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The Upper Triad



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Commentaries

The Upper Triad Association
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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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The First Precept - [C-1281]

The first precept is the principle of abstention from killing living beings, or love. While the precept focuses on abstention from killing, in the broader sense it includes abstention from causing injury (ahimsa). Most people understand that killing or hurting other people is generally “wrong” and a few even understand that the same is true for killing or hurting animals. But few people truly understand this.

The killing or injuring of any creature is inherently counter-evolutionary in the sense that it is a grave imposition, the deprivation or limiting of existence and experience in this world, and in the sense that since all lives are interconnected one is simply killing or injuring oneself in the process, and there are (grave) consequences. One might argue that it was the victim’s karma to be killed or injured, and this would be true, but only in the victim’s framework, and the act itself would still be wrong in the actor’s framework or perspective. Any act of violence or imposition upon another life is generally and inherently wrong. There may be extenuating circumstances, which make it a matter of necessity, on some intellectualized-moral basis, and the temptation may exist to rationalize killing or harming in order to serve one’s own (merely apparent, deluded sense of) self-interest. But it is still wrong.

Each person is responsible for his or her own circumstances. Thus any situation in which one is tempted to rationalize one’s actions as unavoidable is nonetheless a consequence of one’s actions. Thus if one is “forced” to kill, then one is not any less responsible. Many argue that “animal” life is inferior or that animals are here for human exploitation, neither of which is actually true. Animals are simply different. They have different consciousness, different characteristics and methods and means of evolution, but they are no less worthy than human beings for existence (experience and expression) in this world. Some may argue killing animals (or human beings) is a matter of self-defense, failing to realize that “threatening” animals (or human beings) are only attracted to us as a consequence of our consciousness and actions. No human beings and no animal lives are “here” to provide sport for or sustenance to others at the expense of their own lives or freedom of expression. Granted the karma of humanity and the karma of animal lives are complicated, and have led to current circumstances, but the principles of ahimsa (non-violence) remain valid. Especially for the spiritual student.

One might be tempted to rationalize ahimsa on the basis of avoidance of consequences, i.e., that to kill or injure another life (human or animal) eventually brings about grave consequences and suffering to the doer, but pure action (ahimsa) needs no such self-serving motive. While the karma of human lives and animal lives does not include provision of sustenance, and while the karma of plant life does include provision of sustenance, one should nonetheless express love in one’s relationship to the plant kingdom, affording whatever opportunities there need to be for “plant life” existence, experience, and expression, even while cultivating and harvesting the contributions in sustenance (e.g., food, oxygen, shelter).

But fundamentally, it is a matter of the “practice of equality of self and others” or paratmasamata). All lives are interrelated. All are connected. Love is the energy and quality and principle that reveals and actively expresses this connection. One who lives from the heart simply cannot kill or injure another life, through thought, feeling, or behavior. With love, one simply does what is right to do, non-separatively.

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The Second Precept [C-1282]

The second precept is the principle of abstention from taking the not-given, or generosity. There are of course fundamental issues of ownership, rightful ownership, apparent ownership, collective ownership, non-ownership, respect for others and others' rights, and theft, all of which become secondary to one's sense of generosity (and transcending the sense of materialism and egoism that pervade ordinary human relationships).

In the deeper sense one does not ever really own anything. Ownership is therefore merely apparent. This world and the "things" in this world do not belong to anyone, nor to everyone, but to God. Collective ownership is a step in the right direction (of understanding and respecting things in the world of appearances), but even collective ownership is merely apparent. Bigger problems are simply attachment to things (possessiveness) and individuality in the sense of separateness. The relatively unevolved tend to be attached to things, to be "possessive" of things and to (unconsciously if not consciously) exercise "individual" rights, which gives rise to competition, theft (stealing) (grasping), violence, etc. But as one evolves in consciousness, the student tends to be less attached to things, to think (and feel (and behave) less separatively, to be more gracious and to be more generous. To embrace goodwill as an end in itself.

But in the more pragmatic and worldly sense, there is apparent ownership of things, and the spiritual student should endeavour to respect other people and their apparent property and their apparent property rights. People are more correctly stewards of property (and money). Apparent "possession" conveys responsibility for proper utilization of that property or financial resource. And in not being attached to "one's own" property, and in looking more toward some greater perceived good, the evolving student becomes increasingly charitable and generous (and more gracious in human relationships). And since there is no real ownership (and no real limit to energy or substance), being generous tends to evoke more resources to be utilized for the good of all.

