

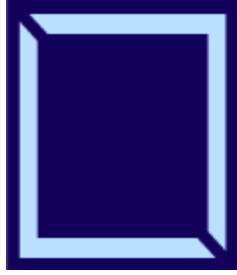


The Upper Triad Material

Topical Issue 6.3

Mysticism

The Inner Experience



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Mysticism

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Chapter 6.3

Mysticism



The Inner Experience

- Mysticism is the art, science, and philosophy of spiritual meaning or reality based upon devotion, aspiration, and heart-centered meditation, including communion with God, self, or reality (the unconscious application or qualification of force and energy), and in the highest sense, is centered in the spiritual intuition (buddhi). The mystical dimension of all the world's various religions is essentially the same, the way of heart-unfoldment and evolution in consciousness toward conscious union with divinity (indwelling God-consciousness).
- The mystical path naturally complements the occult or head-centered path and eventually merges with the occult path to form the esoteric path. But without the mystical dimension, conscious (intelligent) union with God is simply not possible. Thus every spiritual student, of whatever religious or spiritual tradition, ultimately finds himself or herself in the context of inner experience. Thus each of the world's religions properly leads the adherent inwardly to the mystical path.

Mysticism

To the world and the worldly, esotericism, magic, metaphysics, mysticism, occultism, theosophy, yoga, etc., are all relatively poorly defined and somewhat ambiguous. These things do overlap somewhat, as they all deal with the same thing (truth and reality), albeit from somewhat differing (complementary) perspectives. There are distinctions, although the distinctions are not really so important. What is important, is that the spiritual path leads to reunion (realization of union) with the higher Self, with God. It is, simply, finding oneself. Everything else simply lays a foundation or prepares the way for ascension.

Mysticism is defined as “the experience of mystical union or direct communion with ultimate reality” based on “ineffable knowledge and power.” To those who have not experienced the mystical state, mysticism may be properly bewildering, enigmatic, mysterious, obscure, and perplexing. Indeed, it is so by virtue of its indescribability, but it is no less real. Spiritual meaning, in the higher sense, is rather ineffable. It is not “apparent to the senses nor obvious to the intelligence.” How is subjective experience, for which there is no common or widespread participation, to be described in words, when there are no words to describe what is real, and when framing words, when thinking, precludes the experience?

Worldly consideration of mysticism is compounded by the otherworldliness that marks the mystic. The mystic lives predominantly in another world, and may not live in the outer, objective world so effectively. The mystic tends to be isolated, or appears to be isolated, from the bulk of humanity. And yet it is only an isolation in the outer (false) sense. In fact, the mystical path leads the student to union with God and to union with humanity, in the highest, deepest sense. It is only the outer appearances that suffer. It is that the world is asleep, and the mystical path is the path of awakening from that sleep, and so worldly entanglements are preclusive, and the mystic becomes less and less worldly, less and less personality-centered, more and more God-centered, more and more whole.

While embracing occultism is often the result of desire or motivation (being goal-oriented), embracing mysticism is generally (necessarily) a matter of inner calling, of subjective realization. Mystical practice is more process-oriented than goal-oriented, though the practice of mysticism is largely by trial and error, albeit in the subtle and subjective sense, as the means and practices are discovered which allow the mystic to proceed. It is not so much a matter of training, but of discipline and transcending discipline. The discipline provides a basis, while transcending discipline (ever remaining faithful to the discipline while the consciousness passes beyond) provides the means. It is a matter of long preparation and gradually letting go of all preconceived ideas, and then letting go of all non-conceived ideas. And ultimately a letting go of everything.

Mysticism is the way of the heart. It begins with aspiration and devotion and the emotions. It progresses through discipline, sometimes even ascetic discipline, in the process transcending the emotions and the mind, to preparation and qualification. It unlocks the intuition, by removing the various barriers in consciousness (namely ego). It involves silence. It involves love in the highest, deepest, least personal (most personal) sense. It involves solitude. It involves sanctuary. It involves egolessness. It involves otherworldliness. It involves surrender.

† Commentary No. 1190

Mysticism and Occultism

Mysticism is the art, science, and philosophy of spiritual meaning (consideration of truth and reality) based upon devotion, aspiration, and heart-centered meditation, including communion with God, self, or reality (the unconscious application or qualification of force and energy), and in the highest sense, is centered in the spiritual intuition (buddhi). Occultism is the art, science, and philosophy of spiritual meaning (consideration of truth and reality) based upon intellectual, mental, head-centered meditation, including the study and conscious application of force and energy, and in the highest sense, is centered in the spiritual intuition. Mysticism and occultism are complementary, and when the approaches and techniques and talents of both are merged together, it constitutes esotericism.

In ignorance and with lack of understanding, and through reactive association, many people have labeled occultism with unpleasant and irreverent connotations, yet both mysticism and occultism carry no sense of good or evil in themselves. It is only the motives and purposes that mystical quality and occult talents are applied to that bring in the illusion or appearance of good or evil. Each can be applied intelligently, wisely, spiritually, constructively, unselfishly, and for the good of mankind. Or each can be applied in ignorance, foolishly, selfishly, and/or destructively. But as the student progresses there is a growing maturity, a growing sense of balance and appropriateness, a growing sense of propriety (without judging). Karmic force urges the student toward harmlessness, harmony, honesty, and humility, and in so doing the darker side of human nature is transformed and selfishness and self-centeredness is gradually replaced with selflessness.

For the spiritual student, the spiritual path generally includes both mystical and occult development. In general, the spiritual path is first heart-centered and the approach is mystical (although some reverse the order). Later on, the heart is combined with the head and one achieves the balance that is necessary for liberation and greater service. Many lives may be devoted to the development of the heart center, lives with the emphasis on the mystical path. Many lives may be devoted to the development of the head centers, lives with emphasis upon the occult (spiritual) path. Either path can be taken to an unhealthy extreme. Though our fundamental vibration may be either mystical or occult, both sides of our nature must be developed and perfected. We must have attained a basic core of experience and development in both sides of our being, before we can stand in that relative perfection that is liberation and (relative) mastery.

The keynote is balance, for the spiritual student eventually must have a very comfortable balance between head and heart, between qualified emotions and tempered mind, between love, wisdom, and will. The esotericist is the developed spiritual student and disciple who stands balanced between the mystical and occult sides, who can function constructively in either or both perspectives, as needed and without having to think about it.

Occultism is important in the sense that it is the (head-centered) realm in which needed abilities and talent are developed and produced. Mysticism is important

in the sense that it is the (heart-centered) realm in which the needed quality of consciousness is developed and unfolded. Without talent one has no means to proceed toward union. Without quality one has nothing that can resonate with the higher. Thus one must have the tempered form, the requisite abilities and training, and a qualified heart.

† Commentary No. 1191

Mysticism and Religion

The mystical dimension of all the world's various religions is essentially the same, the way of heart-unfoldment and evolution in consciousness toward conscious union with divinity (indwelling God-consciousness). The mystical path naturally complements the occult or head-centered path and eventually merges with the occult path to form the esoteric path. But without the mystical dimension, conscious (intelligent) union with God is simply not possible. Thus every spiritual student, of whatever religious or spiritual tradition, ultimately finds himself or herself in the context of inner experience. Thus each of the world's religions properly leads the adherent inwardly to the mystical path.

The role of religion is to provide a mechanism for progressive relationship between the lower self and the higher Self, between the human being and God. There is within that role both a necessary means (encouragement) for the bulk of humanity (the outer journey), a necessary means for the intellectually astute, and a necessary means (encouragement) for those who can take the inner journey (the mystics). Thus organized religion may provide considerable encouragement at the somewhat superficial level of mass consciousness, more meaningful encouragement at the intellectual level, and encouragement in the sense of facilitating the mystical experience (which necessarily transcends the intellect). The mystics who work (journey) within a particular religion, whether they are the outer leaders (priesthood) of the religion or not, nonetheless provide (embody) the subjective essence (quality) of the religion in its higher, deeper sense.

In other words, religion properly provides a framework for mysticism. Though mysticism does not require (organized) religion, religion does require a mystical dimension in order to be effective. Religions that preclude the mystical

experience for the few who are able also preclude the broader sanction (proper qualification of the masses). The true mystic may or may not work within the framework of a religion, but most do. Those who do not, work within the framework of universal religion. In the final analysis, universal religion embraces the quality of all God-centered religions and it is the mystical dimension of each that is linked, not the outer details and differences in application (interpretation) (dogma).

Mystics provide a common bond, as they each participate in the same divine approach and embrace the same divine essence (quality), regardless of the particular religious and/or intellectual framework. Because the mystical dimension of each of the world's religions is essentially the same, it draws the various religions (and peoples) of the world together, even while outer differences may tend to or appear to draw peoples and religions apart. Religions are essentially cultural and accommodate the religious needs of the people in some cultural context. The mystical path (tradition) (inner dimension of religion) is non-cultural. Mystics of every faith share a common language (silence) (realization) (the heart) and a common faith based on that realization. Thus there is no separateness among mystics, no sense of separation and no separateness. The mystical approach precludes egoism. It precludes separateness. Because it is based on the heart and the truth from within (without intellectual endeavor).

The mystics in the world are not of the world. They may be misunderstood but their quality of consciousness is generally appreciated. They provide a meaningful bridge in consciousness without even trying.

Beyond Mysticism

So. What lies beyond mysticism? Is mystical experience a means to an end (ascension), or is it a preparation for returning to the worldly world? In practice, it depends on the person, on his or her character and temperament and values (quality), and on his or her relative place upon the path.

For some, mystical experience is the final stage of the human journey, preparation for ascension, from which the mystic does not return. In these cases, the emphasis is upon embracing the path-that-follows. But for most, mystical experience is merely an interlude, a preparation for returning to the world with some inner, haunting qualification that precludes or at least discourages becoming reabsorbed in worldly affairs or personality-centered interests. Mystical experience is not something that can be dabbled with (which is not true for occult experience). It is something that is either a calling from within or the person is unable to embrace the path.

Most people experience and express themselves in the ordinary sense, through ordinary cycles (incarnations) without recourse to either occult or mystical experience. For those who embark upon the spiritual path, there is generally an alternation of lifetimes devoted to head-centered (occult) and heart-centered (mystical) experience, development, and expression. Eventually, the experience of the heart is broadened to include the head (and the whole person), and in this higher sense (mystical experience beyond the preliminary stages, wherein there is considerable quality and balance), one passes beyond mysticism. The problem is that there is no way of describing what that involves. The process by which one prepares for this is relatively clear, but it is a very private journey and the insight or realization is not generally communicable.

