

The Upper Triad Material

Topical Issue 4.5

Health and Healing

Harmony and Balance



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Health and Healing

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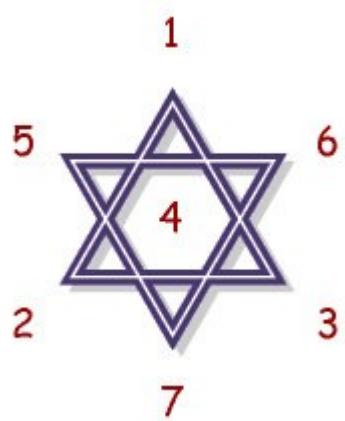
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Chapter 4.5

Health and Healing



Harmony and Balance

- Unfortunately, the human being in incarnation does not generally come equipped with an owner's manual that describes the nature of the human condition within the field of manifestation. One must learn as one progresses through this existence, through experience and expression and through facing the consequences of our activities.
- If one remains in the intended evolutionary flow, then one tends to be healthy and open to the lessons afforded through experience. However, if one is not living in accord with the flow of life, if one is not responsive to the afforded and intended lessons, then disease and injury, pain and suffering are natural consequences of not being in harmony, of being out of balance.



Health and Healing

Unfortunately, the human being in incarnation does not generally come equipped with an owner's manual that describes the nature of the human condition within the field of manifestation. One must learn as one progresses through this existence, through experience and expression and through facing the consequences of our activities. If one remains in the intended evolutionary flow, then one tends to be healthy and open to the lessons afforded through experience. However, if one is not living in accord with the flow of life, if one is not responsive to the afforded and intended lessons, then disease and injury, pain and suffering are natural consequences.

While these consequences may not convey any direct "understanding" of cause and effect relationships to the waking-consciousness (conscious mind), they do leave impressions in the subconscious, and as those impressions are reinforced through subsequent experience and consequences, eventually the lessons are learned and experience is assimilated, however subjectively (and however much discomfort may result in the meantime). Yet where the student is open to the lessons of this world, through physical, emotional, and intellectual experience and expression, then good health tends to result.

Health is technically the condition of one's healthiness and covers a range between healthy and unhealthy. Health includes physical health and the vitality of the etheric double, emotional health and the integrity-quality-stability of the aura, and mental health and the integrity-quality-stability of the concrete mind or intellectual body. More generally, health refers to (good) healthiness or good balance (equilibrium), while lack of health in any measure or way implies movement in consciousness away from the equilibrium of the intended evolutionary path, by virtue of attitude, behavior, feelings, and/or thoughts.

Of course, what is meant by healthy is a matter of perspective based on understanding and values. For example, one might believe that repression of anger is unhealthy and that venting that anger is healthy, so that one "feels" better afterward (which reinforces the belief that it is healthy). Yet actually,

while repression is unhealthy, so is venting of anger. The measure of the healthiness of any action (physical, emotional, and/or mental) is the extent to which it encourages accord with the evolutionary flow. Any action which is harmful to oneself or to anyone else and/or which is dishonest in any way engenders imbalance and evokes consequential forces. Thus in venting one's anger one might feel better as a result of the release of tension, yet the act of venting may be harmful (psychically) to oneself and to anyone to whom it is directed. In such a case, healing occurs not through the venting, but through restoration of balance, meaning the absence of ill will (criticism) (judgment) toward anyone. For some, self-indulgence (and anything self-justified) may appear to be healthy, while in the long run one learns from experience that moderation and balance (and non-self-centeredness) are much more healthy.

Healing is the process through which the balance or equilibrium is restored. In principle, restoration of balance can be accomplished superficially through treatment of the effects, in which case the cause or causes are still in effect and some further anomaly or disease or injury will emerge into manifestation, or restoration of balance can be accomplished through treatment in consciousness, through learning, through adjustments in consciousness. Merely removing the apparent cause or causes does not accomplish healing. One must learn what one needs to learn, and grow in the manner intended, according to one's level and type of consciousness.



Commentary No. 730

Pain and Suffering 1

Pain and suffering are usually misunderstood in the mundane world as unfortunate and often unmerited circumstances. Yet pain and suffering are actually phenomena associated with the natural response or reaction of the human personality to wholly merited (stressing) karmic consequences. Pain and suffering are never inflicted (karmically) without there first being an unresponsiveness on the part of the personality to learning the intended lesson. In fact, suffering is primarily self-imposed (and many circumstances attracted) by the ego or personality-centered nature as a result of attachments or beliefs which are threatened by the learning process.

Those who have substantial attachments to material possessions and mundane principles (money, people, position, power, status) will eventually find these implied values challenged repeatedly until the personality learns reasonable detachment and moderation (balance) in mundane matters. For those whose souls are committed to the spiritual path, this challenge is much more (and increasingly) potent and the consequences of attachment more insistent.

Misfortune will not necessarily pass or lessen quickly as a result of changing values (lessons learned), since so-called misfortune is a natural and inevitable (merited) consequence and must run its course, but with growing understanding and composure, the student can moderate his response to misfortune to an attitude of acceptance qualified by a willingness (earnestness) to learn whatever lessons are implied. An open mind (and heart) are necessary prerequisites.

Karma is opportunity for learning. The good and the bad are simply biased ways of looking at opportunity. The circumstances which induce or encourage pain and suffering are simply more dramatic opportunities for more substantial attachments than is otherwise the case. Those who have no attachments, who are open and honest in their approach to life (and truth), generally do not attract painful circumstances or do not respond so badly to potentially painful situations. Feeling sorry for oneself is one of the less noble activities. One should rather be open to the various learning opportunities and at least recognize that in each element of pain and suffering there is an intended message. In refusing to feel sorry for oneself and in being thankful to God for all of life's blessings (such as they are, necessarily warranted) there is the beginning of openness.

The concept of tragedy is a grand, self-imported delusion. There are no tragedies. There are circumstances which allow karma to be resolved (which encourage the development of compassion and composure) and lessons to be learned (and adjustments to be made). The more dramatic the circumstances, the stronger the message intended (and made necessary by a comparably greater or broader attachment to false ideas (beliefs) (delusions)). And yet, one cannot help properly but to be moved by "tragedy" and respond with compassion and consideration for those affected (effected) (afflicted).

For those who suffer the most, often understand the least (and are generally incapable of consciously understanding the karmic concepts). For those who are

not consciously open to the various learning opportunities, or who suffer pain and anguish, the lessons are generally learned on more subtle levels (unconsciously or subconsciously) rather than consciously or directly (as should be the case for those further along the path). Compassion and consideration (rather than imposition or judgment) offer more constructive encouragement toward qualitative learning.



Commentary No. 733

Pain and Suffering 2

Pain necessarily arises from conflict or inconsistency (while conflict or inconsistency do not necessarily induce pain (they do induce consequences intended to restore the balance or encourage development or evolution in consciousness)). That conflict or inconsistency can be in regard to natural law, attachments, unrealistic expectations, etc., but in each case conveys an opportunity for learning or understanding (i.e., balance or resolution).

Material or personal (mundane) attachments lead a person to identify with the lower world and its varying (associated) illusions (glamour) (maya). The consequences of attachments are (karmic) challenges to unsettle (loosen) the respective attachments. But for those (vast majority) who are emotionally polarized (and for whom attachments are very normal), such challenges generally result in either greater conflict (challenge) or reattachment along slightly different lines (resulting in another cycle of challenge and dissolution). The key is to gradually rise above all attachments, in a constructive manner, such that the student is relatively free from the lesser turmoil (pain and suffering) and able to deal more directly with more subtle matters.

In cultures or peoples in which suffering (bereavement) is glamorized or otherwise encouraged (sensationalized), considerable resistance to learning is prevalent. Such cultures generally exhibit a heavily culturally qualified mass emotional consciousness (inflammation) and polarization (which allows or encourages mass reactivity, fanaticism, etc.) and which actively prevents any manifestation of reasonableness. Or in other words, relative maturity leads to (transitory but not disruptive) sadness or compassion (in the face of great pain or suffering) while relative immaturity may yield bereavement and great or

widespread insensibility (loss of emotional controls) (however necessary in order to release the accumulated or indirect reactive tension).

Pain and suffering (subtle or otherwise) induced (karmically) within an emotionally volatile mass consciousness can be dramatically destructive or revolutionary (in breaking down or through various barriers) and thereby potentially constructive in the long view (albeit difficult to appreciate or realize based upon humanity (human conditioning)). But it may also be a matter of great (grave) mass manipulation (e.g., relatively constructive in the case of essentially good leadership and relatively immature (passive) peoples or relatively destructive (in the sense of evil (ignorance) (self-interest) (bigotry) or alignment with the dark side of human nature or the left-handed path (black magic) (e.g., Hitlerian))) and more complex cause and effect relationships. As all things are karmic consequences, one should both accept the karmic nature of consequences and endeavor to work constructively (consistently with natural or cosmic law).

The spiritual student can effectively be sympathetic and compassionate (even empathetic), experiencing these feelings without loss of emotional control (i.e., there is a distinct difference between feeling some emotion (while being mentally and emotionally undisturbed (coherent)), on the one hand, and being involved in emotion such that the emotion is allowed to dominate or disrupt (not merely distract) the normal (coherent) posture, on the other hand). Ideally, the spiritual student exhibits humility, compassion, and goodwill under all circumstances. Any lack of humility, or lack of compassion, or lack of good-naturedness is an indication of (spiritual) immaturity. Pain and suffering, experienced naturally and consequentially, are ultimately constructive, and encourage these qualities of humility, compassion, and goodwill.



Bodily Polarity 1

The human being in incarnation consists of a number of bodies or vehicles of expression and experience, i.e., (1) the familiar dense physical body, which is the lowest of the bodies, (2) the etheric double or vital (energy) body, which is more properly considered the physical principle, (3) the astral or emotional (desire) body, (4) the mind or lower mental body, (5) the causal body, (6) the buddhic sheath (the vehicle of the spiritual (higher) intuition), (7) the atmic sheath (the vehicle of the spiritual (higher) will), etc., and (more properly) their associated principles and consciousness.

Each body is subject to (governed by) the laws of its own plane of consciousness, e.g., the physical-etheric body is subject to the natural laws of the physical plane, the astral body is likewise subject to the natural laws of the astral plane, etc. In this sense, natural laws are the consequential laws of evolutionary conditioning (qualification for divine intention (evolutionary purpose)). These natural laws are actually and more properly considered as only aspects of the natural law (cosmic law) (karma in its broadest evolutionary context). And so the laws of each plane are linked purposively, as (karmic) energy flows between the various planes of consciousness (through the various chakras or energy centers).

According to and consistent with natural law, each body is subject to (regulated by) causal factors from the body on the plane immediately above it, e.g., the dense physical body is subject to the health and conditioning of the etheric double, the physical-etheric body is regulated by and subject to emotional factors, the astral or emotional body is regulated by and subject to mental activity, etc. The extent to which a body is actively responsive to the higher factors is the extent to which a body is actively subject to that natural law. Each body has its own, elemental existence, which resists higher qualification and seeks to continue its own (self-centered and narrowly-focused) experience and expression on its plane, but as the personality on its various levels is purified, qualified, refined, and uplifted, the personality becomes integrated and more properly responsive.

Each body has a natural fixed or dynamic polarity with regard to the other bodies. The physical body is either male (active) (positive) (inductive) or female (passive) (negative) (deductive) according to the decision made at the time of conception. The astral body is naturally polarized oppositely from the physical body, but can more or less easily function relatively as male (kinetic) or female (static) depending on the circumstances (internal and external factors and the degree and nature of responsiveness to same). The higher vehicles tend to be bi-sexual in this (dynamic or kinetic (male)) sense of polarity. The vehicles also have an underlying and alternating planar (static) polarity, the physical body having a male planar polarity, the astral being female, the mind being male, etc., in addition to the specific polarity of a given body or vehicle. But the real human being (the soul) is sexless and each body is naturally bi-sexual, having, inherently, both male and female aspects, depending on the point of view or perspective. In the case of the physical body, one of the two sexes is selected by the soul for expression (while the other is suppressed).

Bodily polarity gives rise to a number of potential problems or anomalies, e.g., homosexuality and/or other unnatural polarity reversals, yet the relationships of (proper) bodily polarity also hold the key to potential (and eventual) self-mastery.



Commentary No. 862

Bodily Polarity 2

Any sexual excess or reversal of bodily polarity is considered by the esotericist as unnatural (harmful) and counter-productive (i.e., counter-evolutionary). Thus homosexuality is considered to be a serious anomaly. Likewise enforced sexual asceticism (celibacy) is an extreme (while natural celibacy is an evolutionary goal). The homosexual (or other polarity-reversed person) is entirely responsible for and accountable for his or her condition (which is a result of sexual excess or extreme identification with or entanglement of consciousness with the body or bodies).

Reversal of bodily polarity involves a lower body actively influencing the next higher vehicle rather than the next higher vehicle naturally influencing the lower. In the case of the (physical) homosexual, the physical body drives the

emotions rather than the emotions (properly) driving (influencing or conditioning) the physical body. Even without a homosexual condition, bodily polarity reversal can occur where the physical appetites (sexual or otherwise) drive and thereby compound the emotions.

In the case of the emotionally-polarized extremist (in which the astral body is positive with respect to the mental body), the emotional flavor (bias) (cause) (prejudice) dominates and compromises the mind and all thinking. Thus arises the difference between trying to prove something and merely seeking the truth. In the case of the mentally-polarized extremist (albeit more rare than the emotional counterpart), the concrete mind tends to dominate (and draw from) the abstract mental faculties in such a manner to serve his or her (concrete mental and personal) objectives. In both (extreme) cases there is substantial mental and emotional blindness rather than the more natural and more reasonable (properly desirable) receptivity to reality and truth.

The problem of each of these cases of bodily polarity reversal (and/or any tendency toward sexual excess or sexual vulnerability) has to do with the fact that sexual force (on any level) is inherently the creative force with which the occultist and mystic and esotericist (spiritual student) must work. In order to work constructively (productively) (safely), the student must be sexually stable (not necessarily static) on all levels of consciousness. Any reversal of bodily polarity (or sexual vulnerability) minimizes or effectively precludes any serious spiritual work simply by virtue of the fact of that vulnerability. The student who is sexually (or otherwise) unstable (or anomalous) simply cannot and will not be trusted with the spiritual (creative) potency that is the dharma of one who is upon the path (way). [There are however, many religious and political leaders who sincerely (or otherwise) and unconsciously (or otherwise) draw upon the lower (sexual) (material psychic) forces in apparent creative potency. Let us not be deceived by phenomenal appearance].

It is ever important for the spiritual student to become and remain properly bodily polarized, for only with such proper polarizations can the lesser vehicles be purified, qualified, refined, and uplifted. Only where the higher forces are conditioning the lower vehicles effectively can the personality be integrated and (subsequently) aligned with (and therefore receptive and responsive to) the soul. The key to effective self-mastery is therefore (1) utilization of the emotions to

clarify and subdue the appetites of the physical body, (2) utilization of the concrete mind to dominate, purify, and qualify the emotional nature (leading eventually to personality integration), and (3) utilization of the abstract mind and intuition (buddhic faculty) to subdue and qualify the concrete mind (mental body) (leading to soul alignment).



Commentary No. 1407

Consistency and Conformity

Consistency and conformity with natural, higher law, leads to or sustains health. There is simply no other means available for enduring health. All of life is qualified by purpose, namely evolution in consciousness, i.e., learning, growing, and serving. The extent to which people live inconsistently or non-conformingly with natural, higher law, is the extent to which there is disease (dis-ease) and injury and other imports relating to health.

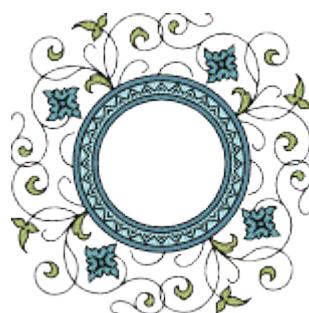
Consistency and conformity with natural, higher law evoke opportunities for further growth. Inconsistency and non-conformity with natural, higher law also evoke opportunities for further growth, but these opportunities are further conditioned by the balancing force that brings a person back into consistency and conformity with natural, higher law. And so these opportunities are mainly about redressing the balance and less about moving forward, i.e., more about helping a person to be responsive to learning opportunities than actually learning. Except that one of the more important things to learn is what actually facilitates learning (i.e., consistency and conformity with natural, higher law).

What is actually meant by consistency and conformity is simply living in accordance with the (ethical, moral, and spiritual) principles that facilitate evolution in consciousness, at the individual, group, and collective levels. It does not mean rigid conformity with rules that are not really understood. But it does mean learning about natural, higher law and then living in accord with that knowledge and understanding. Disease, injury, and other difficult circumstances all indicate a lack of balance, a lack of harmony, and a lack of understanding (a lack of consistency and conformity with natural, higher law). Health and a lack of difficult circumstances does not necessarily indicate consistency and conformity, as it may indicate simply that a person is asleep

and unresponsive (in which case there is generally an eventual, impending disruption of the status quo, and a more dramatic opportunity for adjustment in consciousness).

But more generally, health implies a facility for learning and growing and serving, such that disease, injury, or other awkwardness is simply not needed in order for a person to be responsive. But health is not simply a matter of apparent, physical health. There is also vitality (etheric health) and harmony and stability (coherence) on emotional and concrete mental levels. Many who appear physically healthy are simply "unhealthy" on higher levels. And that dis-ease on higher levels will eventually manifest on lower levels unless it is first properly resolved. A "healthy" person is really one who recognizes unhealthy energy within himself (herself) and makes a suitable adjustment in consciousness (i.e., in attitude, behavior, disposition, etc.). To such a person, the healing process is continual if not continuous, because there is learning, there is adjustment, there is responsiveness to healing energy, there is engagement in healing, and this engagement endures.

Natural, higher law is simply the law of evolution in consciousness that pervades all of life and experience. It is karma in all its various facets. It is dharma likewise. Consistency to natural, higher law is simply being harmless, being devoted to truth (seeking truth, being honest in all regards), and cultivating humility (not allowing the ego to serve as a barrier in consciousness). Consistency and conformity is simply living in harmony with all of life, learning and growing in consciousness, serving others according to need and opportunity, embracing the healing process.



Section 4.51



Health

- Health includes physical health and the vitality of the etheric double, emotional health and the integrity-quality-stability of the aura, and mental health and the integrity-quality-stability of the concrete mind or intellectual body. Lack of health in any measure or way implies movement in consciousness away from the equilibrium of the intended evolutionary path, by virtue of attitude, behavior, feelings, and/or thoughts.



Physical Illness

In terms of the causal chain that leads to physical illness there are a number of superficial or intermediate (consequential) factors as well as an overall, underlying factor of karma. The superficial factors are (1) exposure to an environment of illness-conducive agents, (2) the presence of such agents, and (3) the relative responsiveness of the body (consciousness) to the presence of illness-conducive agents.

These three factors indicate superficially (consequentially) the relative susceptibility or vulnerability of a person to physical illness in general and/or to particular maladies. All people (in incarnation) are exposed to a wide range of environmental factors, germs, chemicals, genetic factors, etc., some (people) more than others, depending on geography, relative environmental cleanliness, etc., but all people to some extent. These factors may be externally or internally environmental. But not all are susceptible to incorporating internally or externally environmental illness-conducive agents; e.g., for two people of equal exposure, one might incorporate (attract) particular illness-conducive agents and the other might not. For two children of common parentage, one might receive (embrace) certain genetic factors while the other may not. For common exposure, there is (relative) individual variability in degree of susceptibility or vulnerability (just as some people are accident-prone and others are not).

