



THE UPPER TRIAD

SET NUMBER 8

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THE UPPER TRIAD

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SOME BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

1. The Unity of All Life. That there exists one God, both immanent and transcendent, within which are differentiated all lives and all forms.
2. The Purpose of Life. That the purpose of life is the evolution of consciousness through experience and expression. That all life is conditioned by purpose within a grand scheme of progressive cyclic evolution.
3. Reincarnation and Karma. That human evolution proceeds through many progressive incarnations according to a cosmic law of periodicity, ever onward and upward. That life is conditioned by the Great Teacher, the Law of Karma, which yields learning experiences and encourages evolution as a consequence of free will, through every thought, feeling, and action.
4. The Nature of Truth. That 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. That there are many paths to God, embracing all religions and spiritual philosophy. That truth is relative and can be perceived in many ways and on many levels, according to consciousness.
5. The Problem of Life. That the real problem of life in the lower worlds is the elimination of glamour and illusion. That 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. Personality and Soul. That the true individuality is the soul which inhabits the personality. That the personality is composed of three interrelated instruments: the physical body, the emotional or astral body, and the lower mind. That the soul is the medium of unity and the essence of the divinity within.
7. The Spiritual Path. That the spiritual path in its many aspects embraces the higher stages of human evolution, as the human soul takes its stand and commits itself to conscious and selfless development. That this process encompasses the development of the inner, latent spirituality and the application of one's faculties in service to God and to humanity.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 141 - PURUSHOTTAMA YOGA

The fifteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita is entitled Purushottama Yoga, the yoga of the supreme self, the tree of life, consciousness of the supreme, devotion to the supreme spirit, the attainment of the supreme. Therein Krishna (the Logos) discusses the eternal fig-tree, the reincarnating self, the eye of wisdom, the immanence of God, and the attainment of the transcendent (supreme self). The common thread is the spiritual path and its encouragement toward supreme realization (perfection)(completion).

The eternal fig-tree is the tree of life, the entire (transient) universe, which symbolizes the (almost) endless cycle of birth and death. The tree finds its origin in Brahman, but becomes more and more entangled in the material world. So do souls become involved (through the instrument of personality) in the objective world and temporarily enslaved by the gunas which nourish the tree of life. The cycle (circuit) can be ended, as perfection is achieved and the place is reached from which there is no return. The trimming of the tree suggests the reformation of human character, leading finally to constructive (harmonious) detachment. As the roots and branches of mundane existence are cut free, phenomena vanish in the ascendent light and vision of reality.

Without worldly delusion, that ascension becomes possible. But the soul (as a projection of divine life) reflects itself into the world of matter and is naturally absorbed by that lower realm as it becomes equipped (through its instrument, the personality) with senses and mind. As purpose is fulfilled in the lower worlds, the soul evolves beyond the divine maya (illusion) that hides the timeless peace of reality. The soul is never separated from the greater (common) life, but its reflection appears as a separation in the objective realm. The one life lives through the many forms, but the individual lives are ever one in that higher reality. As the individual consciousness returns to the soul levels and beyond, that individuality is not lost; it merely finds the reality of itself, as an expression within a sea of higher consciousness.

The participation in the greater life is directly dependent on the control of the senses (the lower life). Those who are deluded by the senses and personal interests (desires) cannot see the reality of the world (inwardly or outwardly). But those who are free from delusion become aware of the self and of reality; the eye of wisdom brings understanding (of pertinent matters) and inner vision. One cannot find or develop the wisdom-eye (of divine immanence) without first reforming and refining the ordinary human nature. The words and perspectives may differ, but the message of the scriptures is ever the same: an encouragement onward and upward for every human being regardless of the stage or particular nature of existence. The path implies continual reformation and progression until the inner life is revealed in all of its (impersonal) glory and the cycle of rebirth is no longer needed.

