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The Upper Triad



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Commentaries

The Upper Triad Association
 P.O. Box 2248
 Leesburg, Virginia 20177

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Commentaries and other materials printed in this journal are intended to stimulate constructive thinking and further study along spiritual lines. The Upper Triad material is not prescriptive, but it is suggestive. Each thought may be accepted, deferred, or rejected, in whole or in part, according to the perspective and values of the reader.

Seven Basic Principles

1. **PURPOSE.** The purpose of life is the evolution of consciousness through experience and expression. All life is conditioned by purpose within a grand scheme of progressive cyclic evolution.

2. **CONSCIOUSNESS.** The spiritual path in its many aspects embraces the higher stages of human evolution in consciousness, as the human soul commits itself to conscious and selfless development. This process encompasses the development of the inner, latent spirituality and the application of one's faculties in service to God and to humanity.

3. **TRUTH AND REALITY.** Truth can be found in philosophy, religion, and science, which are but aspects of one coherent and inclusive truth having no inherent conflict or contradiction. Truth is relative and can be perceived in many ways and on many levels, according to consciousness.

4. **KARMA.** Human evolution proceeds through many progressive incarnations according to a cosmic law of periodicity, ever onward and upward. Life is conditioned by the Law of Karma, which yields learning experiences and encourages evolution as a consequence of free will, through every thought, feeling, and action.

5. **KNOWLEDGE.** The real problem of life in the lower worlds is the elimination of glamour and illusion. Perception clouded by glamour and illusion can be fully overcome, as the student achieves the alignment of a purified and integrated personality with the soul, through intelligent meditation.

6. **RELIGION.** There exists one God, both immanent and transcendent, within which are differentiated all lives and all forms. There are many paths to God, embracing all religions and spiritual philosophy.

7. **MANIFESTATION.** God manifests through all lives and all forms. The true individuality is the soul which inhabits the personality. The personality is composed of three interrelated instruments: the physical body, the emotional or astral body, and the lower mind. The soul is the true Self, the essence of divinity within. The personality is the not-self that must ultimately be transcended in union with the higher Self.

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No. 1261 - The Ten Pillars of Buddhism

The Ten Pillars of Buddhism is the title of a book by Sangharakshita (Dennis Lingwood) that describes the ten pillars or precepts or ethical principles of Buddhism, namely (1) love, the principle of abstention from killing living beings, (2) generosity, the principle of abstention from taking the not-given, (3) contentment, the principle of abstention from sexual misconduct, (4) truthfulness, the principle of abstention from false speech, (5) kindly speech, the principle of abstention from harsh speech, (6) meaningful speech, the principle of abstention from frivolous speech, (7) harmonious speech, the principle of abstention from slanderous speech, (8) tranquillity, the principle of abstention from covetousness, (9) compassion, the principle of abstention from hatred, and (10) wisdom, the principle of abstention from false views.

Each principle can be considered as akusala-dharma in the sense of undertaking-to-refrain from some (negative, destructive, harmful, counter-evolutionary) action, attitude, or behavior, or as kusala-dharma in the sense of undertaking to observe the respective positive. Taken collectively, embracing the ten pillars or precepts is a matter of spiritual practice that equates, in part, to “going deeper and broader” into the wisdom, or to taking refuge in the Buddha, or going for refuge, which is “the fundamental Buddhist act.” This fundamental act or commitment, is in one sense or dimension embracing the three refuges or jewels, namely (1) the Buddha or the ideal of enlightenment, (2) the dharma or the teaching of the way to enlightenment, and (3) sangha or spiritual community (fellowship); in another it is embracing (1) the ten precepts, (2) meditation, and (3) wisdom.

The spiritual student (Buddhist or otherwise) is encouraged to embrace or undertake each of these principles in the daily life (along with whatever other principles the student has encountered that are meaningful in the context of the student’s path). One doesn’t need to “be” a Buddhist in order to embrace these precepts, one simply needs to recognize and appreciate their value. There are number of collections of precepts, some comprehensive, some not as comprehensive, but a comprehensive set of principles such as this, properly embraced, serves as a formula or mantram for deepening, for progressive self-transformation, of progressively embracing higher and deeper and simply, more meaningful truths.

It is, for the spiritual student, a refining of the personal mandala or how one lives one’s life, what is important, what values are embraced. In this process (embracing principles, undertaking self-transformation) one revisits both interests and activities, encouraging those which support and engender the process of enlightenment (learning, growing, serving) and discouraging those which detract from that process. Or in other words, embracing that which is recognized to be constructive, healthy, and evolutionary, and not embracing that which is recognized to be destructive, unhealthy, or counter-evolutionary. This is what happens, properly, when one truly commits to a spiritual life.

In the Christian vernacular, it is “being saved” and making a commitment to living a Christian life (the principles of the Christian faith); in the Buddhist tradition, it is making this commitment to the three jewels. These two respective “commitments” are essentially equivalent, and also to those of other faiths. Each such (genuine) commitment properly evokes a quickening of the path and subsequently progressive spiritual deepening. So these pillars or principles are not simply a matter for intellectual consideration, but are, much more properly, a matter of commitment and embracing the path.

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No. 1262 - Noble Work

The spiritual student is encouraged not only to be continually engaged in the processes of learning and growing, all the while (gradually) deepening in consciousness, but also to be continually engaged in some sort of noble or magnanimous work or undertaking. Not noble in the sense of glamorous or "important" but noble in the sense of being worthwhile, of contributing in some way to the welfare of others, of being a legitimate expression of the higher nature, allowing one's higher energies and faculties to be expressed effectively (subtly) in the (ordinary) world.

For some the noble work and professional undertakings are synonymous, as the work itself may be inherently positively encouraging to others' welfare. For some the noble work is primarily through volunteer work of one sort or another rather than professionally. For others it may be simply a matter of living one's higher values through the context of some (otherwise not necessarily so obviously noble) undertaking. For some it is all of these things. What matters is that the higher consciousness be allowed to be expressed effectively, and this cannot occur when the person is absorbed in mundane affairs, in materialism or egoism, or entangled in the senses. So part of the undertaking is to be "doing" noble work, but another part of the undertaking is to ensure that one is effective in that work by not being so personality-centered.

One should not be overly concerned with apparent results or measurable impacts (which may be misleading and/or englamouring), but rather one should be concerned with the process of ennobling one's work. It is the flow of energy, the qualification of one's atmosphere and surroundings, the goodwill evoked, the encouragement provided, that really matters. To perform one's work graciously, magnanimously, is more important than what one actually does (provided that what one does is not inherently destructive or counter-evolutionary). The real role of the spiritual student is to facilitate evolution in consciousness, not by contriving to do so, but primarily by living a spiritual life and engaging in noble work.

So what is ignoble? Anything that demonstrates the lower nature or encourages something (some practice that is) counter-evolutionary. Anything that is imposed on others. Anything that demonstrates or encourages lack of respect for others. Anything that demonstrates or encourages practices that are inherently unhealthy (e.g., smoking, drinking alcohol, eating flesh foods, taking drugs). A lack of good will, or lack of patience, lack of gentleness, lack of kindness, etc.

So what is noble? Anything that demonstrates the higher nature, through character, morals, ethics, principles, and values. Not in any imposing manner, but simply by virtue of how one lives one's life. So whatever work is engaged, it should not encourage anything counter-evolutionary, but encourage (primarily by example) learning and growing. Work that is inherently constructive. Work that has some value or worth in human consciousness. Not work that is merely worldly, although worldly work engaged in a noble manner can be noble, provided the work does not encourage anything counter-evolutionary. One should realize that most people are where they need to be, and that one's noble work is simply a matter of planting-seeds-by-example (and by encouragement-of-energy). Thus what is evolutionary for the spiritual student may be not what is evolutionary for most people. The student should not worry about what is or what is not evolutionary for others, but simply realize that one's sense of what is evolutionary should not be imposed.

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No. 1263 - Intervention (1)

Intervention is defined as the process through which a person or group of people attempt to interfere in another person's affairs, sincerely or otherwise, with purported or genuine intent to "help" that person in dealing with some sort of perceived or adjudged crisis or illness. Intervention, in the sense of psychological intervention, is rarely a matter of love or caring, though it is often purported to be. Friends listen, learn, understand, and offer to help. Friends do not impose.