The relative concentration of a given illness-conducive agent is a factor, i.e., the presence of certain chemicals (drugs) (germs) in moderate amounts generally indicates less vulnerability than large concentrations of these agents (too much of almost anything can be detrimental). On the other hand, some people are particularly sensitive or vulnerable to some agents for which others are wholly indifferent or invulnerable. It is the relative responsiveness (susceptibility) (vulnerability) of a particular person to a particular illness-conducive agent that ultimately (superficially) determines the extent (magnitude) and duration of any illness. Part of the relative responsiveness has to do with the overall physical, emotional, and mental health of the individual (healthy people have better and stronger defenses), but where necessary, even relatively invulnerable people can suffer uncharacteristically.

The overall, underlying factor of karma determines all aspects of physical illness. Karma determines the internal and external environment and relative concentrations and distributions of illness-conducive agents. Karma determines whether or not and to what extent and for how long a person will be subjected to the presence of such agents. And karma determines the relative susceptibility or responsiveness of the person to that presence and the nature, extent, and duration of all consequential illnesses (as all illness is consequential and all effects are karmic). So any analysis or evaluation of physical illness should consider the causal (karmic) chain and the underlying reason(s) (lesson(s) to be learned) for any particular illness or general susceptibility. All individual consequences are self-determined. Every illness is a relative consequence of some activity, attitude, or disposition, as is every extent of health a consequence of more a positive (constructive, learning) endeavor.

Karma overcomes, as needed. Benign (malignant) transformations are karmic consequents (consequences). Severity and mildness are karmic factors. And past (as well as current) emotional and mental factors are usually significant influences in physical illness. In the final analysis, one must learn what one must learn, and all that intervenes merely facilitates that learning.



Commentary No. 686

Emotional and Mental Illness

Virtually all physical illness is related in one way or another to present and/or past emotional and mental behavior and conditions. The susceptibilities and vulnerabilities to particular physical ills are directly related (karmically) to past and present attitudes, conditions, activities, etc., in thinking and feeling.

Physical illness is merely (generally) the manifestation on dense physical levels of an illness or inconsistency on etheric levels which is in turn a manifestation on etheric levels of an illness (inconsistency) (lack of harmony) (lack of propriety) on emotional and/or (concrete) mental levels (the problem of consciously understanding the cause and effect relationships is dramatically compounded by the fact that current effects are the result of current and past

(unfulfilled) causes, and most people cannot effectively (with detachment and impersonality) perceive their current or past conditions).

The keys to properly resolving illness of any form are (1) acceptance of responsibility for the condition in a positive, constructive sense, and (2) appreciation of the behavioral causes and resolution to overcome such causes. In the predominant case of lack of knowledge or insight into the causes, it is usually sufficient (to induce learning and moderate the effects) to be open and willing to face up to the causes (and associated lessons). The principal objective should be learning and understanding (not merely or even the removal of consequences). Of course if current emotional or mental conditions are less than sound (stable), then resolution (fulfillment) of illness is a more complicated and difficult matter.

From the metaphysical point of view, emotional (and mental) illness refers to conditions in the astral (emotional) body (and in the concrete mind) (respectively) that are inconsistent with the intended (evolutionary) accomplishments of the current human cycle (range of numerous lifetimes) (the further along the evolutionary path one may be the more significant are the lesser inconsistencies). Consequently, emotional and mental extremes are (in this context) indications of emotional and mental illness. Wherever there are wild swings in mood, emotional outbursts, coarseness in feelings, strong attachments, intense desires, etc., there is (metaphysically) emotional illness. Even the normal and natural (intermediate) state of emotional polarization (as most human beings are so polarized) is considered an emotional illness. Similarly, mental extremes are forms of mental illness. Being (highly) (or at all, depending on the place upon the path) opinionated is a mental illness. Being ultra-rational or closed-minded or particularly concrete-minded are forms of mental illness.

While all of these conditions indicate emotional and/or mental illness, the proper attitude toward people who exhibit these conditions is not to treat them as being ill, but rather to appreciate that these conditions are natural (even inevitable for most people at some time or another) and will naturally pass as the people concerned learn and grow by virtue of their experience. Thus compassion and appreciation for these people and their difficulties should serve without judgment. Many of the current physical ills (e.g., cancer, immune

system deficiencies) are directly related to sexual (and other emotional) excesses or improprieties from earlier lifetimes (which may or may not be triggered from current circumstances or related activities).

But in each case (illness) is a lesson or series of lessons ultimately revealed and embraced, even if primarily subconsciously or super-consciously and even if in the afterlife rather than concurrently.



Commentary No. 851

Emotional and Mental Health

Emotional and mental health are, in some ways and in principle, quite similar to physical health, with various strengths and weaknesses (or tendencies thereof) being part of the karmic manifestation. But emotional and mental health are, relatively and respectively, more significant, in the sense that mental health substantively affects the emotional state, and emotional health substantively affects the physical state. The physical state refers to the condition of the physical body and its etheric double or vital body, its relative health, stability, coherence, strength, and purity. Similarly, the emotional and mental states refer to the condition of the emotional or astral body (aura) and the condition of the mental body or concrete mind, respectively. Whatever exists in the mind is naturally reflected into the emotional body. And whatever exists in the emotional body is naturally reflected into the etheric body and its dense physical counterpart.

Bad thoughts lead thusly to bad feelings, and bad feelings lead likewise to a lack of harmony within the physical body. Diseases of the mind and emotions lead to afflictions in the emotional and physical bodies, respectively. But, similarly, good thoughts lead to good feelings, and good feelings lead likewise to more harmony within the physical body. A healthy mind leads to healthy emotions and healthy emotions leads to a healthy (or healthier) body. In the case of an integrated personality, the connectivity between the bodies is strengthened and the potential for "health" is improved. All of this is, however, subject to karmic qualification (and temporally dissociated emergence of consequences), but karmic qualification is necessarily the consequence of (and influenced by) activity by (within) the mind and emotions as well as physical behavior.

The relative coarseness of the mind and emotions, and the relative habits of thinking and feeling, are necessarily related (causally) to (and from) both the mental and emotional health. Just as the physical body can be strengthened (or weakened) by proper exercise (or lack thereof), so can the emotional and mental bodies, as habits give rise to (constructive or destructive) patterns within the emotional and mental bodies (e.g., having opinions). Having opinions, for example, has been referred to as the "falling sickness of the mind."

People think that bias and prejudice are merely habits of thinking. In fact, bias and prejudice lead to deformation and discoloration of that part of the mental body (concrete mind) to which the subject (of bias or prejudice) belongs. That deformation strengthens the bias or prejudice and makes it quite difficult if not impossible for the person to think clearly on that subject. Moreover, habits of bias and prejudice in one subject encourage bias and prejudice in other areas as well. And one who is bigoted or broadly biased and prejudiced possesses a mental body that is actually "diseased" and seriously impaired. And yet, all of this, too, can be overcome by the determined student, who turns his mind to more noble things.

Some diseases of the mind and emotions are as contagious as some of the more virulent diseases of the body, for those who are sympathetic or vulnerable. Bias and bigotry, for example, can be induced in others, however unconscious their sympathy or vulnerability may be. And yet the same is true for mental and emotional health. A healthy mind, for example, free from those biases and prejudices that limit and confine the mental capacities, will naturally (tend to) induce similar tendencies (mental health) in others, by proximity and association, to whatever extent those others are sympathetic or responsive.



The Healthy Aura 1

The human aura is composed of the etheric body, the astral or emotional body (kama), and the concrete mind (mental body) (manas), in the sense of these three bodies forming an energy field through which the human being functions in the lower worlds (the physical body being merely an instrument on dense physical levels). The health of the physical body is directly related to the health of the aura (through the vitality of the etheric body (etheric double) (prana) and through the relative quality of kama-manas (emotions (feelings on astral levels) and thoughts).

From one perspective, the human being in incarnation is composed of the various bodies that form the personality as a whole (physical, etheric, astral or emotional, and concrete mental). From another perspective, the human being in incarnation is the human aura, which is the means of interacting with the world and other people, for experience and expression. From a third perspective, the human being in incarnation is composed of seven chakras in various stages of unfoldment (and expressing various qualities) (the chakras are the energy vortices between the various dimensions or levels (planes and sub-planes) of consciousness that facilitate the flow of energy (life and consciousness)). All three perspectives are true, being three aspects of the whole. The seven chakras represent (embody) life (spirit). The bodies represent matter. And the human aura represents consciousness, which bridges between matter and spirit (life).

The role of the spiritual student in this sense is to be healthy, to not hinder or obstruct the proper functioning of the chakras, to maintain the aura and the bodies in a healthy state, so that experience (learning) and expression (service) are facilitated (which encourages evolution in consciousness). A healthy person (with a healthy aura) is energy positive with regard to the immediate atmosphere, that is, such a person contributes positive (good) (constructive) energy to the collective consciousness. An unhealthy person (with an aura that is not so healthy) is energy negative with regard to the immediate atmosphere, that is, such a person either drains energy from the collective consciousness or contributes negative energy (influence that impedes growth in consciousness).

In this sense, a healthy aura is one in which there is balance (harmony) (stability) and relatively refined (good) energy. A healthy person has healthy (non-critical, non-judging, non-separative) thoughts and feelings. An unhealthy person is one who is relatively more self-centered (self-absorbed) and who proceeds more or less independently of the apparent welfare of (all) others. A healthy person (in this spiritual sense) conveys healing energy (encouragement) to all, more or less unconsciously, by virtue of being (not through contriving to share).

A healthy aura is one in which the higher energies (of the soul) are allowed to flow, to some extent, through the personality (aura) and into the world. This means that the presence or impediment of ego (intellect) (personality) is minimal, that one is living more or less in harmony with the flow of life and not living (merely) in accordance with one's own (contrived) intentions. The presence of ego substantially limits the flow of higher energies. The presence of coarseness within the aura does likewise (from the perspective of the soul, the ego is an artificial necessity, but something relatively coarse (matter) that needs to be transcended). A balanced, healthy aura greatly facilitates human experience and expression, individually and collectively.



Commentary No. 1144

The Healthy Aura 2

So. What contributes to an unhealthy aura? Anything that strengthens the material nature. Health is relative, and the factors which contribute to or undermine health, are likewise relative.

Smoking contributes (relatively directly) to an unhealthy aura, through the introduction of particulate matter (coarseness) directly into the aura, which lower the vibrations of the aura. This weakens the aura (and leads potentially to physical difficulties as well). Drinking (alcohol) (beer) (wine) contributes (relatively directly) to an unhealthy aura, through destabilization, through the loosening of the connections between the various bodies (physical, etheric, emotional, mental) and undermining the process of integration. Eating flesh foods (meat, fish, fowl) contributes (relatively directly) to an unhealthy aura,

through sustaining the relative coarseness of the physical body and its etheric double (through the animal energy (that is not present in dairy products) that distracts and weakens consciousness). Relying on drugs, particularly where they are not necessary (in moderation) for medical purposes, substantially undermines the overall health of the aura. The line between drug use and drug abuse is almost non-existent (for the spiritual student).

Three other major factors are materialism, sense indulgence, and egoism. Any (substantial) focus on (having) material wealth, attachments to material possessions, desire for material things, all contribute to the strength of the material dimension (relative coarseness) of the aura. Indulging the senses (seeking pleasure) (doing) also contributes substantially to the relative coarseness (and instability) of the aura, through strengthening the role of the emotions (astral body) as an independent entity (a distinction is made between pleasure seeking (focus) and pleasure as an incidental consequence (merely enjoying life)). Sense indulgence is materialism (coarseness) on the emotional (astral) plane, while egoism and intellectual attachments are materialism (coarseness) on the concrete mental plane.

An open aura (being emotionally exposed, passively, to the astral plane) (being psychically vulnerable (passive)) is particularly unhealthy. And any form of self-centeredness (separateness) (selfishness) (self-absorption) (egoism) (activeness) directly contributes to the relative coarseness (insensitivity) (unresponsiveness) of the aura, even where other factors are positive. The spiritual student is not expected to be perfect, but the student is encouraged to progressively and substantially overcome all of the various impediments to good health (physically, energetically (etherically), emotionally, and mentally (intellectually)), so that the student is then able to embrace and embody (and reflect) the higher energies.

And what contributes to a healthy aura? Refinement of all of the vehicles (bodies) (physical, etheric, astral or emotional, mental). Stability and coherence of the bodies and how they relate to each other. Proper meditation. Integration of the refined personality. A positive (non-egoistic) attitude, that evokes quality of consciousness. Embracing harmlessness and honesty. Being cheerful and unimposing. Not indulging the senses. Not having mental or emotional or physical attachments or addictions. Good health (a healthy aura) begins with a

sound mind and is substantially aided through healthy (unselfish, non-self-centered) emotions (feelings). In short, all of the spiritual practices of the path contribute toward the health of the human aura and improve (encourage) the effectiveness of the spiritual student in experience and expression.



Commentary No. 1177

Health

To value one's health is rather fundamental to the human condition and the human experience in the lower worlds. Yet although most people value health, not everyone acts (behaves) (feels) (thinks) in ways that facilitate or promote good health. This is so even when certain behavior is known to be inherently unhealthy.

The problem is inertia. People are generally asleep, lacking (full) awareness. People get absorbed or entangled or involved in experience (sensation) (expression) (ego) and there are therefore competing values and priorities. People may do things that are hazardous, either for noble reasons or otherwise (ego), either deliberately (being consciously aware of the risks) or otherwise (being unaware of the potential consequences). Much of human experience is inherently harmful at some level, but experience itself (gradually, eventually) leads to understanding the various factors (rules) (cause and effect relationships) regarding health (e.g., understanding karma, understanding that there are consequences for every action (attitude) (behavior) (desire) (feeling) (judgment) (thought)).

This is a world based on harmony through conflict, of evolution in consciousness through experience of contrast and then of transcending these conditions. (Good) health results from being in balance, in having all of one's karma fulfilled. In good health, at every level, one is able to experience life unimpeded by lack of balance. But good health is multi-dimensional. Good health relies on clear, non-critical, non-judging, non-separative (harmonious) thinking. Good health relies on clear, non-separative (harmonious) feelings. Good health relies on harmonious behavior. Good health relies on healthy human relationship (goodwill) (harmony). Wherever there is poor health (on any

[level], there is something out of balance, something not in equilibrium, something (a message, a lesson) to be conveyed.

One should not only value good health, one should also embrace good health in the sense of doing those things which are healthy and not doing those things which are not healthy. This is the real lesson of evolution. That if one aligns oneself with evolutionary force (flow) (Tao), then one is healthy (or at least the creative forces lead to improving health). If one opposes the evolutionary flow in some way, then there will be stress or tension on some level, resulting in (some manifestation of) poor health. This is true for the individual in incarnation and it is true for groups of people (races, countries, humanity as a whole) as well. Thus not only is the spiritual student encouraged to become and remain as healthy as is practical (i.e., as best one can given whatever karmic constraints there may be), the student is also encouraged to promote health within the race as a whole. This is best accomplished not through preaching or through imposition, but through healthy expression (living harmoniously, promoting goodwill).

Of course (apparent) good health does not imply that one is with or without karma (or with or without lessons to learn (there are always lessons to learn at some level)) (and one could simply be in a sleeping life), nor does (apparent) poor health imply that one is living "badly" (it may be a matter of residual karmic consequences (i.e., the lesson having been learned, the effects may dissolve gradually)). So one should not judge (oneself or others) based on appearances (or otherwise). One should simply live in accordance with metaphysical (spiritual) principles to the extent of one's understanding and the extent of one's ability given the circumstances.



Form and Binding Forces

The unity of form exists where sufficient force binds (holds) (qualifies) (sustains) the coherence (stability) (integrity) of the form. Relatively simple forms are thus bound by relatively simple forces, though higher forces may have shaped the form and established the binding force. Relatively more complex forms, which involve various elements or aspects, require more complex binding in order to sustain the harmony (unity) of the form. Such (complex) forms generally require continuing qualification of a higher order, e.g., indwelling consciousness as a binding force for the material form (body).

The human form (body) (personality) consists of four parts, namely the physical body, the etheric double or energy (vital) body, the astral body or vehicle for emotional experience and expression, and the mental body or mind or vehicle for mental (intellectual) experience and expression. Each of these components is a complex form in itself, but it is the four-fold form as a whole that is linked to the personality matrix or archetype. The mental body or mind is the highest component of the personality and is the first to be created and the last to be destroyed. Similarly, next comes the astral body. Then the etheric body. And finally the physical body. The shaping force is the human soul, which creates the four-fold (complex) form and then incarnates through its instrumentation. The sustaining force is both relatively simple and relatively complex. As long as the soul is present there is evoked thereby a sustaining force. When the soul withdraws the form dies, progressively, beginning with the physical body and culminating with the mind. But there are also all manner of competing and contrasting forces (karma and dharma) which influence the binding of the form.

The state of the form is a consequence of both internal binding forces (dharma) and the influence of external forces (karma). Dharma provides purpose and conditioning for purpose, based on atma (the will of the soul). Karma provides contrast leading to learning and growing, based on the diversity of actions on physical, emotional, and mental levels and their accumulated unfulfilled consequences. Disease is simply the lack of harmony in the body at some level, an imbalance of internal and external binding forces, stress imposed on or through the mind and emotions that has an effect on the physical body and its

etheric counterpart. Disease is a lack of ease of coherence in the (overall) binding force.

Disintegration is a progressive release of the various binding forces, resulting whenever the unifying force is not itself coherent or stable. The body (personality) is generally relatively coherent in the early stages of life and at maturity begins to disintegrate as the soul anticipates withdrawal (indeed disintegration begins almost immediately upon birth, except that the sustaining force tends to be stronger in the early stages of life). Disease and injury are simply imposed upon the disintegrating force and this further weakens the vehicle. Disease and injury are actually a matter of attracted vulnerability, a minor or major disruption of the binding force depending on the severity of the karmic impulse and the extent to which a person is susceptible to learning (greater susceptibility to learning lessens the destructive or weakening import).

Health is simply a balancing of forces, maintaining the form in harmony with its purpose and context. The various stresses encountered convey opportunities for learning and growing. But eventually the soul begins to withdraw, and the forces of disintegration begin to dominate, culminating in death.



Section 4.511



Bodily Ills

- Bodily ills, disease and injury, limitations, etc., are all consequences of experience and expression in the lower worlds. Through understanding cause and effect relationships, through learning from experience, through adjustments in consciousness, the student tends to become and remain healthy.



Bodily Ills 1

In the practical, spiritual context, the spiritual student is expected to refine the personality vehicles (physical body, etheric double, astral body (emotions), and mind), achieve proper personality integration, and (eventually) achieve a proper alignment of the refined and integrated personality with the soul and with the soul's group. Anything non-essential that impedes that process (of refinement, integration, and alignment) is methodically (properly) eliminated, including anything that contributes to bodily ills, emotional distractions, and/or mental attachments (opinions).

It is essential that the spiritual student properly understands and appreciates the relationship of the soul to the personality and the relationship of the mind to the body and the emotions (aura), so that with that understanding and appreciation the student can achieve his practical objectives (refinement, integration, and alignment). The soul relates only indirectly to the personality unless the personality is properly refined, integrated, and aligned with the soul; in which case the soul is then able to directly qualify the mind and the entire personality (it still takes no interest in the particulars of personality life (experience) (expression); it simply increases the energy flow and spiritual qualification). Before the soul can properly (directly) qualify the personality, the entire personality must be properly refined and the mind must properly integrate the entire personality (and sustain that proper (refined) integration). Alignment is not possible without proper integration, and integration is not possible without some degree of refinement (clarity) (purity).

There are many (ignorantly) self-imposed (self-sustaining) personality fetters (limitations) available to the human being; where present, they (any or all of them) can considerably impede refinement and integration, effectively precluding any (real) spiritual poise (rapport) (effective higher consciousness). Many of these fetters are simple matters of bodily ills (indulgences); others are more complicated (emotional or mental distractions and attachments); still others are rather subtle self-deceptions that are most difficult to recognize and deal with. Cursorily, the simple bodily ills include being underweight or overweight, taking drugs (unnecessarily and without medical compulsion)

(including alcohol in any form), smoking, eating flesh foods (meat, fish, fowl), and suffering any disease or injury (physically, emotionally, and/or mentally).

