellect (or even what passes for ordinary human intelligence); depth is about finding and embracing and exhibiting higher, deeper consciousness.

In the final analysis, most people are simply not much aware of themselves or their context. Their thinking and feeling and behavior are largely conditioned by their biases and illusions. They suffer the illusion of self-consciousness. They remain asleep. But through the process of evolutionary experience there is a gradual awakening, and through the more conscious process of evolution embraced by the spiritual student, there is real progress. And greater and deeper awareness, on all levels.

The Price of Awareness

For the spiritual student there is no burden involved in committing to the process of refinement, development, and service, to the spiritual path, to evolution in consciousness. Embracing the various necessary practices and principles may not be easy, but it is not ever a burden for anyone who is actually "called" to the path.

As one progresses along the way (spiritual path) there is great (gentle) joy in increasing and deepening awareness, realization of oneself, one's immediate environment, and people in that environment or context. But there is also great pain, as one passes through the dark night of the soul, as one realizes the extent to which (almost) everyone is asleep and unaware of underlying truth and reality. One naturally develops compassion, and feels a great connectedness with humanity and with all life, but that connectedness is interior, a matter of higher consciousness. Externally, it is as if we are alone, self-realized and isolated within the sea of unenlightened humanity. While there is great joy in being consciously connected at the higher levels, there is great sadness and compassion for the condition in consciousness that almost everyone suffers, i.e., self-absorption, ignorance, unenlightenment, entanglement, and sleep (unconsciousness, lack of any real awareness).

One might look about for kindred spirits. And realize that there are very, very few. And consequently, being somewhat enlightened but still functioning at human levels, there is also likely an accompanying great sense of isolation and loneliness. Of course there are many who are religious without being spiritual. And there are many who are spiritually-minded without being spiritually-realized, or even spiritually-committed. So there are many who seem to be kindred spirits until one realizes that their participation and commitments are relatively superficial. They embrace only those of the various practices that are convenient, or what appeal to them. And consequently, they (well-intended but not serious students) make little progress in relation to depth of consciousness.

The (true) spiritual student is different. The true spiritual student is called to the path, by a soul in resonance with the path. And that resonance gradually

engulfs and embraces the entire lower nature. And as the awareness grows there are times of particular feelings of isolation and loneliness, as well as an overall, more subtle sense of isolation and loneliness. There is also some sense of frustration, in the sense that with awareness of conditions in consciousness there is also apprehension of the lack of awareness of others and the inability of the spiritual student to appreciably help them. One cannot convey insights to another. At best there would be an intellectual understanding. But real insight must be self-realized, else it is transient and not actually realized. One cannot heal another. At best one can offer healing energy and hope that others are responsive to that energy. But ultimately, people attract and embrace healing energy because they are responsive, not merely because they need healing.

The price of awareness is simply to suffer these realizations, and to continue to serve humanity with whatever humility, compassion, and consideration can be evoked.



Section 2.122



Personality Awareness

- In order to overcome the natural impedimentiveness of the personality, the student must cultivate an effective awareness of what is and how is the (particular) personality, e.g., what characteristics and tendencies are there, how the personality functions to protect itself and sustain its illusion of independence. Thus some degree of personality awareness must be achieved before the personality can be effectively tempered.

Awareness of Personality 1

The human personality is potentially a considerable asset to the spiritual student, but it must first be carefully cultivated and tempered in order to be more useful and effective than (naturally) impedimentive. For most people, the personality is already an adequate (generally effective) instrument for experience and expression, but for the spiritual student, the personality must be refined and the natural personality-centeredness of the personality must be overcome as well. In order to overcome the natural impedimentiveness of the personality, the student must cultivate an effective awareness of what and how the (particular) personality is (e.g., what characteristics and tendencies, how the personality functions to protect itself and sustain its illusion of independence), before the personality can be effectively tempered.

It is therefore relatively quite important for the spiritual student to be continually aware of the degree of his or her personality-centeredness (in the case of an untempered personality) or the degree of personality presence (in the case of a partially tempered personality or a personality that is tempered part of the time (or both)). Personality-centeredness implies the absorption of the personality on mundane (personal) levels and/or the absorption of the personality in glamour and illusion. It is extremely difficult for a personality-centered person (even a spiritual student) to be aware of that personality-centeredness.

So the student must cultivate measures of self-discipline such that (1) the personality is gradually refined (making it more receptive and responsive to higher impression) and (2) the waking-consciousness becomes increasingly aware of the times and extent of personality-centeredness. In that awareness are the seeds for gradually taking control of the personality and wresting it from its absorbed state (all of which is over and above the need for the student to overcome the self-centeredness of the personality (i.e., personality-centeredness and self-centeredness are two distinctly different phenomena although often manifesting simultaneously)).