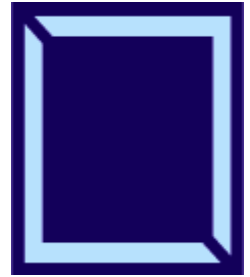
Mysticism is a path and a process of embracing the path. It involves very subtle adjustments in consciousness that facilitate letting go of all the emotional and intellectual baggage that has accumulated over the course of many lifetimes. But beyond mysticism there is another path, one or another of seven paths, each of which takes the soul (and monad (but not the personality)) onward and upward, beyond the wheel of life and death (beyond reincarnation).

People who think in personality terms, who attempt to understand the soul in terms of personality experience and personality attributes, in terms of lower consciousness, who think of the higher as merely being more noble but essential an outgrowth of the lower, are thereby unable to apprehend the soul or the mystical experience or the experience that follows. The personality (mind) (ego) does not evolve into the soul. The personality is just a vehicle, a form for experience and expression. Identifying oneself with the personality (ego) (intellect) precludes mystical experience, and precludes understanding mystical experience and what follows.

It is the soul that evolves, not the personality. And the soul is something well beyond what most people perceive it to be, even most spiritual students (whose perception (framework) (imagination) is largely egoistic). To go beyond mysticism, one must pass properly through the mystical experience, which means transcending the lower self entirely, and then, only then, can one perceive of what lies beyond. And then, only dimly, subtly, subjectively. To perceive in conventional terms, through thinking, only creates and sustains the barriers that tend to exist between reality and the world in which people live (sleep). To perceive without (emotional) feeling, without thinking, allows realization of what is beyond the mystical experience. But even so, it cannot be communicated, cannot be rationally embraced.



Section 6.31



Aspects of Mysticism 1

- There are many and various aspects of mysticism. The mystical path is the path of the heart, and as such embraces all of the ways and means of heart unfoldment and heart expression.

Beauty

True beauty is the special quality that calls forth a state of perception (awareness) (response) in which the normal strains of emotional response and mental activity are displaced to allow a serene emotional and mental appreciation of life (nature) (through positive relaxation) (stillness) (aspiration) (inspiration). Whether the state of appreciation (rejuvenation) (participation) is visual or auditory, the abstract mental response exhibits a common spiritual transcendence over time and space, ever beckoning the world aspirant (humanity) out of the pain of form-attachment and mundane existence, upward to those states of knowledge and soul identification which characterize the peaceful reconciliation of duality (the pairs-of-opposites) (illusion). Such is the case at least for the more refined (pure) (controlled) emotions which invoke the higher participation; not so for the ordinary uncontrolled emotional response which precludes higher activity in its lack of relationship.

Beauty (in this higher sense) leads to the contemplation of those varying revelations of divinity which require no explanation, which leave the student thankful (humble) and in awe of the compassionate presence. Such contemplation is typical of the mature mystical or heart-centered aspect of the spiritual path. The purest emotions and aspirations indicate a simplicity of attitude which eventually clothes the personality in the robes of mystic humility and reverence. The disciple, however occultly (mentally), invokes the needed rays of love and beauty with the realization of the plan of service. For the plan itself represents that which is beauty (truth) (perfection) (life). The beauty of the compassionate quality suggests the attitude of those greater lives for the lesser, who are sacrificed (made sacred) upon the cross of form and matter. The complexities, apparent inconsistencies, and generic suffering of humanity are easily reconciled within the plan of beauty (purpose) of the solar logos.

The ability of the student to analyze these mysteries of beauty is limited only by the extent to which the depths of personal and group being can be realized. There are no constraints on the essence of life, only relative and specific intention. Beauty is a truly synthetic quality, linking all of the seven streams of life (purpose) (manifestation) together in harmony. The creative and

harmonious manifestation of spirit is often reflected in truly classical music (as the position of sound in manifestation is recognized). Good (classical) music (that which calms the emotions rather than that which excites them) is an effective elixir for those students needing to balance in harmony the mental polarization (fire) with the emotional aspect (water) of the heart.

The majesty of certain twilight pageantry emblazons forth the importance of the middle spiritual path (harmonizing the polar opposites). The panoramic differentiation is seen in the tidal spray of sunlight (spirit) projecting subtle rainbows of purpose (soul-mind) amidst clouds of darkness (matter). This suggests the twilight state of meditation bridging between the waking-consciousness and the revelation of the crown of spiritual gold (the light of the soul within the head). The spiritual student sees the presence in obvious splendor while the disciple's light shows the way through the darkness.

The evolved spiritual will synthesizes the seven ray qualities into rich and synergistic patterns (color and harmonies) of greater life from the lesser, the sacred transmutation of microcosmic attributes into macrocosmic aspects. The disciple seeks to identify and encourage the divine principles within humanity in those personalities with which he has contact, a beauty evident only in the group-polarized perspective.

† Commentary No.115

The Power of Love

Man must eventually learn that within his being is a spark of divinity, a God or Christ within, and that spark is characterized by love. Only through the application of that inner love-wisdom can the human being evolve that divine spark into Christhood, as the power of love is invoked and allowed to flow freely throughout the daily life and consciousness. The essence of love is the common denominator, weaving all lives and forms together.

Love is the key, for God is love (God is a second ray logos, characterized by love-wisdom), and all manifested forms and lives within the immanent and transcendent God are qualified by love. The warmth within every form originates from the sun, the outward sign of the solar logos; yet behind every

physical form is the spiritual and superphysical force which brings that form into existence. Obscured or masked by the physical sun is the spiritual sun (son), the light and love and power of God, without which there could be no light or warmth from the physical sun to provide sustenance in the physical world. The spirit that lives through the solar system is that spirit of love which is the keynote of the solar logos, the essence of God, love in the highest sense.

That highest love is the attractive quality that is the bond holding all of local manifestation together. Without that presence (power) of love, the cohesive forces would be naught, and the created worlds would dissolve. The power of love is also instrumental in holding together the human form; for the soul is the Christ or love aspect that sustains the personality. And it is as that love energy flows through the mind and emotions that the human life on earth becomes more meaningful, as the individual finds his place within the coherent plan or purpose of life. The mature and spiritual (impersonal) form of love is demonstrated through many active qualities, including kindness, compassion, humility, goodwill, aspiration, helpfulness, and forgiveness. Love to all creatures is a powerful beacon of light from the soul that fills the darkness with its rays and draws into itself greater light and love, a finer peace, the power of enlightenment and encouragement. Through the power of love are made the sons of God from the sons of men, creators of worlds as yet uncreated. Love creates beauty; that which endures in art, music, literature, and religion, has been infused with both human and divine love. Other works tend more readily to disintegrate and disappear because they lack this essential quality, a bond called love.

Bonds of love, like bonds of karma, transcend the boundaries of physical plane life and death. Bonds of karma between persons and experiences are usually dissolved upon fulfillment, when the needed lessons are learned; but bonds of love endure beyond ordinary karma. In fact, bonds of love are strengthened by the karma of love itself. The attractive power of love is the cohesive force par excellence. The love of the great ones for humanity will often draw them back into the world of human experience, long after their karma and need to incarnate have been fulfilled.

Human love begins with the personal form, but gradually transcends the personal as it becomes a selfless, impersonal love for God and for all lives

within the consciousness of God (as all lives are). The impersonal love is greater simply because it is more inclusive and less selfish, and therefore closer to the love of God. The evolving love which embraces the aspiration of humanity is the love through which divine union is achieved. With each upliftment of love comes an increasing sense of unity, brotherhood, and oneness with all life. Such is the power of love; as love, and love alone, gives life.

† Commentary No. 283

Solitude

The sojourn or pilgrimage of the soul into the external world of the personality (incarnation) involves eventually facing the encumbering glammers and illusions of ordinary (mundane) human experience and reconciling the apparent separation of the lower self from its higher counterpart (and the apparent separation of individuals from the group consciousness).

The vast majority of humanity are so enchanted by ordinary experience (illusion) that they are unaware of their absorption in mundane affairs and are unaware of their true spiritual self. But the spiritual student becomes so increasingly aware of the true state of his experience that a dilemma is faced with regard to action and involvement.

On the one hand the student is drawn to humanity through the love aspect, the impulse to serve, and the natural tendency to be absorbed in the mundane world. On the other hand the student is drawn away from humanity as he seeks the internal balance (self-realization) and feels more and more alien to the mundane world of ordinary humanity. As spiritual values and spiritual consciousness are brought more into focus within the mind and life of the spiritual student, the contrast increases, and the tendency to withdraw from worldly experience may very well predominate. The student is forced to reject many of the ordinary values and as much of the glamour and illusion as can be realized. At this stage the student must also struggle to avoid absorption in the outer world through increased detachment and impersonality (leading to greater freedom of thinking and a deeper rapport with spiritual existence and the common life). This solitude of the student is essential to ultimate progress, but must usually

remain an internal experience, a solitude of inner peace while the student functions (with discretion) in the ordinary world.

The master of solitude is one who has passed through the preliminary stages and who has achieved a state of consciousness in which he is able to live and work in the ordinary world without being absorbed or distracted by mundane concerns. His detachment and impersonality are balanced with wisdom (discretion) and understanding. He refuses to compromise his standards to the extent that his consciousness is affected or to the extent that his ability to serve effectively is impaired. Such a spiritual student places increasing emphasis on subjective work as his abilities and talents are more usefully applied through consciousness. But the student cannot (normally) withdraw completely, for the link with humanity must still be maintained on objective levels (to facilitate the proper passage of spiritual energies). The value of the spiritual student is his place within humanity, for just being among humanity (and being self-realized) is an encouragement to others.

But to master this experience of solitude is not easy. By not accepting normal human values, the student may find himself set apart by others, for he cannot share their mundane rapport and may very much seem alien. Thus the spiritual student must face that challenge (contrast) as well, while allowing the inner love energy to flow unimpaired by the beliefs or feelings or values of his fellow human beings. The student must accept being misunderstood in many ways, but even misunderstanding is an encouragement to understand. Many are troubled (consciously or unconsciously) by the presence of the spiritual student and are ultimately encouraged to reconcile their dilemma. Consolation for the student comes only from within, as the real unity of human life is recognized. The master of solitude remains ever one with humanity where it matters, inwardly, while on external levels remaining detached and free from enchantment.

Sanctuary

Sanctuary is defined (in the orthodox sense) as a most sacred place, a place of refuge and protection, and as an immunity from external influence. In the metaphysical context, sanctuary may refer to a number of concepts, each of which contrasts with the ordinary world and worldly consciousness. Sanctuary may refer to the period between lives when the soul is free from the burden of reflection (and free from the burden of assimilation). Sanctuary may refer to the period of sleep between days of activity in the external world, provided that sleep is a refuge from dreams as well (for dreams are related to external experience). On a larger (planetary, solar, or cosmic) scale, sanctuary may refer to pralaya, a period of rest between major cycles of activity (manifestation). Thus, in general, sanctuary refers to some unmanifested state.