The direct effects of any of these simple bodily ills are relatively easy to discern, appreciate, and overcome (yet most simple ills or effects have more subtle causes that must be dealt with eventually and effectively in order to ensure success). Being (significantly) underweight weakens the physical body and its etheric double, forcing the personality to draw directly on external (subtle) energy sources in order to achieve any balance (stability); although the result may be stable, it is not a healthy energy balance and the (subtle) energy drain effectively prevents or impedes utilization of energy for purposes of qualification (refinement) and integration.

Being overweight has a rather different effect on the body; it dulls the senses and makes it more difficult (if not impossible) for the mind to bring the body and the senses to the proper integrated state. The overweight body is as much a burden on consciousness as the underweight body, although the dynamics are somewhat different. The overweight body tends to strengthen the resistance (inertia) of personality to higher impression.



Commentary No. 484

Bodily Ills 2

Alcohol (and drugs in general) imbibed or injected into the body induces an adversarial condition; the introduction of the foreign substance (alcohol) (drug) causes a natural resistive focusing of bodily forces which may through habit (conditioning) or sheer magnitude be overwhelmed by the foreign substance (a large concentration of a natural substance has the same impact as that of a foreign substance) (any unnatural concentration of chemicals or organic materials can have devastating effects on the natural bodily balance).

The direct effect of alcohol (and many but not all other drugs) is to loosen or sever some of the connections between the lower vehicles (i.e., between the physical body, the etheric double, the astral body, and the mind), making self-control (integration) impossible for as long as the alcohol (or drug) is present and making subsequent (proper) integration extremely difficult due to the (lingering)

conditioning effects of alcohol (i.e., alcohol (and other drugs) negatively (destructively) (unnaturally) conditions the physical body and its links to the other vehicles). A considerable period (sometimes years) of abstinence is generally required to overcome the conditioning effects and permit proper integration to be achieved.

All drugs (including alcohol) are an unnatural burden for the physical body and personality consciousness, effectively impeding or precluding effective integration and higher qualification. Drugs simply make the body (and personality) unresponsive to (proper) higher impression (soul contact) (higher qualification). Drugs in moderate dosages may sometimes be medically necessary (or expedient), but the price (burden) for usage (the energy required to achieve balance) must be paid nonetheless. So the spiritual student abstains from any alcoholic consumption and utilizes drugs only where medically prescribed and necessary.

In loosening the natural (constructive) bonds of the lower vehicles, many drugs open the victim to (uncontrolled) astral impression, giving the delusion of meaningful "spiritual" contacts and making the individual particularly vulnerable to astral forces. There are no short cuts to evolutionary development (the "work" of the path); as the student achieves proper refinement and integration (self-mastery), the subtle bonds and limitations of the personality are gradually overcome, providing considerable freedom and sensitivity, but within the context and bounds of the path, naturally, and without recourse to unnatural methods and their concomitant vulnerabilities.

Smoking involves the inhalation or ingestion of drugs (and their consequential effects), but smoking also has a devastating effect on the quality of the aura. Aside from the drug content, smoke is a suspension of particulate matter in a gaseous medium (air). The particulate matter is coarse (matter) and has a degrading and lingering effect on the vibration and quality of the aura. The aura of a smoker contains and carries with it a dark coarseness (that lingers within the aura almost indefinitely) that lowers the smoker's resistance to external coarseness, disease, etc. (although a strong (albeit coarse) personality may be able to compensate for that lowered resistance for awhile, but not indefinitely, giving rise to the illusion of invulnerability and contributing to the (necessarily delusory) rationalization). The lowered vibration of the aura inhibits refinement

and makes proper integration impossible. Before proper integration can be achieved, the aura must be cleared of all coarseness (and the system cleansed of all drug effects) and the lower vehicles brought into cooperative resonance.



Commentary No. 485

Bodily Ills 3

The consumption of flesh foods (meat, fish, and fowl) is likened to the ingestion of drugs which induce animal coarseness. Although the body may be conditioned to flesh foods, the consumption of flesh foods nonetheless has the effect of lowering the overall vibration (quality) (in the case of transgression) or preventing or impeding refinement (preventing the raising of overall vibration (quality) in the case of those who have yet to achieve any substantive personality refinement (all bodily ills are the consequence of ignorance)). The coarseness resulting from eating flesh foods is not as severe as the coarseness resulting from smoking, and the drug effects of eating flesh foods are not as severe as the drug effects of alcoholic consumption; however, the subtle effects of eating flesh foods are more considerable in the sense of stimulating the animal nature.

The human body is naturally (initially) an animal body with associated animal coarseness, instincts, and sensitivities. An intermediate (necessary) goal of human experience (and precursive to proper spiritual experience) is the transformation of that (natural) animal body into a (natural) (proper) human vehicle (i.e., a properly responsive vehicle of human consciousness in contrast with the body responsive to the needs of expression and experience in animal consciousness). The transformation process is also natural albeit gradual in the case of the bulk of humanity and difficult in the case of those who are responsive to the call of the path (the call of the soul).

The animal stimulation precludes any real (proper) integration due to the separative nature of the animal coarseness. Thus the spiritual student (properly) abstains from all flesh foods (eggs, milk, cheese, etc., are not considered flesh foods and do not bring the coarse effects that other flesh foods do, but they do bring some (relatively) minor psychic impediment).

Although all bodily ills (disease) (injury) (and ills of consciousness) are consequential (karmic) and not merely simple appearances, the effects upon consciousness are nonetheless noteworthy. Drugs used to treat disease or the effects of injury (e.g., pain) must be dealt with as well (particularly with respect to consciousness) (and can induce subsequent or additional bodily ills). The direct effect of disease is (frequently) to induce fever, which impedes or precludes the ability of the mind to integrate the personality (i.e., fever tends to involuntarily dissociate the personality vehicles, making it impossible (for the while) to achieve integration or alignment). In each case (of bodily ills), the outer (lower) conditions are (principally) effects, and the causes (in consciousness) must be dealt with before any real (lasting) resolution can be achieved.

The principal problem of bodily ills (and ills of consciousness) is the ego, which naturally (self-defensively) tends to impede refinement, to impede understanding and resolution, and to impede any significant healing process (unless the ego can be thereby strengthened). But where the ego is responsive to higher impression (i.e., where there is some meaningful degree of humility and concomitant understanding and maturity), then the ego can be a potent instrument of healing (self-healing). The problem is the natural problem of the world deception (the illusion of material reality) and self-deception (the illusion of egoic independence or individuality (contrasted with the reality of individual distinction)). Consequently, in treating any problem of bodily ills or ills in consciousness, one must definitely consider as well the place and role of the ego, if one is to achieve any measure of success.



Disease and Injury 1

In contrast to most bodily ills and ills of consciousness which are the result of personal habits (habits of coarseness) (simple karmic consequences), disease and injury are more normally the results of compounded karma (i.e., karmic consequence of several or more related causes or conditions in consciousness, over a period of time (or lifetimes).

Disease and injury are not necessarily more serious or more significant than bodily ills or ills of consciousness, but all (disease, injury, bodily ills, ills of consciousness) must be effectively resolved (if present) before the spiritual student can progress significantly (contributively).

Disease normally refers to any sickness or impairment of the normal state of the living body (physically, emotionally, and/or mentally) that affects the performance of the vital functions. Depending on the stage of consciousness (physical polarization, the transition of physical to emotional polarization, emotional polarization, the transition of emotional to mental polarization, mental polarization, etc.), what is considered a vital function varies accordingly, and the significance of disease and the level at which it is manifested can vary considerably (and accordingly). Having (more or less) conquered the bodily ills (and the associated coarse habits), advanced humanity (the properly mentally polarized) are more concerned with problems in consciousness. In the more abstract sense the bulk of humanity are said to suffer from "sleeping" sickness, being largely unaware of the realm and rules of manifestation of cause and effect. Thus much of the work of (in) higher consciousness deals with encouragement for humanity to overcome this problem of consciousness (which is central to most (if not all) of the manifestations of human coarseness (conflict) and the maladies of self-interest).

Few differences exist between disease and injury (at any given level of consciousness). Disease tends to develop gradually while injury tends to be manifested more quickly (by effect, not by cause). Disease typically impedes physically and emotionally, while injury tends to impede physically, yet both tend to stimulate emotional and mental experience. While disease may be

manifested over a larger period of time than injury, the respective resolutions can be comparably short or long, and the causative chain for injury is (normally) nonetheless complicated and spread over a considerable period of time (including the direct effects of carelessness, since carelessness is a condition in consciousness or at least related to a condition in consciousness). What is typically referred to as mental illness is largely emotional (not mental), while proper mental illness is typically much more subtle.

All disease and injury are self-inflicted. All disease and all injury (all bodily ills and all ills of consciousness) are karmic consequences of behavior, actions, attitudes, temperament, habits, opinions, attachments, desires, feelings, thoughts, etc. All impediments major and minor are karmic and relatively meaningful. All contain the seeds of resolution and the potential for learning the needed lessons and/or reaching the appropriate degree or extent of understanding. The lessons (objectives) in consciousness are not necessarily obviously or directly related to the effects (impediments) (disease or injury) (ill(s)). The lessons or objectives are not necessarily considerable, in spite of the apparent magnitude of the effects. Some karmic consequences are indeed manifestations of causative chains in which the lesson(s) are already essentially learned, yet karmic momentum is sometimes sufficient for manifestation (in such cases there is normally little pain or discomfort).



Commentary No. 1487

Disease and Injury 2

Disease and injury are rooted in consciousness and behavior. All aspects of disease and injury are karmic in nature. One simply attracts vulnerability based on one's actions over time. It is really quite simple in principle, but complicated in practice due to the coincidence and variety of consequences and intended lessons from various origination times (and lifetimes) and the moderation of consequences due to whatever is learned in the intervening periods and the attitude (receptivity to learning) that is exhibited at the time of consequence.

If one is truly open to learning and growing (and serving) then there is generally no need for either disease or injury, and the intermediate (karmic) forces get

resolved before they can manifest through the body. But few people, even spiritual students, are completely open. And few are yet perceptive enough and intelligent enough to preclude discomfort. Plus there is a collective karma such that even those who are relatively enlightened suffer some of the karma of their species (because in the final analysis, evolution in consciousness is more properly and generally a collective phenomenon than a matter of individual growth).

Given the underlying karmic basis for disease and injury, the mechanics of disease and injury are relatively straightforward. Disease (lack of harmony) begins on etheric, emotional, or mental levels, and grows to the point where there are physical-etheric effects. These effects are typically a lessening of one's vitality in some relatively specific sense, which allows disease or injury to strike. The distinction between disease and injury is not really significant, but injury is based on disease in the sense that there is an underlying vulnerability that attracts whatever circumstances and forces are needed. The resulting incident is simply an explosion of psychic force. And the injury itself is simply an expression of the underlying lack of harmony on some level. Even genetic predisposition is simply an expression of one's underlying karma, an intermediate consequence and not a cause in itself (nothing is actually a cause in itself except at the highest levels of (divine) creativity).

Disease is literally dis-ease, a lack of harmony and a depression in the body's vitality at some place (or generally) and on some level. One is generally healthy to the extent that one thinks and feels and acts (behaves) gently and with consideration for all (lives). Disease results from harmful behavior (even from lifetimes removed from the present) and the need for the student to learn not to engage in harmful behavior. Disease also results from delusion, illusion, and the failure to perceive and embrace the truth. Our whole (ordinary) world existence is based on illusion (materialism, egoism) (the illusion of separateness), and given the preponderance of ego it should not be surprising that most people are deluded in some ways or another. And most people engage in harmful practices without realization. The lack of consistency between what is known (believed) (practiced) (understood) and what is true is a disharmony that breeds vulnerability to disease and injury.

Thus the spiritual student is encouraged both to embrace harmlessness and truth (honesty) and to be as open to learning and growing as is possible given one's circumstances and consciousness. Disease and injury attract healing energy. But the issue is much more a matter of receptivity (openness) than availability. Most people are simply not really receptive or responsive to healing energy, and the process (learning, adjusting) is relatively slow.



Commentary No. 490

Vulnerability

In all cases, disease and injury are the result of susceptibility within some framework of vulnerability and that susceptibility is the result of some karmic (causative) chain or matrix. But being vulnerable (or even being susceptible) is not sufficient to precipitate the effects (disease or injury per se). Being susceptible is simply an earned or self-inflicted condition of potential consequences. The catalyst for manifestation is itself a karmic consequence, but the significance of vulnerability is the potential for karmic resolution (recognition, awareness, adjustment, and resolution (understanding) (wisdom) prior to or preclusive to the manifestation of disease or injury).

While vulnerability implies opportunity for individual growth and opportunity to contribute to growth (progress) on some broader scale, invulnerability implies the lack of such opportunity and a separation of the individual from the lifewave (humanity) (in the context of manifestation (incarnation)). The very act (process) of incarnation brings about some (appropriate) degree of vulnerability. As a soul, one cannot evolve at some level without some degree of vulnerability (in the context of some experiential field). For the incarnated personality, the experiential field is the objective world of physical, emotional, and (concrete) mental experience, with the degree of vulnerability implied by the relative state (degree) of consciousness (degree of refinement and integration) (the soul then evolves as that experience is assimilated (as knowledge and experience are transformed into wisdom)).

Susceptibility is some (significant) degree of vulnerability, implying some lack of resistance or protection (and implying some unresponsiveness to learning the

immediate and near-term (karmic) lessons). As the student evolves (as the student refines the personality, improves the consciousness, achieves integration, etc.), the student remains vulnerable (to the extent of the incarnation) but becomes less and less susceptible to disease, illness, injury, etc. This is so not because the person has achieved some degree of resistance or protection (although such a person may have so achieved), but because the individual (consciousness) is able to learn and adjust (progress) without the need for impediments. Natural resistance (protection) (insusceptibility) (in the context of disease and injury (health)) (individually or collectively) is the result of achievement (responsiveness) (awareness) in consciousness (learning ability).

Susceptibility can arise in either of two ways (each karmically inspired), (indirectly) through (incidental) carelessness or lack of awareness or attention to integration and qualification, or (directly) through some causative (karmic) chain. Exposure to some threat is itself not necessarily sufficient to allow some impediment (disharmony) to manifest. Those who are susceptible to certain diseases (for example) are susceptible because of carelessness or because the susceptibility is induced precursively as part of some causative chain.

If some karmic force coincides with some particular vulnerability (susceptibility), then that is simply (karmically) consistent. There are no accidents, individually or collectively, nor is there any potential for evasion. We are (all) humanity and we have (all) created all of our circumstances, as humanity and as individuals and groups. And we must (all) face those circumstances and fulfill our (karmic) (dharmaic) obligations. The spiritual student remains vulnerable in order to serve humanity and in order to progress, but precludes susceptibility to the extent that he (she) is capable in order to remain effective and responsive (and true to the path).

Section 4.512



Food and Energy

- Proper nutrition and proper energy balance are crucial to health and fitness. The kinds and amounts and balance of foods embraced have a significant effect on health. Too little or too much food will drain the body of energy. The wrong kinds of food (e.g., flesh foods) will encourage coarseness and inhibit self-mastery. The etheric or vital body must be healthy in order for the dense physical body to be healthy. If one is properly balanced, then one is fit for the entire scope of needed experience and expression (service).



Human Energy Balance

The human being in physical incarnation is a rather complex and enlivened mechanism dealing continuously with energy and energy processes. The character and quality of the waking-consciousness has much to do with the overall effectiveness of the entire mechanism. The sources of energy for (individual) human uses are varied. On physical levels, the human being receives (and expends) energy in the form of food and drink, air, light and heat, and (mostly) vital (etheric) forces. On emotional (astral) and mental levels there can be a direct energy interaction with the immediate (astral and mental) environment. On mental levels the student also has an interaction with the soul through which may flow a considerable amount of higher energy (encouragement), from internal sources (from the soul itself) and from external sources (by way of the soul).

The human being is capable of energy reception (input) and expression (output), as well as transformation, assimilation, and accumulation (on each or between each of the various levels). In the reception and acceptance of any form of energy is implied the responsibility for its efficient and effective (constructive) use. On physical levels, the student is urged to eat and drink only in the amounts and qualities necessary or appropriate to the effective use of the physical form. Eating too much causes an unnecessary accumulation (waste) of energy which burdens the physical instrument. Eating too little tends to drain the vital (etheric) body of its natural energies. Thus a balance (and moderation) is implied on every level. Any form of physical, emotional, or mental activity actually expends energy, so the student is encouraged to express himself properly in every way. Some sleep is usually required in order for the vital processes to renew the energy balance of the entire mechanism (due to the expenditure of energy during the waking hours at a greater rate than received).

On etheric, emotional, and mental levels, the energy balance is particularly important because the aura can be highly interactive with its environment. The etheric body is renewed primarily through external (etheric) processes (mostly related to air and sunlight). The etheric body is vital to the health and maintenance of the physical form, so the student should be careful to allow no

unconscious (accidental) etheric depletion. Certain superphysical experiences (such as hypnotism) can be very dangerous since they may involve etheric depletion or otherwise interfere with the normal functioning of the vital body. The same is true (to a certain extent) for emotional and mental processes.

Wherever negative energy is encountered (through the acceptance or expression of negative emotions or thought-forms) there is a considerable depletion incurred (a loss of energy that would otherwise be available for constructive purposes). So the student is encouraged to maintain his composure and self-control (aura containment). If the aura is properly balanced and maintained, external energies of a negative character will have little or no effect. It is also much easier to express the more positive energies (thoughts and feelings) through a balanced (healthy) aura (and disposition).

With a healthy mind and healthy (quiet and controlled) emotions (and with some physical discretion) the student should easily be able to maintain the proper energy balance, and therefore be able to express himself in service along any appropriate line. In the field of proper service (that which is not self-centered or involved with glamour), there is a special form of energy renewal, in which no (net) energy loss is acquired, no matter how great the amount of (meaningful) energy shared. Thus the spiritual student (with an intelligently controlled and balanced aura) becomes a considerable instrument of service.



Commentary No. 263

Food and Energy

Food is material substance (in solid or liquid form) that is usually ingested to provide energy for the physical body. Food is actually energy in the form of carbohydrates, fats, proteins, minerals, etc., that is converted within the physical body into the particular forms (of energy) needed to sustain growth, repair, and vital processes. Physical food also carries with it some energy on vital or etheric levels. The consciousness and vitality of the food therefore have some (possibly considerable) impact in terms of quality.

Aside from its constituents, food may take various forms and be prepared in various ways. Cooking food tends to reduce its inherent vitality. The form of food is usually not as relevant as its constituents and overall quality. The purpose of food is quite simple: to provide sustenance and energy. For the spiritual student, food should provide little more than to serve this basic purpose. Food (eating) may be a pleasant experience, but for the most part, those who particularly enjoy eating are distracted from other, more pertinent matters. The spiritual student is concerned about the quality of food and its effects on body and consciousness, but once the student has achieved the proper diet and discipline, he is no longer distracted by undue attention to diet.

In order to achieve that proper diet and self-discipline, however, and in order to make the most constructive use of the available energies, the student studies the effects of food on his consciousness, and adapts his program appropriately. The effects of food on the physical body are relatively well-known (in the superficial sense), but the effects on consciousness are not so well-known, because higher (superphysical) energy processes are involved and because the effects of food are different depending on the consciousness of the individual. The effects of eating meat, for example, upon the undeveloped consciousness are almost incidental (negligible), while the effects upon the developing consciousness may be quite considerable.