Personality-centeredness is in a sense the extreme case of personality presence or the degree to which the personality is functioning as an (independent) personality (instead of as a consciously and effectively receptive and responsive instrument of higher purpose) (one who is personality-centered can be only marginally receptive and responsive (intelligently cooperative) at best, while one who is not personality-centered is thereby wholly receptive and responsive). In the context of a spiritual group, personality-centeredness is separative and counterproductive. In the context of an advanced spiritual group, even personality presence is separative and counterproductive (impedimentive). Thus one must be properly tempered in order to work effectively in the context of a spiritual group.

The real keys to overcoming both personality-centeredness and personality presence are awareness of what constitutes personality-centeredness and personality presence coupled with continual (continuous) self-awareness (i.e., awareness of what and how the personality is functioning). The first key is a matter of consciously learning from the appropriate (pertinent) theosophical and metaphysical teachings, while the second key is a matter of conscious and deliberate cultivated awareness and the ability to discriminate the personality presence from the properly-tempered personality. Many intelligent aspirants and even some (probationary) disciples (spiritual students) have difficulty becoming so aware and in exercising proper discrimination.



Commentary No. 814

Awareness of Personality 2

The fundamental problem of the untempered or partially tempered personality (one that is personality-centered or which manifests some extent of personality presence, respectively) is that the waking-consciousness naturally identifies with the personality and therefore (without considerable training and self-discipline) has considerable difficulty in discriminating between the real (the absence of personality) and the unreal (the personality presence). [Of course it is not “wrong” for the personality to be personality-centered or for there to be a personality presence (participation of the personality as a personality and not as

a responsive instrument), but that is counterproductive from the point of view of the soul and in the context of the spiritual path (where the objectives of life and the values embraced (or to be embraced) are different from those of people who are not on the path and not subject to its rules)].

Two of the keys to the personality's (self) deception are glamour (feeling) and illusion (rationalization). Emotionally-polarized people (emopols) are particularly susceptible to glamour, while mentally-polarized people (menpols) are particularly susceptible to rationalization (the problem of a menpol who is englamoured is often compounded by rationalization and the problem of an emopol who rationalizes is often compounded by emotional bias). The personality encourages the absorption of the waking-consciousness in glamour and illusion.

When the mind first seeks to wrestle with this problem of personality-centeredness and personality presence, the obvious discriminating factors have to do with coarseness (and apparent quality of consciousness (as manifested) (e.g., character, disposition, temperament, etc.)) (i.e., the color of the personality (aura)). This helps in the refinement process but does not really address the more subtle factors (that may not be obvious to the waking-consciousness). The mind gradually learns to recognize many of the personality indicators (and in recognition are the seeds of overcoming) and eventually develops the ability to discriminate even the more subtle aspects of personality (i.e., the tone of the personality). But this is necessarily a long and difficult process as the personality is intelligently subtle and deceptive and seeks to undermine the student's efforts.

Through self-observation (and retrospection) the degrees of coarseness manifested can be recognized and qualification evoked to bring about a suitable refinement. But where the personality is absorbed (in mundane, personal matters (including glamour)) self-observation and retrospection may not suffice to bring about the needed awareness and self-transformation. One must also actively (consciously and deliberately) cultivate the processes of (continual or continuous) self-observation and (daily) retrospection such that the waking-consciousness (the focus of one's human consciousness) becomes aware of even the more subtle forms of absorption.

One of the crucial keys to success in these endeavors is honesty (and particularly self-honesty). One must be intelligently and sensibly open to truth (and particularly to the truth about oneself) or else the personality will have the upper hand in extending or continuing its deception. In fact, being open to truth may not even suffice. Indeed, one may actually have to love truth and actively (consciously and deliberately) seek truth before the veils of personality-generated glamour and illusion (self-deception) can be overcome. This process is further compounded by the layered nature of truth (e.g., the deception of the personality is layered such that one must actually penetrate (reveal) layer after layer (one by one) (each more subtle) of self-deception).

† Commentary No. 815

Awareness of Personality 3

One who is properly trained and experienced in occult matters should be able to recognize (discern and discriminate) the relative degree of personality presence and in that recognition (coupled with sincere intention (will)) should be able to bring about the proper tempering of the personality such that the personality will be a non-impedimentive and constructive (collaborative) instrument for spiritual work. But those who are not so trained and experienced (yet have embarked upon the spiritual path nonetheless) must institute a process of continual (hopefully continuous and eventually unconscious but nonetheless effective) vigilance in order to achieve the needed recognition and subsequent refinement and qualification.

The student who cannot easily discern and discriminate the personality presence should continually ask a number of pertinent questions. How and to what extent is the ego manifesting itself in my life? To what extent am I manifesting as a personality? To what extent is my personality qualified by higher purpose and quality? How is the personality manifesting as a personality? How is the personality qualified by the soul? What are the ways of the personality? What is the quality and nature of the soul? How can I manifest that quality and nature? What ways of the world have I embraced, consciously or otherwise, and how do those ways undermine the manifestation of higher purpose? How can my personality be refined and cultivated to reduce

and eliminate its presence? How can I utilize my personality (spiritually) effectively, without undermining the higher purpose and quality in manifestation? To what extent am I absorbed in the mundane and personal world? How am I enamoured? What assumptions have I made and what are their effects? What opinions do I have and how closely are they held? How can I be loosened from my opinions and how can I have no opinions?