In a much greater sense, sanctuary may be thought of as a circle of impersonal energy. Within that circle is an unstructured communion of all life, human and deva, a oneness that passes beyond consciousness. Sanctuary is not a place or a structure; it is a high degree of being. Within this sanctuary there is no hierarchy of consciousness; there is only an awareness which is non-awareness, the essence of being, far beyond the ego and far beyond self-identification. In one sense sanctuary refers to the soul and to is consciousness, but in the higher sense, even the soul is left behind as sanctuary is embraced properly, beyond even the true self.

Sanctuary is an energy of pure silence and pure stillness, an energy which filters out all of the accumulated distractions, glammers, illusions, and thoughts of activity on personality levels, and to some extent even on soul levels; a silence (stillness) which leaves behind (below) the not-self (the personality) (the ego) and the world of activity. On the first level, all awareness of the objective world ceases; on the second level, all awareness of the individuality ceases; on the third level, all awareness ceases, as the thread (of consciousness) (being) enters the sanctuary of non-activity (non-thinking) (non-awareness). Sanctuary involves a deliberate separation of self from not-self, a qualification of consciousness leading beyond consciousness, an application of will (atma) that

allows for the ascension of current being into the sacred circle of impersonal energy that is sanctuary.

In the lesser esoteric sense, sanctuary is the inner circle of the ashram (on the higher levels of the soul); in the greater esoteric sense, sanctuary lies even further, beyond ashramic existence, a sacred circle at the end of the path (though the individual may exist far from that ultimate goal). Human terms can no more describe this sanctuary than the being of the soul, yet a correspondence exists, linking sanctuary with love in its highest, impersonal sense, with healing in its highest, esoteric sense (perfection), and with service (in its highest sense). Sanctuary lies toward the end of the path, as a magic circle, toward the end of a path the direction of which is the direction leading from the personality through the soul, beyond being, to the impersonal that lies beyond all.

This sanctuary cannot be obtained through seeking. It can be invoked (and properly evoked) only to the extent of earned consciousness (quality) and only to the extent that external factors are permissive (the esoteric student is not permitted to withdraw from outer responsibilities) (time (?) spent in sanctuary (retreat) must ultimately serve the purpose of the soul). Following sanctuary, the esoteric student faces the return to the world of activity (where activity is wisely limited and/or qualified), where work can be accomplished.

† Commentary No. 377

Thanksgiving

One of the attributes of the spiritually-oriented person is an overall attitude (toward God) of gratitude and thankfulness for all the experience and conditions of life. Esoteric students, certainly (consciously), and to some extent spiritual students, aspirants, and those upon the paths of approach (relatively unconsciously), are generally aware of the karmic laws which determine all cause and effect relationships (consequences), and, quite significantly, generally realize the divine grace that motivates the karmic forces in their application of merited consequences.

The distinction between merited consequences and grace is an important one, for all consequences are simultaneously and identically merited and the result of divine grace. To think of karma only in the personal (earned) sense is misleading, for it is the grace of God (under some grand evolutionary scheme) that makes life and experience possible. It is the grace of God that provides all consequences, all experience, all conditions, and all benefits. And all such consequences are inherently beneficial, albeit not necessarily realizable in (with) superficial consciousness. For the apparent elements of consequences are but the mask (reality), as are all things in the lesser worlds.

The attitude of gratitude and thankfulness is itself a consequence of consciousness, in some a matter of habit and superficial (religious) conditioning, in some a genuine reflection of deeper (relatively unconscious) experience (communion with the soul and thus with God). Wherever such gratitude and thankfulness is genuine and consciously realized (manifested in a broader sense), the spiritual student participates (to some extent) in a higher consciousness and thereby facilitates the passage of spiritual forces into the immediate environment. Thus, the act or process of thanksgiving becomes a meaningful ritual and an effective part of the spiritual student's contemplative (meditative) life (consciousness) (expression).

The act of thanksgiving is an expressive prayer (on some conscious and unconscious levels), an acknowledgement in consciousness of the divine goodness that is the source of all life and consciousness, which provides all evolutionary opportunities and all (genuine) encouragement. The act of thanksgiving actually conditions the aura (personality consciousness) and is an aspect of proper cultivation. The act of thanksgiving (in the proper sense of broad, generalized appreciation, not merely an appreciation of superficial or mundane conditions or circumstances) actually creates or sustains a vortex of (relatively mature) aspirational energy which tends to evoke the higher consciousness (depending as well on other aspects of the lower consciousness (character) (temperament)). The important elements of thanksgiving are humility, sincerity, and selflessness.

Thanksgiving implies appreciative recognition of all elements of life (experience) as beneficial, and an appreciative acceptance of personal consequences, as properly merited and properly faced. Proper thanksgiving leads the individual

(lower personal consciousness) from self-centeredness and self-indulgence to humility and constructive selflessness. As a daily (or otherwise frequent) ritual, sincerely motivated, the act of thanksgiving evokes transforming potencies for the spiritual student, and (simultaneously) as a meditative discipline (in consciousness), the act of thanksgiving evokes the awareness and understanding necessary to apply those transforming potencies. Indeed, thanksgiving is an element of magical tradition, and a conveyance of harmonious force.

† Commentary No. 385

Heart Quality and the Emotions

Several significant distinctions exist between heart quality and the emotions. Emotions (feelings) are expressions of the personality utilizing astral matter (the material substance of the astral or emotional plane). The vast majority of humanity are emotionally-polarized; their personality consciousness is largely reactive to internal and external astral (emotional) (desire) forces (glamour). The astral (emotional) plane is a plane of (lower) consciousness. Heart quality, on the other hand, is a qualification in consciousness (effectively spanning several planes of consciousness) and is neither a level of consciousness nor a construct in consciousness.

The astral plane of consciousness is the field of emotions, literally filled with emotional substance, the forms of desires, feelings, etc. The human astral or emotional body is actually submerged in the astral plane and tends to be highly reactive to conditions in the astral plane (feelings that exist in the emotional environment), because the astral body is typically not an integrated part of the personality (though it typically dominates the personality unless the personality is indeed properly integrated) and because the astral plane is relatively chaotic (dynamic) (fluidic) and inherently unstable. The prevailing qualification of the astral plane is glamour, the residue (mixture) of unconstrained emotional (personal) energies.

The primary distinction between emotion and heart quality is that the former is inherently personal, while the latter is inherently impersonal. Personal energy (astral matter) is relatively coarse and highly reactive. The emotions, per se, are

(normally) dynamically attractive and repulsive. However, when the emotions (individual astral body) are disciplined (qualified) (refined) (stabilized and uplifted) by the mind and made a part of an integrated personality, then the individual can not only control the emotions (remain poised), but can refine them and qualify them (with heart quality). But until then the individual is typically the victim of his own desires, emotions, feelings, and glammers, and highly vulnerable to external forces.

The unqualified and unrefined emotions tend to form attachments via the astral plane. The properly qualified, highly refined, and disciplined emotions are non-reactive and can be used as a means of relating effectively with a humanity unable to respond intelligently or properly to higher impression (e.g., intuitional (buddhic) or higher mental levels). Thus, the spiritually poised individual of considerable heart quality (being qualified by the soul rather than the personality or the mind) is an instrument of impersonal love, compassion, and goodwill, who can achieve an intelligent rapport with humanity while remaining poised and detached (without being involved with or enchanted by the more typical human (personal) energies).

The heart quality itself is a reflection of the character of the soul (humility and impersonal love) via the heart center (a major psychic center) which bridges between the levels of the soul (atma-buddhic-manas) and the levels of the personality (physical, emotional, and mental). Where the heart center is properly unfolded, the higher character (of the soul) flows into and qualifies the responsive (integrated) (aligned) (refined and cultivated) (disciplined) personality. The rapport of the soul is never emotional (or physical or mental); the rapport of the soul is inherently buddhic. But the emotions can nonetheless be an effective (albeit limited) means of relationship and encouragement. However, the real tool of the enlightened student is heart quality, manifested on every practicable level of consciousness.

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the act or process of forgiving, of ceasing to feel resentment against some (presumed) offender or giving up some claim to requital or recompense. There are a number of problems related to forgiveness that need to be considered if the separative forces (of forgiveness) are to be avoided.

The first problem of forgiveness is the presumption of wrongness. Many would observe or experience some activity of another and (consciously or unconsciously) consider that activity to be wrong. But it is not for the spiritual student to judge others or their actions (it is rather for the student to observe and evaluate and learn, without judging others in the process). It is (relatively) wrong (inappropriate) for the spiritual student to presume wrongness on the part of others. It is appropriate for the student to judge his own behavior (actions, feelings, and thoughts) as a means of recognition leading to progress. Thus the spiritual student may set standards for himself but not others, with implied standards effective if and only if they are consciously accepted by the (mind of the) personality (or possibly unconsciously in the case of the soul's qualification of the personality).

Another problem of forgiveness is the tendency toward (or existence of) resentment as a response to (presumed) offense (or wrongness). For the spiritual student (who should know better), resentment in any form is simply unwarranted. It is unwarranted in two respects, in the sense that resentment is itself an inherently separative (destructive) activity (on emotional or concrete mental levels), and in the sense that resentment implies the presumption or assumption of wrongness (or at the very least, a denial of karmic balance). If a person suffers on some level in relationship to some other person's actions, then from the karmic standpoint of the suffering party the suffering is indeed warranted (yet the action is not necessarily warranted from the karmic standpoint of the person whose action is linked to the suffering on some level). In any case, resentment is ignoble and avoidable.

Yet another problem of forgiveness is (believing in one's) having a claim to requital or recompense. Such a perspective is self-centered, narrow, and

separative, apparent injustice notwithstanding. Since it is the presumption of wrongness that leads to resentment, and resentment that leads (potentially) to claims-making (or forgiveness of same), then the real issue or focus should be the elimination of one's own (natural human) tendency toward judging others. The outer world is a learning environment for all and many are the opportunities for experience leading to karmic consequences and the assimilation of experience. At first glance, forgiveness appears to be a noble gesture, yet the very act of forgiveness is based upon ignoble presumption (of wrongness or offense taken), for one cannot forgive without first presuming some offense to have taken place. Rather than forgiving, per se, it would seem to be far better (1) to overcome one's sense of being wronged or offended (i.e., to refuse to judge others' behavior) and (2) to apologize (verbally or mentally (depending on the circumstances)) for taking offense in the first place (since one is responsible for one's own offense-taking (resentment) independently of the presumed or apparent offender (for whom one has no responsibility)).

In the final analysis it is the glamour of forgiveness and the illusion of nobility that concerns the spiritual student, for the problem of resentment is usually overcome through the normal processes of refinement, while the problems of presumption and forgiveness per se are more subtle (less coarse) and therefore more difficult to address.

† Commentary No. 606

Unity

There exists but one God, being simultaneously immanent and transcendent, within which is differentiated all lives and all forms. Every successive (higher) realization in human consciousness broadens and deepens the (inner and outer) sense of unity.