There are a number of factors involved (with regard to consciousness), but primarily it is a matter of the quality of food, the amount of food, and the quality of consciousness. Nutritional factors are important but not particularly so, since the (potent) spiritual student can compensate for nutritional deficiencies. For a given quality (consciousness) of food, the effects of quantity are remarkable. Too little food provides too little energy and the student (who can) is forced to compensate by drawing more directly (but inefficiently) on etheric energies. Too much food is a burden, energy-wise, and the excess is either stored internally or ineffectively released. Excess internal storage (fat) drains the vitality of the physical form and also impairs consciousness. Eating food, in general, stimulates the vitality of the form, but eating too much burdens and dulls both form and consciousness.

The spiritual student is urged to eat sparingly (more frequently, if necessary) especially since there is a time factor in digestion (and corresponding effects). A

large intake of food will dull the consciousness to a greater extent and for a longer period of time than small quantities (of quality food) taken more frequently (two or three times per day). The spiritual student should consume only enough food to sustain his immediate (physical) needs and no more. His vitality can be enhanced (to a certain extent, in addition to food) with etheric, vital forces without the burden of physical digestion and the distraction of eating. Of course these effects are true for all, but are almost incidental (inconsequential) for those of ordinary consciousness, and much more pronounced (meaningful) for those who aspire to higher consciousness.



Commentary No. 272

The Quality of Food

The quality of food has particular effects on the form (body) and consciousness. The quality of consciousness of the individual is usually reflected in the quality (consciousness) of the food that is consumed (and vice versa). Even the physical body is an energy (vibratory) form (aura) that interacts with the relative consciousness of the ingested food. High quality foods (in nominal quantities) support, sustain, and encourage higher quality of consciousness and limit the independent vibratory activity of the personality.

The effects of the quality of food on physical levels are not as pronounced as on astral (emotional) levels (and similarly, not as pronounced as on mental levels), particularly in the case of the spiritual student (less pronounced in the case of other persons). The quality of food can be broadly categorized as having mineral, plant, and animal elements. Certain minerals (in small quantities) have moderately positive effects upon the physical body, but very little (if any) effect on higher levels. Plant foods (vegetables, fruits, nuts, etc.) (in modest quantities) have rather positive effects on both physical, emotional, and mental levels. Plant foods provide more essential vitality than other foods (mineral or animal) and are much more efficient as far as the physical body (digestive processes) is concerned.

Plant foods tend to increase the sensitivity of the student on both emotional and mental levels, and for this reason it is important to avoid extreme (sudden)

changes in diet and to cultivate emotional sublimation (control). Emotional sensitivity, however induced, is worth very little unless the student can properly control it. The sensitivity provided by plant foods (a vegetarian or meatless diet) merely provides the opportunity; it is up to the student to utilize that opportunity through mental and spiritual exercise. The vegetarian diet alone has naught to do with spirituality, though spirituality (if present) is enhanced by a (proper) meatless diet (and conversely impaired by a diet of animal food).

The simplicity and natural vitality of plant foods (in moderation) provide most efficient and effective means of properly sustaining the physical form and its associated consciousness, minimizing the burden of digestion and being more easily (readily) converted into the needed internal forms. Conversely, the complexity and naturally coarse vibration of animal foods (flesh) (meat) (fish) provide the least effective means of sustaining the physical form. Moreover, animal foods in particular dull the consciousness of the individual for extended periods of time (if not indefinitely). This effect is quite compatible with ordinary consciousness, which is not that far above the animal consciousness. But in the case of the spiritual student seeking to control and uplift his natural (historical) (hereditary) (animal) instincts, the animal food diet is a particularly burdensome adversary. The basic problem is two-fold: overcoming the animal consciousness of the physical body (which is necessarily (in fact) an animal body), and overcoming the consciousness of the food that is ingested.

In the case of plant foods, it is a relatively simple matter of overcoming the (relatively weak) plant consciousness. In the case of animal foods, it is a more difficult task (requiring more energy and attention) of overcoming the relatively strong animal consciousness of the food, which, at the same time, stimulates the animal consciousness of the personality. Thus eating animal foods is counterproductive (at least for the spiritual student). Much of the struggle of the spiritual student with his own lower nature is won when the student achieves a well-disciplined diet of quality (plant) food.



Food and Strength

There are relationships between food and strength in their various and respective kinds. Food is that which nourishes or sustains, particularly in the sense of material nutrients and vitality. Strength is the capacity for exertion or endurance, the degree of potency, firmness, and/or stability, and has physical, emotional, and or mental factors. Food generally conveys or sustains some measure of strength, although other factors certainly apply to strength.

For the case of human beings in incarnation, food is generally taken from the plant and/or animal kingdoms (lifewaves), either in terms of plant and/or animal substance (e.g., flesh) or the products of plant and/or animal processes (e.g., milk and cheese). In terms of dharma or responsibility, the plant kingdom has a responsibility to provide food for the animal kingdom and the human kingdom, while the mineral kingdom, the animal kingdom, and the human kingdom have no such dharma or responsibility toward other kingdoms (the mineral, animal, and human kingdoms contribute to the whole in other ways) (except that the mineral kingdom contributes water and traces for use by the other kingdoms). But man's principal form of nourishment comes from prana which conveys the natural vitality of the logos and which is naturally entrained on etheric levels. And man's secondary form of nourishment comes from the air which is breathed. Thus food and water, per se, are tertiary, though nonetheless required for effective experience and expression on the lower planes of consciousness.

The substance of food is, to some considerable extent, vitalized by the life from which it is derived. Mineral substance is relatively coarse and cannot be incorporated effectively except in very small measures (and much of mineral substance is inherently poisonous to higher lifeforms). Plant substance is polarized and vitalized distinctly differently than mineral substance, with plant substance (vegetables, fruits, nuts, etc.) having a definitely developed etheric component and a rudimentary astral component. Thus vegetarian fare generally provides a natural vitality that is relatively clear (pure). The strength resulting from (or contributed by) a vegetarian diet is not particularly intense or quick, but it contributes most effectively to the momentum of vitality.

Similarly, animal substance (flesh foods) (meat, fish, fowl) is polarized and vitalized distinctly differently from mineral and plant substance. Animal substance has definitely developed etheric and astral components, with the etheric component conveying a more intense and quick strength (which is therefore less effective than the strength-momentum of plant substance) and animal substance conveys a substantial "animalistic" quality through its astral component, which is, after all, qualified by the animal's desires and instincts. The problem for man, therefore, is that man's duty is to rise above his own animal nature (derived from his own body and history) and a diet of animal substance definitely inhibits that ascension by clouding a person's emotions with the relatively coarse emotional content from the animal's aura (which is not substantially conveyed through the foods resulting from animal processes).

The flesh diet is therefore not so much of a hindrance to average humanity, but a definite and substantial hindrance to one who aspires to spiritual progress. The spiritual student must, therefore, embrace an appropriate vegetarian discipline in order to build and sustain a foundation upon which to develop the greater strength of character and qualified consciousness that is needed for evolution and service expression.



Commentary No. 1198

Vegetarian Diet

There are many reasons that various vegetarians may give for why they embrace their particular diet, but ultimately there is only one reason that works for the spiritual student. It simply feels right.

Some say that a (properly balanced) vegetarian diet is more healthy, and this is true. Some say that it is a matter of energetics. This may also be true. Some say it is wrong to kill (and eat) animals (animal flesh), and this is generally true (but it is also a matter of consciousness and conscience). But whenever one relies on beliefs and arguments (rationalization) there are naturally counter-beliefs and counter-arguments, some or all of which may be reasonable and therefore not inherently conclusive. Thus a choice of diet should be a matter of individual conscience and not imposed by others or even by convention.

Even so, there is a matter of consciousness. A vegetarian diet does not, in itself, convey higher consciousness. A vegetarian is not inherently any better (or worse) than a non-vegetarian, though the vegetarian tends to be, naturally, and in some ways, more healthy. But a vegetarian diet does allow something that a non-vegetarian diet precludes, and that is an adjustment in consciousness that facilitates depth, growth, and understanding, at some level. It is, for the spiritual student, a practical matter of what is necessary for progress, at whatever stage the student may have realized. At some stage, the student must be concerned about refinement and the relative coarseness of the (animal) body must be overcome. A vegetarian diet allows this. A non-vegetarian diet precludes this. But until the student reaches the point where the diet becomes a limiting factor, there is no compulsion for a vegetarian diet (unless there is also a matter of conscience (based on previous experience)). Considerable growth generally occurs before one becomes vegetarian, and considerable growth generally occurs thereafter. But there are limits to how far one can go without becoming vegetarian.

In the occult or metaphysical (psychic) perspective, the effects of a non-vegetarian diet are quite obvious to the properly trained observer. The animal (flesh) matter consumed sustains the relative coarseness of the body and induces and sustains effects (limitations) on etheric and astral (emotional) levels, but not directly on concrete mental levels. The animal magnetism encourages the human being to remain at the animal level and feeds or encourages the animalistic tendencies within the human nature. Much of this can be tempered without becoming vegetarian (i.e., there are many "nice" people who eat flesh foods), but there are necessarily limitations. And although becoming vegetarian facilitates further progress, unless the person has achieved some complementary work (e.g., through meditation), there is not likely to be any substantive difference in consciousness (i.e., there are some "not-so-nice" vegetarians). So ultimately it is a matter of there being work to do that includes becoming naturally vegetarian. Thus being (becoming) vegetarian is (ultimately) necessary, but not, in itself, sufficient.

There is no need to deny the existence of the human animal. The body is necessary to human experience at this level. But the body needs to be cultivated as a vehicle suited to the expression of higher consciousness, and that means tempering the animal nature to a considerable extent. It is a matter of

resonance, of responsiveness to higher impression, a matter of being refined and able to wield (express) (share) safely the higher energies and forces. It is a matter of becoming and then being what one truly is.



Section 4.513



Alcohol and Other Drugs

- The use of non-medicinal (recreational) drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, is harmful and detrimental to growth in consciousness. Smoking in any form fills the aura with (etheric) particulates that coarsen and weaken the aura. Alcohol and other drugs loosen the aura, prevent integration, and evoke (psychic) instability. In the worst cases, drug use destroys the protective capabilities of the aura, leaving a person entirely vulnerable to psychic attack. But even in moderation, alcohol and other drugs are inherently harmful.



Alcohol 1

Another of the various limitations that ultimately inhibit growth in consciousness is the practice of drinking alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, liquor, anything having any measure of alcoholic content). Drinking (alcohol) is not a matter of coarseness, but a matter of integration. Drinking inhibits and ultimately actually precludes the proper integration of the personality into a coherent instrument.

There are health and safety issues associated with drinking, and there is no doubt that drinking facilitates relaxation. But there are other, more natural, less harmful means to accomplish relaxation without the detrimental effects of drinking alcohol. This is not to say that drinkers cannot or do not develop or make progress by virtue of their experience and expression in the lower worlds. It is to say that at some point, as opportunities are fulfilled, drinking becomes a limiting factor. One simply cannot achieve a proper (non-temporary) integrated state until one transcends the need for or practice of drinking alcohol. That most people do not need an integrated state is beside the point. The spiritual student needs to achieve an integrated personality. The spiritual student seeks union with the higher Self, and a lack of proper integration precludes the possibility of alignment.

Drinking loosens the connections between the various lower bodies (physical, etheric, astral (emotional), and mental). A person may seem to be integrated, but in the occult sense of the term, of the four lower bodies being integrated by a single personality ray, drinking precludes integration. And integration is a prerequisite for alignment of soul and personality. It doesn't mean that a drinker cannot be sensitive or spiritual; many are. It just means that drinking is a substantial and inhibiting limitation to the progress that is implied by the spiritual path. Some say that an occasional drink cannot hurt, yet in fact each drink undermines whatever progress has otherwise been made toward integration.

In order for a person (spiritual student) to achieve the integrated state, there must be a sustained practice of refinement and gradual integration of the lower

forces (physical, etheric, emotional (astral), and mental (intellectual)). A number of diverse but related accomplishments (adjustments) are required. But this also requires self-control, as the personality ray gradually dominates (integrates) (enfolds) the rays as expressed through the various components. Drinking inhibits the required coherence. Drinking also damages and weakens (loosens) the aura to the extent that the person remains somewhat-to-substantially (depending on other factors and circumstances) vulnerable to external forces (mainly on astral levels).

Many aspirants and spiritually-minded people drink (or smoke) and accomplish a great deal along spiritual lines before they reach the implied limitations of these practices. Some then wonder why progress has slowed or why other limitations (e.g., habits in temperament) are so difficult to overcome. Yet, in every legitimate esoteric school the student is required (at some stage) to permanently forgo both smoking and drinking (and eventually forgo consumption of flesh foods as well). It is not merely a matter of discipline. It is also a matter of health and energy (and facilitation beyond merely health and energy). But there is also a matter of freedom of choice. The committed student exercises that freedom of choice and chooses to eliminate these practices in order to more effectively embrace the path. It is simply a matter of personal values. And commitment.



Commentary No. 1491

Alcohol 2

Alcohol is the intoxicating agent in fermented and distilled liquors, such as beer, wine, and whiskey. Some "drinks" contain more alcohol than others, but even so-called non-alcoholic beer contains some alcohol. Alcohol is in fact a recreational drug which helps people to relax or to "feel good" in some superficial sense. Alcohol is embraced by many people as harmless in moderation. Indeed, in moderation, alcohol has a relaxing effect on most people. And in moderation, alcohol indeed evokes "good" feelings. Alcohol is popular because it is an easy way to become relaxed, an easy way to achieve a "good" feeling, an easy way to "fit in" socially, and an easy way to avoid whatever it is that needs to be avoided. Alcoholic use tends to be habitual, a matter of habit or conditioning, a matter of social convention, although for some

it is more or less occasional. And for some (relatively few) it simply has no place at all.

Most people who are intelligent in the ordinary sense realize that alcohol can be abused and that it can be addictive, indeed that some people are alcoholics and should not drink alcohol because they are unable to control their drinking. The continued excessive or compulsive recourse to intoxication by means of alcohol is considered more a matter of "disease" than a lack of self-discipline.

Consuming large amounts of alcohol can be fatal or injurious, either through the inability to metabolize it quickly enough, or to damage to various internal organs. Indeed, consuming large amounts of almost anything can be fatal or injurious, but alcohol (and other recreational drugs) are dangerous at almost any level of consumption. And consuming even moderate amounts of alcohol can be fatal or injurious to oneself and to others in the sense of resulting behavioral and perceptive impediments.

These dangers of consumption of alcohol are only the superficial or readily apparent dangers, that many people recognize and acknowledge. For most people, who are not embarked upon a spiritual path, who are in the experiential phase of life on earth, drinking (alcohol) in moderation is okay. But for someone who is embarked upon the spiritual path, it is a different matter altogether. For even in moderation, alcohol is inherently counter-evolutionary. That does not matter for most people, but for the spiritual student it is important. The spiritual student must learn to temper the personality, and integrate the personality, and align the personality with the soul. Alcohol undermines that process of tempering. Alcohol prevents integration and alignment is simply not possible without both tempering (refinement) and integration (coherence).

It is also essential for the spiritual student to deepen and broaden his or her awareness, and alcohol undermines and prevents that from happening. Alcohol dulls the senses, impairs perception, and places the most superficial part of the person "in control" of the personality. Even in small amounts, alcohol undermines the spiritual focus that is necessary for the student to be more properly aware, of oneself, of one's environment and circumstances. Moreover, the spiritual student must necessarily be dedicated to embracing the truth, and alcohol undermines even this. Alcohol leads to greater self-deception, a blurring of the ability to recognize the truth.

For the spiritual student, the consumption of alcohol, even in small and occasional amounts, is simply a matter of engaging and encouraging one's fundamental weakness, which is personality-centeredness. Properly, the spiritual student embraces the natural discipline of the path, and avoids alcohol and other recreational drugs, unquestionably.



Commentary No. 1090

Smoking

Much of the preliminary endeavors on the spiritual path involves gradual refinement of the physical, etheric, astral, and mental bodies. Each person (and each spiritual student) tends to progress as far as he or she can until certain limits are reached. At that point, the person (student) either transcends the limitation and proceeds on, or the person loses momentum or suffers gradual regression as inertial forces become dominant. The various habits and practices (limitations) may be rationalized or self-justified either way (to sustain the practice or to transcend it), but in the final analysis, it is a matter of what either actually facilitates spiritual growth or actually inhibits such growth.

One of the many limitations is the smoking of tobacco (or other substances) (which may also be compounded by addictive effects). Smoking is a habit or practice that is generally either discouraged or prohibited by virtually every legitimate occult school. The reason for this discouragement is simply a matter of facilitation of progress in the context of occult training, spiritual growth, etc. Smoking is detrimental to physical and etheric health, but in the context of the path, smoking reveals and sustains certain limitations that preclude much of the experience and development that is needed for progress. This is not to say that one who smokes has necessarily reached the limit of afforded (appropriate) experience and expression, but that at some stage of experience (development) smoking becomes a sufficient limitation that further progress is either inhibited or precluded. The problem is essentially one of coarseness, debilitation, and distraction.

Smoking tends to weaken the aura, reducing the vitality (reducing the circulation of vital energies), and reducing the sensitivity to higher impressions.

Smoke can be observed in the aura. It dulls the colors of the aura. It fills the aura with (etheric) particulate matter that is naturally (necessarily) coarser than would otherwise be the case. This leads to a coarser temperament than would otherwise be the case. This does not mean that a smoker cannot also be a very nice person, only that not-smoking, given that everything else is equal, facilitates the refinement of the physical and etheric bodies. The etheric body consists of matter on several different sub-planes. Smoke inhibits the preponderance of "matter" being on the higher sub-planes. Smoking is not non-spiritual. It is merely inhibiting and limiting. On the other hand, giving up smoking without the requisite basis of understanding may not be very constructive either. Usually there are adjustments in character, temperament, and values that must occur before the "change" will be effective (natural). And naturally the ego-self will oppose the change.

Some metaphysically-minded people (who smoke) might argue that smoking helps them remain "grounded" or that it has a stabilizing effect. This may be true. But, if so, it masks more serious problems. There is no doubt that people who smoke do so either because it feels good or because they want to for some other reason, consciously or unconsciously realized. But the spiritual student is challenged to do whatever facilitates spiritual growth, through elimination of whatever practices are substantially limiting (and are not otherwise necessary).

Of course each person has the right to choose his or her own practices in accordance with personal values. Anyone who is earnest in spiritual seeking, who realizes the benefits of not smoking, and who can, will generally and naturally undertake the change in practice (and go on to other, more subtle challenges).



Drugs

Drugs are defined as biological and/or chemical substances, including food and drink, ingested in some way, and deliberately or indeliberately utilized for medicinal, incidental, and/or recreational purposes. In the broader sense, a drug is anything ingested or injected or otherwise brought into the body, for whatever purpose, including sustenance. Medicinal drugs are typically used to relieve uncomfortable symptoms or to treat infections or to stimulate healing. Incidental drugs are typically drugs that people generally don't think of as drugs *per se*, e.g., alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, flesh foods. Recreational drugs are typically used to stimulate the lower nature in some way, by inducing the illusion of enhancement of the senses.

Some drugs are quite natural, being produced naturally, either in the body or elsewhere in nature. Most vitamins occur naturally. Some drugs are artificial, being cultivated or designed for some specific purposes. Some drugs are inherently harmful or poisonous, even in small amounts, e.g., arsenic. Some drugs are inherently superficially helpful, e.g., some vitamins and minerals. Some drugs are habit-forming or addictive, either psychologically or chemically. Some drugs are relatively non-addictive. But all drugs have some effects and consequences, substantial or otherwise, intended or otherwise, consciously realized or not, on the body and in consciousness.