The intent of a (psychological) intervention may be to hinder or alter some action or behavior or simply to "remedy" some perceived condition (attitude, behavior, (physical, emotional, mental) illness or disease). Intervention implies and usually involves imposition, in the sense that the "client" or "victim" of intervention is generally unwilling to do or to be as the intervener (or group) intends. Perhaps the client (victim) is incapable of sensible action. Perhaps the client is capable but simply chooses not to do what others would have him (her) do or be. And perhaps (actually, necessarily) the intervener(s) have simply made a judgment, speciously or otherwise, and are acting upon that judgment. Generally, intervention involves the use or threat of use of some coercive force, to entice the client (victim) to be more receptive. But in any event, whether sincere and genuine or gratuitously self-serving, any intervention is necessarily a matter of imposition. And, generally unless it involves a minor child or genuinely incapacitated adult, it is a crime in consciousness.

To constructively and sincerely help someone who is open and responsive to being helped is a noble effort. To "intervene" in some obvious or apparent injustice is likewise noble, provided that the intervention is welcomed (in which case it would be an "assistance" and not an intervention). Genuinely caring for someone means listening and understanding and offering encouragement, without judging and without imposing. In the "best" case of intervention, there is gentleness and kindness. In the worst case of intervention, it is a matter of psychic violence (psychological rape). Any expression of criticism or judgment is an expression of (necessarily harmful) violence.

There is of course a dynamic range to intervention, from casual (less imposing) to formal (more imposing), from singular to collective, from genuine and sincere to self-serving, from legitimate in the sense of there being a true basis to illegitimate in the sense that the purported basis is unfounded or based on (specious) judgment or is self-serving in some manner. The ethics of "intervention" are relatively clear. No one has the right to impose on another, except where there is direct responsibility, as in a legitimate and sincerely founded parent-child relationship. And almost every "basis" for intervention is a matter of judgment, and judgment is never infallible, and rarely is judgment a matter of understanding the whole truth of anything.

So while there may be (a few) instances of legitimate and helpful intervention, the vast preponderance of "interventions" are merely attempts to impose one's views on another, without real appreciation or respect for the victim's thoughts or feelings or values, without any real consideration for the victim at all. Indeed, most interventions are abject failures, even (and perhaps especially) where the "intended" changes are brought about. They are failures because they damage the psyche of the client (victim). They are failures because the whole process is adversarial (contentious) (impositional) (separative) (head-centered).

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No. 1264 - Intervention (2)

No matter how sincere the interveners purport or believe themselves to be. No matter how heart-centered they perceive themselves to be (one is not heart-centered “because” one “thinks” that one is, or “because” all of one’s actions appear to be noble (the head is notoriously capable and clever, able to provide whatever rationalizations are needed for self-deception)). Intervention is (necessarily) ego-based. It is based on judgment. It is not based on realization. It is based on imposition. It is not (truly) based on caring. It comes from the head, not from the heart.

To truly care for someone is to respect them, to listen and learn about their feelings and thoughts and values, to accept them as they are, to support them as they choose to be, not as one would (foolishly) have them to be. It matters not if the intervention is “based” in the (worldly) legal system, or if it is based on some democratic process (a majority of (or even all) people believing something to be true (or warranted) does not in itself mean that it is true (or warranted)). Intervention is, still, in almost every instance, a wrongful imposition. It is fine (perhaps even helpful) to express one’s concerns, to share one’s insights, but without the intent to change or influence another person’s attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, principles, temperament, or values.

One might argue that the “victim” is deserving, otherwise it would not happen. And, given an understanding of karma, this may indeed be true. But to “think” that the victim is deserving is judgmental and therefore psychically and psychologically violent (harmful). And to act on that judgment, through attempted intervention, is therefore unconscionable. One might also argue that if one is sincere, if one believes that the “action” is warranted, that the end justifies the means, etc., it is okay. But it is not. Sincerity is not an acceptable excuse for unconscionable behavior (not that there is ever any acceptable excuse). Moreover, “sincerity” is often a matter of self-deception, in which the (necessarily self-serving) ego drives the behavior (intervention). Even “knowledge” is never sufficient, for one can never really know the whole truth of a situation. This is why any form of judgment is necessarily limited. One can make assumptions or presumptions, but one can never really know anything (sufficiently) about another person.

Thus there are a number of substantive fallacies associated with the “conventional psychological” notion and process of) intervention, (1) that a person can ever know enough to make a proper judgment or truly know what another person needs (in fact, one can never really know the whole truth of anything), (2) that any person can ever be truly influenced (in fact, externally-imposed behavior “modification” is simply another form of conditioning, it is not a matter of learning or a matter of growth in consciousness, and therefore it is at best transient, at worst long-lived (in the sense that it inhibits the truly needed self-realization)), and (3) that sincere imposition is not harmful (in fact, the very act of judging someone is harmful, to both the judge and the judged (likewise criticism is never constructive)).

On the other hand, there are legitimate techniques and processes for helping people. Without judging. Without imposing. Without intervention. Through listening and learning. By working with them, through gentle (kind) encouragement rather than judgment. By respecting people and allowing them to be who and how they are, rather than expecting them to conform to some (one’s own or collective) value system.

The Upper Triad Commentaries

No. 1265 - Inner and Outer Religion (1)

Religion is properly God-centered and not personality-centered, and is actually a matter of religious and spiritual principles (which relate the human being to God and to living a spiritual life). But there are two extensions of religion, one in the outer dimension, one in the inner dimension, that greatly expand the scope and import of those religious and spiritual principles and which also pose some not immodest difficulties.

The outer dimension is the one most people are familiar with. It begins with some fundamental or basic religious and/or spiritual context, clothed in some sort of cultural and social framework. It is potentially quite "evolutionary" in the sense that the religious-spiritual principles, teachings, and values are placed in a more worldly, more practical context. But the problem is that much of the "outer" framework is cultural and social rather than genuinely or actually religious or spiritual. When spiritual principles are tailored to some (necessarily artificial) cultural or social context, there is an inevitable lessening of value (clarity, quality). Thus "going to church" is not the same as embracing the (actual) values of the religion (indeed one can embrace the actual pertinent principles and values without submitting to the cultural and social "demands" although the cultural and social context (e.g., participating in services) can be nonetheless encouraging). The outer context tends to be conditioned and superficial (as people tend to be conditioned and superficial), a matter more of personal-social convenience than spiritual import.

Another problem of the outer context is that people tend to be concerned about the cultural contextual details rather than the actual spiritual principles, and it is (unfortunately) only human nature to seek to impose "understanding" on others. Religions provide a suite of behavioral ethics, principles, and values to guide life-in-this-world. But those are for each to embrace to the extent that they are understood and appreciated. What is important is living an ethical, principled life. And developing (and sustaining) a genuine (heart-felt and conscious) relationship with God. The various rituals of a religion are not important in themselves, but have value primarily to the extent that they encourage and facilitate that heart-felt and conscious relationship.

Yet another problem is exclusivity. Religions that exclude or belittle "non-believers" in any way are not (truly) God-centered religions but are simply personality-centered (ego-based) derivatives-of-religion. There is no exclusive path to God or to salvation. All truly spiritual paths inherently lead the student toward God and toward salvation (graduation from this worldly experience). The heathen is no less a creature of God. The truly religious adherent ((spiritual) student) embraces all lives as lives-of-God. And respects and appreciates that each person sees things differently and that there is great value in every avenue or approach to God.

There are no favored (or unfavored) people, not as individuals, not as groups, races, or nations. Individuals, groups, races, and nations all have some karmic context, but over time there is always-ultimately balance and equity in the process. In order to graduate from this world each person must do essentially the same "work" and obtain the same relative place in consciousness. There are no special means available to anyone or to any group. There are no shortcuts. Each person is afforded the opportunities consistent with his or her current relative place in consciousness.

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No. 1266 - Inner and Outer Religion (2)

There are unfortunately many glammers and illusions associated with conventional (outer) religion. But as one deepens in consciousness, as one gathers experience and begins to consciously assimilate that experience, then one begins, progressively, to see through the various glammers and illusions. Of course (many) people see only what they want to see, and think that there are shortcuts or favored status. But there are no such paths-of-shortness. And all are equally favored.

The inner dimension is one of which relatively few people are aware. It is the mystical dimension that links all of the various religions and spiritual approaches together. As one approaches God in consciousness, the various paths coalesce and become one and the same path. Each outer religion is simply a portal or gateway through which one can progressively and gradually approach the divine source. The outer religion is necessarily personality-centered and worldly. The inner religion is necessarily centered in the higher self and decidedly non-worldly. Thus the real process involves simply moving toward the center of consciousness.