Unity is defined variously as singleness (the state of being one), the state (quality) (condition) of accord (concord), the union resulting from some unification (arrangement) of parts into a whole, and singleness (constancy) of purpose (continuity). The underlying unity of (all) life is all of this and more. The unity of life is a reality that transcends all perspectives to the contrary, differential existence notwithstanding. All lives and all forms exist (merely)

within the context of differential (partial) perspective. From the higher (more real) perspective, no lives or forms exist or function without the underlying unity of life, consciousness, and material existence. As the human consciousness is refined and uplifted the sense of oneness begins to dominate the conscious and unconscious mind and all of the personality is qualified by that realization. The underlying unity exists whether or not it is realized or embraced, but the extent to which it (unity) is realized and embraced is the extent to which the wholeness and relatedness of the human being (and all other lives (forms)) can be properly manifested.

The process of unification (integration) (concordance) is actually a meaningful imitation or reflection of the underlying unity. All things (lives) (forms) are one; yet the act of conscious unification strengthens the qualification of the human being by that underlying reality and brings the human being closer in consciousness to that higher life and improves the rapport with collateral consciousness. The sense of individuality is a false sense, for the individual exists only in the context of lesser reality (the illusion of separateness); in the higher reality, the individual is merely a differential extension (expression) of the one. The manifold is one. As the one in many achieves self-realization, the many is realized as one. The one can only be achieved (realized) as separative aspects are overcome or transformed (as the individual is refined, integrated, and aligned with higher consciousness) (as the ego is dissolved). Thus true unity does not result from unification. True unity is the precursor of differential existence; unification is a consequential process of realization of unity.

The one (individual) who is truly at peace has achieved conscious concordance (and continuity of consciousness beyond the one (self) to the one (all)). That continuity exists in all dimensions (as dimensionality is integrated (in perspective), the one is revealed). The five principal (obvious) dimensions are macroscopic or macrocosmic, collateral, microscopic, temporal, and spectral. No matter the extent of macroscopic or microscopic embrace, all is realized to be an integrated, wholly interdependent whole. No matter the extent of temporal or spectral embrace, the same is true. God (the one) does not exist here or there, then or now, but here and there (and everywhere), then and now (and every-when), simultaneously. One must become unattached to all partial perspectives in order to be free to realize (the) truth.

The collateral perspective (dimension) is (with the temporal dimension) the more difficult for the mind to embrace, but with perseverance the mind can let go of itself and simultaneously project (broaden) itself to embrace all collateral lives and forms, realizing that all such collateral energies are equally expressive of the one, and that the one lives through all.

† Commentary No. 790

Egolessness

Egolessness refers to the relative absence or quiescence of the human ego or that aspect of the personality (ego) that demonstrates primarily as self-centeredness, separativeness, defensiveness, reactivity, etc.

The ego is the independent strength of the personality in contrast to the spiritual strength (humility) of the soul. That relative independence is developed as a product of personality development and peaks with the full integration of the personality (where the lower or concrete mind integrates and subordinates the entire personality). The ego is the successor to the more primordial (animal) instinctiveness of the unintegrated and relatively coarse personality (and the precursor of the manifested (spiritual, inclusive) strength of the soul (the animal strength (quality), the ego strength (quality), and the soul strength (quality) are each substantially different from each other).

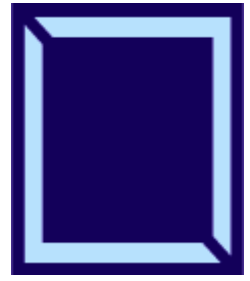
Thus egolessness characterizes the beginning and the end of human evolution. In the beginning of human experience there is (only) the human animal, full of instinct and lower intelligence. As a person evolves, the personality develops and unfolds more human characteristics (including emotional and concrete mental development) and is eventually perfected (relatively, insofar as human existence and expression is concerned) as the higher faculties (abstract mind and intuition) are unfolded and realized (i.e., as the soul wholly qualifies the responsive personality). Thus, at the end of the human experience the ego is fully overcome and egolessness is achieved. That (eventual) egolessness implies that the true strengths and positive (higher) characteristics of the personality are actually available to or abstracted by the soul (and conversely, that the illusory strengths of the ego are not abstracted). It is not a simple matter of abstracting the good (desired, intended qualities) and leaving the bad; for the

soul carries forward (beyond the human experience) with the matrix or fully-developed archetype of human experience, and therefore, it is a matter of eliminating (overcoming) (sublimating) (qualifying) (refining) those aspects of the personality (namely the ego (and coarseness)) that are not warranted (or are not applicable) to higher experience.

But in the meantime, through the various stages of the spiritual path, the presence and activities of the ego and the cultivation of egolessness are quite significant and substantial concerns (for the spiritual student). The principal objective is to maintain the integrity and capability (positive strengths) of the cultivated and relatively refined personality while gradually reducing the independence of that personality. It is not, however, a matter of the soul merely breaking through to the personality and compelling adjustments and changes. It is, rather, a matter of the personality taking responsibility for aspiration (refinement) and uplifting itself toward the soul (and the energy qualification of the soul).

The soul does not compel the personality. The soul offers qualification and encouragement (guidance) that the personality is (or is not, relatively) responsive to. It is up to the spiritual student as a personality to seek the realization of that soul encouragement (i.e., bringing about the responsiveness of the personality). The ego stands as the principal hindrance for the relatively well-developed personality in its quest for spirituality (and higher consciousness). The ego naturally resists any endeavor that undermines its influence in the personality. Thus the entire spiritual path can be viewed as the battleground (struggle) of (between) the higher and lower aspects of the personality (more so than between the soul and the personality).

Section 6.32



Aspects of Mysticism 2

- One of the central features of mysticism is going beyond egoism, which is the only way to find the divinity within.

Beyond Egoism

There is a natural and inevitable psychological transition from egoism through altruism to holism. Egoism is the natural result of focused self-interest (replacing the passive non-egoistic (and non-altruistic) state of the undeveloped ego) and predominates in the “developed” personality whose strength is allowed to color character, disposition, temperament, and values. Egoistic (self-centered) people are necessarily personality-centered (but not necessarily vice versa) and non-altruistic.

Egoism does however have a “range” from relatively coarse to relatively refined. In the worst case, the self-concerned person preys on others for some apparent (but not real) benefit. In the better case, the self-concerned person has some moral (ethical) (legal) temperance such that others do not suffer (directly) by virtue of his or her egoism. This tempered ego naturally evolves into a more altruistic personality (characterization) as consciousness improves (based on experience and largely unconscious realization (conscience)) and a person begins to be concerned as much about others as himself, and on to the point where one is concerned predominantly with others. This altruism also has a “range” based upon the degree to which values are imposed (i.e., at worst one can be altruistic and impositional, at best altruistic and non-impositional).

Average and relatively developed people have a reasonable balance between self-interest and concern for others (with self-interest holding sway if the balance is tested). It generally takes a number of lives before self-interest gives way to more noble (and more humble) endeavors. Beyond altruism is the range of holism, in which altruism gradually evolves into (over the course of lives) trans-altruistic realization (deeper, broader, semi-conscious appreciation for the inter-relatedness of all lives and all events). Holism is concerned with the whole, with concern for individual components (forces and/or people) (as individuals) tempered by that greater realization (conscience) (wisdom). In the holistic domain (approach) (perspective), individual components still have value, but that value is related to the whole and the emphasis (focus) is upon the determining factors as irreducible wholes.

Holistic methods can be applied to virtually any level or segment of manifestation (e.g., humanity can be viewed and treated as a whole (system) of internal and inter-related components, activities, forces, etc.) but are only truly effective when external-relatedness is accounted for (i.e., treating a whole (system) in the context of some greater whole (system)). In the final analysis, holism is a means of embracing the all of life and is far superior (psychologically) to altruism (which is, in turn, far superior (psychologically) to egoism) [although the measure (character and quality) of consciousness determines the individual needs (suitability) and egoism (altruism) is a necessary precursor (prelude) to altruism (holism)].

But this triplicity (egoism, altruism, holism) [more properly holism, altruism, egoism, with clockwise circulation] is itself only one dimension or component of the human psychological system. There are a number of dimensions or components which collectively indicate the measure of human (spiritual) (evolutionary) achievement (relative maturity), any one or several of which are not necessarily conclusive (i.e., one can be developed or advanced in one or more dimensions with or without a corresponding achievement in the remaining dimensions). Yet passing (evolving) beyond egoism (egoistic character, disposition, temperament, and values) toward a more altruistic (holistic) view is a major and necessary prerequisite for serious spiritual and esoteric work.

† Commentary No. 1078

Internal Haunting

Internal haunting refers to the condition in waking-consciousness in which a person senses some subtle and persistent or recurring encouragement of an extra-ordinary nature. The most common variety of such haunting is a matter of conscience (e.g., guilt); another variety is a matter of unfulfilled desire that is allowed to permeate the subconsciousness. Yet another is a matter of some unresolved puzzle, with or without apparent personal significance. In each case there is a subtle, internal consequence of some association or attachment, which induces an awareness, however subtle, that encourages resolution.

A less common but potentially potent variety of (internal) haunting occurs in the aftermath of a mystical experience and generally lasts (recurs) through the remainder of the lifetime. A mystical encounter implies a direct connection between the inner and outer selves, however transient that may be in waking-consciousness. A mystical experience generally leaves a strong, albeit subtle impression in consciousness (and subconsciousness). Even as a person becomes absorbed in mundane (personal) (secular) matters, the deeper, inner impression tends to persist. In this sense, the haunting "entity" is the higher Self.

The great value of the mystical (internal) haunting is that it encourages awakening, through its persistent and/or recurring presence (memory). The experience (haunting) is almost impossible to describe, as there are no words available to convey a sense of the experience. It is very subtle. It is a persistent and/or recurring reminder of something important but not really defined or identified, something elusive, something to be wrestled with in subtle ways. It is haunting in the sense of its gentle encouragement, with an awareness of "something" without substantive or conscious understanding. In a sense this mystical form of haunting is inspiring, but not in the normal sense of (direct and obvious) inspiration.

Internal haunting of the mystical form is a relatively direct manifestation of evolutionary pressure. Evolutionary forces apply to everyone, but in different ways and with different intensities. Ultimately, the goal of evolution in consciousness for humanity is self-realization, the attainment of self-consciousness (in the higher sense) and full human awareness (and concomitant meaningful expression). But most of humanity are asleep in the dream (illusion) of (lower) (personality) self-consciousness (ego). Mystical experience is a breakthrough of sorts. It is an indication of the beginning of awakening. The haunting associated with mystical experience is the subtle (evolutionary) force of the soul pressing on the subconsciousness and to some extent on the waking-consciousness as well. It does not allow the person to fall (completely) asleep again. It gently and persuasively and slowly engenders the needed awakening.