But this second precept has actually a much broader context than merely respecting the (apparent) property rights of others, being much more than simply a discouragement from stealing what appears to belong to others (i.e., wrong appropriation). It is really about not taking from others what is not freely given. So "ownership" (and apparent ownership) is not the real issue. Taking what is not freely given is a form of violence. And it matters not that in the world there maybe a majority of people who look out for themselves at others' apparent expense, the preclusions from violence and from hurting others in any way still hold. The spiritual student lives according to higher values. And loses nothing in doing so. There is no real advantage that one person has over another. That is all a matter of worldly perspective, seeing things superficially, according to appearances, rather than according to the underlying truth and reality.

In some sense the second precept follows as an extension of the first, as (true) love naturally begets generosity as is essentially incompatible with "ownership" and other separatively individualistic notions. Indeed, in the higher sense there is no distinction between the giver, the gift, and the recipient. And in the broader sense, generosity includes not "taking" someone's time or energy (vitality), it includes faithfully honoring all of one's debts and obligations to others, and it includes being generous and gracious without regard to the existence of graciousness and gratitude in others.

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The Third Precept [C-1283]

The third precept is the principle of abstention from sexual misconduct, or contentment. There are actually two dimensions to this precept, one concerned with avoiding or transcending sexual misconduct in the normal sense and the other, relatively more noble, concerned with transcending (absolute) identification with one's sexual state. In either case, the intended and inferred result is contentment.

Sexual misconduct means different things to different peoples and varies according to diverse cultural and national and racial and religious contexts. But fundamentally, sexual misconduct refers to physically and emotionally and mentally unhealthy sexual practices, i.e., practices (perverted and otherwise) that undermine spiritual growth (primarily through over-identification with the body and over-indulgence in the pleasures of bodily experience). This does not preclude healthy sexual relationship, but it does discourage any sexual extremes that become ends-in-themselves (attachments) (obsessions) and it discourages any sexual practice which is harmful in any way to the participants and/or to others. For example, infidelity (in marriage or in committed relationship) is substantially harmful, to the participants, to the associated non-participants, and to the marriage or relationship itself. It is harmful primarily because it is separative, it undermines the energy and quality of the relationship, the connectedness of the partners. Similarly, sexual experience as an end in itself is substantially harmful. It tends to keep a person at the material level and undermines growth in consciousness. Thus the more obvious sense of abstention from sexual misconduct is the facilitation of harmlessness and opportunities for spiritual growth. It matters not that it may appear that no one is (obviously) hurt; much of the harm from sexual misconduct occurs on more subtle levels.

But the less obvious sense has to do with identification (or non-identification) with one's sexual state. And the intent is to encourage spiritual students to not identify (absolutely) with being male or female, but to appreciate that on a higher level (the soul) people are androgynous, that sexual dimorphism only exists superficially and in the lower worlds of human endeavor, and not in the higher worlds. Thus to identify with being male or female, without appreciation for the "other" half of one's own being, is misguided to some extent. This is not to deny that one is male or female on some practical level, with associated instincts and needs, and naturally heterogeneously sexual, but to focus more on being a more complete person, without identifying so completely or absolutely with one or the other sex.

Again the keyword is non-separativeness. Identifying with being male or female is inherently separative. In realizing that one is both male and female, with one predominating on this level, and that one is non-sexual at the soul level and beyond, one can begin to transcend the separative nature and touch more clearly the higher common energies. In principle, there is a natural "progression from a state of biological and psychological sexual dimorphism to a state of spiritual androgyny." But this progression should not be (indeed, cannot be) forced. It simply happens as it needs to, based on overall progress in consciousness. And "spiritual androgyny" does not necessarily mean that one ceases to function as a male or as a female, but it does imply that one no longer identifies exclusively with being one or the other.

In sexual dimorphism there is an underlying tension between the sexes. In true communion (of male and female, in partnership and within oneself) there is only contentment.

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Karma and Disparagement [C-1284]

The efficacy of karma notwithstanding, one's understanding of karma should be tempered with compassion and consideration for those who appear to be less fortunate in any way. In understanding that consequences follow actions and that consequences may appear disparately in time, there should not ever be any "judgment" or sense of disparagement for anyone who is facing karmic consequences.

Everyone is subject to karma, the law of cause and effect, action and consequence, even those who don't believe in karma. Every action, behavior, comment, feeling, and thought is subject to karma. Everyone has strengths and everyone has weaknesses. The strengths, weaknesses, talents, limitations, opportunities, etc., that a person faces at the moment or for a given lifetime, are all a matter of karma. And all is consequential in some sense or another. Everyone is currently facing the consequences of actions. And those unresolved consequences are cumulative, from a wide variety of personal causes and times. But it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to accurately assess specific cause and effect relationships. And karmic consequences emerge not in any form of punishment but in terms of conditions that inherently encourage growth in consciousness.