The spiritual path is a path of hastened evolution in consciousness. Not a shortcut, but an investment in doing the "work" in some hastened sense, through greater intensity of "work" in consciousness over a relatively shorter period of time. But if one takes the "long and winding road" one ends up doing the same amount of "work" and achieves the same place in consciousness as one who moves forward more intently-quickly. But the hastened path is not a matter of simply choosing. It is rather a calling, from the soul, which then encourages the personality-ego to reorient itself toward the (hastened) path. But those who take the "shorter" path are no more favored or unfavored than those who take the more gradual, more normal path.

But the realm of the hastened (spiritual) path is the same as the inner dimension of religion, although it needs not the framework of any particular religion (or any religion at all). The religious framework is simply helpful in placing a person in the circumstances that allow the hastened path to be embraced. One is simply drawn to the inner teachings, to prayer and meditation, to progressive communion, with the soul, with Christ (or whatever one calls the principle of divine consciousness), and with God. As one progresses in this inner sense, the outer life and consciousness is naturally transformed, as one embraces the quality and energy of the inner life, it is reflected in the life and circumstances (demeanor) of the outer person.

In order to do this, the religious context is merely helpful, but not necessary. One does not need, necessarily, to be of certain lineage, for lineage is simply not important (lineage only pertains to the body, and not to the indwelling consciousness). Nor does one need to have a spiritual teacher, for all are teachers and all are students (though some teachers can be quite helpful and insightful, in providing encouragement (but the student must ever exercise discretion, and it is the student who is responsible for the outcome, not the teacher)). Similarly, one does not need, necessarily, a particular religion, for all (God-centered religions) lead to the same place (if only one is predisposed to look in the right ways (as one progresses, one simply senses where and how to look (the insight (intuition) is simply-naturally evoked))). But what one does need, necessarily, is a refined nature, e.g., a healthy body, clear emotions, and a quiet mind. And (necessarily) a suitably tempered personality (ego).

The Upper Triad Commentaries

No. 1267 - Religious Abuse

Like most areas of human endeavour, the practical realm of religion is not without some potential for abuse. All God-centered religions are fundamentally sound, if not perfect, but wherever human personalities are involved, there is likely to be some matters of interpretation and some matters of practice which may not be entirely (if at all) consistent with the basic teachings of the religion, despite what the practicers may believe in justifying their actions. Thus one should not blame any (proper, God-centered) religion itself, but realize that abuses are just a matter of human nature.

There are a number of areas of potential abuse, including disagreements in interpretation (which are (all) really (and necessarily) not important), imposing one's individual or collective views upon others (proselytizing, criticizing, judging) (instead of encouraging others to think for themselves and reach their own conclusions), presuming authority in religious matters, behaving separatively (as if one's religion and (presumed) associated values is superior in some sense to another), and (ultimately) fostering violent confrontations based on (necessarily superficial) interpretive or value differences (it doesn't matter what the "reasons" are, there is never any legitimate excuse for religious strife). Religions are not abusive, but people can be.

For example, all God-centered religions in principle engender respect for others, harmlessness (peace) (harmony), etc., yet in historical practice, there have been wars, conflicts, violence, etc., in the name of religion, when in fact none of this has to do with religion, per se, it has to do with personalities (egos) (and self-justified and self-serving rationalizations) and not living in accordance with the principles and practices of the religion. Conflicts between peoples of different religions, between peoples of various Christian denominations, between Catholics and Protestants, between Christians and Jews and Muslims, between peoples of various Buddhist or Muslim sects, etc., are really not ideological conflicts, and certainly not noble conflicts, but are conflicts between personalities and attachments to interpretations, or a matter of more personal conditioning, and involve failures to honor the basic teachings. It seems so easy to focus on differences, and not respect people who are different, much harder to appreciate the similarities (inherent goodness of all peoples). And most "religious" despots are nonetheless sincere (although often deluded). Genuine charlatans are relatively rare.

Many abuses draw upon (wrong) interpretations of scripture. While religious scriptures are generally "inspired" texts, they are still subject to the human mind in how the "inspiration" is translated into words, and words can be changed through human intervention (sincerely or otherwise), and words are always subject to interpretation (sincerely or otherwise, rightly or not so rightly). But most abuses (and most interpretations) are more a matter of self-serving beliefs and imposing those beliefs on others. Many people are insecure in their faith, and need others to believe as they do. Some people use "religion" as a means to bring about or sustain self-serving societal or cultural conditions. Many people presume to "speak for God" (sincerely or otherwise, when in fact no one speaks for God. God speaks to all, if only a person would care to listen.

All of these abuses, potential and real, constitute a disservice to humanity, serving to discourage many people from embracing religion, from learning associated ethics and principles and values, from the supportive fellowship that most God-centered religions engender. Yet religions remain a valuable source and means of spiritual encouragement to many.

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No. 1268 - Religious Differences

The differences between the various (God-centered) religions are not really important. They are convenient in the sense of facilitating the religious-spiritual principles being tailored to some cultural context, but they are not important as ends-in-themselves.

The basic (inherently valuable) teachings of all religions are more or less similar. The basic teachings encourage and facilitate evolution in consciousness by encouraging and facilitating the adherent's developing and deepening relationship to God. The outer aspects of religion, where all of the (necessarily non-essential) differences occur, are simply not important. The concept of Christ-consciousness is relatively important. But Christ-consciousness is not exclusive to the Christian faith, and it is known by various other names. The "name" of God, the "name" of the principle of higher consciousness (e.g., Christ), are simply not important except that one needs some name to facilitate the association and relationship. Thus conceptually and practically, Christ and Buddha and Krishna (and others) are all important, but none is particularly important, and all relate in some meaningful way to the same principles (to God and higher consciousness). In most instances, these are simply different ways of saying (teaching) the same underlying principles.

Too often what seem to be essential differences are simply non-essential differences in interpretation and understanding. To many Christians "being saved" is important, but the common interpretation of this phenomenon is really quite far afield from its true import. The actual import of "being saved" is simply waking up to a higher reality (and embracing higher values), which is common to all God-centered religions (of course most people who are "saved" in this sense are not actually saved, because they simply don't understand the process, they embrace the outer circumstances rather than the inner meaning, but even a limited (superficial) understanding can be of value).

The Holy Bible is a valuable, indeed substantially inspired resource (scripture), as is the Koran and the various scriptures of Buddhism, Hinduism, and other religions. But none are infallible, as no human being is infallible. And each has a cultural context. And each has been interpreted by (necessarily fallible) human beings (sincerely or otherwise). The underlying divine inspiration is there, in each scripture, but one must feel it in the heart and not worry so much about (head-centered, cultural) details. In fact, the differences are actually merely superficial. If one looks beyond (within) the words, to the energy and content of the words, rather than "at" the words-as-words, then the differences fade away and the underlying content (value) emerges.

Many Christians have problems appreciating in other religions what appears-to-them to be polytheism, but this is based on presumption and misunderstanding. There is but one God, and even the Christian God is a trinity. The Gods of other religions are not fundamentally different. One God living through many forms and in various ways is no less monotheistic. But when a person is "taught" various religious principles without a broader, deeper context, there is bound to be misunderstanding. But many people are insecure in their faith, they fear the teachings of others, which they imagine to be counter to their own, instead of learning of the value of other religions are realizing that they are inherently complementary (radical-fundamentalistic interpretations notwithstanding). Thus the student is encouraged to study each of the various religions, and appreciate that each has value.

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No. 1269 - If Then

One of the most common assumptive errors involves the use of the "If X then Y" reasoning. Something is (actually) logically correct only if (1) the assumptions upon which it is based are actually true and (2) the conclusion necessarily follows. The problem with assumptions is that they are (merely) assumptions, and may or may not be true. But even if a premise is actually true, i.e., factual and not merely an assumption, the conclusion may not follow (necessarily) for any one of a number of reasons.

For example, the if-then statement (argument) "If he loves me, then he would send me flowers" is patently illogical in a number of ways (and the further conclusion of "He didn't send flowers, therefore he doesn't love me" is even worse). The problem is that there is not necessarily any correlation (at all) between the premise (loving someone) and the conclusive action (sending flowers or not). A person may love another and send flowers. A person may love another and not send flowers. A person may even not love someone and send flowers (anyway). And of course a person may not love someone and not send flowers. Thus all four possibilities are fair and reasonable, but no action necessarily follows the validity or invalidity of the original premise.