Finally, the immanence and transcendence of the Godhead are clarified (through the participation of the individual consciousness within the life divine). The immanence of the Logos persists through the various transformations of energy (life). The four kinds of food refer (on one level) to the four elements: earth, fire, air, and water; each of which is an expression of the divine life. Though matter, form, and even lower (human) consciousness is perishable (transient)(mortal), higher consciousness (the soul) belongs to the imperishable (eternal)(relatively immortal). But the transcendent (supreme self)(monad)(purushottama) is beyond even the imperishable. And it is to that transcendent reality that the evolutionary path ultimately proceeds.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 142 - POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE

The concept of contrast involving positive and negative elements (or terminology) is frequently encountered by the philosophical student. It is often important to be able to distinguish the meanings of each, drawn from context, since positive and negative can refer to things in several different ways, with numerous variations or implications. These terms may refer to good and evil, to activity and passivity, or even to something more or less arbitrary.

In the sense (illusion)(appearance) of good and evil, positive can refer to something that is beneficial, constructive, or appropriate; while negative can refer to something that is detrimental, destructive, or inappropriate. In a related sense, positive and negative can refer, respectively, to that which is superior and inferior, ordinate and subordinate, higher and lower, definite and indefinite, qualified and unqualified (a paradox), conditional and unconditional (another paradox), real and unreal, objective and subjective, or independent and dependent. Or they may refer to an action and reaction (response), a presence and absence, or an affirmation (assertion) and denial. And yet, in each of these pairs-of-opposites there is not necessarily any sense of good or evil. So one must be careful in using these terms, to avoid the unintended implication of positive with good and negative with bad.

In another sense, there is (similarly) not necessarily any correlation of positive with good. In this sense, positive and negative refer respectively to that which is active and passive, objective and subjective, or masculine and feminine. Here, masculine and feminine refer to polarity, a universal concept that goes far beyond the apparent human sexual distinctions. That which is active by nature is called positive or masculine, while that which is passive by nature is called negative or feminine. The human lifewave (of souls) is masculine, while the angelic lifewave is negative or feminine. A soul expressing itself temporarily through a male or female physical body may have an emotional nature which is positive (masculine) in some respects and negative (feminine) in other respects.

So polarity is not necessarily fixed or absolute. Positive and negative, active and passive; these terms usually have meaning only in a relative sense. A plane of consciousness may be positive with respect to certain lifewaves or subordinate levels of consciousness, while being negative with respect to other lifewaves or to superior levels of consciousness. Furthermore, polarity in the sense of positive and negative is generally not discrete. There is normally a wide (continuous) range of intermediate values (degrees) between the extremes. Not all things are either black or white (rigid contrast); many shades of gray may exist. So much depends on context and perspective. Many of the various pairs-of-opposites are actually rather arbitrary. That which is white is defined as the composite presence of light, but it may equally as well be defined as the absence of darkness. Even the so-called good and evil are not without some arbitrary implications.

Most everything involves some sort of moderation between the extremes. The point or region of balance is often a matter of constructive neutrality (freedom) while each extreme remains relatively distracting. In this sense (too) there can be considerable variation in the point of balance (the paradox of rightness) from one individual to another, or from one context (perspective) to another. But the vagueness of diversity and contrast is resolved and simplified in the resolution of the positive and negative elements of each of the pairs-of-opposites. Greater unity (synthesis)(harmony) ultimately replaces (in consciousness)(and in being) the lesser (temporary) realm of paradox and duality.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 143 - IDENTIFICATION

Identification means the orientation of consciousness in regard to some inner or outer object, value, or reality. The orientation or association (at some depth) may be superconscious, conscious, or subconscious (or some combination). In fact, many such (various) associations may exist simultaneously. In the external sense, the identification might be with some particular impression, value, or principle (or some set), or it may be with some individual, family, racial, cultural, or national object. In the internal sense, the identification might be with some aspect of the individuality or its instruments, or even (further)(in a contemplative way) with the inner reality of an apparently external or objective existence (such as humanity).

Most forms of external or internal identification come about unconsciously through the conditioning effects of life in the outer (objective) world, such as the influence of society, culture, and family which is sustained by the external glamour and illusion. The values that are unconsciously identified with (and accepted) must ultimately become conscious and progressive. The path of freedom requires the individual to attain self-knowledge, and with that self-knowledge the spiritual student can begin to consciously reprogram the lower consciousness. Thus, as the individual (and analogously, the group) grows, so should the values upon which the objective life is clarified be expanded and refined, progressively and without attachment, with increasing self-control.