If the student is both honest and earnest in asking these questions (and in formulating additional pertinent questions) and patient and persistent in listening to (for) answers, however subtle they may be, then progress will be achieved. The "work" is continual, as ever the process is refined and new recognitions occur. Eventually the qualification of the personality by the soul (which is necessarily indirect and subjective) will increase and become more and more obvious to the waking-consciousness (helping the waking-consciousness then to discriminate between the personality presence and the soul's quality). Ultimately, as the soul's quality is recognized, it will become painful to be anything other than that soul qualification (i.e., every emergence of personality will be painful to the waking-consciousness which will then seek to dampen the personality in order to restore the flow of the soul qualification).

Of course the spiritual student cannot expect to be soul-aligned or soul-infused all of the time (although that is indeed one of the goals), and there will naturally be times in which the personality emerges (as a personality). Stress, for example, naturally evokes both the personality presence (more notably in the form of manifested weaknesses and vulnerabilities (e.g., impatience and irritability)) and the seeds of their overcoming, but stress (and its effects in the personality) is not an easy matter to deal with.

The extent to which a personality participates in anything (e.g., a spiritual (metaphysical) (theosophical) group (activity)) is the extent to which the soul (higher self) (higher purpose) (truth) (wisdom) is not present. In the final analysis, the soul is only and ever revealed in the absence of personality.

Awareness of Personality 4

After many cycles of incarnations for experience and interludes (pralaya) for assimilation, the personality is eventually developed and refined to the point where it begins to sense the presence or quality of the soul. Just prior to that point, the mind (waking-consciousness) believes in the existence of the soul and works toward becoming consciously and continuously aware of the distinction between the soul (quality) and its personality (color and tone), but can only properly measure the soul's presence in terms of the absence of the personality. However, after the mind (personality) (waking-consciousness) begins to sense the presence of the soul (i.e., after the noise of the personality and ego have been largely (but never actually completely) overcome)), then the discernment (discrimination) of personality presence becomes relatively more easy (intuitive).

Prior to this turning point the personality has the upper hand as it is self-enchanted (i.e., absorbed in material (mundane) (personal) glamour and illusion) and the personality actively deceives the waking-consciousness (which is after all only an aspect of itself) in its falsehood (even to the point where the personality masquerades as the soul). But once the soul quality is consciously recognized, the personality is increasingly seen (perceived) to be of lesser quality (relative to that of the soul) (even as the quality of the personality is actually improving). From that point on the soul has the more apparent momentum and the waking-consciousness actually begins to enchant the personality with the quality of the soul (i.e., the personality begins to "like" the feeling that results from its awareness of the soul's quality). At that point, the personality begins to cooperate with the efforts of refinement, seeking its own temperance as a means of improving its ability to bathe in the presence of the soul (even as that means the personality is weakened in its sense of separation and independence).

However, even at that point, the struggle is not ended, as the personality is still "present" to some extent and its (now secondary) objective of self-preservation becomes even more subtle in its manifestation. Thus the (waking-consciousness of the) spiritual student must still be (further) refined and further trained to permit increased awareness (discernment) of the personality presence (and the more subtle distinctions between personality and soul (in

manifestation)). On the other hand, having some awareness of the soul means that the soul qualification (energy) (forces) is more actively felt (available) and the student can more easily recognize the finer distinctions between the real (the self) and the unreal (the not-self).

Believing in the existence of the soul (active relationship to God) conveys some momentum to the aspirant's efforts. But once the soul is actually felt (and this does not mean the personality's masquerade), that momentum is increased relatively dramatically. In subsequent lifetimes and prior to the fulfillment of each lifetime's recapitulation in which the soul's presence is again consciously felt, such a student will simply "know" of the soul's reality, having unconscious memories of the earlier incarnation(s). But it is only when the soul's presence (quality) is actually felt that the personality can begin to respond actively.

Awareness of personality must nonetheless be continually realized, consciously or unconsciously, in order for the spiritual student to continue within the momentum of the path, for only by that awareness and realization can the personality be effectively and efficiently utilized for good.



Section 2.13



Intelligence

- Intelligence is another important characteristic or dimension of consciousness and is not independent of awareness. Relative awareness is primarily a characteristic of the focus of consciousness, while intelligence is primarily an acquired and progressively developed ability for learning and understanding. Intelligence is a matter of cultivation and development, while awareness is a product of intelligence and quality of consciousness.

Paths of Intelligence

There are numerous lifewaves within each planetary scheme, and each creates and sustains its own path of progression from lower consciousness to higher consciousness (with sufficient encouragement and guidance). As evolution proceeds, the intelligence of the various lives is increased and expanded, along the particular lines of development intended for the lifewave. There are many paths, and each path has characteristic methods and goals, varying widely one from another. Ultimately, these paths of intelligence converge as the lifewaves (lives) are blended and as the contributions of each are assimilated.