The invalidity and unreasonableness of reliance on the if-then "reasoning" process is compound. A person may or may not love another (particular) person. That person may or may not send flowers. The problem is inherently one of not really understanding each other, of not really communicating, compounded by the invalidity of the reasoning process. For example, there are many ways of expressing love, and loving someone does not mean that a person must necessarily express himself or herself in any particular way. Indeed, one can love another and not even be expressive. It is all about conditioning. People are conditioned differently, according to heritage and culture, according to experience, according to opportunities, according to (varying) (personal) nature. Some are more conventional, others less so. Some are inherently honest and open with their feelings, others less so. Love cannot be measured (in any way). It simply is. And people participate in love (and its outward expressions) according to their capacities and conditioning and natures.

The if-then assumption is actually fallacious (specious) in other ways as well. People have different natures and different values. The if-then assumption is compounded by the implied additional assumption that both parties have the same nature and values, which is rarely entirely so. And of course it is compounded by the tendency of someone relying on the if-then to not be aware that there is any wrong assumption or illogic in the first place. And further compounded where there is some inherent lack of communication or trust. There is even an if-then hypocrisy, where a person relies on the if-then, believing that he (or she) (himself or herself) would act in accord with the if-then, and apply it to another person, when indeed such a person (himself or herself) may not even (actually) "act" the same way as he (or she) expects another.

And of course the "giving of flowers" may be simply meeting someone's expectations and not be a genuine expression of feelings in any regard. The solution to these problems would seem to be (a) realizing the inherent fallacy of the if-then and (b) cultivating a genuine communicative rapport with someone, so that there is real and mutual understanding of how people feel and how they are comfortable expressing themselves. To rely on "signals" may work in some superficial sense (many people prefer to live assumptively and delusionally), but the spiritual student should be more concerned about the truth of things.

The Upper Triad Commentaries

No. 1270 - Meekness

In the context of (metaphysical-theosophical) spirituality, meekness is the quality or condition of being enduring, patient, strong in spirit, non-violent, mild and moderate in the ways of personality and the world. In the more worldly vernacular, being meek suggests being deficient in spirit and courage, being passive or submissive, being weak in personality. But in the deeper, more profound sense of meekness, it is a matter of spiritual strength, without lack of courage, without being passive or submissive, even while the worldly may not be able to recognize these strengths in one who is meek. This is because the meek (in this spiritual sense) do not entertain the worldly, do not embrace worldly (materialistic and egoistic) ways.

Some worldly folk would seek to "take advantage" of those who are meek, who appear to the worldly to be weak or passive. But the truly (spiritually) meek person is not gullible nor easily manipulated by people or circumstances, but simply exercises a quiet discretion in his or her worldly experience. The word "meek" actually means or suggests gentleness and moderation and sensible humility. This non-passive meekness is actually a wonderful place, where one is non-passively accepting of one's nature and circumstances and quietly, gently progressing along the way.

"The meek shall inherit the earth" ... suggests this inner strength that allows the spiritual student to "endure injury with patience and without resentment." It suggests that strength of personality (i.e., over-developed ego) is a barrier in consciousness that impedes or inhibits the process of conscious reunion with God. That it is only through refined consciousness that one can truly find the God within. That those who find themselves (God within) are reborn in a higher place, and endure, while those who do not find themselves are fated to return again and again to the lower worlds, until the work of evolution in consciousness (for this stage) is actually accomplished.

In this spiritual context, meekness is equivalent to having a well-tempered personality, so that worldly materialism and egoism not longer have a strong hold on the personality, so that the student is no longer predominantly separative or self-serving. If by this nature of his or her embracing spirituality (through harmlessness, honesty, humility (meekness)), the student should be misunderstood by the worldly, then so be it. The wise man is not one who proclaims his (presumed) wisdom. The wise man is not one who seeks to be recognized or entertained by others. The wise man is simply one who sees and hears and feels from an inner place, necessarily quietly, with subtlety. It is not passivity nor is it contrived indifference to the world. But it is a natural (higher) condition of being unattached to worldly things and worldly ways, of being not absorbed in the senses or the intellect or the ego. It is living in the world gently, learning and growing and serving, without much in the way of worldly distractions or impediments.

The key to understanding meekness, indeed to understanding true spirituality, is the realization that things in this world are not actually as they appear to be, that most people experience life in this world superficially, who think and feel and behave and perceive and know and understand things superficially. In seeing things only on the surface, most people judge based on appearances, and think according to their conditioning. But those who walk gently through the trials and tribulations of this world are progressively able to see beyond the surface, to progressively deeper levels of reality, and embrace progressively deeper levels of spirituality.

Special Announcement

The Upper Triad Group is planning to make some substantial changes in the way it operates, with these changes intended to be implemented over the next few months. For the time being we are not generally able to place new subscriptions from prisoners nor are we generally able to fill requests from prisoners for reprints.

Background:

Core Group. For many years we had a core group of about a dozen people, who contributed substantially financially and volunteered their time such that there was no real burden on any of one person. With a shared workload and sufficient funding, we were able to meet most the demands of our readers, subscribers, and members, in an almost-timely manner.

Groups of Subscribers. For many years there were three large groups of readers and subscribers, (1) domestic U.S. subscribers, (2) subscribers in West Africa (Ghana and Nigeria), and (3) prisoners in the U.S. There was also a fourth group, much smaller, of several hundred international subscribers in places other than West Africa.

Relocation Crisis. When the Upper Triad Group went through its relocation crisis in 1994-1995, we lost substantially in terms of financial support and volunteer effort. At that time we simply could no longer afford to support the West Africa groups and so deleted many hundreds of subscribers. Since then our mailing list continues to grow and we have struggled to meet the demands of our remaining readers and subscribers, but have fallen behind financially and otherwise.

Financial and Workload Considerations. In the past eighteen months we have had to borrow almost \$40,000 on personal credit in order to meet the Association's expenses. We just cannot afford to keep doing this. And without any staff support, we simply have been unable to keep up with the demands of our subscribers-in-prison. If we focus on filling requests for back issues there is no time to produce new material, and vice versa. We get hundreds of requests each week and we simply don't have the time or the money to keep up. And there is always a considerable backlog of new material to be composed and produced.

Production Process. For many years we have written and published articles and commentaries without much regard for where they fit in any topical sense, publishing them sequentially in our monthly, subsequently bi-monthly, journal. More recently we have collected all of the articles and commentaries and have reprinted them in a series of topical issues. Now when we write articles and commentaries, they simply fit into one or another of the topical issues. So the topical issues have become our primary mode of publishing and the bi-monthly issues have now become almost secondary. Also, in establishing the Upper Triad website, the primary focus is on the Upper Triad Material in its topical form rather than through the bi-monthly issues.

Planned Changes:

In order to restore some sort of balance, financially and in terms of labor, we are planning the following changes in the way we operate ...