Perhaps the biggest mistake that someone can make, who believes in karma, but does not actually understand karma, is to judge that particular conditions or circumstances makes a person any greater or lesser than anyone else. One who understands karma would never think so. For in understanding karma, one realizes that all things are interrelated and that wisdom underlies all that seems to occur in this world. Apparently wonderful opportunities (e.g., health, wealth) may not be all they appear to be, and indeed may be (and are generally) part of something much more subtle. Similarly, apparently less-than-wonderful circumstances (e.g., physical or mental disability, poverty) may mask something (opportunity) quite meaningful and valuable. So one should not (ever) judge based upon appearances, for there are underlying factors that may not be generally apparent.

Even where current consequences are related to previous (current) (future) "sins" there should be no less compassion or consideration. Indeed, the apparently less fortunate should be admired for their ability to evoke such consequences and for the courage to face up to them, while others take on less intense karmic measures (for the time being). Moreover, the whole concept of "sin" is somewhat inherently prejudicial and judgmental; there are no sins, per se. There is simply "action" that evokes learning opportunities through consequences. But in addition to "personal" actions and consequences, there is also collective actions and consequences, and it is difficult (virtually impossible) to discern the difference between what is personal and what is collective but manifesting personally. Thus one who is "unfortunate" may simply be (nobly) undertaking some collective karma.

All peoples (and spiritual students in particular) should rise above all tendencies to judge others, which is quite separative (inherently harmful). Likewise, all peoples (and especially spiritual students) should rise above all tendencies toward disparagement. All actions, behaviors, comments, feelings, and thoughts should be tempered by compassion, considerateness, discretion, gentleness, kindness, etc. If one truly lives from the heart, if one truly embraces the bond that exists between all lives, then it is simply not possible for one to be harmful or disparaging.

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Changing Consensus Values [C-1285]

As people gain experience and develop in terms of relative intelligence, awareness, and consciousness, that experience and development is reflected in the ethics and principles and values that are consciously or not-so-consciously embraced. The same is true for collective consciousness.

People tend to change their outlooks, perspectives, and values according to their conscious or unconscious realizations. For example, a person who truly realizes that smoking is not healthy will simply not smoke. If the person doesn't truly realize that, then the person will simply make excuses for continuing the habit of smoking. The fact of addictiveness notwithstanding. Something is addictive only to the extent that the person truly allows it to be so. Consciousness can (and in many cases does) transcend the (addictive) tendencies of the lower nature (protestations of the body or the emotions) (and assorted concrete mental attachments). But for a person to actually realize something, e.g., that drinking alcohol is inherently undermining consciousness, there must be true (conscious) assimilation of experience resulting in the courage to embrace the new value(s) even if contrary to the consensus (thinking) (of ordinary humanity).

But while personal values change not very quickly, because it generally takes time to truly assimilate experience, values held collectively sometimes change very (very) slowly and sometimes relatively more quickly than is the case for some people individually. Indeed, many people change values incidentally, because collective or consensus values have changed, rather than because there is any true realization at the individual level. For example, many people today realize that "smoking" is harmful, because the collective or consensus realization has changed. Even while pioneers (in consciousness and values) came to this realization more directly and substantially in advance of the majority or consensus. Yet it is the "thinking" of the pioneers that precurse the changing consensus values, and the "idea" that smoking is harmful simply grows gradually in the collective consciousness until there is some critical mass, at which time there is (in some sense) a growing contagion of passive realization. Eventually this will occur also for use of alcohol (and other drugs) (i.e., that they are inherently harmful (counter-evolutionary)) and ultimately (likewise) for consumption of meat, fish, and fowl.

But there is of course great inertia, resistance to change. Habits (addictions) abound, on physical, emotional, and concrete mental levels. People are consciously and/or unconsciously quite comfortable with the ways things are and relatively uncomfortable with changes that they do not really understand. And real progress in consciousness comes not from passively embracing collective values, but through conscious individual realization.

And sometimes there is an ebb and flow of consensus values (i.e., where values are not quite broadly consensual), as in the case of (relatively unpopular prohibition (of alcohol)). But there is encouragement in the sense that there are active debates (considerations) of most poignant issues, e.g., abortion, alcohol (even if only in the context of driving while intoxicated), animal rights, children's rights, drug use (abuse), human rights, respect for cultural and racial and religious differences, etc. It is this framework of open consideration of values that stimulates growth in collective values. It is not about legislation or imposition. It is about experience and understanding and realization and (then) embracing the needed values (doing the right thing for the right reasons).