Identification does not necessarily imply attachment. As the quality of that which is identified with increases, and as the quality of the process is improved, there is less and less attachment. The identification of the evolving individual with a family, racial, cultural, or national unit gives way eventually to an identification with humanity, life itself, and ultimately to that which is cosmic or universal. And yet, the universal identification is of greater reality (co-existence) and lesser attachment than anything of a more personal nature. Personal (external) identification binds. Impersonal (more universal) identification liberates.

The process of internal identification parallels that for external values. The identification of the waking-consciousness with the physical body gives way to identification with the emotions (feelings) and the mind (and its thought-forms). Identification with the personality is eventually replaced by the identification of (with) the soul. In each successive transition, a crisis and transformation of consciousness is implied. Inner identification carries with it a relative reality (unification)(experience)(inseparability) beyond the association of thought with objective; for inner identification is a realization on some level, conscious or unconscious (from the standpoint of the waking-consciousness) as the case may be. The very act of identification is a lifting up (sending forth) to that plane (or object) of consciousness.

Wisdom is identification with eternal being (reality), whereas ignorance is identification with phenomenal appearance (illusion). The act of identification carries with it considerable potency for change and improvement. To identify with eternal being is to send forth (inwardly) one's life and consciousness toward that wisdom. To identify with phenomenal appearance is to sustain the enchantment of lower existence. The power of positive thinking and projection is allied with that of identification. Identification is essentially and inherently creative and evocative. If the best of spiritual values and qualities are identified with, then the group-identification can be creatively and progressively improved.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 144 - FREQUENCY

Frequency is intimately involved with time and space, and yet, within itself, frequency is beyond any realm of time and space. Frequency is defined as the number of cycles or repetitions (of some phenomenon or activity) in a unit interval of time. By normalizing time (integrating over the time variable), the phenomenon is transformed into the frequency domain. In that domain can be found a number of keys to the various mysteries of manifestation, for manifestation is a periodic (recurring)(cyclic) function.

One of those keys has to do with the variation in frequency of the progressive spiral of evolution. In the frequency domain is found the natural tone of the Logos and the various permutations of the creative Sacred Word. Each of the variations holds a unique and creative aspect of manifestation. As creative manifestation proceeds, the frequency of cyclic unfoldment varies according to those (musical) potencies. As the frequency changes, so does the nature of objective experience (in the space-time reference frame) change. It would be misleading to assume the constancy of the time-interval in classical (historical) (non-relativistic) experience. The objective experience (time-wise) changes gradually throughout history.

Another key provides some insight into the relationship of the soul to its personality via meditation, since the microcosm reflects on its own level the natural experience of the macrocosm. On human levels, the (frequency of the) rhythm of the soul changes as the individual continues the pilgrimage (along the path). The soul is itself a creative word, related to the natural unfoldment of the human lifewave. And as a creative word, that soul has a natural rhythm (and frequency) through which it subjectively interacts (communicates) with its instrument (primarily the mind and the heart of the personality). Meditation is therefore much more meaningful if it coincides (in some significant way) with the natural tempo of the soul. Infrequent or occasional meditation is generally ineffective as far as the soul is concerned, for it lacks the continuity necessary for substantial progress. Too frequent meditation likewise becomes ineffective since the natural response time is violated and is therefore confused. A meditation frequency of once per day (minimum) to several times per day (maximum) is usually quite appropriate for any spiritual student, but the specific timing is mostly a matter of the individual rhythm.

Throughout manifestation are additional clues and hints concerning the natural order and rhythm of the universe which can be directly related in a helpful manner to human existence. The natural frequencies of the solar and lunar cycles, for example, determine the (effective) meditation rhythm or pattern for group endeavour. There are cycles within cycles, with harmonics and overtones of significance; each of which can reveal a natural frequency. In the atomic and molecular realms are found natural frequencies that can provide information concerning the various orders (and structure) of manifestation; and each may have its analogy for human experience.

The unit (dimension) of frequency is inverse time. Inverse times are the common threads of every rotation, revolution, and progression throughout all of nature. For every modulation (communication) and pulsation (evolution), regardless of level, there exists (in the frequency domain) a common thread through which all things are bound (conditioned)(qualified)(sustained), the music of the spheres. In the frequency domain is found also the relationship between objective time and subjective time, and the ease of transition from the world of limitation (time and space).