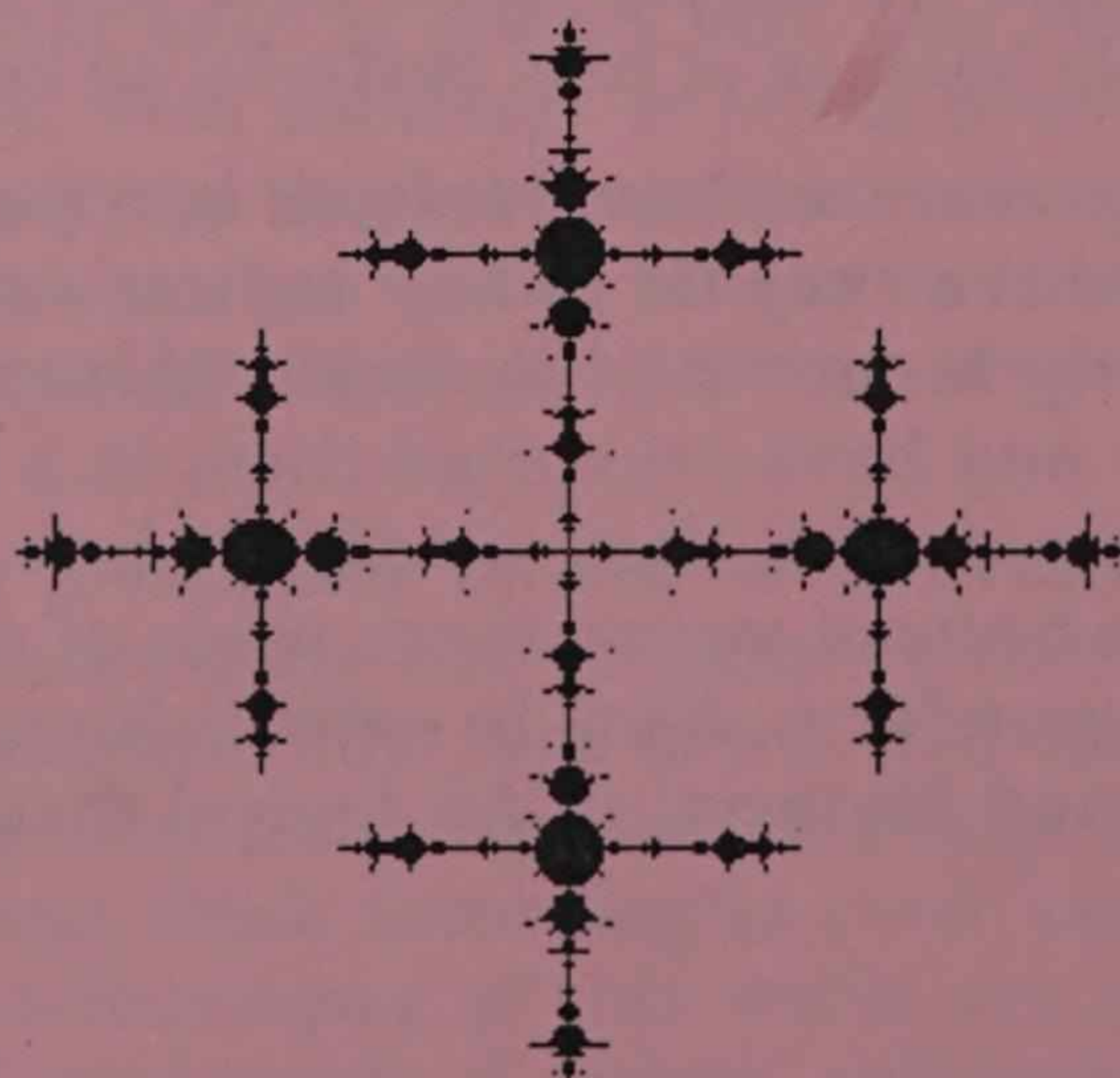
Changes in the Nature of Periodic Issues. We plan to cease production and distribution of regular bi-monthly issues, with the last regular bi-monthly issue being No. 220 in March-April, 1999. This would mark our 25th anniversary of such publications. Thenceforth, new articles and commentaries would be placed directly in the respective topical issues, and as the revised topical issues are produced, they would then be mailed to everyone on our active mailing list. We anticipate that this would be approximately the same amount of new material being produced and distributed as is currently the case. But we would no longer be providing reprints of all topical issues free of charge. This would virtually eliminate the very substantial workload in support of prisoner requests, yet the material would still be available to them, albeit in smaller, more periodic doses.

Changes in the Availability of Reprints. We would still provide reprints of the introductory issues, Volume 0, free of charge, but request \$3 each for reprints of any of the other topical issues, to cover the actual cost of printing and postage. For prisoners, many of whom contribute in the form of postage stamps, we might suggest three topical issues in return for a donation of ten first class stamps. And of course, we would continue to not be charging anyone for the regular mailings of topical issues.

Changes in Formatting. We shall also be looking into ways of aligning the website development with production of camera-ready topical issues, i.e., somehow using the same computer files for both. Right now we maintain separate files for printing and website posting, as they are formatted quite differently. We just haven't had time to resolve this.

Advantages. The advantages of these planned changes would be several. It should be much easier to balance the books financially. And most of our time would be spent producing new material in topical form rather than being more or less equally split between working on topical issues, bi-monthly issues, and filling requests for reprints.

Your patience is appreciated. And your comments and suggestions on any or all of these matters would also be appreciated.





To see things as they are is perhaps the most important characteristic of intelligence.

The three qualifications, strength, unselfishness, and purity, must be acquired to an adequate degree if we want to prepare ourselves systematically for the descent of the divine life within us.

The chief reason why such a large number of people who aspire to experience the realities of the spiritual life remain where they are, without making any definite progress towards their goal, lies in the fact that they do not take any steps to lay the necessary foundations for that life and are content merely with reading and thinking about these things.

This is not a thinking process at all, but rather a form of consciousness before which the thinking processes take place and pass in a panoramic view.

There can be an impassable gulf between profession and practice in the case of intellectual knowledge, but this is not possible in the case of wisdom.

On the buddhic plane, perception and action are inseparable.

Although the higher self is seated in the heart of every human being, its will is not able to find expression in the personality partly due to the inadequacy and resistance of the lower vehicles and partly owing to egoism and the illusions in which the personality is involved.

Unless and until thoughts and emotions are made to express themselves in corresponding actions, no fundamental change in our life can be effected.

The road to hell is proverbially paved with good intentions and the utter inadequacy of merely forming pious resolutions is unfortunately too well known to people who are content merely with the wish to reform themselves.

A mere resolution or a thought-image is a rather ineffective force as long as it remains in the realm of the mind, but give it practical expression, and the whole inner mechanism of our life is galvanized, and forces are immediately released to bring about the required change and to make this change a permanent part of our character.

Thought is the father of action, thought strengthens the tendency for a particular kind of action, but it is the actual action which precipitates thought, brings about a real change in the outer and inner life, makes pathways for the nervous system and stabilizes the mental forces in the new mental grooves, and enables the will to manifest and dominate the lower vehicles more fully.

The first of these practices is the cultivation of the habit of constant recollectedness of our true nature and purpose in life. This presupposes that the candidate has already thought deeply over the problems of life, has realized the urgent necessity of rising above the weaknesses and illusions of the personality, and has some idea of the altered attitude towards the circumstances of life which the attainment of higher consciousness necessitates.

If we make a persistent effort to rise above the attitude of the personality, the center of our consciousness does gradually shift inward, and this brings with it an increased power to deal successfully with the problems of life and to see them in their correct perspective. It enables the person to act in an increasing measure from the center of the individuality, the seat of the atma.

So let all of us who are aiming to bring down into the personality the power of the atma try first to bring all our smaller aims and activities within the magnetic influence of a dynamic purpose which is related to our higher destiny.

When we begin to tread the path of spiritual unfoldment and our buddhi begins to function, these tendencies begin gradually to come to our notice. We begin to become conscious of them one by one, and as we eliminate the cruder ones the subtler ones emerge into the field of our consciousness.

When reactionlessness has been developed to an adequate degree, then the bodies remain unaffected under the impact of stimuli coming from outside and respond only to the impulses coming from the jivatma.

This cultivation of reactionlessness develops gradually that self-determination which is a marked characteristic of those in whom the atma is becoming the inner ruler, and this characteristic must be developed by people who want the spiritual will to direct their life.

The more reactionless and impersonal we become, the more will our actions be the expression of the divine life within us, instead of being merely products of the samskaras of the lower vehicles. Action done under these conditions is nishkama and is free from egoism.

When a man can take up, continue, or drop any activity of the physical, astral, and mental body, at will, then only can the atma be said to have gained control over those bodies and to be able to use them merely as instruments in the lower worlds.

An individual who has lived only in the realm of manifestation, in the realm of colors, can have no idea of the white light of reality, unless and until he transcends manifestation and emerges into the light of reality.

If an aspirant is involved in this world with its illusions and limitations and has lost awareness of his divine nature as a result of this involvement, he should know the essential nature of this world in which he is involved if he is to understand and apply the necessary means for regaining his freedom.