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Delusion and Denial [C-1286]

Delusion is defined as the state of being deluded about something or in some way, believing something falsely and acting as if it were not false, especially in the sense of false beliefs regarding oneself or others that persists despite factual or objective evidence. Delusion “implies self-deception concerning facts or situations” that is relatively uncommon and/or not shared by others in general, while illusion “implies an ascription of truth or reality to something that seems to normal perception to be true or real but in fact is not.” Thus while many people suffer the illusion that the physical world is real, relatively few are actually deluded about their place in the world. Delusion, then, is a more serious matter than illusion.

There are many illusions inherent in living in the objective world, wherein people tend to see things as they appear to be rather than as they are actually. Conditioning tends to strengthen these basic illusions. But as a person grows and deepens with experience and assimilation of experience, over the course of a lifetime and over the course of a succession of lifetimes, there is a gradual and progressive awakening to the illusionary nature of this world. The slightly more “enlightened” person simply sees things a bit more clearly, a bit more closer to reality, a bit less unencumbered by appearances and unconscious assumptions and presumptions about the world and a person’s place in the world (and the nature of experience (and the nature of being)). But “delusion” is a bit more special than illusion, because it is inherently more personal, more individual, more a matter of personal perception than (more collective) illusion. Most delusion is a matter of uncommon (personally-oriented) beliefs that are simply false, but there are some cases where most people are deluded, sort of an extension and personalization of illusion, while some (fewer) people can see (relatively more) clearly and correctly. And of course there is also the case where a majority of people think that “someone” is deluded when in actuality it is not so.

One of the most prevalent delusions is that of believing oneself to be happy or unhappy. This is a delusion compounded and engendered by wrong identification, of (the illusion of) identifying oneself with the body and feelings rather than with the (actual) indwelling (higher) consciousness). Less prevalent, but more serious, is the delusion that one is “happy” when indeed one is, at the level of appearances, actually not so. This is a modest form of denial, of simply denying the relative (practical) truth about oneself that is more readily apparent to others.

Denial compounds and goes beyond merely being deluded. Denial is an actual (conscious) “refusal to admit the truth or reality” of something. Thus being deluded is not a matter of awareness (indeed, is a matter of not being aware), while being in denial is a matter of consciously believing something for which there is substantial evidence to the contrary. But people tend to perceive and to believe what they want to, what sustains the illusion (perhaps even delusion) of (therefore unthreatened) comfortableness (illusion of security), what is consistent with their world view (the way they view the external world) and/or their personal view (the way they perceive themselves).

But many self-perceptions are simply convenient (and wrong). If a person’s self-perception is substantially at variance with how another person perceives him (her), there is delusion (by one or the other or both), depending on what is actually true). Thus the spiritual student should strive to be open and honest about oneself and about one’s external perceptions.

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New Age Delusions [C-1287]

There is a great deal of underlying, uncommon truth associated with new age metaphysics, but there is also widespread delusion (in many or most new age practitioners) based on limited understanding of those truths and based on unrealistic self-perception.

One of the "truths" of new age metaphysics is that each person is a living God or Goddess, when in fact the actual truth is that God lives within each person, that there is an underlying divine nature, and that a person can in principle tap into that underlying divine nature and evoke changes or expressions of that divine nature in the daily life. But if the outer, superficial self (personality) assumes that "it" (oneself in the sense of the waking-personality or personality consciousness) is the indwelling God, then one is very definitely deluded. Because the ego (personality) is simply an artificial entity that is utilized by the underlying divine nature (soul) (higher consciousness) (monad). Most people who study metaphysics simply very wrongly confuse the ego and the higher self. The problem is compounded by the "new age" emphasis on self-esteem (even while healthy (modest) self-esteem is constructive for most people).

Another great metaphysical "truth" is that one can change one's circumstances, create one's future, in accordance with whatever is desired. Indeed, creatively having expectation does evoke energy and forces toward fulfillment of that expectation, but there is also a matter of karma (and practicality) that is often conveniently ignored by the new age practitioner. And indeed, one can bring about changes, but only to the extent that those changes are consistent with one's karma, i.e., what one actually needs and deserves. One of the greatest new age delusions is the belief that "God wants me to be happy" which tends to justify whatever behavior evokes (artificial) feelings of happiness. The problem is that "God" does not "want" anything. God provides the creative evolutionary framework, but does not get involved in the details of manifestation or evolution (and does not get involved in "individual" lives or circumstances). Happiness and sadness are necessarily superficial. God is not.

Positive thinking can be a real boon to one's day-to-day life experience, and yet unbalanced, unrealistic, positive thinking is delusional. A broad framework of positive thinking (feeling) is healthy, but where positive thinking is applied to details of personal matters, there is some measure of delusion (inconsistency between what is expected and what is actual). And to continue to believe something that is unrealistic is also the beginnings of delusion compounded by denial, especially if one is entangled in day-to-day life and personal (artificial) circumstances (desires, expectations, reactions to circumstances).