Intelligence is defined in various ways, according to perspective. In general, intelligence refers to the power or capacity for understanding; that power or capacity depends to some extent on the mental faculties that have been developed, and/or upon the mental resources that can be drawn upon. Human intelligence, in particular, is the product of a path through individualization (the development of self-consciousness) (and the development of brain-consciousness), a path that leads to a highly developed (and structured) mind having a predominantly objective perspective. But human intelligence is only one of many forms of intelligence (described by various paths), and human intelligence (and the corresponding path) differs markedly from other forms.

Many other (major) paths to intelligence do not require the development of brain-consciousness or even the relatively objective, externalized experience that is so characteristic of the human path. Many other paths lead quite easily and effectively to various forms of penetrating (and non-penetrating) subjective intelligence, while some paths lead to far more objective forms than even the human path. But the type of understanding realized depends a great deal upon the type of path (which in turn depends on the degree of objectivity (subjectivity), the degree of externalization, the plane(s) of consciousness involved, the degree of self-consciousness (group-consciousness), etc.).

The human path (somewhat objective, somewhat externalized, involving (primarily) the lower three planes of consciousness (physical, emotional, and mental), and involving considerable self-consciousness) is not particularly

common (nor is it particularly rare) but it does afford some interesting experience not generally shared by other paths. The (positive) human path involves a great deal of contrast and illusion; other paths generally offer less contrast and less illusion. The angelic path, for example, is more subjective, is also somewhat externalized, involves (approximately) the same planes of consciousness, but cultivates group consciousness and realization rather than self-consciousness and rational processes. Angelic beings (devas) need no brain-consciousness, for their form of intelligence is developed along entirely different lines altogether. They pass through a kingdom slightly analogous to the human, but without any real contrast. That semi-human experience occurs much earlier in their evolution than the human experience that the current (human) lifewave is passing through.

The understanding achieved by these two paths (human and angelic) differs significantly, yet, the human path leads ultimately to an understanding rather similar to that of the deva evolution, but at a much later point in (relative) evolution. The pioneers of humanity, for example, deal more with the subjective consciousness and work with group energies (and pass beyond individual consciousness). But the devas are far better equipped to understand the other paths of intelligence than the (ordinary) human, since subjective consciousness predominates through the later stages of (virtually) every known path.

† Commentary No. 413

Intelligence 1

Intelligence is defined as the capability or capacity to apprehend facts and propositions and their relationships and to reason about them. Intelligence implies some degree of objective awareness, common sense, and comprehension (understanding). In the human case, intelligence also implies mental capabilities (and analogously for other lifeforms). Intelligence does not imply formal education, but it does imply experience and training. The degree of intelligence is an indication (albeit not conclusive) of overall evolutionary development (but it can be masked if appropriate), but intelligence cannot be measured effectively by conventional means.

In a sense, intelligence implies a capacity or potential for learning. The extent or degree of intelligence does indicate previous development and assimilated experience. Thus intelligence is an acquired (induced) capability, but one that depends heavily on the condition, quality, and training of the current vehicle(s) (in the human case, principally, the mind). Consequently, intelligence represents both the potential for learning and the capability of comprehension. The character (quality), degree (magnitude), and extent (focus) of intelligence varies tremendously between lifewaves, and considerably within most lifewaves, but generally increases with experience and order (i.e., a preceding lifewave tends to exhibit greater intelligence (being more experienced), albeit not necessarily along the same lines).

The formula for intelligence varies from one species (lifewave) to another. For humanity, intelligence is a meaningful combination of consciousness, awareness, and mental ability. In a higher sense, intelligence is an inherent potential ability based upon the basic (external) presence (quality) of divine mind (the inherent mental aspect of the solar logos (or higher intelligence of some degree and extent)). In this sense, intelligence is the degree and extent to which a unit of consciousness (individual or group) participates in the divine (higher) intelligence. The growth of consciousness (intelligence) is thus the development of the means with which intelligence is contacted (on subtle levels) and expressed. In the human case, the principal vehicle is the mind. The entire personality nature is initially an ineffective means of reflecting (expressing) intelligence; ultimately, with proper and balanced development, it becomes a very effective means of expression.

Thus intelligence is an induced (comprehensive) (aggregate) capability. Though much of the human nature and talents appears to be possessed, all is actually (more properly) measured as induced, as the human being participates more effectively in the greater life. In this sense, intelligence is a measure of effectiveness, as the quality of consciousness is a measure of rapport. But intelligence and quality of consciousness are not necessarily developed in a balanced manner (any more than the head-centered and heart-centered natures), but must ultimately be balanced for completion (perfection).

By definition (qualifications), the esoteric student is one who is both (relatively highly) intelligent and spiritually responsive (with relatively considerable

quality of consciousness). One who is merely interested in metaphysical and spiritual matters is not necessarily particularly intelligent or spiritually responsive. Many people are highly intelligent but not spiritually responsive. Many are spiritually responsive but lack significant intelligence. To fulfill the dharma of the spiritual path, the student must eventually mask a high degree and extent of intelligence and a considerable quality and extent of consciousness.