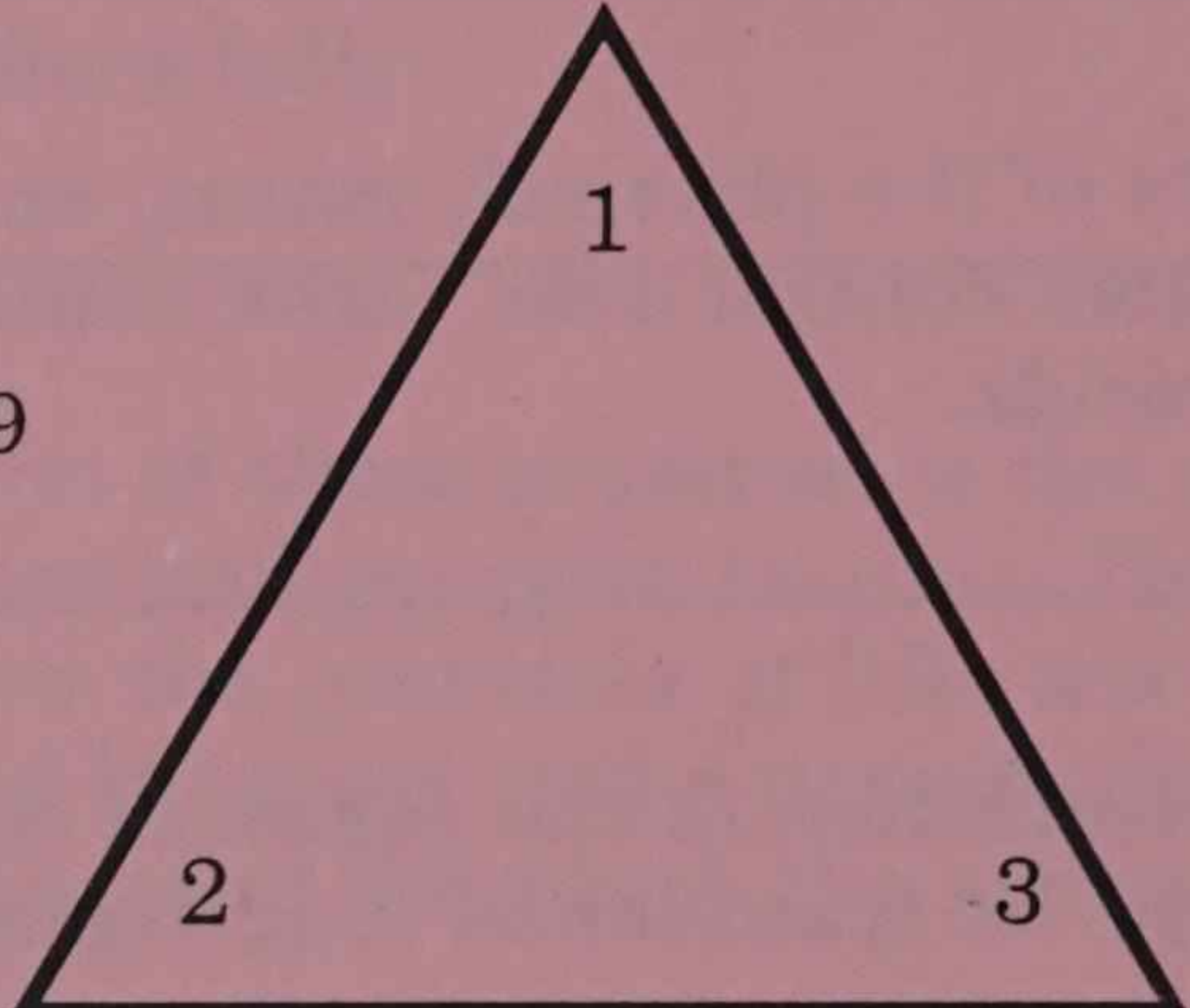
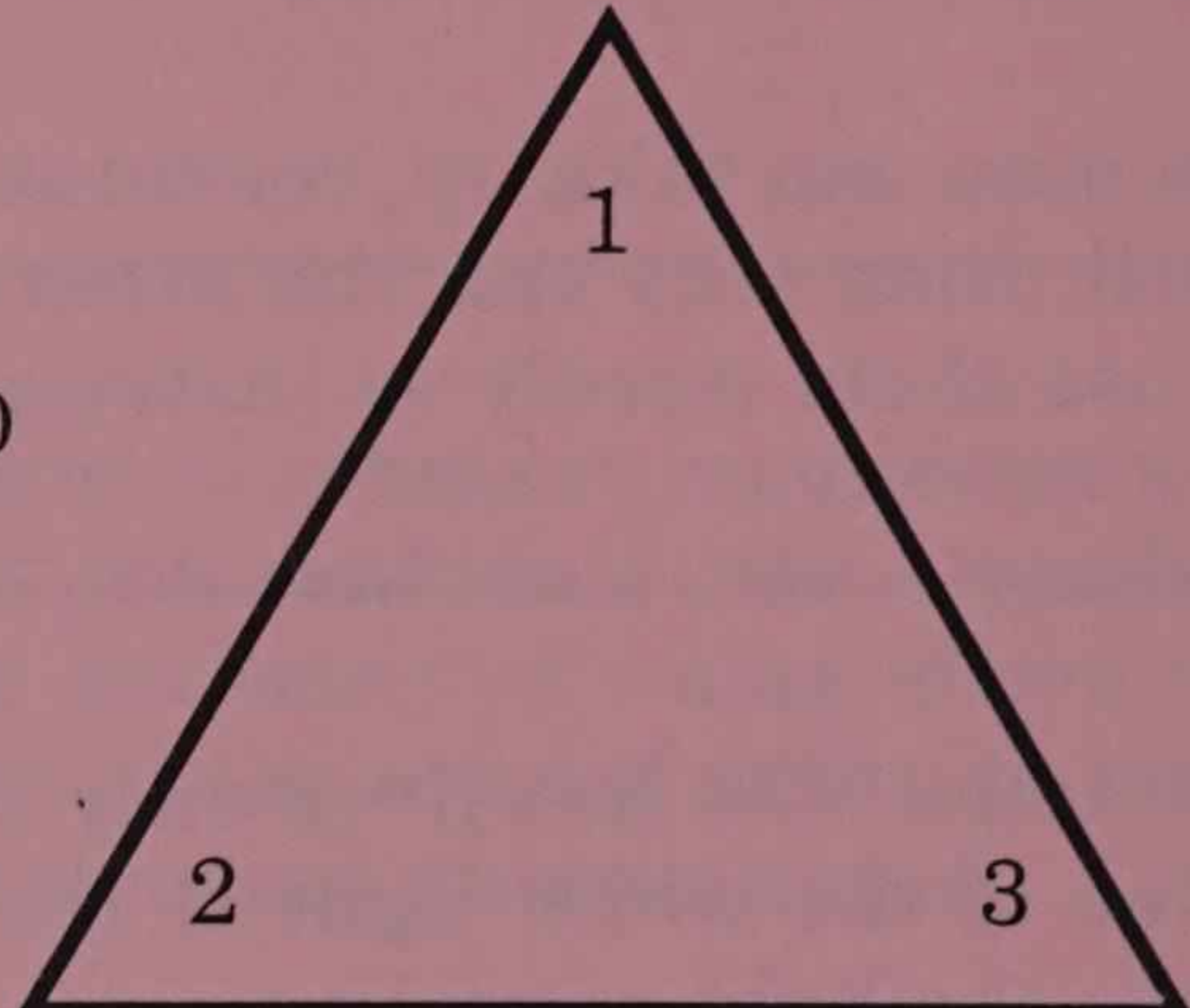
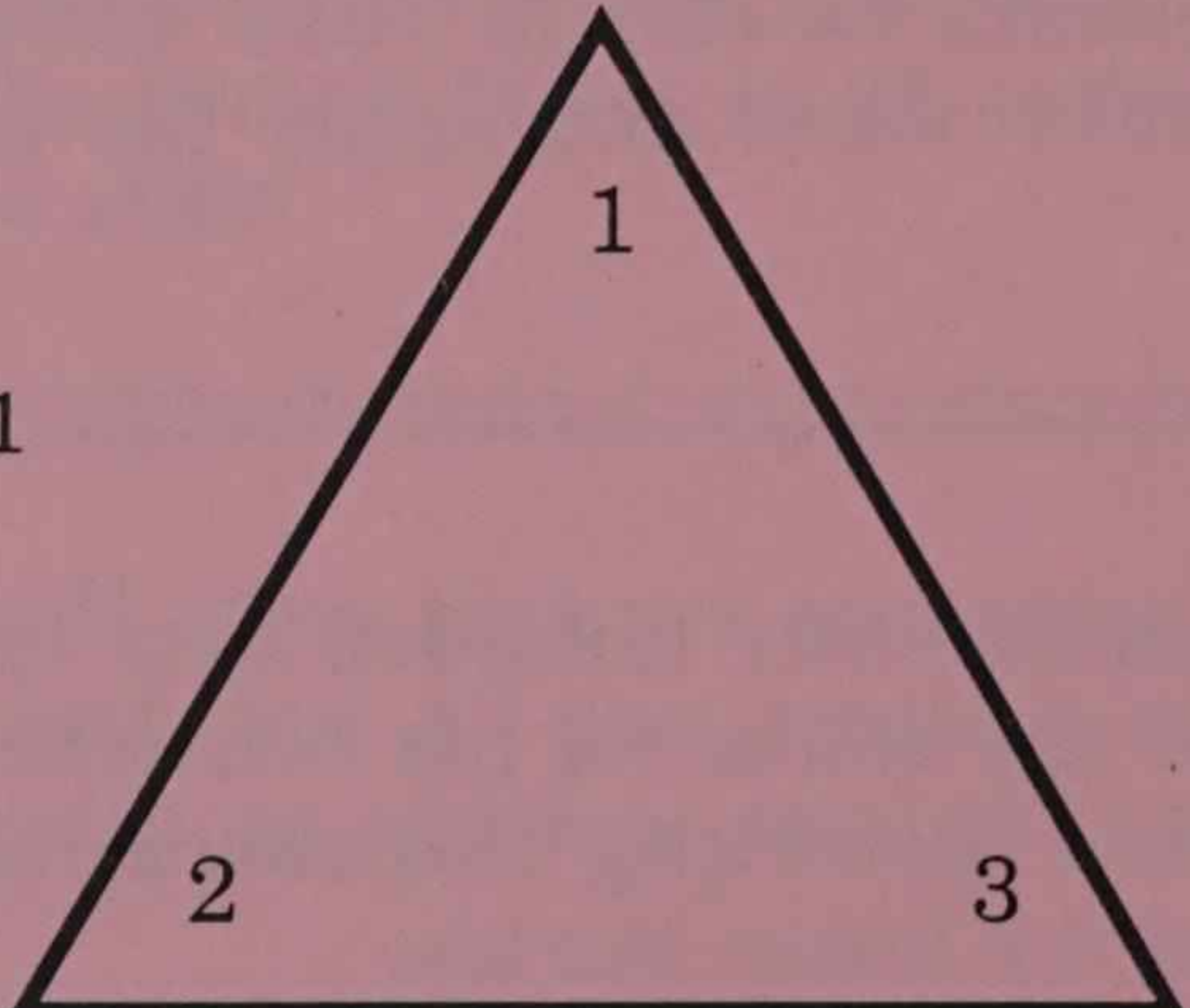
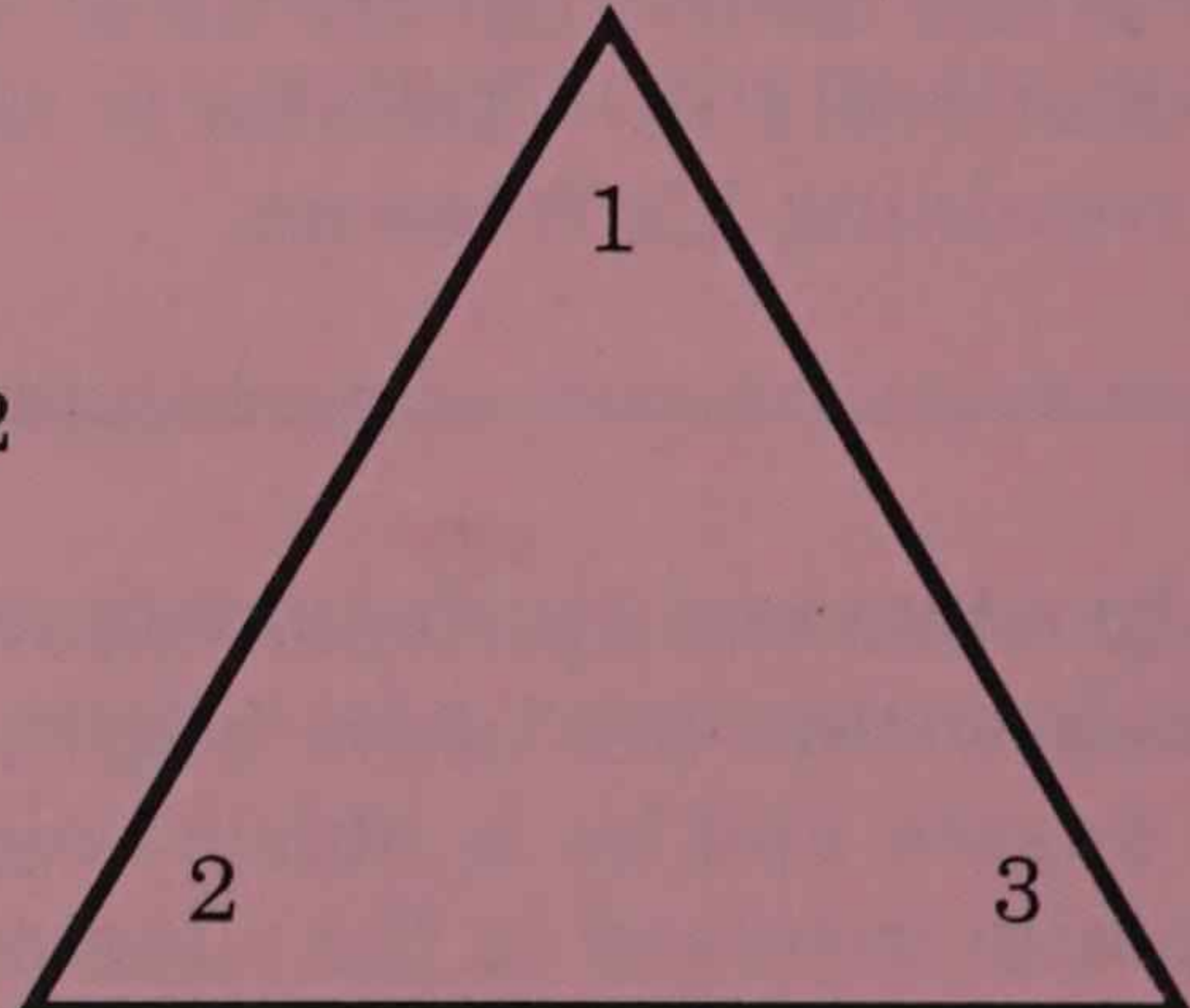
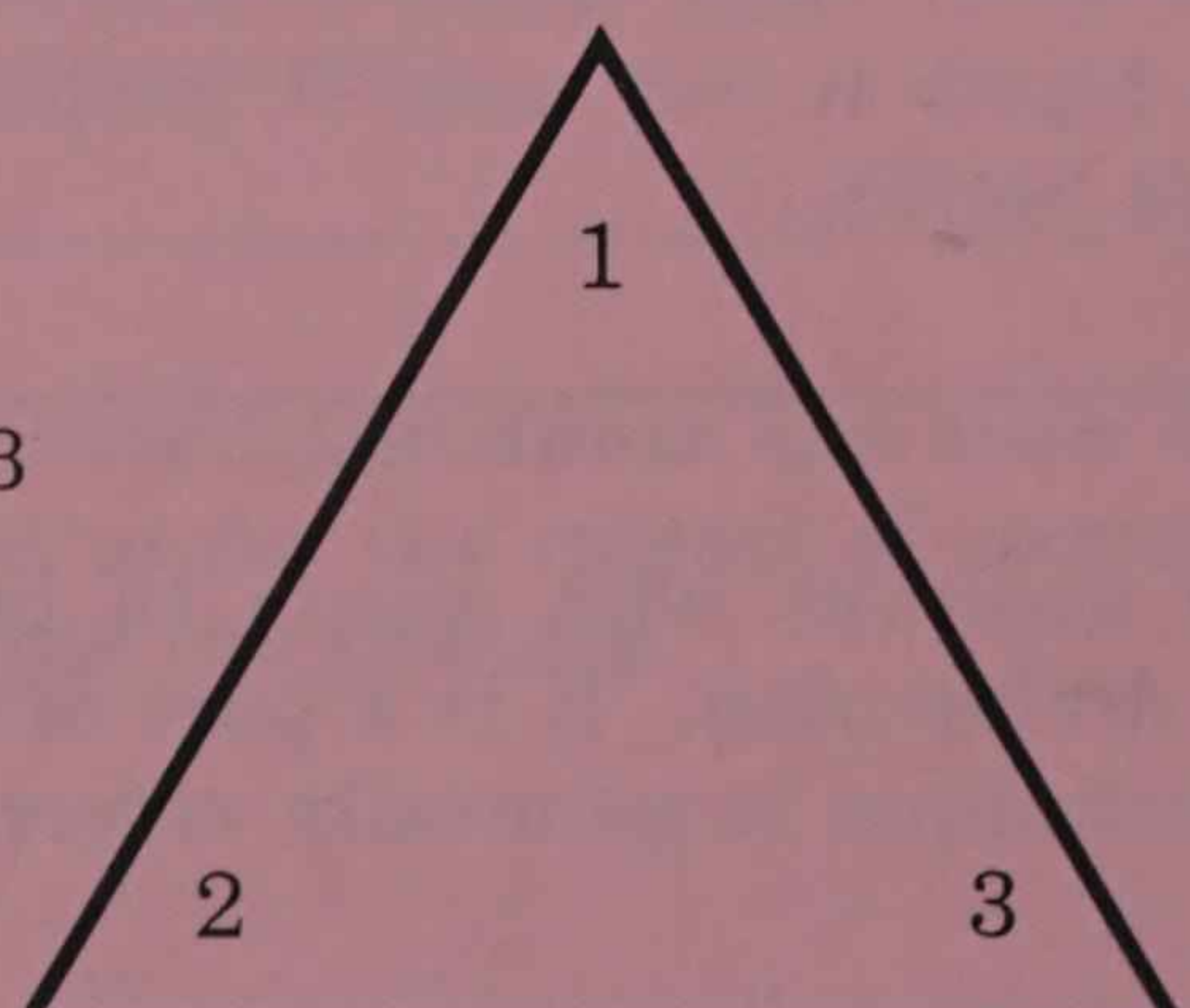
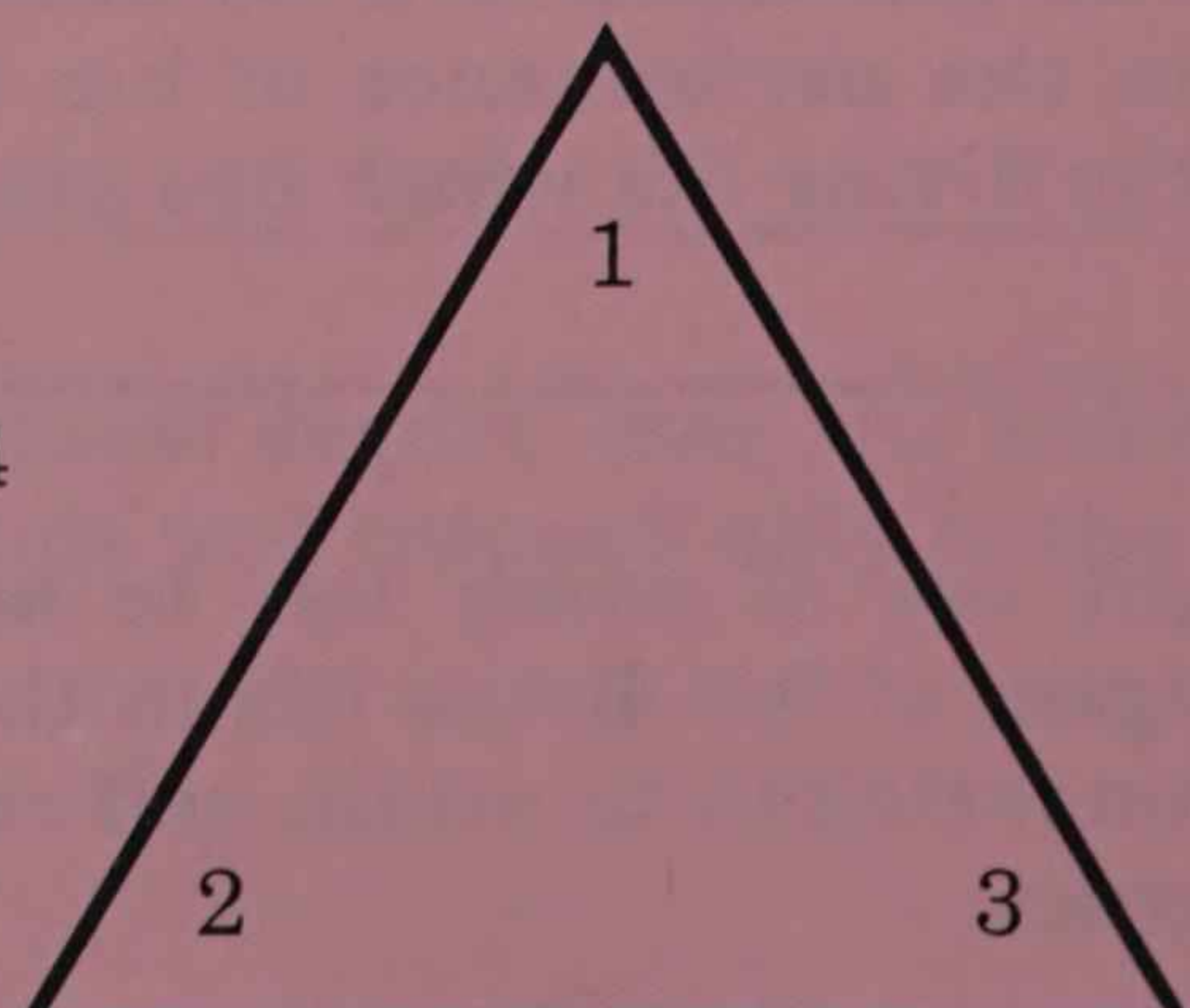
It is only when the spiritual nature of man becomes sufficiently unfolded that the divine power hidden within his heart begins to descend through the center of his consciousness in increasing degree and he is able to dissipate gradually these distorting and obscuring agents which keep him involved in the illusions and attractions of the lower worlds.