Any emphasis on being "beautiful" or being prosperous or having great self-esteem or "taking charge of one's life" (another great metaphysical delusion) necessarily takes the person away from an emphasis on truth and reality. There may be needed lessons in new age metaphysical delusional experiences, but the spiritual student rather needs to cultivate humility and a dedication to truth that allows the truth to be seen or perceived relatively more clearly despite whatever tendencies there may be to the contrary. Indeed, if one focuses on being open to truth, embracing truth, and living the truth as best one can, than one will naturally tend to be "beautiful" and prosperous and not lacking in self-esteem, but without the otherwise attendant delusions.

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Control [C-1288]

There is a nominal trendiness associated with “taking charge” or “being in control” of one’s life. While there is some merit or value in this notion, for some people, there are also a number of associated caveats and delusions.

First of all, many people believe or perceive themselves (as egos and personalities) to be in control (of the lower life, of their own destiny) or to need to be in control, when in fact the ego or personality is never actually in control (in any real (non-superficial) sense). Neither are God or the soul. God (and the soul) provide encouragement and qualification to the extent that the lower self (ego) (personality) is receptive and responsive, but they do not control the lower life or circumstances in any direct sense. The waking-consciousness (ego) (personality-consciousness) (lower self) is nominally “in charge” but not really. But there are controlling factors. These controlling factors are the evolutionary principles (evoking evolutionary forces (in manifestation)) that underlay and overshadow all of life in the lower worlds, e.g., karma and dharma. So only in the karmic sense of “actions beget consequences” is any lower self (personality) “in charge” of the lower life. Yet even consequences do not generally follow (or precede) specific actions. Indeed, consequences generally follow (or precede) cumulative actions.

But there is for many people a need to engage (lower) (worldly) life in a more active, head-centered sense. This is where a person is entangled in life in the lower worlds and needs to evoke personal, worldly, experience and expression in order to learn and grow, to actively engage the world and one’s circumstances. But while this is an active engagement, one is still not actually in control of anything (while there may be the delusion of being in control), one is simply more actively engaged. This active stage follows the largely passive and instinctive stage and precursus the subsequent non-active (non-passive) stage of simply being aware of life in this world and “doing” whatever needs to be done, intuitively (non-passively, non-actively, non-willfully) rather than (passively, non-willfully) instinctively or (actively, willfully) intellectually.

The need to be in control of one’s own life is necessarily ego-based. While the underlying (higher, non-conscious) purpose is evolutionary experience, the ego is simply attempting to substantiate its role as the (primary) interface between the waking-consciousness and the outer world. The problem is that this process (delusion) occurs only if a person identifies with the lower self (ego, personality, body) rather than with higher consciousness (and it hardly matters that the person “thinks” or “believes” that he or she is indeed identifying with something higher. But almost everyone identifies with the lower self, without realizing that it is so. Even most spiritual students. Learning to discern the differences between the ego pretending to be the soul and the soul itself is a very challenging process. And one that does not (need to) concern most people.

There is also a notion of the controlling personality, one who is perceived to be controlling or unduly influencing others (especially in petty ways). It is generally inherently wrong to impose on others, physically, emotionally, or intellectually, and so the controlling personal is one who is simply not appreciating or respecting the needs of others. But some are perceived as controlling when in fact they are not; where in fact others are simply passive (and yet always responsible for their own actions or reactions) but resentful. Thus one should simply live according to one’s own conscience and not worry about what others would have one do or be.

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Profanity and Vulgarity [C-1289]

The use of profanity and/or vulgarity is necessarily a reflection of coarseness in consciousness, compounded or not by the momentum of it being a matter of personal habits. Those who resort (consciously or more generally unconsciously) to profanity or vulgarity are generally not aware that it is a matter of coarseness and are not generally aware of the consequences of their profanity or vulgarity.

The problem of materiality is endemic to life in this (lower, objective) world. Being immersed in the material world, without conscious appreciation of the fact that one is so immersed, means that it is only natural to embrace worldly and material conditions. Thus almost everything in the lower worlds (of physical, emotional, and intellectual experience) tends to engage a person as if this (lower, outer) world was real and substantial, when indeed this (lower) world is not real and is merely transient. Material energy tends to be quite "low" or coarse in vibration. Thus those who identify with their bodies or with bodily experience tend to be at a lower (more coarse) vibration in consciousness than those whose experience is more emotionally-based (and similarly, those who identify with their emotional state tend to be at a lower vibration in consciousness than those who identify more with the intellect (and similarly, those who identify with the intellect or with "thinking" tend to be at a lower vibration than those who (actually) identify with the higher self (soul) and the intuitional being)).