† Commentary No. 1095

Intelligence 2

Conventional notions of intelligence are based predominantly on conventional (worldly, personality-centered) values and are naturally biased toward good worldly instincts, practical knowledge, intellectual capacity, and worldly accomplishments, i.e., “success” in the worldly (egoistic) sense, without much regard for actual awareness, clarity (correctness) of perception, depth of understanding, wisdom, etc.

The world (ordinary, worldly consciousness) generally values strength of personality and superficial accomplishments. Therefore conventional notions of intelligence promote these values. The world generally values materialism and therefore promotes those abilities and talents that facilitate (personal) growth in the material or worldly sense (in terms of material possessions, worldly experience, intellectual knowledge, power, status, etc.). The world tends to value fame and fortune. While these things may be important or relevant at some stage of growth in consciousness (i.e., in developing the personality as an instrument of expression), they have not so much value in the longer view (sustained growth in consciousness (beyond materialism, beyond personality-centeredness)).

More properly, intelligence does not rely so much on instinct or intellect, but rather on intuition. It does not rely so much on conscious experience or knowledge attained or capacity for worldly accomplishments, but, rather, it relies on understanding, realization, and wisdom. The intelligent person may or may not be educated, may or not be “accomplished” in any worldly or egoistic sense, but the truly intelligent person has awareness and understands, even if he

or she does not understand how he or she understands. It is not a matter of reasoning. It is a matter of insight. It is a matter of being able to rely on the inner senses rather than on outer abilities, on wisdom from within rather than external knowledge. Thus the truly intelligent person exhibits wisdom through being, without pretentiousness, without calling attention to the outer self (personality).

Because true intelligence is at variance with conventional notions, it is not (and cannot be) measured by conventional methods. True intelligence is not worldly and can hardly be measured through any worldly means. The objective mind does not really have the basis for measuring (or even recognizing) true intelligence. Thus conventional intelligence tests are (naturally and necessarily) substantially biased toward conventional notions of intelligence. At more spiritual "levels" the measurement of intelligence has no meaning. For true intelligence is subjective and collective, rather than objective and individual. True intelligence is based on internals rather than externals. And the inner life is substantially collective, as the individual links with other souls (at inner levels and through inner means) and the individual becomes an expression of something deeper, more noble (and more intelligent) than the individual consciousness.

The real value in "intelligence" is what characteristics or qualities of intelligence (consciousness) can be carried forward with value in the next incarnation or with value beyond life in this world. Worldly-based intelligence only has significance in the world, and has relatively little value beyond. On the other hand, awareness (clarity of perception) (insight) (wisdom) are extremely valuable in the longer view. They have more permanence. They can be applied not only in the current incarnation and in the next lifetime, but in the subtle (higher) worlds as well.

Education and Intelligence

In conventional thinking there would seem to be a relatively high correlation between higher education and intelligence. If a person is highly educated, then that person is (sometimes wrongly) presumed to be relatively intelligent, and if a person is not so highly educated, then that person is (sometimes wrongly) presumed to be not so relatively intelligent. But in fact there is no real (absolute) correlation between (formal) education and actual intelligence. Some intelligence is required in order for one to succeed in higher education, but lack of formal education does not imply a lack of intelligence. While most well-educated people are nominally (relatively) intelligent, and while some highly educated people are very intelligent, some poorly educated people are also very intelligent.

The problem, in part, is in the conventional understanding of intelligence. Intelligence is defined conventionally in academic terms, in terms of reasoning abilities, in terms of knowledge and the ability to apply knowledge in conventional ways, with a strong presumption that formal education and knowledge are important ingredients. But while formal education has considerable (potential) relative value and provides credentials and opportunities that might not otherwise be realized, real intelligence is not so much a matter of knowledge or training, or even of understanding and comprehension, as it is a matter of awareness and perception and wisdom, i.e., quality of consciousness and the capacity for learning and applying that understanding wisely. Thus a relatively uneducated person may sense things that a highly educated (and more nominally intelligent) person might not perceive or understand.

In a sense, formal education provides tools, much like the intellect and its training are tools, but in many ways education also limits the perceptive process, through conditioning and the introduction of presumptions and biases. Since intelligence is really the capacity for learning, many intelligent people are largely self-educated. And truly intelligent people continue to learn substantially throughout the lifetime and well beyond the boundaries of their formal education. And the very truly intelligent people simply very effectively

apply whatever understanding and wisdom is realized. The key is to learn without being encumbered by knowledge. To think of knowledge as relative rather than absolute. To see things in a broader, deeper context than most formal educational institutions can provide.

Another dimension of intelligence is conscience and discretion (intuitive insight). A self-absorbed person is simply limited by personal focus, and unable to perceive things (very) clearly, being largely unable to discern the more subtle (and more meaningful) aspects of truth and reality. A person of conscience, i.e., who senses the inner wisdom and lives in accord with it, tends to be relatively more insightful and therefore relatively more effective in dealing with the challenges of life in the lower worlds.