For the individual who has risen above the illusions of the world, even to a small extent, power has no attraction and he does not desire or seek it ... But when it comes to him naturally in the performance of his duties, he does not reject it but uses it properly as a trustee of the divine life which has placed that power in his hands.

The right use of power has to be learned by every aspirant who wants to become a conscious agent of the divine life in the fulfillment of the divine plan. It is a part of the self-discipline undertaken to attain self-realization and its technique is generally referred to as niskamakarma.

Synthetic Triangles

Synthetic triangles are aids to meditation and philosophical study. The various keywords indicate relationships between the three points of the triangles, while the various numbers indicate relationships through correspondence with the seven rays. Further information is available in Special Issue No. 7 (Synthetic Triangles) and Topical Issue No. 1.5 (The Seven Rays).

<p style="text-align: center;">Wisdom</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 679</p>  <p style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> Meditation Ten Precepts </p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Buddha</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 680</p>  <p style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> Dharma Sangha </p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Communion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 681</p>  <p style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> Spiritual Path Religion </p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Inner Religion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 682</p>  <p style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> Meditation Outer Religion </p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Learning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 683</p>  <p style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> Growing Serving </p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Spirituality</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 684</p>  <p style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> Metaphysics Theosophy </p>

Mantrams - I

The Great Invocation

From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let Light stream forth into the minds of men.
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let Love stream forth into the hearts of men.
May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men,
The purpose which the masters know and serve.

From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out,
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.
Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

Please use this space to print the names and addresses of any persons who may be interested in receiving the Upper Triad Journal. Each person listed who is not already on an Upper Triad mailing list will be sent a sample copy and given an opportunity to subscribe.

Please return to The Upper Triad, P.O. Box 2248, Leesburg, Virginia 20177 (USA)

Announcements

Contributions are always appreciated to help defray the cost of printing and mailing the Upper Triad Journal, and to help defray the cost of reprinting the various topical issues. The approximate cost of printing and mailing the bi-monthly Journal, for domestic subscribers, is \$ 12 per year. The approximate, average cost of reprinting and mailing the various topical issues is \$ 3 each.

Errors occasionally occur in the preparation and/or production of these Upper Triad materials. In the event of missing pages, etc., replacement sheets are available upon request.

Please note that the Upper Triad materials (publications) are generally available only to registered subscribers.

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Subscribers are urged to inform the Upper Triad Group promptly of any change of address or address correction. The Upper Triad journals are not forwardable and journals returned for address correction are both expensive and time-consuming.

The Upper Triad Group is currently understaffed and undergoing some financial difficulties. We appreciate your patience.

For information on Upper Triad Group activities in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, please write to the address below, or telephone (703) 443-8289. Fax (703) 443-8294.

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