People who are haunted by something are people who simply cannot entirely forget something. If one cannot entirely forget the mystical encounter, then there is a considerable albeit subtle encouragement forward. The phenomenon is a matter of evoking a mindful attachment in a way that allows the mind

(heart) of the personality to participate in the awakening process. Thus it is also a matter of subverting the independence of the personality (ego) and bringing the personality-consciousness to a realization of its own artificiality, whereupon the personality can then be gradually subordinated to the higher Self. It is the “reach” of the higher Self, through the mystical experience and subsequent “haunting” of the conscious and subconscious mind, that encourages the student onward to freedom, at least at this stage of the Way.

† Commentary No. 1079

Otherworldliness 1

The natural consequence of spiritual deepening, through mystical encounters and through qualification and other meaningful (interior) spiritual experience, is an increasing sense of otherworldliness, of not really feeling a part of the mundane, personal, secular world, but feeling more so a part of the deeper, less personal, but more meaningful (heart-centered) inner (spiritual) world (dimension).

As the student progresses along the Way and as this deepening occurs, the student must be careful to balance the two aspects (inner and outer), for while most people are completely absorbed in the outer (objective) (personal) world and unresponsive to higher impression, the spiritual student who passes the midway point along the path risks premature absorption in the inner (subjective) experience. The inner experience is important, and should deepen, but the student should still be able to function in the outer world. Indeed, the student should be able to function even more effectively in the outer world, by virtue of his (her) lack of outer attachments (entanglements). This growing sense of otherworldliness is a wonderful complement to the inner haunting that follows the mystical encounter (soul contact). It helps the student build momentum along the Way, evoking the experience and opportunities for higher expression that are needed, without being overwhelming.

This sense of otherworldliness may be interpreted by those who are absorbed in the outer world as separative, yet in fact it is just the opposite. Being absorbed in the outer world is inherently separative, even for heart-centered and well-

intentioned spiritually-minded people, while living more so the inner life places the waking-consciousness more directly in contact with the reality of unity (rather than merely the intellectual appreciation of unity). But the student who embraces the spiritual path must necessarily become non-conforming in the sense of not living in accord with most of the expectations of the outer world (culture). This may be viewed as separative, and is indeed threatening to the ego sense, but is really a matter of progressive non-separativeness, accompanied by progressively deeper, inner realization.

While the student becomes less-conforming in consciousness, i.e., more free from the worldly conditioning (of materialism and egoism), there is no need to be antagonistic to the more worldly experience. A truly heart-centered student cannot be antagonistic. But, many people feel threatened by those who do not share their own world-view (i.e., they are insecure in their own belief systems and need assurance and comfort from like-minded people). Thus the spiritual student should proceed in gentleness, living in accord with inner values while respecting and appreciating that others may see the world very differently. Those who embrace otherworldliness should endeavor to function in harmony with those who are not able to appreciate the inner dimension, not by conforming to outer values, but through love and appreciation.

The passage through this sense of otherworldliness is often related to the dark night of soul, as one returns from the dark night haunted (inspired) by the experience. The Way is inherently lonely. Yet from within comes persistent and recurring encouragement, inward, onward, upward. This sense of loneliness is just the reaction of the outer self (personality) to the subconscious realization of the truth of inner experience (the truth of the artificiality of outer experience). In otherworldliness tempered by practical considerations comes balance (harmony) and quiet (inner) joy. And through deepening inner experience comes true communion with all of life.

Otherworldliness 2

Another aspect of otherworldliness is the matter of reality and how reality is perceived by those of worldly consciousness. Otherworldliness is defined conventionally as the condition or circumstances of “relating to a world other than the actual world” while the more metaphysical definition focuses on the transcendental aspect.

For most (conventional) people, otherworldliness is a matter (belief) (perspective) of someone withdrawing from the “real” world and living in one’s imagination (non-reality). The “real” world is viewed (by the worldly) as the physical world that is apparent to the (worldly) senses, and other dimensions (emotional, intellectual) are viewed as aspects of that physical world. The fact that virtually everyone in incarnation is absorbed in the materialism and worldliness of “objective” experience means that hardly anyone can appreciate the truth of the inner worlds. It is beyond their experience and therefore not real to them.

But truth is not a democratic process. Something is not true merely because an overwhelming majority of people believe it is true, though the fact that an overwhelming majority of people believe something does have an effect on mass consciousness, mass perception, etc., i.e., making a “belief” more believable, regardless of its validity. Thus otherworldly people, people who live in both worlds, are often misunderstood, because their character and temperament and values tend to be significantly different than that of “normal” people. If the otherworldliness is in the context of some conventional system (e.g., an established orthodox church) then it is more readily accepted if not fully understood or appreciated. But many pioneers do not work through conventional means and achieve their otherworldliness without regard to the sensibilities of the majority.

To the truly otherworldly, reality lies in the subjective (inner) realm and not in the objective (outer) world. The physical, emotional, and mental planes are viewed as different (equal but not equivalent) but closely-coupled dimensions, but all by way of embracing and facilitating the illusion of the senses, e.g., of

separateness, of the (false) “reality” and (false) validity of sense impressions. One is drawn into otherworldliness either through some mystical experience or through being unsatisfied with the conclusions of the ordinary senses (sense experience) (intellectual endeavors). When life in the mundane world loses its glamour and therefore its hold on waking-consciousness (and subconsciousness), i.e., as materialism, intellectualism, and egoism are gradually overcome, then one naturally becomes gradually and increasingly otherworldly.

The reality of inner experience cannot be conveyed effectively. There is a realization that transcends the senses, that transcends logic and all lesser (worldly) experience. One simply knows and understands, without being able to express that knowledge or understanding. There is a great comfort that accompanies this inner sense, as well as a quiet haunting that tends to keep the student (more) awake (than would otherwise be the case). But in the final analysis, reality is a matter of perspective (relativity). The inner reality is only real for those who live there (or who can function therein). Likewise outer reality is only real for those who are satisfied with that conclusion. But the outer reality is a matter of conditioning and usually a matter of passive (unconscious) acceptance, while the inner reality (otherworldliness) is a matter of progressive realization and release (freedom) from conditioning.

† Commentary No. 1092

Surrender

One of the prerequisites of (true) (non-casual) mystical experience is the surrender of one’s ego, the subordination of one’s own will and acceptance of the qualification of one’s higher, deeper, more noble Self. The three main difficulties are (1) the tremendous reluctance (impedance) of the ego, (2) the underlying tendencies (attachments) of the personality, and (3) the widespread tendency to deceive oneself by allowing the ego to masquerade as the higher Self while one believes one is approaching that higher Self.

The ego (personality) (mind) serves a purpose in facilitating experience and expression, but it is fundamentally an artificial and self-serving entity. In order

to sustain its (artificial) existence and its (false) sense of importance (pre-eminence), the ego contrives to dominate the waking experience and expression, albeit through subversion and more subtle means. The ego seeks to create and sustain attachments. The ego seeks to experience and express itself in ways that sustain its hold on consciousness. It is not that the ego is "against" evolution in consciousness. It is just that, generally, the ego is more concerned with self-preservation than it is with growth in consciousness. Thus while the ego facilitates experience and expression at the personality level, it also tends to impede real growth in consciousness, so that most "growth" occurs between lives as the experience of a lifetime is assimilated without the hindering presence of ego.

Attachments are another great hindrance. Life in the lower worlds tends to be dominated by attachments and involvements. Most people are wholly absorbed (asleep) in personality experience and expression and therefore almost completely unresponsive to higher impression. This absorption is apparently necessary for much of the preliminary experience and expression, but spiritual growth occurs to the extent that one is not so absorbed in mundane, personal affairs. The spiritual student must first awaken to a large extent, overcoming his or her absorption, transcending the bulk of egoism, before the student can even begin to intelligently surrender. Yet absorption in sense experience and/or various other forms of mundane (material) (emotional) (intellectual) absorption remains an unconscious addiction for the bulk of humanity. But letting go, overcoming attachments (addictions) is very difficult. Proper detachment (freedom from attachment) is a very substantial achievement.

But those who seek to overcome these hindrances (ego, attachments) usually pass through various stages of self-deception in the process. The will to transcend these limitations tends to evoke the subtle-but-undermining presence of ego. The ego gets "involved" in the process, and offers great encouragement while sincerely undermining one's accomplishments. The ego is not trying to undermine anything. The ego is just trying to sustain itself. Yet success ultimately comes as the ego is tempered to the point where it is forced to collaborate, in subordination to the greater Self.

A solution is the actual cultivation and exercise of the will to surrender, completely, without reservation, qualification, caveat, or expectation. But that

surrender must be to one's Self and complete, and not to any external person or entity. In this sense (surrender), God lives within, not without. People do not represent God's presence, except in themselves. The spiritual student is encouraged to participate in worthwhile external activities, but without surrendering to any person, persons, groups, or organizations. Instead, the spiritual student is encouraged to cultivate the egolessness that allows complete (inner) surrender (and (complete) outer qualification).

† Commentary No. 1227

The Divinity Within

Divinity is defined as the state or quality proceeding directly from God. Every human being, indeed every lifeform, is divine. At the highest level, the human monad is that aspect of the human being that remains with God, that does not descend or reflect itself into the lower worlds of endeavor. At the lowest level, that of the human personality, the human being is a reflection of that divine monad. Whether or not a person actively embraces or engages the divinity within, the divinity remains (within).

The divinity within is the basis for human equality (the essential equality of all human beings (a coarse, self-absorbed human being is no less divine than a highly refined spiritual student)) and is the basis for the equality of all lives (an animal is no less divine than a human being). The divinity within is the source of all (energy, life, purpose, consciousness). The divinity within is the reality of the human being, while what merely appears to be human is not so real. The divinity within is the only persistent part of the human being. But, that divinity within can be embraced or engaged in a variety of ways and through various means.

In the lower sense, the human being is a divine expression, and every aspect of lower existence is similarly divine, in some (inner) sense. The personality is a divine instrument. The body, the emotions, and the concrete mind all have an underlying divine nature. Based on this lower sense, many people "embrace the divine" by embracing the lower nature as divine. But without realizing the distinction between the real and the unreal, embracing the divine in this (lower)

sense is rather self-deceiving (and self-serving). For while the body (personality) is a divine expression, it is merely an instrument. It is not the substance of divinity. And so to identify with the lower nature under the guise of embracing the divinity within is largely a matter of illusion. Such illusion is often used as an excuse to indulge the senses, effectively blocking out any real insight. The ego (and lower nature) fosters this experience as a way to maintain control and to prevent self-realization. The ego (and lower nature) fosters self-absorption and self-indulgence (if it feels good it must be divine).