And of course the final factor in intelligently embracing experience and expression is the (lack of) ego. The ego is substantially preclusive. It tends to filter out what is inconsistent with its own interests. The truly wise person does not allow the ego or intellect to be (so) preclusive. The truly wise person transcends the limitations of ego and intellect and allows the conscience (higher consciousness) (intuition and insight) to manifest naturally. In the final analysis, it is not education and training and knowledge that matters, though these all have some value. What really matters is awareness and perception and conscience.

† Commentary No. 1274

Ordinary Intelligence

Conventional definitions of (ordinary) intelligence are based on an ordinary, worldly and intellectual perspective, where “values” relate primarily to the world and to living in the world and “succeeding” in accordance with the expectations of the world (and given the presumption that living in the world (based on materialism and egoism) is an end in itself). It is based on the (necessary but transient) delusion of life in the material world and is therefore necessarily quite superficial (however useful it may be to living the world and solving worldly (and academic) problems).

Consequently, ordinary intelligence is instinctive and intellectual intelligence. Having mental capacity in ordinary (logical) (rational) (reasonable) “thinking” and having insight into and understanding of the ways of the world that allows a person to more effectively cope with the world. Cleverness, quick-wittedness, objectivity, etc. are all descriptive of ordinary (academic) (limited) (superficial) (ego-based) (personality-centered) (self-centered) (lower) intelligence. The problem is, that although ordinary intelligence is a necessary development in human intelligence, as it facilitates experience in the (lower) world, it is necessarily limited and limiting, because it does not facilitate or even allow deepening in the greater sense of true perception and higher awareness.

Ordinary intelligence is also fundamentally separative, as it is head-centered and individualistic. It is based in the delusion of separateness and fosters that delusion. It is fundamentally based on instinct for survival and worldly “progress” at the individual level. People at ordinary levels tend to view themselves as distinct entities, being relatively independent of others and involved to some extent in self-determination. People tend to value ordinary intelligence because that is consistent with their life-in-the-world perception, but if one is absorbed in the pursuit of worldly experience, knowledge, and understanding, then one is not able to be responsive to some higher calling. This is because the mind, in its separative role, tends to be self-absorbed and therefore unable to accept “information” that challenges its self-perception. Also because the mind tends to be attached to what is “known” and is not naturally open-minded or amenable to any depth or breadth of learning. Those who are of ordinary (intellectual) intelligence, but focused on learning, tend to be more intelligent and more open-minded, perhaps even more objective in thinking, but still largely limited by the capacity of the mind to function in comfortable patterns.

Ordinary intelligence involves the brain and the mind, the body and the intellect, rather than consciousness per se. Ordinary intelligence is thus rather material in its workings, mechanical in its nature, and subject to conditioning. If the brain is damaged or impaired, then the ability to function intellectually tends also to be impaired. Similarly if the brain is sound but the mind is damaged or impaired. Indeed, ordinary intelligence requires an effective link between mind and brain. Ordinary intelligence is also an outgrowth from animal instinct, being similar but on a higher level.

Intelligence is not consciousness. Consciousness is a higher quality that simply utilizes whatever intelligence there is. Primitive human beings rely primarily on the intelligence conveyed by their animal instinct. More developed human beings have developed the mind to the point where intelligence is primarily intellectual and not instinctive. But beyond (normal) (ordinary) (intellectual) intelligence, is intelligence based on the intuition.

† Commentary No. 1275

Extraordinary Intelligence

Extraordinary intelligence is defined as intelligence substantially beyond the merely intellectual or mindful and not simply a larger measure of intellectual intelligence or “great” ordinary (intellectual) intelligence. In this context, extraordinary intelligence includes substantial lower (instinctive and intellectual) intelligence, tempered by higher consciousness, and enhanced through reliance upon intuition.

While ordinary intelligence is limited and limiting, and grows only in the academic and intellectual (and personal) dimension, extraordinary intelligence is multi-dimensional and holistic. It includes instinctive intelligence (the animal intelligence of the physical body), emotional intelligence (the animal intelligence or “lower intuition” of the astral body), intellectual intelligence (the “human” intelligence of the concrete mind or mental body), and intuitive intelligence (the superhuman intelligence of buddhi). But it is the intuitive dimension that makes extraordinary intelligence special (substantially extraordinary), because it is the intuition (buddhi) that provides true (unbiased) (clear) perceptiveness and awareness and insight in ways uncluttered by knowledge and beliefs and bias and prejudice and conditioning and habits. In ways uncluttered by the lower self, by personality-centeredness (ego) and self-centeredness.