Part of the problem of drugs is that drugs work to some extent differently in different people or under different circumstances, and therefore the effects and consequences cannot necessarily be easily or completely anticipated or predicted. Part of the problem with drugs is that drugs work differently in different amounts or in different combinations, too much of anything can be harmful, and even a small amount of something may be quite harmful, depending on the circumstances, even if the effects are not generally or readily apparent. Drugs taken for medicinal purposes, in moderation, may or may not be substantially harmful. Likewise drugs taken incidentally. But drugs taken for recreational purposes, deliberately or otherwise, are almost necessarily harmful in some ways. And many drugs (food and drink) are harmful in the sense that they undermine the clarity of thinking and feeling in subtle ways.

But the biggest problem with drugs would seem to be the conditioning factor in consciousness. Such that drugs taken for apparently medicinal or incidental purposes have effects and consequences that weaken the clarity and stability of consciousness. Mood-altering drugs, even if the "taker" is unaware of the mood-alteration, undermine the ability of a person to see and feel and think clearly. Drugs tend (substantially) to strengthen the hold of the body on consciousness and weaken the ability of consciousness to guide the body effectively. Most drugs, even those taken incidentally and in small or occasional quantities, especially medicines and alcohol and flesh foods, tend to weaken the inner connections in consciousness and strengthen the presence of the personality (lower nature) (ego). Minimizing if not naturally avoiding all non-essential drugs is crucial to the gradual deepening of the spiritual student.

The spiritual student is encouraged (a) wherever practicable, to rely primarily on methods in consciousness rather than reliance on medicinal drugs, (b) to minimize the utilization of medicines, minerals, and vitamins, (c) to abstain from any recreational drugs, including tobacco and alcohol, and (d) to (eventually) abstain from consuming any flesh foods (meat, fish, and fowl). The objective is to become and remain healthy physically, emotionally, and mentally, meaning to become and remain relatively free from any conditioning effects.



Commentary No. 1310

Wine

Of all the alcoholic beverages, wine is probably the most dangerous because of the widespread (but wrong) belief that the effects of wine are almost entirely beneficial. While stronger alcoholic beverages are more obviously intoxicating, the effects of wine taken in moderation would seem to be not really serious. There is a widespread illusion that the only evil of alcohol is the loss of control implied by substantial intoxication, and so wine is generally not seen a real problem. It is perceived by most as simply helpful in some relaxing sense and pleasurable.

But the truth is that all alcohol is detrimental in the sense that it strengthens the hold of the ego or superficial self upon the person in manifestation (incarnated self). It undermines, even precludes the integration of personality and prevents alignment of higher and lower selves. But because the effects of wine (and relatively more gentle alcoholic beverages) are less obvious and apparently less substantial, and because wine tends to appeal more to people who are relatively less coarse, consumption of wine is actually more and deceptively dangerous. Most people who drink wine believe they remain "in control" and are not substantively impaired, and this is really quite deceptive. The problem is that the effects of alcohol in moderation are simply relatively more subtle. Most people confuse superficial "control" with self-mastery, while self-mastery actually requires a great deal more effort and accomplishment than merely embracing the facade of normality (the facade or appearance of self-control).

From a very superficial perspective, of physical body chemistry, the effects of alcohol are reasonably well known to modern "science" and these effects are not really pervasive or long-lasting. So occasional drinking or drinking in moderation would seem not to be detrimental. But this is only true in the physical-superficial sense. The actual effects on more subtle levels (etheric and astral) are much more substantial and much longer-lasting. A single drink of some gentle beverage such as wine can evoke effects on subtle levels that last for many months. If this is reinforced through occasional-modest drinking, then the effects are compounded and cumulative and never really leave the system. Now this may not be a problem for the ordinary human being, who has no need to find the truth within or to integrate the higher and lower selves, indeed such a person generally has no need to even realize that there is a higher self at all. But for the spiritual student it is another matter altogether.

The spiritual student needs to be free from all intoxicants, from all drugs, from anything that undermines growth in consciousness and the ability to see the truth of things. The spiritual student needs to temper the entire personality (ego) (and intellect) and begin to discern the differences between higher and lower selves so that he (she) can be gradually attuned to that higher self. Which means tempering or eliminating anything that is necessarily preclusive or inhibitive to these goals. The spiritual student needs to be (relatively) free from conditioning, free to perceive and embrace the truth, free to be who he (she)

really is (the soul) instead of simply living through the facade of personality (ego).

So for the earnest spiritual student, wine is simply not an option. While those who embrace the facade of the spiritual path may justify their actions and indulgences, the genuine spiritual student simply proceeds quietly, gently, according to the rules of the path, gradually-ever onward and upward.



Section 4.52



Healing

- Healing is the process through which the balance or equilibrium is restored. In principle, restoration of balance can be accomplished superficially through treatment of the effects, in which case the cause or causes are still in effect and some further anomaly or disease or injury will emerge into manifestation, or "real" restoration of balance can be accomplished through treatment in consciousness, through learning, through adjustments in consciousness. Merely removing the apparent cause or causes does not accomplish healing. One must learn what one needs to learn, and grow in the manner intended, according to one's level and type of consciousness.

The Etheric Body and Healing

The etheric (vital) (energy) body of man is a vehicle of consciousness that interpenetrates and sustains the dense physical body. The etheric body is often called the etheric double, for it is the same shape and slightly larger than its dense physical counterpart. The etheric body is like a sea of sparkling points, a web of dynamic energy. Each spark or point of light is a focus for vital, sustaining forces to flow into the dense physical body.

The etheric or energy body has four levels, corresponding to the four etheric subplanes of the physical world. The forces of the etheric body on the first or reflecting ether provide a vital function in relation to memory, for the reflecting ether is a realm of impressions in the form of etheric energies. The second or light ether is the realm of sense perception. The forces along the negative pole of the light ether permit the functions of sight, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. The second ether forces of the etheric body also generate the blood heat by flowing along the positive pole. The forces of the etheric body in the third or life ether are the forces of propagation. The forces of the fourth or chemical ether provide for the growth and maintenance of the dense physical body. Without the etheric double there could be no growth, no motion, and no vitalization of the physical body; the cells of the physical body would simply die without replacement.

The work of the energy body is continuous; however, during the active waking state, the energy of the physical body is expended faster than the vital forces can keep up (usually). Thus the individual becomes tired and must sleep. During sleep, the vital forces of the etheric body can work unimpeded by physical, emotional, and mental activity (which expends energy), and the physical body can be restored to its normal strength for a new day of experience. This action of the etheric body is very much related to the health of the physical body. The vital body is actually the body of causes as far as the dense physical is concerned, for the health of the etheric double determines (controls) the health of the dense physical. Karmic patterns appear in the etheric prior to manifestation in the dense physical instrument. Medical science will be greatly enhanced when treatment is performed on etheric levels (and on other levels of

causes) rather than on dense physical levels (which are levels of effects), and especially when medical science has an appreciation for the law of karma.

Psychic or spiritual healing is generally performed on etheric or astral levels, for a dense physical healing requires etheric adjustment, and an etheric healing requires an astral adjustment. Similarly, an emotional healing requires an adjustment on the next higher level (which is mental). The causes of disease in a body, whether directly or indirectly karmic, will be found on the next higher level of consciousness. Thus, mental or emotional problems can cause a chain reaction of disease on lower levels. The effects may be displaced in time, but nevertheless remain related.

The spiritual student is gradually trained to look for and recognize the causes (on various levels), rather than to look only at the effects. Any form of disease can be traced back to some fundamental (general or specific) cause. The quality of thoughts and feelings usually has a rather direct effect upon health. Though the individual cannot interfere with karma, he can consciously adjust his mental, emotional, and physical behavior for the better, which should certainly improve his health and simultaneously enhance his ability to fulfill karma and to respond to dharma in a more enlightened manner.



Commentary No. 537

Healing Energy

Healing energy is that aspect of the second ray (love) (wisdom) or fourth ray (harmony) that acts to restore equilibrium (balance) within any and all lifeforms (regardless of level or extent (composition)). For each lifeform there is a natural (healthy) (harmonious) state and there is the actual state which may or may not be the same as the natural state. Whenever a lack of balance (harmony) (consistency) exists between the actual state and the natural state then healing energy will be evoked in the form of restorative force. Success (restoration of balance) depends on the responsiveness of the form (its consciousness) to the opportunity afforded by the healing energy.

Healing energy is quite similar to karmic energy (and must necessarily be consistent with karma) in that karmic forces seek to restore the karmic balance

while healing forces seek to restore the natural balance (harmony) (a third balance (archetypal) is maintained by evolutionary forces). On the level of the trinity (the three major rays), healing energy (force) is a manifestation of the second ray; while on the level of the septenate (the seven rays), healing energy (force) is a manifestation of the fourth ray. Thus healing energy comes primarily from the second ray but through the instrument (mechanism) (channel) of the fourth ray. Healing energy is inherent in consciousness (just as karmic energy is inherent in life and evolutionary energy is inherent in matter) and is drawn from the (refined) consciousness on each level.

Healing energy is invoked (and evoked) naturally and automatically whenever a non-equilibrium state exists for a given lifeform, to the extent that that lifeform is responsive and to the extent that karma permits. There are many instruments of healing energy, including the soul, certain orders of deva lives (devas whose specific calling is to channel healing energies on some level of consciousness), and certain occult (esoteric) orders of human lives (occult (esoteric) students whose specific calling is to invoke, transform (transfer), and evoke (direct) healing energies more actively than in the case for the deva lives). Within karmic boundaries there is never a shortage of healing energy, but responsiveness is another matter altogether.

The need for healing (restoration of harmony) is necessarily indubitably linked to karmic and evolutionary qualifications such that responsiveness depends on karmic fulfillment (learning the intended lessons (on some level)) and concomitant (incremental) evolutionary progress. Thus healing energy can never be effectively imposed, for to do so (to impose) simply upsets the balance in another direction, leading to lack of immediate (karmic) fulfillment (i.e., loss of opportunity) and the necessity for (karmic) restoration (before any real (non-superficial) healing can result). Thus those who work properly with healing energy serve to make it available on practical levels without specific (personal) direction or imposition. The proper qualification (evocation) of healing energy is a form of encouragement (non-compelling stimulation) toward learning (understanding), adjustment (right action (response)), and restoration of harmony (health), leading to greater effectiveness.

The great potency of Christ-consciousness is its healing potential (love) (wisdom) (harmony), which can be invoked indirectly (without recourse to occult

training). Any invocation of healing energy is more properly a group (impersonal) qualification (e.g., for all of humanity rather than some particular person) (although individual qualification is sometimes appropriate (without imposition)). Where one is properly integrated and aligned, one will naturally (and almost unconsciously) serve as a channel for healing energy.



Commentary No. 977

Psychic Healing

Various psychic abilities may be applied to the healing process, with results commensurate with the extent of the ability, the relative knowledge and understanding (and perception) of the practitioner, the responsiveness of the patient, and, above all, the karma of both parties in the context of the circumstances and situation.

Healing is inherently a psychic phenomena, involving the adjustment on physical, emotional, and/or concrete mental levels of some balance of forces consistent with some growth or realization (lesson learned and adjustment made) in consciousness. Thus a distinction is made between superficial healing and true healing. Superficial healing occurs where the effects are treated without there being any growth or adjustment in consciousness, i.e., where the intended lesson is not properly learned. Superficial healing is transient, although in some cases it can endure for the remainder of a lifetime. True healing occurs where the intended growth or adjustment in consciousness is actually achieved, and is therefore permanent (with regard to those particular circumstances (cause and effect relationships).

Those healers, psychic or otherwise (directly or indirectly psychic), who lack sufficient insight into the cause and effect relationships, do little real good in treating the effects, unless there is an accompanying encouragement for the patient to deal consciously, deliberately, and intelligently with the causes (i.e., to face up to the intended lesson). The true healer is not really a healer, *per se*, but a facilitator, who encourages the patient to heal himself (herself) in the process of learning or growing in consciousness. But psychic energy (healing

force) can be brought to bear, with knowledge, understanding, and wisdom (or otherwise) to accomplish (facilitate) healing (superficially or otherwise).

Disease or injury on any level results from a lack of balance (e.g., from attitudes (or behavior) that are (is) inconsistent with one's conscience or which is not in harmony with (higher) nature). Healing consists of restoration of balance. This generally means provision and application of prana or vitality, directed at or toward the affected disease or injury. With sufficient psychic force (and proper application), a healing will occur. But that healing will always be superficial and transient if it is not accompanied by the intended adjustment in consciousness. And unless the patient participates more or less directly in the healing process, the healing will not endure much beyond the healer's presence and attention.

Psychic healing can "cure" virtually any disease or injury, but unless there is the intended growth or realization (assimilation) in consciousness, the cause will not be affected and the forces associated with the cause will continue to be applied to the patient's incarnation (personality) (e.g., if one is "cured" of a particular disease, without the requisite adjustment in consciousness, one will eventually contract another, often somewhat more serious malady). In this context, the psychic healer is simply one who consciously or unconsciously shares or directs healing energy toward some objective (patient). A number of the various orders of devas (angels) serve as psychic healers on etheric, astral (emotional) and manasic (concrete mental) levels, being attracted naturally to those who are ill or injured, but with unconscious appreciation for the involved karma (i.e., they are not attracted to people who are unresponsive to the intended lessons). The wise psychic healer proceeds likewise, in appreciation of karma, encouraging and facilitating the healing process without imposition.



Regeneration

One of the most encouraging aspects of life in the lower worlds of human endeavor is the continual opportunity for regeneration. Although one may be embroiled in personality experience, although one may be enchanted by and entangled in the senses, although one may be enslaved in habits, there is always potential for regeneration.

Regeneration is defined as the act or process of spiritual renewal, and is closely related to grace. Regeneration can occur either as the student reaches upward (onward) (inward) or as the higher Self (soul) (atma-buddhi-manas) reaches downward (outward), generally and more properly, as both occur. Regeneration occurs through some often modest awakening, as fresh insight is achieved and that insight carries momentum for change, progress, development, unfoldment, etc. Through regeneration there are additional or expanded energies and associated forces available. Through regeneration there is a breaking of old habits and establishment of new, more progressive patterns, more facilitative of spiritual growth.

Regeneration means that actual changes are made in the composition of the vehicles of consciousness, i.e., in the physical body, in the etheric double, in the astral or emotional body, and in the concrete mind. The extent of these changes depend on the nature of grace, the magnitude and nature of the regenerative force, consistent with karma, and the relative responsiveness of the personality. Through regeneration, these changes are effective to the extent that the personality does not overcome them through retrogression, i.e., by falling back into the old habits and patterns of thinking and feeling. Regenerative forces discourage that falling back but do not preclude strong personality-level (subconscious) intentions to the contrary. Thus regeneration is both a consequence (grace) (karma) and an opportunity for real growth, but it still requires cooperation (acceptance).

The key to successful regeneration is willingness to change, willingness to grow, willingness to release attachments (on physical, emotional, and intellectual levels). To the extent that the student is willing and therefore

responsive, regeneration will be effective. But the ego generally tends to undermine these opportunities, as the ego is generally threatened by spiritual growth. Thus regeneration is usually part of the struggle between the higher and lower selves, between the progressive forces (encouragement) of the higher Self and the impeding (inertial) forces of the lower self. The ego generally prefers the status quo. The soul is aligned with progressive forces (on its level) and shares that alignment through qualification of the lower self. But the ego tends to resist, to struggle with the more progressive forces, often in subtle but self-serving ways.

Yet real progress comes when, ultimately and through regeneration, the ego itself is transformed into a willing partner. When the ego accepts the fact of its own artificial nature, when the ego learns to sacrifice itself in the better (higher) (more noble) interests of the Self, then progress is greatly facilitated. For while the ego is part of the material self, albeit extending through emotional and concrete mental levels, and is inherently inertial, the ego has the ability to minimize its impedimental nature. But this only occurs through proper integration, in which the ego (mind) (personality as a whole) is subordinated to the higher Self. And proper integration is itself a matter and consequence of regenerative opportunities. And all of this occurs through grace.



Commentary No. 1132

Healing the Open Aura

Healing an open aura, even a partially open aura, is a definite challenge. There is the condition itself, its extent and complexity. There is the karmic factor, which may actually prevent (or facilitate) any healing or resolution in the current circumstances (lifetime). And there is an issue of ethics with regard to the role of anyone attempting to help.

A fully open aura is quite rare and extremely difficult to resolve. There is generally so much inertia due to the condition being a karmic consequence that there is little that one can do except to encourage the understanding or adjustment in consciousness that is necessary in order for the next aura (i.e., in the next incarnation) to be healthy. In the case of a fully open aura there is no

semblance of self-control, indeed no focus stable enough to even work with. The patient may be wholly at the mercy of external forces on etheric and astral levels and may be obsessed or possessed. Or in a less extreme case, the patient may be merely wholly open to non-malicious external forces (which may be nonetheless difficult).

Where there is an external entity involved it is a relatively simple matter to intervene, provided the karma is permissive, separating the external entity from the patient, through application of appropriate (properly qualified) force, and through either releasing or disposing of the external entity, depending on its nature (in some cases the external entity is artificial and must subsequently be absorbed by the patient). Then it is a matter of healing or closing the aura to the extent that the patient is able to respond in a meaningful (cooperative) way. This can be accomplished using a variety of mental-psychic techniques (e.g., evoking force to stabilize the aura, closing the gaps, and sealing the aura in a protective and stabilizing manner). This is relatively straight-forward in the case of a partially open aura, provided there is cooperation and sincere intent (e.g., a matter of learning and adjustment in consciousness).

But before these techniques can be (generally) successful, there are two prerequisites, namely (1) understanding and (2) willingness to embrace methods of refinement and self-discipline. Without understanding, or without the responsiveness to learning, the patient is likely to undermine any healing practices. Likewise, without embracing methods of suitable refinement and self-discipline, the healing efforts are more likely to be superficial and temporary. In other words, there are habits in consciousness that undermine the process of healing the aura and of sustaining a healthy aura. Those habits need to be overcome and new, healthier practices embraced, before any real healing can take place. For example, smoking fills the aura with particulates which render the aura more vulnerable (and attracts a coarser energy); drinking alcohol tends to loosen the connections between the vehicles and makes it virtually impossible to achieve coherence in the aura (and the personality as a whole); eating flesh foods (meat, fish, fowl) introduce coarser (animal) elements that work against the gradual refinement that facilitates integration and alignment.

So as the patient (student) embraces the preliminary disciplines of the path, including meditative practice, there is then the possibility of making more

substantial adjustments (healing) in the aura (in general and in the case of the open aura). Real healing is accompanied by understanding and adjustment. And real healing is predominantly a matter of self-healing, although others may assist in the process, through encouragement or provision of energies, or through collaboration.



Commentary No. 1199

Healing and Karma

The healing process can never be effectively dissociated from the karmic process, since all consequences are a matter of cause and effect relationship (karma). Thus attempting to heal someone (oneself) without embracing the karmic factor (learning, growing, adjusting) is ultimately fruitless. One can treat the effects with (potentially) some (superficial) success, but real (enduring) solutions come only through addressing the role of consciousness. It is consciousness that creates effects. And it is consciousness that allows healing to take place as the experience is properly assimilated.

Any sort of disease or injury has its roots (causes) in consciousness, in attitudes, in behavior, in feeling, in thinking. Oftentimes the roots come from previous lifetimes and so the correlation of cause and effect is not so easy to discern. And consequences are rarely the result of single causes, and so the matter is generally complicated, particularly so if one tries to unravel the details. Fortunately, the details are not so important. What matters is understanding the intended lesson, as every consequences conveys opportunity for growth in consciousness. And every injury, disease, or suffering is a signal and opportunity to be more open to understanding.

The law of karma is the law of evolution, the means through which one learns the intended lessons and grows in consciousness. Every action on every level of human (personality) consciousness is a sending forth of creative energy that must ultimately return with consequences. Under law, those consequences are suited to both the original causes and the current condition in consciousness. In effect, action upsets the balance and through consequences the balance is restored. In the process are many lessons and much opportunity for growth through assimilation of experience. If one "acts" in accordance with the

evolutionary flow then the consequences will simply (non-painfully) facilitate growth in the direction of that flow. If one "acts" not in accordance with the evolutionary flow, then there is disharmony resulting (potentially) in disease or injury that awakens the person at some level (often unconsciously) and encourages both assimilation of experience and suitable adjustment in consciousness. Through cause and effect relationships one (consciously or otherwise) learns how to work harmoniously with the evolutionary patterns.