In this sense, it is how a person actually identifies that matters more, not so much what a person "thinks" or believes he or she is identified with (e.g., most spiritual students are emotionally-polarized and head-centered but perceive themselves (wrongly) to be mentally-polarized or intuitively polarized and heart-centered, and it is how they are that primarily affects consciousness, not so much where they "think" they are). Although one can creatively affect the balance in consciousness through identification with higher consciousness.

In any event, there are various practices in "life" that detract from or inhibit spiritual growth or deepening, and various practices that enhance or encourage spiritual growth. The most basic of these practices is the extent to which one is actively engaged in refining one's consciousness. A person engaged in profanity and/or vulgarity is necessarily lowering one's natural vibration, engaging coarseness and inviting that coarseness to dominate the aura (etheric and astral and mental bodies). Being coarse inhibits refinement. Engaging in coarse practices likewise. Conversely, avoiding coarse practices facilitates refinement. There are very valuable "refinement" exercises in meditation. Avoiding profanity and vulgarity is helpful (and (gently, non-separatively) insulating oneself from (the effects of) profane and vulgar people, likewise).

But it is not simply a matter of how profanity and vulgarity affect oneself, it is also a matter of how these practices affect others. Coarseness tends to attract and encourage coarseness (as refined consciousness tends to attract and encourage refinement in consciousness (in oneself and others)). Thus in avoiding the practices (habits) (coarseness) of profanity and vulgarity, one is "acting" in a more evolutionary manner and allowing the higher (more refined) consciousness to more effectively emerge and be expressed in the lower self. The spiritual student should take care to be aware of one's tendencies toward materiality (profanity, vulgarity) and through proper meditative exercise and focus, gradually refine the consciousness so that these tendencies no longer apply.

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Spiritual Frameworks [C-1290]

In addition to the complementary distinctions between psychological and metaphysical frameworks, there is a matter of depth and breadth and inclusivity of various religious or spiritual frameworks.

In the religious and spiritual context, a person is generally found in a place of relative psychological comfort. The religion or spiritual philosophy that one embraces is generally consistent with one's experience, with one's intelligence and consciousness, and with one's religious and spiritual needs. In such a (comfortable) place, the framework is broad enough and deep enough to be spiritually and psychologically satisfying. All of one's life's experiences, ethics, principles, understanding, values, etc., can fit nicely enough within that spiritual framework. Thus, for example, to a fundamentalist Baptist-Christian there is great comfort in one's faith and one's faith is broad enough and deep enough to be all-inclusive, there being no need for anything beyond that framework. Indeed that framework provides a considerable opportunity for growth and deepening and service.

But eventually the student grows beyond the boundaries of that basic framework. With experience, with deepening, come new realizations, and one becomes dissatisfied with the "old" framework (which has nonetheless served its purpose). One then looks for and generally finds a new framework that is simply more comfortable, more comforting, more satisfying, more amenable to the growth and deepening that is needed. This does not in any real sense invalidate the truth and value of the previous framework. The new framework is not "better" in any absolute sense, but it is "better" in the sense of being what the person needs, for the time being. The new framework is then naturally seen (consciously or unconsciously) as broader, deeper, more inclusive than the previous framework. Someone who embraces the framework of the "Unity Church" for example, may see the former, more conventional faith as a small part of some much larger, much broader, much deeper, much more meaningful framework (at least for now, and at least for that person).

The principles of the earlier faith can then be seen in a broader, deeper sense, even though this could not be apprehended at the time one was embracing the former framework. The "old" can be interpreted in a "new" light. And progress (experience, broadening, deepening, spiritual growth) is facilitated. Thus spiritual growth really involves a continual broadening and deepening of perspective or framework. For example, one who is a Christian may undergo a number of periods of reframing, perhaps even over the course of several lifetimes, until Christianity is seen as a small part of some even broader framework. Because of the limitations and constraints inherent in "religion" many people move beyond religion in their quest for truth, sometimes losing something in the process. While others simply embrace a more spiritual (less religious) perspective while remaining within a comfortable religious-spiritual framework. Yet the tendency remains to see one's framework (Baptist, Unity, whatever) as all-inclusive, even while it is actually just a small part of something yet-to-be-apprehended.

In any event, as one progresses in this matter, as the framework gets broader and deeper, one begins to realize that all God-centered religions and spiritual philosophies are leading pretty much to the same place in consciousness. The barriers between various religions and spiritual philosophies are recognized as artificial, and the deeper essence of one is seen, undiminished, in all.