So the key to developing, more properly the key to allowing to unfold, extraordinary intelligence, is the tempering of the ego (mind) (personality) and the cultivation of the (higher, buddhic) intuition, none of which can actually be accomplished until the mind is sufficiently developed, meaning that sufficient

ordinary (intellectual) intelligence is a prerequisite, and that too much ordinary intelligence (complete reliance on intellect, a overarching sense of the separated self, undermines or precludes the emergence of intuition. Indeed, even where there is an intellectual appreciation of these truths, the mind will tend to fabricate what seems to be intuitive insight, where in fact it is most likely and generally merely subconscious (ego-based) intellect at work. But while ordinary intelligence is developed primarily through effort and assimilation of experience, extraordinary intelligence is not really developed but cultivated, allowed to emerge through the tempering of that which impedes the higher consciousness. The ego cannot do that. It can only be brought about through listening and becoming responsive to something higher (and deeper) than the ordinary consciousness.

By extraordinary, in this context, it is not meant abnormal or supernormal in the sense of being an extension of the normal, but simply remarkable and exceptional in the sense of it being so rare and requiring so much preparatory work, and being so misunderstood as to be not even recognized by most people. The truly perceptive, intuitively insightful person is almost invariably recognized (wrongly) as having (merely) an exceptionally keen intellect, when in fact the intellect has been tempered and qualified, held in quiescence, in order to allow the intuition to emerge, utilizing the intellect only as a vehicle of transmission and not as a vehicle of apprehension.

There is another real difference between ordinary and extraordinary intelligence, and that is that ordinary intelligence is based in the body, on material levels (the physical, emotional, and mental bodies) and utilized by consciousness, while extraordinary intelligence is based in consciousness and utilized by something higher than consciousness (the soul). Thus extraordinary intelligence only emerges during the relatively later stages of the path.

Section 2.14



Realization

- Realization is a compound product of some measure of awareness and some considerable underlying intelligence. Self-realization is an important goal of life on earth.

Mundane Realization 1

Realization in the lower sense is the action of realizing or the state of being realized. To realize is to bring into existence (at whatever level) (both in an exoteric and esoteric sense), to cause to seem real, make appear real, to conceive as real, or to be fully aware of. The ability to realize (create) (at any level) is a common, natural, and necessary part of (experiencing) (evolving) life (existence), and it is a considerable part of differentiating man from the life-forms of the other kingdoms (exoteric and esoteric).

In the early part of personality-dominated incarnations (lives), the realization process is mostly self-centered (appropriate at that stage of evolution), and more concerned with self-indulgent activities, interests, and personal comfort. However, with increasing higher-order awareness, the process becomes (more) centered beyond the personal "I" (and increasingly affected and effected by the influence or qualification of the soul), and less personal (more service oriented) considerations are evoked. While it may be (usually is) some time (incarnations) before the soul is able to guide consciousness away from the personality-oriented self to the greater (higher) self, in time, under the unending (gentle) (pervasive) (appropriate) guidance of the soul, the lower self comes into coherence (cooperation) with the (evolutionary) plan.

In the course of evolution, the student (spiritual) (of life) (man) makes innumerable realizations, which is another way of saying that evolution (life) (progress) is occurring. One of the more meaningful (significant) (consciousness expanding) realizations a spiritual student makes in this process is the (higher-order) recognition of living in but not of the mundane world. With this realization, the spiritual student participates in incarnation only as required to achieve the necessities of life, and otherwise, he exists on the periphery of incarnation (or beyond) to accomplish the more meaningful (esoteric) (service) duties in response to a higher calling. This realization is often compelling to the spiritual student, resulting from the student's awareness of not wanting anything in the lower, mundane world (as an end in itself) (illusion). Furthermore, the student eventually realizes that he (she) may not even like (care for) (look forward to) earthly existence, especially with regard to the

quality of life that one is expected to live at this level (time) of consciousness (i.e., primarily a physical and/or emotional existence).

The realization of relative disinterest in mundane life may be (forcefully) (meaningfully) (appropriately) brought to consciousness in a context, such as “What am I doing here (in earthly life (existence))?” Or, the recognition may take the form of the (sinking) feeling (from a personality perspective) of “Is this all there is (or, surely there is more?)?” This realization (awareness) (however perceived) generally occurs when the lower (personality) self is reasonably well integrated and beginning to be qualified by the higher self (soul), and only then after the refining process has occurred over a reasonable (necessary) period of time.

Under these circumstances of higher-order (necessary) (appropriate) qualification, the process may be thought of as a (normal) transitory (initiatory) step (test) (trial) on the (unending) (spiral) path (of life). If the step (call) is not taken it probably indicates a lack of (personality) readiness (qualification) to willingly cooperate (subjugate the lower self) to the higher (inevitable) principle of the soul. However, in the way of evolution, appropriate circumstances will be recurringly evoked (as called for), so that the next step (for those called) may be taken.

† Commentary No. 777

Mundane Realization 2

The process of being able to realize (understand the (true) meaning behind) the concept of living “in” but not “of” this world is usually (potentially) (often) a precursor of the personality sublimating (or beginning to sublimate) itself to the soul. While the actual process is not (need not be) difficult (it is really quite natural) (i.e., life to death and vice versa (death of the personality but greater awareness of the soul (life))), making the step can involve a period of conflict (turmoil) (upheaval) for the student in (during the) transition period (due to personality resistance).