But wherever disease or injury "happens" there is a condition that is not in harmony in some sense or context. The context may be individual or broader, involving the group or the race as a whole. But the intention is restoration of harmony, through learning (healing). Healing energy is always available. It is simply a matter of being properly responsive and receptive, which means being able to assimilate the experience. If the lesson is learned and the (intended) adjustment is made in consciousness, then one is healed (at that level) and one proceeds on to the next experience. If the lesson is not learned and the (intended) adjustment in consciousness is not made, then the condition (disease) continues or is compounded. If one merely treats the effects, and this appears to be successful, then either the lesson is really learned (on some level) or the underlying force will emerge in another way at another time, and, generally more dramatically.

This world is a world of harmony through conflict. People learn through experience and expression, through engaging the karma of life in this world. Disease, injury, suffering, etc., are only necessary to the extent that one is asleep and needs to awaken to some higher, deeper realization in consciousness. Thus one eventually approaches and embraces harmony.



Alternative Medicine

Medicine is generally defined as the science and art of preventing, alleviating, or curing disease and injury. It is that practice and process that is concerned about the health of the human being. There is a widespread and long-standing practice of conventional medicine, and a growing practice of so-called "alternative" medicine.

Three fundamental problems of conventional or traditional medicine are (1) the (wrong) belief (premise) that every physical condition is based exclusively in physical reality, i.e., without proper regard for emotional and mental processes (as non-physical), (2) the failure to appreciate the actual cause and effect relationships, i.e., the karmic context, and (3) the inherent inertia of traditional medical practice. Alternative medicine incorporates both progressive medical practices as well as more traditional practices that conventional medicine has apparently ignored. The reason (need) for alternative medicine is simple. Conventional medicine does not always work effectively, and in some instances does not work at all. But the same is also true for alternative medicine. Conventional medicine works in some instances and to some extent. Alternative medicine likewise.

Conventional medical practitioners tend to focus on alleviating the effects rather than dealing with the causes of disease and injury. Much of conventional medicine purports (quite sincerely) to deal with causes, but because causes are seen in terms of limited (physical) reality, what are perceived as causes are really just intermediate effects. And the same is true, to a large extent, for alternative medicine. Alternative medical practitioners tend to be more progressive and more open-minded, but many are simply not well-qualified, i.e., do not really understand the practice that they are attempting to embrace. Where there is an appreciation for the limitations of any medical practice, e.g., the general inability to correctly apprehend cause and effect relationships, then there is more likely to be insight.

In principle, psychology offers a substantial additional dimension to health and healing, through consideration of human consciousness and the effect of

consciousness on physical health. But psychology (and psychologists) also has (have) fundamental limitations, and tend(s) to deal with human consciousness superficially. In principle, metaphysics offers even more. But metaphysics is plagued with limitations also, mainly in the form of the human being who embraces metaphysics without real understanding (i.e., with ego) or without training, and the reluctance of people to accept "truths" that are not self-evident (which is good, because many "truths" are unfounded) (yet even that which is self-evident may not necessarily be true).

But there is hope. Mainly in the form of (alternative) holistic medicine, which treats the whole of a person, in context. Not in the form of what is merely called holistic medicine, but that which actually embraces the human consciousness in the context of psychological and metaphysical reality, e.g., evolution in consciousness, karma, dharma, etc. Without appreciation for cause and effect relationship, without appreciation for current consequences (effects) arising from past, present, and future action (feeling) (thinking), any medical practice will remain substantially limited. Pain and suffering are considerable and valuable signals. Alleviation of pain and suffering can only truly occur where the intended lessons are openly and honestly embraced. While the effects (physical, emotional, mental pain) may need to be treated, one must also deal with the causes, else effects (pain) will recur in other ways.



Commentary No. 1483

Working with Devas

Many human beings are intrigued by or englamoured with the angels or devas, based mostly on superstition and their own imagination, and without any real understanding of what the devas are or the role that they play. Thus many people attempt to approach the devas without success.

The main problem is two-fold, namely (1) the angels or devas work much more passively, much more uncontrivedly, than do human beings and (2) human beings tend to push angels away simply by virtue of their (human) physical, emotional, and mental activity (personality-centeredness) (self-centeredness). The devas are very (very) gentle creatures. They do not resemble human beings,

either in form or in personality, but they are very sensitive to human presence because humans tend to be noisy, much more so than even the animals. Indeed, given the sensitive nature of the devas, human beings are considered to be inherently violent. Any disharmonious emotion is a violent projection of energy. Every thought, no matter how gentle, is inherently separative. So in order to approach the devas and to work with them, one must understand that one must not in any way interfere with their presence or their work. Indeed, one must learn to be very (very) gentle in all regards.

One must also understand that the devas do not need the help of human beings and that they are somewhat averse to human presence (activity). The devas work naturally with energies at all levels, from the etheric upwards, by embodying energy, by being part of the flow of energy. They channel energy in the most harmonious ways and serve needs that are simply sensed. They work with nature, with the mineral kingdom, the plant kingdom, and to some extent the animal kingdom, rarely with the human kingdom except to provide healing energies. They guide and nurture evolution in consciousness, but work primarily in the sub-human kingdoms. Their nature is to restore the balance, to heal rather than to contrive. They are not themselves creative beings, but they embody creative energies in intelligent ways.

There are of course guardian angels, or devas who are attuned to people and who exert some beneficial influence. But these devas only work with people who are receptive to them on some level, usually emotionally or mentally. These guardian angels are stronger than most devas and are not as averse to human beings. They do not communicate with human beings, but they help in subtle ways (and sometimes in not so subtle ways). More prevalent are the healing angels or devas who work fairly closely with people who are diseased or injured on some level (physical, etheric, emotional, mental). These devas also do not communicate with human beings, but simply offer healing energies which facilitate the healing process (learning, growing, adjusting in consciousness). But again, one must be receptive and responsive on some level in order to benefit from their presence. But most prevalent are the vast numbers of nature spirits, devas who work with the more fundamental lifewaves, especially those in the plant kingdom. The plant kingdom has a special affinity for the deva kingdom.

It is not really the place of human beings to approach the devas directly. But it is wise simply to embrace gentleness and facilitate the work of the devas by not being disruptive. And in gentleness one becomes more receptive and responsive to the healing forces provided by the devas, thereby enabling a more direct channeling of healing energies. One does not need to be consciously attuned to the devas, one only really needs to be gentle and caring, and the healing energies will be provided, naturally.



Commentary No. 1484

Healing Places

There are both physical and non-physical (super-physical) places of healing. The most poignant places of healing are deep within the human being, far removed from the illusions of personality, places where one can touch the innermost being through genuine humility.

These are (non-physical) places where most people cannot go, and where very few can go consistently, because there are so many (ordinary) psychological barriers to contend with. People are simply generally unable to be entirely honest with themselves. Most people simply do not have the understanding or ability to find the truth within themselves. And yet for those who can find these places in consciousness, deep within themselves, there is an immediate and almost overwhelming release of healing energy that pervades the whole person, providing ease (harmony) (lack of disease) at all levels, physical, etheric, emotional, and mental. More importantly, this phenomenon reveals to the conscious mind (waking-consciousness) the adjustments (reformation) that are needed in activity (action, attitude, behavior, feeling, thinking) in order for the healing to endure.

These deep places are places where one's own consciousness is brought into harmony with the divine consciousness and with the healing consciousness of the deva kingdom (which are one and the same). It is only in these deep and (very) gentle places that true realization is achieved. And it is only in these deep and (very) gentle places that one is real. Everything else is part of the (ordinary) world of shadows (illusion) (self-deception). Healing is fundamentally an embracing of truth and reality. For disease and injury arise

only from the lack of embracing of truth and reality. But one must work very hard in order to be able to embrace truth and reality. One must achieve progressive refinement on all levels. And most people are unable or unwilling to do this. Because they do not understand either the truth about themselves (content) or the truth about the world around them (context).

There are also healing places in the physical world. Places where there is an extraordinary measure of magnetic (healing) qualification. These are generally places that are relatively remote, though some are in more populated areas, but each is nonetheless a place (magnetic vortex) of retreat (withdrawal from the ordinary world) and renewal. These physical healing places are simply places in the physical world where healing is facilitated by virtue of the nature of the etheric web. Places of great resonance, where devas and people are attracted, the devas to work with the healing energies afforded, people who are drawn for the purpose of healing. The (planetary) etheric web is not quite uniform. There are places of greater and lesser efficacy. Places where people are more vulnerable, and places where people are more amenable to healing. But healing takes place not because of the healing energy available, but by virtue of one's receptivity and responsiveness. And healing endures only to the extent that one is truly reformed in some (substantive) manner. It is not enough merely to be exposed. One must also adjust, and learn, and grow. If the truth is embraced, then healing is facilitated. If one is simply exposed to healing energy, then the healing will not endure.

There are actually many healing places, both within and without. Most peaceful places have a certain healing and magical quality, usually enhanced by elemental magnetism (earth, air, fire, water). Thus one need look not far for a place of healing. And where one can also be honest with oneself, then the healing process is enhanced.

Section 4.521



The Healing Process

- The healing process involves the elimination of barriers and the restoration of harmony, through consistency with (higher) law.



The Healing Process 1

Disease (injury) (bodily ills) (ills of consciousness) reveals (implies) a state or condition of lack of harmony resulting (karmically) from some action or state or condition of consciousness that is itself a lack of harmony. The resolution involves restoration of harmony and consistency with (higher) law.

In the human experiential field, in essence, progress in consciousness is made as the human personality moves from one state of relative harmony to another, either along a natural (direct) harmonious path, or indirectly by way of action peripheral to the path of (the evolution of) consciousness and the (karmic) consequences that bring opportunity for restoration (with some implied growth or understanding). More properly, evolutionary progress is made as the soul assimilates the lessons in consciousness of the personality (either during the incarnation in the case of those upon the path (who are sufficiently responsive to the soul) or between lives in the case of the bulk of humanity).

Every action that is inconsistent with natural (cosmic) (karmic) law is a projection of energy qualified by that action, which is (necessarily and consistently) a lack of harmony. Every energy sent forth must ultimately and appropriately return. The projection evokes karmic response(s) according to its direction, intensity, degree of inconsistency, etc., in the context of the relative state of the individual's consciousness and in the context of the relationship (relative consistency) of that individual consciousness to the (overall) state of human consciousness. The consequences are necessarily consistent and appropriate to the individual and his or her group (humanity) and serve to restore harmony and (simultaneously) to encourage (ensure) growth (progress) (understanding) (wisdom) as the intended lessons are learned and appropriate adjustments made (consciously or otherwise).

Karmic dispensation is always appropriate to the integrated circumstances and consciousness. Every condition or action that is inconsistent with natural law will evoke compensating forces that persist until the balance (equilibrium) (concordance) (harmony) is restored. The more intense the inconsistency, the more intense (albeit appropriate) is the evoked response. The longer the

condition (lack of harmony) persists without resolution (understanding) (adjustment), the more intense is the evoked response (restorative force). Every instance of disease (injury) (bodily ills) (ills of consciousness) (on some individual, group, or planetary scale) is a manifestation of karmic force appropriate to the integrated circumstances and consciousness (at that level). Merely treating or removing or moderating the apparent effects (manifestation) in no way restores the intended balance (harmony), for the karmic force (pressure) would remain unfulfilled and that karmic force would naturally find another means of manifestation (i.e., subsequent and potentially more serious disease or injury).

But where adjustments are made in consciousness to restore harmony on that level (i.e., with appropriate growth, learning, understanding, etc.) then the karmic force is fulfilled and the disease (injury) is no longer significant. What is significant (relatively important) is that healing cannot be imposed from without, it can only be achieved from within. External forces may offer encouragement, but proper healing occurs only where the intended realization is achieved (on some appropriate level). The healing process is the learning process. As understanding is achieved (and relevant adjustments made), so is harmony restored in consciousness (and concurrently, in the karmic balance as karmic equilibrium is restored).



Commentary No. 488

The Healing Process 2

One of the aspects of the dharma of the path (for spiritual students) is the task of concordance, that every spiritual student is expected to seek consciously to maintain individual and group harmony, not the superficial harmony of appearance, but the true living in accordance with natural (karmic) law and working appropriately in accordance with the group's charter (dharma).

Living in accordance with natural law allows (evokes) meaningful experience and expression (service) without the impediments of bodily ills, disease, etc. By being responsive to natural law (the wisdom of the path), the student is able to recognize the relative karmic balance and work toward restoration (equilibrium) beyond the scale of the individual (but without imposition). By being so

responsive, the student is able to contribute to the healing process for humanity (planetary life), by sharing the various energies of encouragement.

The healing process requires recognition (on some level), acquired understanding, appropriate adjustments (progress) in consciousness, and a restoration of karmic equilibrium. For oneself, it is a matter of non-distractive vigilance (the vigilance of qualification (programmed awareness or recognition), not the constant conscious vigilance of absorption in self-interest), being aware of the circumstances and conditions in consciousness, and being able to make adjustments (learning) before the consequences become impediments. Where impediments emerge, the student should assess their relative significance (some may merely indicate the need for perseverance) and make any appropriate adjustments in consciousness to which the student is aware, without becoming absorbed in the process.

The enlightened individual (spiritual student) gradually becomes more and more able to discern the karmic balance, learn the appropriate lessons, make the appropriate adjustments, and pass on to more appropriate matters (dharma), without the need for impediment (disease, injury, ills, or other obstructions). Where incidental discernment is not sufficient, the student should approach the problem meditatively (contemplatively), evoking light and love energies motivated by the desire or need for understanding and subsequent adjustment, not motivated by a desire for effective removal. Recurring effects (similar or otherwise) may imply a lack of insight or an improper direction (approach) (or egoic deception (one should always approach these matters in the humble state, being willing to face the truth (as the ego is seldom so willing to face))). Of course the properly trained esoteric student can relatively easily bring the effects into balance, removing the immediate impedimental force, but a solution in consciousness must then be found before the healing process is complete and the karmic force fulfilled (for such is the obligation of those abilities notwithstanding the karma of the effects themselves).

Similarly, it is relatively easy to treat the effects of another's karmic imbalance, but that is to some extent an imposition (unless invited and unless accompanied by a willingness to seek and face the truth associated with the problem and a willingness to live in accordance with the lessons learned). One cannot (should never) control another's actions or consciousness; one can (should) only offer

encouragement (healing energy) and (potentially) serve as a catalyst for healing. By evoking healing energy (i.e., making such energy available for utilization) the spiritual student offers encouragement without imposition. In general, the evocation of healing energy is (should be) for general use, not particular to some person or persons, but to some more appropriate broader, impersonal context.



Commentary No. 489

The Healing Process 3

The healing process is quite natural and is in fact the path of least resistance for healing energy, healing energy being any appropriate energy qualified for some restorative purpose. The healing process cannot be imposed; it can only occur to the extent that the patient is karmically responsive and responsive in consciousness (at some appropriate level). Great patterns of healing energies are maintained throughout the planetary network and those (devas and humans) who work with the healing energies (properly) simply attune themselves to the natural flow of healing energies and respond appropriately, channeling the energy onto more practical levels and releasing it in a manner consistent with their understanding of the appropriate equilibrium state. One should never appropriate healing energies, but should rather simply be responsive to such energies.

The available healing energy is limited only by the karmic balance of the planet (humanity) (or level of application). On a global scale, many ills of consciousness, diseases, etc., are common, yet each is appropriate to the affected consciousness. Resolution (harmony) can only be achieved where human consciousness is responsive to the implied lessons. The role of the spiritual student is to serve humanity from within humanity, as an inductive (non-imposing) force for good, to encourage the refinement of consciousness (which will, incidentally, serve to restore harmony on the larger scale).

In addition to developing an affinity for healing energies (and appropriate wisdom) and a sensitivity (sensibility) sufficient to preclude imposition, the spiritual student who would work with healing energies (as all spiritual students must, directly or indirectly, for such is the dharma of the path) must

avoid rationalization and the various forms of (glamorous) deception. It is a simple albeit dangerous matter to perceive an apparent injustice or an apparent need for healing on some level, with accompanying rationalization of cause and effect or of effect and (presumed) solution. But all effects are just, and rationalization is a path of deception compounded by emotional resolve (naiveté) and egoic attachment (the delusion of understanding (righteousness)).

Thus humility is a necessary ingredient for the spiritual student in working with healing energies. One cannot normally perceive the underlying karma (the wisdom implied by the consequences) (certainly not with completeness, and partial understanding presumed as complete is almost always dangerously misleading). Things (effects) are rarely as simple in the context of cause and effect (action and consequence) as apparent (yet effects are indeed simple, but only in a higher context). Wisdom calls for humility in all actions (attitudes), and understanding (particular) karma is not necessary for the needed encouragement and/or catalysis in healing. The spiritual student needs only that understanding required to preclude imposition. The spiritual student needs only to make healing energies available on practical levels and to encourage (inductively) the responsiveness of the individual (group) (humanity) to learning (healing).

The healing process is simply one of learning and adjustment, given the opportunity implied by encouragement (healing energies). With humility and the preclusion of (significant) glamour (deception) (egoic involvement), the spiritual student is a potent and effective catalyst for constructive change (restoration of equilibrium) (healing). Wherever there is a need that coincides with responsiveness (on the appropriate level), then there is a natural evocation of healing energy and a restoration of harmony.

Section 4.53



Centeredness

- In addition to the polarization of consciousness at some level (physical, emotional, mental, intuitional), there is a matter of being head-centered or heart-centered or (preferably and eventually) nicely balanced between the head-centered nature and the heart-centered nature. The head-centered nature is that aspect of human consciousness that works through the head center(s) and the four odd-numbered or occult rays. The heart-centered nature is that aspect of human consciousness that works through the heart center and the three even-numbered or mystical rays. The student generally develops along one line or the other, then gradually develops the missing aspect until the two are perfectly balanced or centered. This balancing of the head and heart provides equilibrium in consciousness and facilitates overall health. There is also a matter of being centered, being poised in the sense of being responsive to inner guidance (conscience) (intuition), instead of being distracted by personality-centeredness.



The Head and Heart-Centeredness

One of the principal objectives of the spiritual student is the achievement of balance between the head and the heart, between the head-centered aspects of human nature (along the lines of the first, third, fifth, and seventh rays) and the heart-centered aspects of human nature (along the lines of the second, fourth, and sixth rays).

Most people develop in a moderately unbalanced manner and subsequently need to achieve balance by developing and blending in the hitherto missing qualities. Thus those who have developed largely along emotional, intuitive, and heart-centered lines need to develop along intellectual lines as well, and those who have developed largely intellectually, need to develop and integrate the higher emotional and intuitive features of heart quality (e.g., kindness, compassion, consideration, unselfishness) (and in doing so tempering various head-centered tendencies (e.g. the critical, judging nature)) (whereas characteristics like selfishness, self-centeredness, egoism, defensiveness, reactivity can be manifested through either the head-centered or heart-centered nature (while overcoming these limitations requires somewhat different techniques depending on the extent of head-centered or heart-centered development)).

The principal objective then of the heart-centered person is the development of intellectual abilities without losing the heart-centered focus. If the person is emotionally-polarized (rather than mentally-polarized) it is primarily a matter of purifying and tempering the emotions and allowing the mind to develop into prominence while retaining the essential heart-centered nature. If the person is mentally-polarized (yet heart-centered) it is simply a matter of balance between the two aspects so that neither really dominates. At that level it is also a matter of transcending whatever elements of egoism remain within the personality.