List of Topical Issues - 0

A series of eight volumes of topical issues cover the entire depth and breadth of the Upper Triad Material. These topical issues include all of the previously published articles and commentaries. Some topics are preliminary and will be expanded in subsequent editions. Those topical issues that have been produced are available, without charge. However, the cost of reproducing and mailing these topical issues averages \$ 3 per copy. Contributions to help defray these costs are always appreciated.

Following are descriptions of the topical issues of Volume 0.

0.1 INTRODUCTION

Contains an introduction to the Upper Triad Group and a basic outline of the Upper Triad Material. [22 pages]

0.2 OVERVIEW

Contains a synopsis of the Upper Triad Material and seven overview articles corresponding to the seven volumes of the Upper Triad Material. [42 pages]

0.3 ARTICLES - 1

Contains ten introductory articles on the purpose of life. [36 pages]

0.4 ARTICLES - 2

Contains seven introductory articles on the spiritual path. [24 pages]

0.5 ARTICLES - 3

Contains three short articles on theosophy and text of two theosophical classics, At the Feet of the Master and Light on the Path. [28 pages]

0.6 GLOSSARY

Contains brief definitions for approximately 270 significant words encountered in the various Upper Triad commentaries. [34 pages]

0.7 INDEX

Contains a subject (topical) index for the Upper Triad Material as well as an alphabetical title index of all articles and commentaries published to date. [44 pages]

Most of the Upper Triad Material is now available on-line

at <http://www.uppertriad.org>

List of Topical Issues - I

A series of eight volumes of topical issues cover the entire depth and breadth of the Upper Triad Material. These topical issues include all of the previously published articles and commentaries. Some topics are preliminary and will be expanded in subsequent editions. Those topical issues that have been produced are available, without charge. However, the cost of reproducing and mailing these topical issues averages \$ 3 per copy. Contributions to help defray these costs are always appreciated.

Following are descriptions of the topical issues of Volume 1.

1.1 PURPOSE

The Source of Manifestation. Purpose, God, Life, Power, the Nature of Manifestation, and the Process of Manifestation. [40 pages]

1.2 EVOLUTION

The Work of Manifestation. Evolution, Cosmic Law, Evolutionary Impulse, Conveyance, and the Flow. [38 pages]

1.3 COSMOGENESIS

The Process of Manifestation. Cosmogogenesis, the Seven Planes, the Planetary Scheme, Kingdoms and Lifewaves. [28 pages]

1.4 ANTHROPOGENESIS

The Role of Humanity. Anthropogenesis, Root-Races, and Human Evolution. [30 pages]

1.5 THE SEVEN RAYS

The Means of Manifestation. The Seven Rays, Descriptions of the Seven Rays, Keywords for each of the Seven Rays, the Nature of the Seven Rays, Ray Relationships, and the Seven Ray Methods. [52 pages]

1.6 GOVERNMENT

The Cultural Context of the First Ray. Government, Inner Government, Ashrams, Outer Government, and Leadership. [36 pages]

1.7(a) THE BERMUDA PROTOCOL <> Not Yet Available

List of Topical Issues - 2

A series of eight volumes of topical issues cover the entire depth and breadth of the Upper Triad Material. These topical issues include all of the previously published articles and commentaries. Some topics are preliminary and will be expanded in subsequent editions. Those topical issues that have been produced are available, without charge. However, the cost of reproducing and mailing these topical issues averages \$ 3 per copy. Contributions to help defray these costs are always appreciated.

Following are descriptions of the topical issues of Volume 2.

2.1 CONSCIOUSNESS

The Context of the Spiritual Path. Consciousness, Aspects of Consciousness, Types of Consciousness, Polarization, Awareness, Intelligence, and Realization. [50 pages]

2.2 THE SPIRITUAL PATH

The Mechanism of Higher Evolution. The Spiritual Path, Approaching the Path, Probation, Discipleship, and Initiation. [34 pages]

2.3 THE SPIRITUAL GROUP

Spiritual Relationship. The Spiritual Group, Brotherhood, Community, and the Teacher. [36 pages]

2.4 THE SPIRITUAL STUDENT

The Middle Ground. The Spiritual Student, Dharma, Commitment, Adherence, and Transformation. [42 pages]

2.5 SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

The Application of Spiritual Principles. Spiritual Practice, Advancement, and Self-Assessment. [38 pages]

2.6 SPIRITUAL WORK

The Dharma of the Path. Spiritual Work, Development, Service, and the Greater Work. [30 pages]

2.7(a) MEDITATION - 1

The Means of Development and Service. Meditation, Applied Meditation, Meditation Cycles, and Meditation Dynamics. [38 pages]

2.7(b) MEDITATION - 2

Meditation Forms and Mantrams. [44 pages]

List of Topical Issues - 3

A series of eight volumes of topical issues cover the entire depth and breadth of the Upper Triad Material. These topical issues include all of the previously published articles and commentaries. Some topics are preliminary and will be expanded in subsequent editions. Those topical issues that have been produced are available, without charge. However, the cost of reproducing and mailing these topical issues averages \$ 3 per copy. Contributions to help defray these costs are always appreciated.