But while the lower nature remains a divine expression, and while the human being is a (divine) whole, the only effective way to embrace and engage the divinity within is through realizing the distinction between the true (real) (Self) and the false (not-real) (not-self). One cannot identify with the higher nature unless the lower nature is recognized for what it is, divine but merely instrumental. As long as one is identified with the lower nature or some aspect of the lower nature (body, feeling, thinking) one cannot properly or effectively embrace the higher nature, because such a person (identified with the lower) (necessarily) cannot recognize the higher nature. People can talk about the soul all they want to, and people can deceive themselves into thinking they are participating in the soul energy, but until a person transcends the lower nature and identifies with the higher, in actuality, then the soul (and higher nature) is not engaged.

In engaging the higher nature, one does not reject the lower, but one simply places the lower nature into proper context. The lower nature is a valuable instrument for experience and expression, but it is not an end in itself. Being absorbed in the lower nature, being entangled in the senses, living at the ego (personality-centered) level, has some value, but ultimately must be transcended, as the higher (divine) nature is embraced and engaged.

The True Mystic

A mystic is one who follows or expounds a mystical way of life, without necessarily achieving conscious communion with God. A true mystic is one who actually embraces mysticism, the path and the condition in consciousness, who embraces and communes with the God within, and allows that God-Self to effuse every aspect of his or her life in this world.

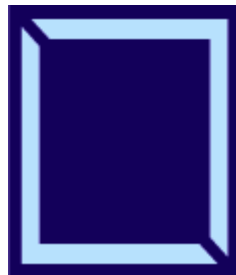
The true mystic is one who can discern the distinction between the higher and lower selves and embrace the higher Self relatively if not perfectly unimpeded by the lower. The true mystic is one who has conquered the lower self to a large extent, and allows the higher to shine through much of the time. Whose mind and personality are refined and tempered, and whose ego is all but destroyed. The true mystic lives in the world, but is not entangled in the world. The true mystic lives among humanity, feels genuine compassion for humanity, indeed communes with humanity, without any sense of separateness and without any expression of separativeness, yet rises above the ordinary human (sleeping) consciousness into a greater reality. The true mystic does not confuse experience with being. The true mystic embraces experience without being entangled, and yet completely embraces being without any real isolation from humanity.

The true mystic feels the greatest joy, evoked through communion with God. Yet also feels the pain and sadness of humanity in its isolation in consciousness from God. The true mystic is awake and surrounded by those who sleep, embracing true compassion and offering gentle encouragement. The true mystic is consciously one with humanity in the highest and deepest sense, and walks among outer humanity as a pilgrim in the wilderness. The true mystic is consciously and objectively aware of his or her place in the world and his or her surroundings. And the true mystic is consciously and subjectively aware of the inner truth and reality. The true mystic does not embrace either materialism, or entertainment of the senses, or egoism. The true mystic is often misunderstood in his or her non-conformity, but that non-conformity is gentle and merely unconventional, not threateningly so. The true mystic has uncommon character

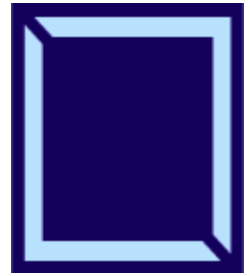
and principles and values and lives among humanity without ever seeking to impose in any way.

The inner life of the true mystic is both rich and deep. He or she knows the depths of despair and loneliness, as well as the greatest of joy in finding the true Self. The true mystic may or may not live alone in the world, but recognizes kindred spirits along the way. Above all the true mystic is gentle and quiescent. There is no outer coarseness to impede. There is no recourse to or reliance upon thinking, though there may be thoughts here and there. Similarly there is no recourse to or reliance on sense impressions. There are feelings, from both external and internal sources, but there is no entanglement in feelings. There is activity in the world, without intensity or entanglement. There is simply a serving of humanity, in necessarily small ways.

The true mystic is not entirely free from karma, but his or her karmic experience is relatively gentle and modest. There is a not inconsiderable embrace of harmlessness, honesty, and humility. There is a deepening communion with the God-Christ (by whatever name it may be known in whatever conceptual framework), even while there are no words or even symbols to express this experience to others. It is sufficient for the true mystic to simply walk about the wilderness of humanity, remaining unrecognized and unacknowledged, embracing the grace of God.



Section 6.33



Mystical Experience

- The mystical experience is the most profound experience that a human being can embrace while in incarnation. It is, fundamentally, the experience of union with the soul or higher Self, and thereby with humanity and God (and all of life).

Mystical Experience 1

That which is mystical is defined conventionally as “having a spiritual meaning or reality that is neither apparent to the senses nor obvious to the intelligence” or “of, relating to, or resulting from an individual’s direct communion with God or ultimate reality” usually “based upon intuition, insight, or similar subjective experience.” Mystical experience tends to be unintelligible because it is beyond the realm of ordinary experience and therefore beyond the intellectual scope.

Non-conventionally (metaphysically), that which is mystical is further defined as that which is evoked by the soul (atma-buddhi-manas), i.e., through direct contact of heart (in the personality sense) and soul (in the transcendental sense of that which exists beyond the human personality, i.e., beyond the intellect) (the soul being the Christ-essence within the human being but which does not appear on physical, emotional, or intellectual levels). This contrasts with that which is occult, which, although still subject to interpretation (and mis-interpretation), is more objective and does not necessarily involve the soul. Higher occult experience is more similar to mystical experience, and eventually the two paths blend and merge in “esoteric” experience.

There are at least three (generic) kinds of mystics and many kinds of mystical experience. The first kind of mystic is the student (human being) (not necessarily a spiritual student) who has a transient mystical experience, an encounter of a mystical nature, which necessarily leaves a rather strong impression. If this is a genuine mystical experience, then it usually haunts the student for the rest of his or her life. Such a student will generally be unable to evoke another mystical experience, though it may happen from time to time. In other words, mystical experience is not something that the personality (mind) (ego) (intellect) can evoke, but it is something that the soul can evoke for a responsive personality. Thus, all a person (personality) can “do” is prepare for mystical experience. Occasional, transient experience of a mystical nature does not require conscious or deliberate preparation, but sustained or more frequent experience along these lines does require considerable qualification and heart-unfoldment.

The second type of mystic is the (more) serious spiritual student in the tradition of some religion or spiritual faith, who devotes himself or herself to the mystical path, to some extent, in the context of that faith. The conditioning associated with and/or conveyed through that faith facilitates the experience yet limits the ability of the student to properly interpret his or her experience beyond the intellectual scope of that faith (which is in itself necessarily limited). Virtually all of the historical documentation of mystical experience is associated with this second type, meaning that virtually all of the descriptions of mystical experience are colored by the personality, and particularly the emotional nature, and interpreted in accordance with the personal religious faith of the particular mystical student.

For example, a student who “expects” to encounter God or Christ personally, will tend to interpret his or her experience in accordance with that expectation. That does not invalidate the genuineness of the experience (if indeed it is a genuine mystical experience), but it does mean that the description and interpretations are personal and biased (and therefore misleading in some ways). However, many people have merely “emotional” experiences that they sincerely but wrongly believe to be genuinely mystical.

† Commentary No. 1070

Mystical Experience 2

The problem is not so much a matter of whether or not one has had an experience, but whether or not it is meaningful and/or genuinely mystical. Of course every experience can be considered meaningful (where meaningfulness is actively promoted by the ego or superficial self), but in this sense of “soul contact” very, very few experiences deemed mystical by the ego consciousness are actually and genuinely a matter of soul contact or actual communion.

Only the third type of mystic has the potential to properly discern both genuineness and significance. The third type of mystic is the serious spiritual student in the more universal sense, who has transcended the limitations of particular religious and spiritual faith and tradition, being substantially less conditioned by the tenets and framework of any particular faith. Such a student sees the underlying commonality of mystical experience within all genuine

religious and spiritual traditions, but also has the experiential framework to properly interpret his or her experience (or, more correctly, the experience and understanding (insight) to not-interpret the experience).

The central problems of mystical experience are (1) lack of understanding of the experience, due to conditioning, personal bias, expectation, lack of training, etc., and (2) lack of shared understanding or the inability to communicate understanding. The first problem is a matter of inherent intellectual limitations. One who thinks that he or she understands probably does not. People tend necessarily to interpret their experience in the context of their intellectual and experiential framework, i.e., one tends to fit one's experience into that pre-existing framework, whether it really fits or not. That fitting further limits understanding. An orthodox Christian, for example, will tend to interpret his or her mystical experience in an orthodox Christian framework, and see (hear) (feel) accordingly. Likewise a theosophist will tend to interpret his or her mystical experience in the framework of what he or she (thinks he or she) knows and understands about the metaphysical realm. But any such interpretation is limited; it is only when one transcends the belief system as a whole, that mystical experience can be properly realized (not that one can ever really "understand" in any intellectual sense).

Mystical experience is special. It is generally well beyond the scope of one's prior conscious experience and likewise beyond the scope of others' experience. Thus the second problem is a matter of compounding one's lack of understanding with a lack of language adequate to communicate what understanding there is. Yet with proper caveats, the historical record of mystical experience can be nonetheless encouraging. It is helpful to know that others have passed this way before, however poorly that "way" can be communicated and explained. It is helpful to "understand" the inherent trials and tribulations along the way. It is helpful to "understand" the depths of the sense of otherworldliness and loneliness that invariably attends much of the mystical progression. And it is helpful to "understand" the quiet joy or true communion that is ultimately achieved as the student passes beyond his or her ability to communicate (and beyond even thinking about what is being experienced).

And yet, for people who have genuine mystical experience and who have some measure of genuine understanding, the limitations of language are transcended. One simply understands what is being communicated, despite the limitations of the words themselves, because similar experience has been encountered, so the framework for understanding is there. Yet genuine mystical experience does not in itself or necessarily convey genuine understanding.

† Commentary No. 1071

Mystical Experience 3

Mystics are human beings. They just tend to have a different focus and a different perspective than most people. Mystics are by definition heart-centered or at least more heart-centered than head-centered, but they are not necessarily emotionally-polarized.

Emotionally-polarized people (emopols) and mentally-polarized people (menpols) interpret experience, and particularly mystical experience, differently, both qualitatively and procedurally (functionally). Emopols tend to interpret experience more personally, and this tends to convey substantial limitations through the somewhat unconscious and underlying conditioning of one's faith (belief system) and the tendency to attribute more personal significance to the experience than would otherwise be warranted. Emopols tend to rely on their feelings rather than their thinking. And mystical experience, while not inherently emotional (in fact not at all emotional), tends to evoke (induce) emotional reactions in someone who is emotionally-polarized. Thus emopols who are mystical tend to focus on these evoked and induced feelings rather than on the experience itself. Thus much of their descriptions and interpretations have to do with effects rather than essence.