A distinction is made between being intellectual and being mentally-polarized; one can be intellectual without being mentally-polarized and one can be mentally-polarized without being intellectual. Being intellectual is seen as a

necessary and precursory stage that must eventually be transcended. Being predominantly intellectual is seen as a condition which inhibits the needed balance. The heart-centered person is rather unlikely to over-develop the intellectual nature (unless the heart-centered nature is suppressed or abandoned (which is not healthy)), but the transcendence of ego can be quite difficult in the emotionally-polarized and/or unrefined heart-centered student. With refinement comes humility, and so the refined and heart-centered person is generally rather well-placed with regard to the needed development.

The three keys to balance for the heart-centered person are refinement, temperance, and humility. Through these three keys the heart-centered person is able to develop mentally without losing the heart quality and without being lost in the head-centered nature. What follows (beyond balance) is the cultivation of the intuitional nature which lies beyond mental polarization. The heart-centered person who achieves the proper balance is better placed to unfold the intuitional nature than the head-centered person, resulting in strength of understanding in the sense of feeling or realization, while the head-centered person who achieves the proper balance is better placed to understand things more conceptually. In the best of both worlds, the esoteric student, perfectly balanced between head and heart, enjoys the breadth and depth of full realization, unimpeded by intellect (intellectual distortion) and unimpeded by emotional distortion.



Commentary No. 1055

The Heart and Head-Centeredness

The problem for the head-centered nature is often a matter of lack of heart quality, of relying so much upon the intellect that the various qualities of the heart are understood merely intellectually, i.e., that one's heart is in the intellect and is therefore merely conceptual and not real.

Many head-centered people, whether they are emotionally or mentally-polarized, do not pay much attention to the qualities of the heart. And many of those who do pay attention do so with the delusion that their understanding of heart quality is sufficient to manifest that quality, when in fact, an intellectual understanding of a quality and a (mental) commitment to embrace that quality

does not suffice to actually embrace and express the quality. One must necessarily and actually feel the quality of the heart, in the higher, inner, deeper (but not merely intellectual) sense, in order to evoke the quality. But the mind, given its self-delusional nature (self-protective, egoistic posture), tends to interpret experience and expression in a self-biased (self-centered) manner, thus serving as an impediment to actual evocation of heart quality.

The three keys to balance for the head-centered person are the same as for the heart-centered person, namely refinement, temperance, and humility. Through these three keys the head-centered person is able to develop and unfold the heart nature without losing the abilities of the head-nature and without being overly absorbed in the heart. This leads ultimately to moderation of the head nature and a sensible (reasonable) (but not intellectual) approach to the evocation of heart quality. What then follows (beyond balance) is the cultivation of the intuition nature which lies beyond mental polarization.

While glimpses of (true) intuition are available to the heart-centered person, by virtue and to the extent of his or her heart quality, the ability to correctly understand the products of intuition is generally lacking or limited by the reaction of the emotional nature. But when the heart nature is balanced by the not overly-developed head nature, then the products of intuition are recognized and understood much more sensibly. But for one who is head-centered, the intuition emerges generally only in rather subtle ways and generally without conscious realization or recognition of same. Thus, the head-centered person cannot generally distinguish between intuition and intellect (comparably, the heart-centered person cannot generally distinguish between intuition and instinct (what is generally (popularly) but incorrectly called intuition but which is really emotional (astral) impression rather than buddhi)).

The real key is humility. For humility eventually and successfully undermines (overcomes) (transcends) the pervasive (and sometimes subtle) hold of egoism that generally accompanies the developed personality. Without humility people are generally self-deceived in many ways (whereas with humility people are generally less self-deceived and only in relatively subtle ways). Thus the principal impediment is the ego and its tendency toward self-delusion (defensiveness, reactivity, insecurity, taking things personally, separateness, etc.). Humility is the most synthetic and most fundamental of the heart

qualities, ultimately enfolding and engendering all of the heart quality (qualities), and is absolutely essential for the heart-centered student in order to achieve balance and transcendence, and for the head-centered student likewise. And for those who are properly balanced, humility is the means of passing beyond the distinction between head-centeredness and heart-centeredness, beyond ego and intellect, to the truly quiet realm of God-ness.



Commentary No. 1058

Centeredness and Polarization 1

The distinction between head-centeredness and heart-centeredness and the distinction between emotional polarization and mental polarization are quite useful constructs for progress in consciousness. But one should not confuse head-centeredness with mental polarization nor should one confuse heart-centeredness with emotional polarization, because centeredness and polarization are two distinctly different aspects of human consciousness.

Polarization refers to the level of consciousness at which a person functions, predominantly. And though the emotional level is "higher" than the physical, and though the mental level is "higher" than the emotional, and though the intuitive is "higher" than the mental, polarization of consciousness at some level does not necessarily or even generally imply or convey any sense of quality of consciousness or any sense of evolutionary achievement other than the face-value of being polarized at some level (and one should not confuse intuition (buddhi) with emotional instinct or astral impression). In the evolution of consciousness, one simply advances through experience at some level and through re-polarization to the next level. But "quality" is as much, if not more, important than the level of consciousness at which a person is predominantly functioning.

On the other hand, one must achieve a measure of quality of consciousness at some level before one can pass on to the next, yet even within each level there are many distinctions in quality. Thus one needs to look at the broader context of quality of consciousness and centeredness, not just polarization or level of

consciousness. And of course each contributes regardless of level, quality, centeredness, etc.

Centeredness refers to the chakra or system of chakras through which consciousness is aligned or focused. The consciousness of a head-centered person is focused primarily through the head center(s), while the consciousness of a heart-centered person is focused primarily through the heart center. The heart center is more closely related to the emotional and intuitive planes, while the head centers are more closely related to the mental plane and the intellect. But an emotionally-polarized person is not generally or necessarily heart-centered, as heart-centeredness refers more to quality and type of consciousness rather than level of consciousness.

Most people and most spiritual students are emotionally-polarized. Some are head-centered; some are heart-centered; some are neither in the sense of being undeveloped; and some are neither in the sense of being balanced between head and heart centers. But no one who is emotionally-polarized is integrated as a personality, for emotional polarization implies lack-of-integration, of being at least somewhat distracted by emotional experience and expression rather than being poised in some higher sense. Thus the emotionally-polarized person may have considerable intellectual development, and be able to function intellectually, but is still subject to considerable (personal) bias due to the emotional polarization. Some people and some spiritual students are mentally-polarized. Most mentally-polarized people are head-centered and live primarily through the intellect. Fewer are heart-centered, and in the case of the mentally-polarized, heart-centered person, this implies considerable balance between the head and the heart, as one generally becomes mentally-polarized through the head-center, and heart-centeredness follows only as the heart properly unfolds through higher (intuitive) contact with the higher Self. And that unfoldment can only occur through quality of consciousness.



Centeredness and Polarization 2

Thus one generally progresses from emotional polarization to mental polarization through the focus of head-centeredness. The more mature spiritual students who undertake this transition and repolarization may be well-developed in the heart center, and may be able to carry that heart nature with them, i.e., as the head center is developed not at the expense of the heart center but in addition to and in balance with the heart center. In this sense, repolarization is a matter of transference of quality from the emotional plane to the mental plane. But generally, it is merely a matter of refocusing on mental levels through intellectual development and integration of the personality along head-centered lines.

Weaknesses are not generally a matter of polarization of consciousness but of head-or-heart-centeredness or lack thereof. The emotionally-polarized person who is not also heart-centered is generally either relatively materialistic and/or relatively experiential and self-indulgent (absorbed in sense experience). At this level, heart-centeredness conveys quality of consciousness that tends to moderate the personal focus. The emotionally-polarized person who lacks sufficient head development is generally lacking also in objectivity and reasonableness, being too easily distracted by the emotions (feelings, desires, etc.) and personal interests. On the other hand, the mentally-polarized person who is not also heart-centered is generally self-centered in the intellectual sense, being relatively insensitive to other perspectives. Thus while the head conveys considerable ability for conscious understanding, it is the heart that conveys wisdom and balance. It is the head that tempers the emotions, but it is the heart that tempers the ego.

And when one progresses beyond mental polarization to intuitive polarization, it is through the focus of heart-centeredness and the challenge then becomes being able to carry the head nature along, so that heart-centeredness is not developed at the expense of the head, because, ultimately, one needs to be intuitively-polarized and perfectly balanced (blended) between the head and heart natures. The heart then serves as the instrument of evoking the higher energies, while the head serves as the instrument for focusing the evoked

(higher) energies. Yet very, very few human beings are functioning at this level and in this way (and most who do achieve this do not then reincarnate (of course at this level it is not really an achievement but an allowance-of-emergence)).

So what is more important than centeredness and polarization in consciousness? Quality of consciousness. If one focuses primarily on quality of consciousness, then centeredness and polarization fall into place and these distinctions are not so important. Quality in consciousness leads naturally to balance between the head and the heart. Quality of consciousness leads naturally to the transcendence of egoism (personality-centeredness and self-centeredness). And quality of consciousness leads naturally to repolarization, as the lessons of one level are assimilated (as the work (e.g., development, expression, service) of that level is accomplished) and the need to move on to the next level is realized.

Thus real progress in evolution of consciousness requires progress in all three aspects, through progressive repolarization of consciousness from one level to the next, through progressive development (alternating emphasis) of the head and heart natures and their periodic balance, and through unfolding quality of consciousness and allowing the higher nature to emerge into manifestation.



Commentary No. 1200

Centeredness

There is also a matter of being properly centered, being poised in the sense of being responsive to inner guidance (conscience) (intuition), instead of being distracted by or involved (entangled) in personality-centeredness. One of the fundamental problems of centeredness is the inherently deceptive nature of the ego. One usually believes that one is properly centered, even when one is not, because the ego wants to retain its hold over the personality experience. But one eventually learns to discern the difference between the false centeredness of the ego and the higher, deeper centeredness.

Life in the ordinary world is fundamentally personality-centered, a matter of being engaged in the (material, egoistic) world and being relatively unresponsive

to higher impression. This facilitates experience and expression at the personality level and all that that implies. This is necessary for developmental experience, over many lifetimes, but ultimately, as the student matures in consciousness, the hold of the world begins to loosen and the student needs to become centered or focused in a higher, deeper place. The challenge then becomes how to become so centered without losing the ability to function effectively on practical (worldly) levels, i.e., how to not go back to sleep in the mundane world. It is fundamentally a matter of learning to discriminate between the higher and the lower and of aligning oneself with the higher. It is also a matter of letting go of the lower.

Life for the spiritual student is therefore a continual struggle or challenge, for while the ordinary human being is wholly immersed in the mundane world of the senses (personality, ego), the spiritual student must live in two worlds, simultaneously, and effectively so. The spiritual student must become centered in that higher, deeper place, and then learn how to serve effectively in the outer world without being compromised. This generally means remaining somewhat otherworldly, so that one does not lose the inner focus. It is inherently easier to deal with the outer world from the higher centeredness than it is to deal with the higher center from the lower worldly place (in fact, it simply cannot be done). The student must choose the higher, deeper place. And from that center, relate effectively to the lower world (humanity in manifestation). The real connection with humanity is in the higher place, not in the outer (superficial) world.

Meditation is crucial to this process but not sufficient. There must also be determination and persistence, for meditation alone can become relatively superficial and the student can go back to sleep (without realizing that that has happened). The student must find the inner place (center) and allow that place (its character and nature) to dominate the waking consciousness. Otherwise the student will simply go back to sleep. Which is inertia. Which is comfortable at the personality (ego) level. And the lower cycle will repeat itself. But eventually, when the student is properly centered, the cycle will be fulfilled and a new, higher cycle will begin.

As one becomes properly centered (in the higher, deeper sense), then one naturally embraces and expresses the higher energy (quality) and one is naturally and substantially misunderstood, however unconsciously, by those

who cannot relate to that inner experience. The student does not separate himself (herself) from humanity. To the contrary, through the center there is a much stronger connection with humanity, but it is a connection at the higher, deeper level. But it does mean that the student no longer conforms blindly (unconsciously) to worldly expectations.



Section 4.54



Heredity

- Heredity is "the sum of the qualities and potentialities genetically derived from one's [physical plane] ancestors" and "the transmission of qualities from ancestor to descendant through a mechanism lying primarily in the genes." Heredity is thus a major conditioning factor that (karmically) affects the personality life and its ability to express itself while in incarnation.



Heredity and Environment

There are two interrelated factors which the evolving spiritual student should take into consideration during the study of the self. These two factors are heredity and environment, two conditioning factors which are the sum-total of the forces evoked by the soul for utilization during the early years of any particular incarnation. Together these two factors set the stage (foundation) for the incarnation and provide the initial framework of the personality.

Heredity factors include the qualities and potentialities genetically transmitted from parent to offspring (factors inherent in the physical, emotional, and mental atoms and molecules of the parents), as well as the individual's characteristics, conscience, experience, and qualities contained in the permanent atoms (which are not related to those of the parents). The permanent atoms of the soul are the matrices (energy patterns) from which the mind, the emotions, and the physical body are created (or recreated). Within the genetic factors (and the permanent atoms) is contained the history of the human (racial) form and that of the consciousness of the individual. These histories include the lessons of experience and the positive qualities earned (and those that are unfinished), both of the race and of the reincarnating soul.

The soul chooses its physical plane parents according to karma, according to the quality of parents available (and the atoms thereof), the quality earned by the soul, and the opportunities available to fulfill various human relationships. The resultant personality (exclusive of external forces) will then inherit characteristics from the physical plane parents, modified by or superimposed with those of the individuality. Hereditary characteristics may come from the family and racial history of the form-life, as well as from the experience of the indwelling life, from past incarnations and consciousness that may or may not be related in some way to the present family or experiences.

In addition to the inherited characteristics there are environmental factors to be considered. The soul not only (normally) chooses the parents, but it also chooses the time and circumstances of birth. The astrological and environmental forces present at the time of birth form a set of conditioning

factors earned by the soul (which includes the karma to be worked out in the present lifetime). Environmental factors include the physical, emotional, mental, social, cultural, racial, and national atmosphere at birth and during the early years of the incarnation. These particular factors provide much of the soul's opportunity.

These hereditary and environmental factors are considered by the soul and must (for the disciple) also be consciously considered by the brain-mind-soul (the soul working through a mind that has achieved brain-consciousness) (the mind is mental; the brain is purely a physical instrument). The evolving individual studies himself to determine where he is, where he came from, what he is, why he is what he is, and where he is going. In understanding one's inheritance and environment in both the positive and negative aspects (strengths and weaknesses), the mind-soul is better able to direct its forces to achieve the purposes of incarnation (experience and expression). The consciously enlightened mind-soul can then take greater responsibility for its actions and reactions in the objective and subjective worlds, transforming weaknesses into strengths and achieving freedom from the limitations of environment and external forces (astrological and otherwise), as well as overcome inherited weaknesses. The soul then consciously controls its environment and activities in the most constructive mode and manner. To know oneself is to unlock many mysteries and to take a major step forward along the path of realization.



Commentary No. 994

Heredity

Heredity is "the sum of the qualities and potentialities genetically derived from one's [physical plane] ancestors" and "the transmission of qualities from ancestor to descendant through a mechanism lying primarily in the genes." Heredity is thus a major conditioning factor that (karmically) affects the personality life and its ability to express itself while in incarnation.

In modern science, however, there is considerable and largely unrealized confusion in (lack of) understanding the cause and effect relationships concerning the role of genes. Scientists and the general public tend to think of

genes as causes, rather than as effects. In learning that, statistically, a particular gene is associated with particular "effects" leads the unwary observer to conclude that one (the gene) causes the other (manifested characteristics). Whereas, in fact, genes are simply (primary) effects of karmic forces and do not, in general, cause the associated secondary effects (manifested characteristics).

When the soul or higher self approaches incarnation, all of the karmically warranted genetic effects are taken into consideration (not rationally or objectively, but subjectively). Host parents and (cultural and genetic) conditioning factors are selected based on qualifications and needs (and karmic relationships). Thus the incarnated individual "inherits" the genetic factors (real and potential) that are karmically warranted. Genes are thus effects or consequences. Moreover, many genes are not deterministic, but, rather, they are merely potential, being opportunities for manifestation (evocation) rather than necessarily manifested. Thus the individual in incarnation, based on his or her activities on physical, etheric, astral (emotional), and mental (intellectual) levels (i.e., attitudes and behavior), evokes genetic manifestations or not, depending on the circumstances. Thus genes are still effects, not causes. The real "cause" of genetic manifestation (evocation of genetic "effects") is the karmic condition of consciousness.

In practice two people with essentially the same genetic makeup may easily manifest different "consequences" of that genetic composition depending on their respective circumstances in consciousness. For example, one person may succumb to a genetically "induced" disease, while another person with the same genetic makeup but different "consciousness" may not. The deciding factor is always karma, and karma is not so simple and straightforward that the "rules" are easily discerned. Thus while a "good" attitude may prevail, one may also succumb to genetically induced effects, because of some overriding karmic factor. While attitude is important, the needs of karma always prevail. Thus one may not be able to consciously determine the karmic effects, but one can, definitely (in principle), consciously determine how one responds to those effects (opportunities) [assuming one is conscious].

Genetic selection in the first place is made based upon anticipated "life" parameters. Some of those parameters are relatively fixed; others are flexible and can be changed (evoked or not) according to the dynamic needs and

circumstances. Over the course of a lifetime, a person (hopefully) experiences, grows, and changes in consciousness. That growth is not easily predicted, at least not in its details. Thus each person needs a relatively broad range of opportunities, genetic (hereditarily) and environmental. Genes (genetic factors) are mostly convenient potentialities. The soul in incarnation can selectively activate genetic factors, evoking some, not evoking others, according to the circumstances in consciousness.



Commentary No. 1236

Genetics 1

Genetics is "a branch of biology that deals with the heredity and variation of organisms and with the mechanisms by which these are effected." Genetics also refers to "the genetic makeup and phenomena of an organism." The word "genetics" is related to genesis, and implies a sense that while the genetic makeup of an organism is presumed to be the consequence or effect of some evolutionary process, that genetic makeup is the cause of much of whatever physical and psychological attributes may be evoked.

The problem with this sense is that it is based on the underlying (but wrong) assumption that the physical world, the apparent world, is all there is, and the (equally wrong) assumption that attributes and characteristics are largely consequents of genetic makeup, moderated perhaps somewhat by environment and experience. These (wrong) beliefs are quite reasonable, and based upon (limited, unenlightened) experience. There are apparent and obvious causal relationships between genetic makeup and tendencies or propensities manifested through attributes and characteristics, physically and psychologically. However, the actual causal chain is a bit more complicated and not so obvious to the (necessarily superficial) physical scientist. In fact, the genetic makeup of an organism is indeed the product of evolutionary process, but the specific genetic makeup is a consequence of conditions in consciousness, at a level that is more real and therefore less apparent. In other words, a person's cumulative consciousness, tempered by karma, evokes a particular genetic makeup, and so there is some not inconsiderable consistency between genetic makeup and nominally observable attributes, characteristics, and tendencies.

There is evolution in consciousness, and as consciousness evolves, it evokes corresponding developments (secondary evolution) in the various forms that are inhabited by consciousness. Thus the human body has evolved, genetically, but the underlying driving force for this evolution has been consciousness, and not vice versa. Most physical scientists perceive consciousness as a consequence of form, i.e., that the form is alive and has through the evolutionary process therefore developed consciousness. But in fact, it is consciousness that "lives" and evolves and the body or form is therefore animated (enlivened) by virtue of that higher presence (consciousness).

Similarly, most physical scientists and worldly psychologists fail to discern the distinction between the brain and the mind, where the brain refers to the physical organ and the mind to a higher organ of consciousness that may express itself through the brain. The human being is not the body or the brain. The human being is not even the mind or ego. The human being is a soul that merely lives through the induced (artificial) personality that in turn lives through and expresses itself through the body. But most people identify with their bodies and unconsciously perceive their emotions and thoughts as extensions of the body. Others, with more experience and insight, tend to identify more with the emotions and/or thoughts and not with the body. But the truly enlightened have no such identifications.