Following are descriptions of the topical issues of Volume 3.

3.1 TRUTH AND REALITY

The Quest for Realization. Truth and Reality, Truth, Aspects of Truth, and Reality. [38 pages]

3.2 MEANING

Prelude to Understanding. Meaning, Language, and Symbolism. [34 pages]

3.3 VALUES

Personal Truth. Values, Value Systems, Importance, Personal Values, and Ethics. [44 pages]

3.4 PHILOSOPHY

The Study of Truth and Reality. Philosophy, Classical Philosophy, and Modern Philosophy. [34 pages]

3.5 METAPHYSICS

Beyond Objective Experience. Metaphysics, the New Age, and New Age Notions. [28 pages]

3.6 THEOSOPHY

The Ancient Wisdom. Selected commentaries from each of the seven volumes that illustrate the theosophical perspective. [58 pages]

3.7(a) THE ENNEADS

54 commentaries on The Enneads of Plotinus. [60 pages]

3.7(b) THE FOURTH WAY

10 commentaries on The Fourth Way of P.D. Ouspensky. [16 pages]

Financial Update

The Upper Triad Association is pleased to announce that thanks to three very extraordinary contributions from one of our long-time subscribers, the entire \$40,000 debt reported previously has been retired. And with the recent changes in our operating practices, we are now beginning to break even each month, financially.

However the work continues to depend financially on large contributions from staff member(s) and relatively small contributions from some of our subscribers, while many of our subscribers do not contribute financially. The resources of our staff are quite limited, and continued financial support from subscribers is needed in order for us to continue to produce and provide our publications.

An Open Letter to Prisoners

Over the course of the past twenty-five years the Upper Triad Group has provided our publications free of charge to over 20,000 people on our various mailing lists, some of whom are incarcerated prisoners.

However, given the financial and staff limitations presently being experienced, we regret that we cannot afford to add more prisoners to our mailing list at this time. We have over the past few months removed many prisoners' names from our subscription list, but we hope to be able to continue providing our materials free of charge to those who remain on the subscription list and who continue to renew their subscriptions each year. We urge you to share our publications, wherever practicable, with others who are interested, rather than urging them to seek their own subscriptions.

Some of the prisoners on our subscription list are able to send modest contributions. Others are able to send unused U.S. postage stamps. All of these contributions and stamps are very much appreciated and help to make it possible for us to continue these efforts.



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;">Humility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 691</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 3</p> <p>Honesty Harmlessness</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Reality</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 692</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 3</p> <p>Truth Behavior</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Principles</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 693</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 3</p> <p>Ethics Morals</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Thinking</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 694</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 3</p> <p>Feeling Speaking</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Communion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 695</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 3</p> <p>Harmony Peace</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Heart</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>No. 696</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 3</p> <p>Gentleness Kindness</p>

Mantrams - III

The Mantram of Unification

The sons of men are one and I am one with them.

I seek to love, not hate.

I seek to serve, and not exact due service.

I seek to heal, not hurt.

Let pain bring due reward of Light and Love.

Let the soul control the outer form, and life, and all events.

And bring to Light the Love

That underlies the happenings of the time.

Let vision come and insight.

Let the future stand revealed.

Let inner union demonstrate, and outer cleavages be gone.

Let love prevail. Let all men love.

Mantram of the New Group of World Servers

May the Power of the one Life pour through the group of all true servers.

May the Love of the one Soul characterize the lives of all who seek
to aid the Great Ones.

May I fulfill my part in the one Work, through self-forgetfulness,
harmlessness, and right speech.

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

Beginning with the May, 1999 issue, the Upper Triad Journal will be published monthly on the Upper Triad Website. New articles and commentaries will be placed in the various topical issues, and as the topical issues are revised and reprinted they will be mailed to registered subscribers, instead of the bi-monthly issues. Contributions are always appreciated to help defray the cost of printing and mailing the various topical issues. The approximate cost of printing and mailing the various topical issues, for domestic subscribers, is \$ 3 for each issue.

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.

Subscribers are requested to voluntarily renew their subscriptions by filling out and returning the form (below) at least once per year. Those who have not yet subscribed are invited to do so, without charge, by filling out and returning the form below.

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.

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.

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

Readers are welcome to submit comments, questions, referrals, renewals, requests, etc. via electronic mail to the following internet address ---

bels@uppertriad.org

Free Subscription (Response Form)

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