On the other hand, menpols and head-centered emopols tend to interpret experience according to the extent of their intellectual understanding, which is likewise necessarily limited. They tend to be less personal, but also influenced (primarily subconsciously) substantially by their conditioning. Thus emopols tend to be limited primarily by their experiential framework and menpols tend to

be limited primarily by their intellectual framework. In understanding these limitations, then, there is the potential for transcendence.

It is only when one transcends the personality as a whole (and its intellect), that one can evoke mystical experience at will and actually understand the experience (by virtue of not interpreting the experience). But those who do so invariably refrain from claiming to have had any such experience and from attempting to communicate anything at all regarding their experience. They realize how futile it is to attempt to convey any detail, for unless one has had the experience and unless one has the ability to understand the experience, communication is not possible (and if otherwise, communication is not needed).

So what is mystical experience? Genuine mystical experience cannot be explained. The depth and breadth of it cannot be conveyed. Only one's interpretations can be communicated, and all such interpretations are substantially limited and are therefore inadequate and necessarily misleading to some extent. Much of what has been communicated is from emotionally-polarized spiritually-minded students in the context of traditional religious commitments, e.g., devout students who commit themselves to withdrawal from secular activities in order to focus on their devotional and religious commitments. While much is a description of feelings, the remainder is largely a matter of intellectual interpretation. Much is limited by personalization and anthropomorphization. Yet there is also much encouragement. While the mystical path cannot be adequately or properly described, heart-centered students are quite naturally drawn into (onto) the mystical dimension of the spiritual path. The process is validated primarily through their own experiences, not through the experiences of others (invariably, the student passes beyond this sense of "otherness" as mystical communion is transcendental of any personal dimension). And the reality of union (and the reality beyond union) is realized.

Mystical Experience 4

Mystical experience is not the same as occult experience, nor is it the same thing as psychic experience. Occult experience is predominantly head-centered, while mystical experience is predominantly heart-centered (psychic experience can be either). While mystical experience may stimulate emotional response and intellectual activity, it is not itself either emotional or intellectual.

Mystical experience is the progressive phenomenon of soul contact, of the mind and heart reaching toward the soul, through the qualification and intensity of the heart, while the soul (on its level) responds to that quality. But the soul persists (exists) well beyond the emotions and beyond the intellect, so for there to be any (genuine) mystical experience, one has to transcend the emotions and the intellect, at least for the moment. There is a phenomenon of the mystical encounter, and there is a phenomenon of more sustained mystical experience.

For some, the mystical encounter is momentary (transient) and superficial. In the momentary absence of emotional absorption and intellectual activity, involuntary and unanticipated contact is made (yet without substantive understanding or even appreciation for what has transpired). For others, the mystical encounter is momentary but less superficial, leaving the student with sufficient encouragement that it is much more than a matter of curiosity, becoming a matter of impelling progress toward inner union. Few seek mystical union seriously, and most of those who do seek tend to be consumed in the process without much success. This is because most who seek are trying to achieve something, when in fact what they seek exists already, as it is our natural state. What is needed is preparation followed by sufficient allowance. Most who seek simply do not allow the mystical union to be revealed to the waking consciousness.

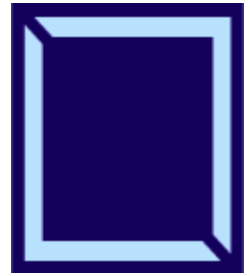
What occurs during the mystical encounter is a momentary breakdown (break-through) in which the normal senses are momentarily suspended and some inner contact achieved. Devotional students of all faiths seek in some ways and through whatever means are available to their understanding to achieve this mystical experience at will, to be one consciously with the God within, to pass

through and go beyond the various stages of mystical progression, which are, after all, merely preparatory. But in the trying the student generally gets lost, distracted by effort rather than progressing through allowing the inner self to be revealed. The impediments are many, as the conditioning of the human being is considerable. It may take years or even lifetimes of preparatory effort before the student can let go of all the various emotional and intellectual attachments. The withdrawal from secular life is one of the traditional approaches, and has its place and benefits, yet ultimately fails to evoke the desired results. It is only when the student can actually achieve interior silence, in the midst of surrounding emotional and intellectual turmoil, that the student has truly released his or her conditioning and stands free in the light and love of the higher Self.

What follows, then, is progressive experience in which the mind and heart (of the personality) embrace the inner Self (soul) (atma-buddhi-manas) (Christ) (God) in stages. The various stages are natural consequences of reaction to progressive experience. Every reaction creates further impediment. As each impediment is transcended (through detachment and non-focus) the mind-heart of the student progressively builds the bridge between the lower and higher selves, such that mystical union is ultimately achieved at will.



Section 6.34



Silence

- In this spiritual context, silence embraces meditation, quiet surroundings, and the quiet mind, all of which, if properly embraced, lead to a deepening and quickening of the spiritual senses. In the final analysis, silence is the essence of the soul, the inner (higher) Self and the essence of God.

The Value of Silence

The value of silence includes the value of meditation (interior silence), the value of quiet surroundings (exterior silence), the value of disciplined thinking, and the value of disciplined speech. The voice of the silence is required for true enlightenment and for the guidance of the soul. Meditation and the inner silence are essential daily functions in the life of the aspirant or disciple (and for the spiritual students of all degrees).

The student needs frequent surroundings of peace and quiet if he is to properly collect his thoughts, avoid absorption in mundane affairs, and consciously learn from his daily experiences. Loud music, coarse music, and unpleasant atmospheres are quite detrimental to the process of awareness and alignment. Most of what is considered classical music can be of some benefit, provided that it is not too loud. Pure exterior silence or the silent (soft) sounds of nature are always conducive to interior alignment and awareness. Sounds which excite the emotional body should be avoided if at all possible.

Disciplined thinking implies wisdom in thought, through harmless, non-critical, constructive, unselfish thinking. The power of human thought to affect the thinker's atmosphere (aura) as well as that of others is considerable. Much damage can be done through careless thinking. Even greater can be the damage done through careless speaking. In most of the ancient mystery schools, the neophyte was forbidden to speak during the first two or three years of training. After such an experience, the neophyte would certainly speak only when and where words would be helpful. Careless or undisciplined words can be quite painful and can carry consequences far beyond the immediate time and place. Speaking is a release of energy. The energy of the aspirant or disciple is to be conserved, not wasted; it is to be used (released) wisely and constructively for the optimum good. It takes strength and forbearance to leave unkind or worthless thoughts un-thought.

Such wisdom in thinking and in speaking is quite possible, and can be approached by anyone who treads the path. The serious disciple is marked by his inner calm and serenity and self-control, in spite of the pressures and noise

of the world around him. Disciplined thinking and speaking can become a very natural and comfortable disposition, which will eventually fall below the threshold of the waking-consciousness (and therefore be spontaneous and automatic). The experience of silence encourages soul contact and consequently enhances awareness. Living a spiritual life in the objective world is difficult enough even with the guidance and intuitive wisdom of the soul. The lower world is filled with darkness (glamour, illusion, and the less subtle (coarse) vibrations). The encounter with silence helps the individual to see through the glammers and illusions of this world and helps the student to live a more worthwhile life of experience and expression.

The need for periods of inner and outer silence does not imply any real (sustained) withdrawal from the objective world. It is not the purpose of the aspirant to escape or to totally withdraw from this world (though sustained periods of withdrawal are sometimes called for). The student must learn to live and work in the lower worlds without becoming absorbed by the glammers and illusions, and without losing touch with the inner self (soul). The disciplines of silence offer a path to soul contact and subsequent spiritual renewal. The inner life of the disciple can be maintained without interfering with objective responsibilities. Though living in both worlds is difficult, the rewards are well worth the continuous effort expended.

† Commentary No. 738

Silence

Silence is the absence of sound, the forbearance of speech or noise, to be mute, still, or quiet (physically, emotionally, and/or mentally). Silence is the essence of the higher self (soul) (Christ within), its only existence, and thus, it is an (absolute) necessary attribute for the spiritual student to achieve as part of treading the path to the greater self.

While silence is easy to define and relatively straightforward in meaning, it is difficult to achieve, for it is the antithesis of the personality, which by nature may be loud, noisy, boisterous, outgoing, exuberant, etc. The difficulty is that the personality is developed to control the lower triad of the physical, emotional, and concrete mental bodies, but once control is established (as a never ending

cycle on the path (i.e., achieve and then give up (let go))), the personality is expected (required) to give up its outward (active, outgoing, robust) nature and turn (and be (willingly) subservient) to the inner self (soul). Since achieving control of the lower nature takes considerable time and the personality is (naturally) reactive towards relinquishing its preeminence (seeming (illusory) position of power), a considerable struggle (in terms of time and effort) may ensue.

The (considerable) issue for the spiritual student is that in order to become (achieve alignment with) the higher self (soul), one must learn to curb the normally noisy manner of the personality, for without some degree of silence any approach to the higher (eventual) self (the Christ within) is not possible. The object is to dampen the lower (personality) self (in measured stages), so that it is possible to effect a rapprochement with the higher. Meditation is an effective way to achieve this end gradually (at first), for the essence of a daily structured (meditation) exercise is to achieve a link (thread) between the higher and lower entities. Beyond the structured meditation period, the student is expected to carry this undisruptive attitude (atmosphere) into daily life, propagating it beyond the formal meditation period.

In effecting a link between the higher and lower selves, silence has other (short term) (more immediate) benefits. By its very nature, the noisy or exuberant personality is prone to say and/or do things unintentionally (or not), in the best of circumstances. However, when the lower self is weakened due to disease and/or being tired (due to warranted circumstances) (karma), the normally (unfortunately) outspoken personality is even more prone to say and/or do things that are unintended (extremely disruptive) (in the long run), but due to compromised circumstances beyond its immediate control (nothing should ever be beyond the qualified self-control of the spiritual student), this outspoken tendency may contrive to make a bad situation even worse.

Thus, among other things, silence encourages a more patient (caring) disposition (existence) (concerned about how one affects others), which can lead to harmlessness and a predisposition to right speech (compared with any flippant or otherwise painful (unacceptable (to the soul)) expression of the personality), which are a few of the needed prerequisites of the student on the path. The practice of (relative) silence can also be beneficial in everyday life for

the student's approach to those around him will naturally become more gentle (less disruptive), and the student will be further on his way to achieving a silent demeanor, which then leads to the Voice of the Silence (the kingdom (working arena) of the soul). May a silence (reticence) pervade the aura of all students on the path so that the united state may be achieved with the higher, greater self.