Understanding genetics in the conventional, albeit superficial, sense has some value. But understanding genetics in this deeper, more real sense has even more value. Because it conveys the understanding that people are not really limited by their genetic makeup, that their genetic limitations are temporary, and that through evolution in consciousness, the genetic equation can be changed, if not so much in the current lifetime or incarnation, then at least in preparation for the next.



Genetics 2

The real lesson of genetics is that genetic evolution is a consequence of consciousness. If a particular gene or genetic trait (tendency) exists, it exists because the ensouling consciousness has karmically created the circumstances that necessarily result in (demand) that gene being present (there are of course other, more external factors, that provide a broader or collective context for genetic manifestation). For example, if there is a gene or genetic trait associated with heart disease, if a person is prone to heart disease, it is not because of that genetic trait. The genetic trait associated with heart disease, if it exists, exists because the person is prone to heart disease. The various (discerned) laws or principles of genetics exist not as causes but as consequences.

A person who incarnates does so to experience and express consciousness. The soul chooses its circumstances, its genetic makeup, the astrological circumstances, etc. Given the consciousness and the associated karma, a person will be drawn to consistent (karmically allowed) genetic-hereditary circumstances. As the person evolves in consciousness, the circumstances tend to change. Healing can occur on various levels (where the effects of healing are generally expressed on the next lower level, i.e., mental healing evokes effects at the emotional level, emotional healing evokes effects at the etheric or physical level). The genetic framework is simply part of the hereditary conditioning that a person (at the soul level, prior to incarnation) chooses.

The genetic framework does not generally convey absolute limits, but rather the genetic makeup serves as a framework within which, over some range of possibilities (tendencies) (propensities), effects are evoked. Thus as changes occur in consciousness, for apparent good or apparent ill, those changes tend to be within that genetic framework. Although in some (rare) cases, the actual genetic makeup can be changed en route (during incarnation), at least partially, through consciousness. But for the most part, the genetic makeup is created (chosen from available opportunities) prior to incarnation and indicates tendencies and propensities rather than inevitabilities, and it is consciousness (more correctly the quality of consciousness in the karmic context) that

determines whether or not some tendency or propensity will actually manifest itself. Thus, for example, a person with an apparent (genetic) propensity for cancer may or may not evoke cancerous circumstances.

Through genetics, "man" is not playing God, even if "he" thinks he is, any more than medical people save lives. People are merely instruments of consciousness and each person is also an expression of collective (racial, human) consciousness. Genetic research (and medical research in general) may be sincerely motivated (to improve the human "condition") but it suffers very considerable limitations due to lack of appreciation of the underlying context (consciousness, karma). "Success" comes only where the results are consistent with some collective karma, and to some extent, "success" in medical research breeds new opportunities for "new" diseases and conditions, for where "success" appears to eliminate needed consequences (e.g., a needed disease), then another disease will emerge or reemerge to provide those needed consequences.

Genetic advances ("miracles") like medical "advances" do not actually solve the problems facing humanity. They (doctors, scientists, engineers) are merely addressing or treating the effects rather than the causes, and are therefore substantially limited. But eventually all of this (research) (medical practice) will pass beyond appearances, and be guided more from higher consciousness.



Commentary No. 1238

Genetic Cloning

Cloning is a process and phenomenon in which understanding of genetics is applied to the deliberate "creation" of forms that are identical to or similar to those from which they are genetically derived. Some people are opposed to cloning because they perceive cloning to be rightfully beyond the human province, or because they fear the consequences, or because of ethical and/or moral considerations. But there is a fundamental misunderstanding of what cloning is. With an understanding of what cloning really is, although the ethical and moral issues remain, cloning can be placed into a far more meaningful perspective.

The real issue involves the distinction between life and consciousness and the distinction between consciousness and form. The cloning process is merely a matter of bringing forth, albeit with manipulation, a form that would not necessarily otherwise have been "created." But this is not really creation. It is more properly perceived as manipulation of matter and form, which is, to a large extent and subject to ethical and moral considerations, the province of humanity. Modern genetic science and engineering allows for considerable insight into genetic makeup and influence upon subsequent genetic forms. This does not necessarily constitute an interference with the natural order, and is, oftentimes, quite consistent with what needs to be.

Some might suggest that genetic experimentation and genetic engineering, e.g., cloning, interferes with the ability of the soul to incarnate and to express itself properly, or that it somehow circumvents karma. But this is not so. A genetically engineered lifeform, whether identical, similar, "improved" or progressive, or even radical with regard to previous forms, cannot be utilized by any consciousness that is not karmically consistent with the opportunities afforded by that form. In other words, a karmically inconsistent form will fail to "attract" an ensouling entity. As forms "evolve" they attract lives (consciousness) that can effectively utilize them. As forms serve their intended purpose and are abandoned by "higher" lives, they are naturally appropriated by "lower" lives and eventually disappear (usually through the mechanism of infertility, induced by the overshadowing collective consciousness).

Thus a cloned animal form will generally and naturally attract the same animal life (consciousness) that expressed itself through the form from which it was derived. If the form is a sufficiently radical departure, the experiment (process) will naturally fail, or will attract a very different lifeform. Similarly, in terms of human incarnation, a cloned human form offers no more threat to humanity than (unfortunate) practices of indiscriminate procreation.

A human soul chooses to incarnate, based on available opportunities that are consistent with its karma and intended karmic expression. Thus a cloned form, much like forms evoked through artificial insemination or other practices, is not necessarily significantly different from an otherwise naturally evoked form. So, unless it is a radical departure from the natural order, there is no trauma

associated with cloning (there is, however, considerable trauma associated with abortion, where a soul commits to incarnation through a particular form and then “suffers” the destruction of that opportunity prior to birth, even though that is necessarily consistent with that soul’s karma). Thus one should consider prospective abortion of a cloned form in the same moral framework as a natural process. If conception has occurred, naturally or artificially, then a commitment has been made.



Commentary No. 1291

Eugenics

Eugenics is the “science” that deals with the presumed “improvement of hereditary qualities of a race or breed” and evokes a number of ethical and metaphysical considerations. Eugenics is based in principle with noble intent, but in practice it is based on a number of questionable assumptions, e.g., that human intervention can actually change something, that genetic factors are causes rather than consequences, and that the implied objectives of eugenics are actually noble and reasonable.

Action certainly evokes consequence, individually and collectively. There is free will. And there is karma. “Selective breeding” appears to have consequences. But there is a bigger picture, a panorama of individual and collective evolution in consciousness in which artificial interventions are simply (primarily or substantively) effects rather than causes. The notion of improving the opportunities for survival (or prosperity) (or intellectual advancement) and improving the quality of life through genetic manipulation may seem noble enough, but these things happen naturally, according to natural law, and according to need rather than willful intent or manipulation of the gene pool. Furthermore, there are many “souls” whose karma is consistent with the relatively limited “bodies” that are relatively commonplace. Genetic makeup, vulnerability to disease, etc., are all karmic consequences. And only those people whose karma allows advancement-in-form can actually “take advantage of” improved forms.

While there may be some (modest) value in eugenics, in principle, the real issue in eugenics is in the ethics of imposition and the “abuse” of eugenic principles

and practices (e.g., ethnic cleansing). Although perhaps not as popular these days, eugenics has in the past been strongly linked to imposed sterilizations and other attempts to prevent “inferior” peoples from breeding. And even today eugenics is sometimes a (fallacious) basis for (necessarily unfounded) racial and ethnic discrimination. This includes rather callous assumptions (illusions)/(self-serving rationalizations) that “inferior” people (i.e., people sufficiently “different” from those who are presumed to be “proper”) do not enjoy a sufficient quality of life, that they do not contribute sufficiently to society, or that somehow the “superior” people and their offspring benefit from eugenics. But all of these assumptions are unfounded and unreasonable, being based on intellectualizations rather than genuine understanding.

First of all, there are no “inferior” or “superior” people. People simply exhibit various attributes and characteristics that are perceived as various strengths and weaknesses. But the person-in-manifestation is not the real person. The real “person” is the soul. And given karma, a person may chose to incarnate with various limitations in order to better embrace learning opportunities. And people who seem not to be living in the “normal” ways may indeed nonetheless be living valuable lives-in-consciousness. But eugenics leads sometimes to callous disregard for human rights and (necessarily unfounded) discrimination against peoples whose appearances are misleading (e.g., people with perceived physical limitations, people of perceived “limited” intelligence, etc.).

Eugenics only really makes sense in some hopelessly superficial (artificial) sense. If the broader perspective is realized, then the focus is necessarily on compassion and consideration for others rather than manipulation of superficial circumstances.

Section 4.55



Homeopathy

- Homeopathy is "a system of (alternative) medical practice that treats a disease especially by or through the administration of minute doses of a remedy (from a repertory) that would in (some or most) healthy persons produce symptoms of the disease (being) treated."



Homeopathy 1

Homeopathy is “a system of (alternative) medical practice that treats a disease especially by or through the administration of minute doses of a remedy (from a repertory) that would in (some or most) healthy persons produce symptoms of the disease (being) treated.” It is an ancient practice rediscovered and popularized in modern times by Samuel Hahnemann. There are two major schools of homeopathy, namely classical homeopathy in which one and only one remedy is utilized at a time, and pluralist homeopathy in which several remedies are utilized simultaneously.

The fundamental (practical) problems in homeopathy are (1) that each human being is an individual and there are differences between people and the way each relates to disease or injury and (2) that it is not necessarily easy to find the proper remedy and apprehend the effects of that remedy. Consequently, each treatment is properly a matter of (relative) understanding the whole person and his or her context. This requires much more time and attention, consideration or (preferably) insight than more traditional (modern) (generally allopathic) medical practices which (generally) treat only the effects. Homeopathy is progressive in the sense that it is more holistic and goes beyond the superficial and looks more for apparent causes. In this sense neither conventional medicine nor homeopathy really address causes in consciousness, even if there is a competent psychological evaluation as part of the treatment. The problem is simply that both practitioners of allopathic and homeopathic medicine generally are not aware of the underlying metaphysical dimension (cause and effect relationships in consciousness that transcend individuals and individual lifetimes).

Nevertheless, some insight is possible and homeopathic treatments may be just as effective if not more so than allopathic treatments. It really depends on the relative competence and insight of the practitioner and the genuineness of the patient (openness to healing, openness to learning). But with pluralistic homeopathy it is more difficult for the practitioner to discern the superficial cause and effect relationships (between the effects of various remedies). There is also not inconsiderable danger from “cookbook” homeopathy (much like the

dangers of hypnotism and “cookbook” psychology). Thus homeopathy is properly practiced with much closer attention to the psyche and context of the patient, and best practiced in conjunction with true metaphysical insight.

Allopathic (conventional) medical practice is simply a matter of applying whatever treatments are known to work, generally through drugs or medicines that counter the effects of the ailment. In other words, (generally) using whatever attacks the disease and leads to the elimination of effects. If there is pain, then painkiller is used to attack and dull the pain (without dealing with the actual cause). If there is infection, then antibiotics or other medicines are used to attack the infection and remove the effects of the infection (again, without dealing with the underlying cause(s)).

If indeed there is either fulfillment of karma and/or a learning in consciousness leading to adjustment in consciousness, then the treatment is effective in the long run, but it is the learning and adjustment in consciousness (fulfillment of karma) that results in the “healing” and not the medical treatment per se. But as a practical matter, the medical treatment can be quite helpful as it allows the patient (who is willing) to focus on the underlying causes instead of worrying about the effects. In other words, most medical practice alleviates effects and (potentially) enables healing.



Commentary No. 1348

Homeopathy 2

There are three basic principles of (classical) homeopathic practice, namely the law of similars, the principle of single medicine, and the principle of minimum dose.

In the law of similars a disease is “cured” or addressed by a medicine which is similar to the disease itself in the sense that the medicine (remedy) is “proven” to cause similar symptoms in others (healthy people). The problem is that there are many symptoms and many remedies. Part of the challenge is to identify and evaluate all of the symptoms that a patient is experiencing, i.e., to understand the context, and not simply to treat each symptom individually. This means that the process is (somewhat) “closer” to the cause and not merely mechanical.

In the principle of the single remedy the challenge is to find a single (homeopathic) remedy that treats all of the symptoms, on all discernable levels (physical, emotional, and mental). In the principle of the minimum dose, the homeopathic physician or practitioner prescribes a small number of doses so that the effects of the treatment can be discerned and each remedy is administered in infinitesimal doses. In allopathic medicine, a large dose equates to large (more substantive) effect, while in homeopathic medicine just the reverse is true, smaller doses equate to larger effects. Indeed, the smaller the dose, the larger the effect.

Homeopathy is in a sense more honest than conventional medicine (allopathy) because it admits that the process (treatment) is experimental, the physician is simply seeking a solution that seems to work and openly (honestly) (objectively) (less arrogantly) seeking to understand. Of course homeopaths are human and can be arrogant, but the process of homeopathy tends to be less egobased than allopathy. The challenge for the practitioner is to look and listen and learn, and not to draw conclusions based on superficial considerations. It may require a number of iterations to discern the proper remedy. And except for minor and simple ailments, without a proper (competent, qualified, insightful, sincere) practitioner, there is a danger of utilizing the wrong remedy or the wrong dose, which can make the situation much more serious.

Homeopathy is no more a panacea than conventional medicine, but it can be quite effective if properly practiced. Part of the key to effectiveness in homeopathy, in understanding the problem and evoking a cure, is that the person and his or her ailment are not separate. One cannot properly infer that if two people exhibit the same symptoms that the underlying causes are the same or that similar treatments would be effective. In this sense homeopathy is closer to the underlying truth than more conventional practice. In the more conventional approach to disease, disease is simply a result of some disturbance or condition to be treated. More properly, and somewhat less superficially, disease is a reaction of the body (person) to some disturbing influence, and so one must properly consider the person and the disease together (holistically) in order to effect a satisfactory resolution.

There are actually three dimensions to proper healing. One is treatment of effects, alleviating symptoms. The second is helping the body (person) to heal

itself, by stimulating the body's own defensive and restorative systems, which is (much) more effective than simply treating the effects. And the third is true healing or making adjustments in consciousness (learning, understanding, changing (improving) one's attitudes or behaviors or feelings or thinking practices) which means that the cause has been addressed and there will be no need for the evocation of subsequent (usually more serious) ailments.



Commentary No. 1349

Homeopathy 3

Conventional medicine tends to treat only the first dimension. Homeopathy tends to treat the second dimension. Indeed, the basic underlying principle of homeopathy is, properly, that the medium for healing is the elemental or fundamental or vital or etheric force (in the theosophical sense). The dense physical body is surrounded and interpenetrated by the vital body or etheric double. It is through the vitality or etheric force (prana) (chi) that the body is sustained.

Diseases and injuries that appear in the dense physical form are really (generally) manifestations of disruptions or disturbances in the etheric body, i.e., in the proper flow of vital force through the vital body in sustaining the dense physical body. If the vital body is healthy on its level, then the physical body is generally and substantively protected from both disease and injury (barring imprudence and barring substantive karma (sudden manifestation)). Moreover, mental problems (wrong thinking) tend to evoke emotional disturbances (wrong feeling) which in turn evoke disturbances in the etheric body which in turn lead to vulnerability to disease and injury. The closer one can get to the actual cause of disease the more likely the treatment is to be effective. If one treats the physical body (only) then the cause is not dealt with and subsequent ailments are likely to appear. If the problem is at the etheric level and treated at the etheric level then success is much more likely. But if the cause is (and generally is) on emotional or mental levels, then treating the physical body or the etheric body will have only nominal (transient) (temporary) impact (regardless of appearances of comfort).

Homeopathy (and some but not all other alternative medical practices) tends to treat the person at the psychological level in terms of context, and at the etheric or vital body in terms of remedy. Homeopathic remedies are in fact little doses of poisons that stimulate the (etheric-vital) body to defend itself. It is important not to utilize a "large" dose, which would simply overwhelm the body's defenses. Proper homeopathic remedies tend to be diluted so substantially that it would be difficult to even detect the remedy on dense physical levels, but the success of the remedy correlates to its etheric component, not to its dense physical component. And that etheric component is not diminished by dilution.

Through trial and error homeopaths have discovered the process (successive dilutions with the remedy being succussed or shaken between each dilution) that works. And likewise the correlations between symptoms and remedies through the process of "proving" or seeing what effects are evoked in healthy people. But it is all a matter of doctoring at the etheric level. Consequently homeopathy can be quite effective in non-irreversible conditions, i.e., in those instances where the conditions are not inconsistent with the vital body's capacity for repair and regeneration (which is generally greater than that understood by "modern" medicine) (miracles are simply natural healings that are not understood in conventional terms). Homeopathy tends actually to be more effective in some instances than others, based on the degree of involvement of the etheric force, e.g., some chronic conditions that are not responsive to allopathic medicines may be responsive to homeopathic remedies.

But homeopathic practice is generally not really compatible with allopathic (conventional) practice, because much of allopathic practice tends to be repressive or suppressive and these in turn tend to mask discernment of the underlying causes.



Homeopathy 4

Almost all homeopathic remedies are natural substances. While the collection of "proven" remedies comes from a rather diverse spectrum of sources (mineral, plant, and animal) (including inert substances, poisons, etc.), the spiritual student should be more cautious than most, for animal sources can have substantial (negative) consequences for consciousness and the ability of the spiritual student to work in consciousness, even while they may be effective in persons of ordinary sensitivity. And while the process of preparation (successive dilution and succussion) should eliminate any physical potency, the etheric component of a remedy from an animal source can remain quite potent.

In the final analysis the spiritual student (as patient) should rely on his or her inner senses (intuition) insofar as the remedy is comfortable, rather than merely the practitioner's senses, however competent and sincere he or she may be. The problem is that most homeopaths have only a basic (rudimentary, limited, merely pragmatic) understanding of the vital force and its role in healing, and generally do not have any training in the metaphysical or theosophical framework for the vital force.

The vital force is holistic in the sense that it tends to sustain the whole body and in the sense that it reacts (responds) holistically to any disturbance or disruption. If the disruption is severe enough, then the dense physical body simply dies. If the disruption is not too severe, then the vital force will naturally respond to the disturbance with "healing" energy (which is simply a qualified or focused or directed component of vital energy). Disease is a major disruption of the vital force (body). Sometimes the vital body is simply overwhelmed and dulled such that it cannot effectively respond to the threat (disturbance). Thus one might first need to heal on some higher level (mental or emotional) before one can effectively heal on the etheric level, homeopathic and other remedies notwithstanding.

The vital force is not substantially intelligent in its own right, but it is a reflection of the higher intelligence and is therefore qualified by higher energy (which means that it seems intelligent). Some homeopaths believe that only

one disease can be active at the vital level at any one time, i.e., that disease being collectively symptomatic, but in fact what occurs at the etheric level (effects, even collectively) can come from more than one source on emotional and mental levels (in which case homeopathy tends to be less effective). But where there is a single cause with multiple symptoms, then homeopathy is, in principle, potentially, quite effective. Homeopathic remedies can be viewed as irritants that stimulate the vital force into addressing the larger problem (one must be careful to stimulate without interfering in the (vital) body's ability to heal itself). But in fact, homeopathic remedies are not conclusive unless there is also some understanding in consciousness on some level by the patient. Homeopathic "healing" is no more a matter of mechanics than is allopathic "healing."

Another way of looking at healing and homeopathy is that most disease is evoked by stress on some level, or more properly by the improper dealing with stress on some level. While superficial (conventional) insights may be helpful, apprehension on a more metaphysical (holistic) level can be much more so. One must simply deal with problem (stress) on its own (causal) level before any real (enduring) healing can take place. But homeopathic (and to some extent allopathic) remedies can be helpful in alleviating effects while adjustments are being made in consciousness.