As part of the realization process, considerable procrastination and rationalization (concrete mental, reactive avenues of expression) (used to

undermine the process) can be (unnecessarily) invoked by the personality to defend its (supposed) domain of control (sovereignty). This reactivity occurs because the personality perceives the situation as a loss of control (which is contrary to its normal position of dominance, unless the lower-self is reasonably soul-qualified). In this process, besides loss of control, the personality fears letting go of the familiar (as to the unfamiliar, greater self), again because the process of soul-infusion is incomplete and/or the personality is still quite powerful and resistant to (necessary) (appropriate) change.

The realization process (of “What am I doing here (in mundane existence)?”) can occur even if the familiar (world of the personality (interaction with other personalities)) is undesired (without attraction) (as is quite possible at this stage of individual evolution). Under these circumstances, the personality is (probably) playing games (invoking “lip service” to accepting the situation (i.e., “apparently” transferring control from the lower (personality) to the higher self (soul)) without really meaning it) (as the personality is wont to do), being not willing (unable) (temporarily) to take the next logical step (i.e., make the necessary commitment).

Basically, the conflict of control (only from the perspective of the personality) (the soul does not act (is not responsive) at this level) comes down to believing what one means (what one thinks one means), being firm in one’s conviction (as possible) (yet hopefully without attachment), and being able to act accordingly in a consistent, sustained (higher-referenced) manner. While this realization may (seemingly) involve a difficult transition period (initially), if the mundane (false) (illusionary) existence created by (for) the personality holds no real meaning (attraction) and mainly entails only circumstances of disinterest, is there really any choice?

If the realization (awareness) (in consciousness) exists based on soul-infusion or qualification (i.e., the apprehension of the (new) higher world is considered in lieu of disinterest in the mundane world combined with a real interest in service (the motive of the soul)), the realization process will (readily) evoke or involve the accepted (all-inclusive) consciousness, once the inevitable, all-illuminating (non-threatening to the personality) realization (of not really wanting to be either in or of this world) naturally floods and (positively) infuses (fully qualifies) (is embraced by) the lower self. All of this suggests that rather than

fighting the situation (a normal personality reaction), the spiritual student should instead endeavor to accept (the natural) world of the soul, especially if the alternative (lower world existence) no longer holds its previous attraction and access to the higher world is warranted (appropriate).

† Commentary No. 853

Seeking and Self-Realization

Seeking refers generally to the process of truth-seeking and specifically to the process of preparation for self-realization (which involves the preliminary stages of the spiritual path of conscious evolution in consciousness). Self-realization refers to the state of consciousness (achieved through the later stages of the spiritual path) in which the consciousness (waking-consciousness) is wholly aligned with the soul or higher self and in which state thinking in the normal sense is not possible, as awareness is achieved that transcends thinking in that conventional sense.

Many believe that self-realization requires only that one stop thinking, that in not-thinking one has overcome the illusion of duality and separateness, and that no effort or qualifications whatsoever are required, that any effort at all undermines the possibility of self-realization. And, in apparent contrast, many believe that lifetimes of experience, training, self-discipline, etc., are required before one can be qualified for self-realization. Thus many feel that these two ideas are mutually exclusive. But in fact, these two ideas are somewhat complementary. Self-realization is actually possible only after one is properly qualified, and self-realization can then, and only then, occur through the final mechanism of not-thinking.

Those who believe they have achieved self-realization without prior qualification are therefore merely deceiving and deluding themselves. To evoke not-thinking prematurely, i.e., without prior and proper qualification, is to prevent further growth and evolution in consciousness (which is of course quite convenient for the personality and ego). The “great awakening” is therefore a great self-deception and is, in a sense, greater than the grand illusion of individuality, separateness, duality, materiality, etc., that pervades much of

humanity. At least the great illusion is part of the plan and something that all of us must pass through in the process of achieving self-realization. The false sense of self-realization that comes with (merely) not-thinking is simply clever and self-limiting.

On the other hand, the mind is definitely a major hurdle to be overcome, and the state of not-thinking is a difficult one to achieve (more properly, a state to allow, as it cannot, properly, be evoked through effort). This is an apparent paradox (and one of many encountered on the path), in that one must develop the mind rather definitely before the mind can be overcome in self-realization. One must seek before one can "achieve" not-seeking. One must learn to think (properly) before one can learn to not-think. In another sense, not-seeking (like not-thinking) is part of the cycle of activity and repose (pralaya), as one works within the field of consciousness (evolution) for a while, and one then rests in repose for a while, effectively assimilating the experience of the active period before returning to another period of activity (experience and expression) (leading to growth and expansion (and refinement) in consciousness).

For the spiritual student, the danger is entanglement in activity that precludes periods of repose. But even entanglement is preferable to stagnation in non-activity. Thus the student should endeavor to observe himself (in constant recollectedness), to achieve both the humility and refinement that comes with non-attachment, and eventually to evoke the state characterized by the silent mind. These efforts are not inconsistent with the intended result; in fact they are quite necessary in order to bring about that intended result (the silent mind).