† Commentary No. 743

The Quiet Mind 1

The quiet mind is characteristic of the third and final stage of mental development per se (beyond which the mind plays a minor or incidental role (and ultimately no role at all)), that in which the abstract mind and intuition dominate and in which there are no emotional or mental attachments (i.e., no substantive emotional or mental bias and no opinions). The third stage is governed or qualified by the first ray (as the higher self finally imposes its (higher) will (need) upon its instrument (the properly and fully prepared personality) (i.e., as the personality is finally able to fully submit to the wisdom and quality of the soul)). While the first stage primarily involves development (experience) and the second stage primarily involves utilization (more active experience and expression), the third stage involves self-mastery and the complete qualification of the mind by the soul such that thinking per se does not even occur (i.e., thinking is replaced by realization).

The achievement of the quiet mind is a major goal of the spiritual student and comes only as the mind is stilled and the entire personality becomes fully responsive to the soul. It is not really an achievement or an accomplishment, as it is "achieved" not by effort but by allowance. The effort is required in preparation (as one cannot "allow" until one is properly prepared (refined) (qualified)), but ultimately one learns to allow the higher self to manifest as it will (and in so doing one ceases to exist in any separative or independent sense) (this is a "great" sacrifice as far as the ego is concerned but nothing at all to the soul per se). Thus the quiet mind occurs only as the ego is wholly overcome and the noise of the mind disappears.

The quiet mind is an indication of the perfect peace of the soul, of perfect balance between head and heart, between mind and soul, between God and individual existence (i.e., between God transcendent and God immanent). While the first stage is predominately passive and the second stage is predominately active, the third stage is predominately reflective and expressive only in the higher sense and on higher levels. The presence of the quiet mind induces considerable qualification on lower (etheric, astral, and concrete mental) levels, but that inducement (induction) is not the result of mental activity or effort. It is, rather, a result of quality and existence (being).

In the beginning of the third stage, the emotional and mental biases are carefully qualified or programmed out of the personality. The resulting emotional freedom (third aspect) is desirelessness while the resulting mental freedom (second aspect) is selflessness (the first aspect is the ultimate object or being). The fundamental concern (in this sense) is the progressive embrace (and demonstration through quality) of truth (true service) and that embrace requires considerable refinement in the lower consciousness to enable the higher consciousness to manifest unimpeded by coarseness, attachments, distractions, ego, etc.

As the student achieves progressive refinement and overcomes the inherent bias of the material bodies (etheric, physical, astral or emotional, and concrete mental) and their natural reactivity to environmental forces (i.e., as the personality is fully qualified by higher impression (which is the same thing as undoing the material qualification and replacing it with more "advanced" programming)), greater freedom in thinking is attained (meaning that thinking becomes first unfettered, then primarily abstract and subjective (as in realization), and finally entirely reflective as the independence of the mind is fully overcome).

The Quiet Mind 2

In the (nominally) first and (primarily) second stages, on necessarily lower levels and through lesser channels of energy (and information content), the sincere student endeavors to reflect whatever truth he or she can sense or embrace. But that is necessarily (and heavily) biased by the emotional and mental nature (the noise of relative coarseness and relative self-centeredness) (or the noise of worldly absorption (experience) and personal expression (ego)). As the student becomes more and more refined (properly integrated) (more responsive to the higher nature), that noise is progressively eliminated and the student becomes more and more able to respond to (embrace) higher truth and in higher ways (unimpeded by ego or personality considerations (e.g., unimpeded by feeling or thinking)).

This is not the lack of feeling or lack of thinking of earlier cycles (where the lack indicated inability), but the lack of feeling and lack of thinking that comes from having developed the capabilities of the emotional and mental natures to the point where they can now accurately reflect the energy of the higher self. As the capabilities for feeling and thinking are developed over many lifetimes the personality necessarily acquires a considerable measure of independence (noise) (extroversion) (or even spiritually unresponsive introversion (compared with spiritually responsive introspection)). On the major turn of the spiral following that development and utilization (i.e., the third stage), the noise is eliminated and the capabilities for reflective (non-distractive) emotional and mental expression are achieved.

At each major and minor turn of the evolutionary spiral attachments give way to new freedoms. Those who are emotionally absorbed eventually become thinkers. Those who are mentally absorbed eventually become intuitive. At each major and minor turn of the spiral, that which is closely held is recognized (even unconsciously) as unfulfilling, and the individual passes on into a new sphere of experience and relative activity. The major spiral is fulfilled with the achievement (more properly the realization) of the quiet mind, and a new spiral (beyond humanity) is thereby afforded.

The means of achieving the state of consciousness or ability implied by the quiet mind includes (1) refinement and qualification (initially), (2) proper (thoughtless) meditation and contemplation (in the intermediate phase of this third stage), and (3) illumination and inspiration (in the highest sense) (in the final phases). From the higher point of view, the human aura is rather noisy and coarse during the first stage (that of the passive mind), relatively noisy and relatively coarse during the second stage (that of the active mind), and rather quiet yet blazing forth (in its quality and silence) during the latter phases of the third stage (that of the quiet mind).

These means and measures of achievement are indicated in Patanjali's seven (six) stages of meditation ((1)(0) mundane absorption (not normally enumerated), (2)(1) aspiration, (3)(2) concentration, (4)(3) meditation (proper), (5)(4) contemplation, (6)(5) illumination, and (7)(6) inspiration) (of course what Patanjali means by aspiration, concentration, and meditation (and more particularly, by contemplation, illumination, and inspiration) is not what these words normally convey). These words mask considerable processes and substantial adjustments in consciousness, leading ultimately to the quiet mind (and the light of the soul). Considerable insight into the process of cultivating the quiet mind can be found in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras and in particular Alice A. Bailey's commentaries on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras entitled The Light of the Soul.

† Commentary No. 1068

Interior Silence

There is a distinction between standing in the interior silence of God and standing in the silence of one's own self-righteousness (ego). Only those who have known the interior silence of God can discern this, yet anyone who stands in the silence of his or her own self-righteousness may believe, albeit falsely, that he or she has made such a distinction. This is due to the natural-but-false identification of self with not-self.

The movement toward conscious union with God is not an active movement; it is a matter of laying the groundwork and removing the barriers and allowing the union (which has always existed) to be revealed. The principal impediment is

the ego. And the farther one proceeds along these lines the more subtle is the working of the ego. Thus the principal requirement is being able to discern the distinction between the self (ego) (personality) and the not-self (soul). But silence has many dimensions and there are parts of the human being that proceed in silence, independently of the silence. The spiritual student (contemplative) (mystic) proceeds then, initially, to examine the preliminary silence, to recognize the "activities" of the emotions and the mind (and the ego) below the threshold of silence. And then the student is able to dwell in the silence without being distracted by the lower workings. The lower workings are thereby tempered by one's focus in silence. But eventually one moves beyond focus in silence to the silence itself.

Throughout this process, until one embraces the silence without embracing the silence, the presence of ego fluctuates between being apparent and otherwise. When one learns not to identify with the (lower) self, one enters into the progression of successive identifications with more subtle aspects of self, until one achieves non-identification (which is true selflessness and true union (not-selfness)). If one earnestly and openly seeks to recognize the distinction between self and not-self, then the distinction is eventually realized, but not without this progressive series of delusions in which a subtle self-righteousness reigns in the silence. But as true humility emerges into manifestation, the presence of the absence of ego is evoked (realized) (in the sense of non-realization).

The interior silence of God is communicative only in the sense of grace, that presence of the absence of all that seems to be. At first there is direct awareness of the lower workings (thinking, feeling) because the focus is either at the abstract mental level (non-thinking) or the lowest of the intuitive levels (where the intuitive plane "interfaces" with the abstract mental). There is no conscious "activity" in the silence because it is a matter of being beyond the intellect and beyond any possibility of intellectual activity (at that level). When one "moves" beyond the lowest of the intuitive levels, then there is no possibility of distraction by virtue of the lower workings.

The interior silence is truly wonderful, in the sense that having experienced that (true) silence, one remains haunted by the experience, i.e., haunted by any absence of that experience, which simply encourages the student to return to the

silence. Eventually one learns how to live in the lower worlds while remaining in the silence, living in accord with Tao, the flow of life, without any hint of ego or intellect. The eyes may see, the ears may hear, the person may respond appropriately (necessarily uncontrivedly), yet the focus of consciousness is beyond all this, remaining in the center (interior silence) of true being. Thus apparent action is non-action. And self-righteousness is not possible.

† Commentary No. 1250

Quiescence

Quiescence is defined as the quality or state of being quiet, at rest, and refers (metaphysically) primarily to the mind. Quiescence in this sense is not a passive state, nor is it an active state, but is a non-active state. The intent of quiescence is progressive disentanglement and awakening leading to self-realization.

Almost everyone in the world is entangled in the world, entangled in sense perceptions, entangled to some extent in materialism and egoism, and/or entangled in thinking, such that there is no (real) awareness of greater truth. People identify with their bodies, with their emotions, with their thinking, such that the reality of who they are is simply not apparent to them. Being entangled in the world is a necessary phase of experience and expression, and leads gradually to assimilation of that experience and growth in consciousness, but ultimately, being entangled in the world precludes growing beyond the worldly experience. The spiritual student begins to realize this and embarks upon the journey of self-mastery leading to liberation and service, by gradually becoming disentangled.

The body, the emotions, and the mind are instruments of attachment and entanglement (immersion in worldly (predominantly self-centered) experience). These instruments are necessary to intended experience and expression in the lower worlds, and necessary to evolution in consciousness at this level, and should therefore be properly cultivated and cared for. But as the student progresses, these instruments must be tempered and brought under control and not allowed to function independently. They should be respected as

instruments and tempered (refined) for greater usefulness, but the student should not identify with them.

Most people are emotionally-polarized and entangled in their senses. The mind can be utilized to temper the emotions, through meditation, so that a person eventually becomes mentally-polarized, but the mind cannot be utilized to temper itself. And so bringing the mind to quiescence is necessary in order to go beyond the mind. But the mind has two natural states, and most people (unconsciously) engage the mind in the lower sense (lower natural state) (monkey mind). The (monkey) mind naturally forms attachments and naturally (actively) embraces experience in consciousness. But the human being is not the mind. And while the experience at the personality level is useful for most people, and while the mind is an important part of that experience, (conscious or unconscious) identification with the mind and with thinking is (ultimately) a great hindrance.

Bringing the mind to quiescence is a very considerable challenge. There are many prerequisites (self-discipline in various levels), without which the effort is daunting and ultimately not possible. But where the (preliminary) work is accomplished, and where the will and determination to achieve quiescence is sufficient, then it becomes a matter of allowing the mind to rest in its (higher) natural state. The mind cannot do this work. The student must "operate" from a higher place, through meditation, so that the mind is not engaged in any conventional sense. In quiescence (proper) the mind simply reflects (clearly) whatever is evoked from higher levels, without filtering or interpreting or biasing the process. In quiescence the mind is simply there, at a point of tension, neither active nor passive. In quiescence, the connection between lower self (personality) and higher self (soul) is unimpeded, and the higher senses (intuition) flow(s) naturally.