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 145 - ABSORPTION

In a practical, spiritual context, absorption refers to the entire occupation of the conscious mind, the process of being absorbed. In the practical mental life of the spiritual student there are two processes of absorption which are of special concern: absorption in the mundane world and absorption in the world of the soul.

Absorption in the mundane world is one of the most peculiar problems for the spiritual student. The vast majority of intelligent human beings are completely absorbed in the mundane world. And even the vast majority of spiritual students are absorbed in mundane affairs more often than not. It is through such absorption that much of the basic human experience is attained; thus it is both natural and necessary. But for the spiritual student (as well as the intelligent, but thinking human being), progress requires that the consciousness be lifted out from mundane preoccupation. Gradually, objective experience is placed into a higher perspective which requires a relative detachment from lesser forces. Personal values are gradually refined and improved, and the mental life begins to take precedence over the mundane or worldly life.

The transition between mundane preoccupation (absorption) and mental polarization is natural and ultimately inevitable. But during that (usually very lengthy) transition period the waking-consciousness will naturally oscillate back and forth between being absorbed and not being absorbed. There are many factors which tend to keep the waking-consciousness absorbed. Personal energies and interests are paramount in sustaining absorption. Glamour (mundane experience) in its many forms is perhaps the most serious of personal (individual and group) energies. The great planetary momentum of sustained glamour makes the task of intelligent withdrawal from the mundane consciousness a most difficult one. To be absorbed by glamour is easily the path of least resistance. Spiritual inertia is a most formidable adversary.

But, there are a few factors which encourage the upliftment of the personal life into the realm of (impersonal) mental polarization (and the sustained alignment of soul and personality). The soul itself is the most potent factor, for it gradually draws the mind (and the waking-consciousness) away from mundane preoccupation, according to the rhythmic (subjective) outpourings of the soul. The conscious mind can deliberately withdraw from the mundane habits. New mental habits can be programmed to trigger withdrawal upon entering the absorbed state. The problem of absorption is complicated by the fact that the mundane world is usually entered unconsciously (by circumstance, habit, and tendentiousness). It is further complicated by the prime characteristic of absorption: the inability of the conscious mind to recognize the absorbed state while being absorbed. Therefore it is helpful to achieve conscious and subconscious mental discipline, so that self-programming becomes an effective means of avoiding absorption. It is further helpful to dwell upon impersonal, abstract, and spiritual energies; to achieve soul consciousness and to live in the lower (objective) world from the higher standpoint.

The avoidance of mundane absorption faces another stern test in the need for the spiritual student to consciously live and work (serve) in a relatively mundane environment, to identify with humanity without being absorbed by the glamour and illusion of everyday human experience. It is a most difficult assignment, living in both worlds so that the energy of the higher may be made manifest in the lower; but with dedication and persistence, and with the guidance of the inner life, it becomes possible and practical, and most effective.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 146 - INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

Individual freedom is a relative state, limited by capability (potential), natural law (physical and superphysical), and the freedom of others. The concept of individual freedom is an interesting one for the spiritual student, for it has a bearing upon the personal (individual) life as well as the relationships of the individual with others. What appears to be individual freedom is actually an internal phenomenon (from the standpoint of humanity), but it can be considered from the vantage point or focus of the individual.

The exercise of freedom is one of the more sacred (and well-earned) of opportunities. Relatively unevolved individuals flow with the inherent and instinctual current of the personality, as that personality is exposed to the internal and external forces of heredity and environment. Such a flowing is relatively devoid of individual freedom, or at least lacking the exercise of freedom (as decisions are made unconsciously). As the individual evolves, the intelligence emerges (withdraws) somewhat from the surrounding sea of external forces, and the exercise of freedom is begun (on purely personality levels) (as decisions are made more or less consciously). Ultimately, the individual must face the crisis of decision between the (apparent) values of the individual and the values of the group. That crisis (transition) (interaction of values) continues until the individual becomes deeply committed in consciousness to the evolutionary path. The higher (impersonal) values take precedence over the lower (personal) values and the exercise of freedom gradually becomes a matter of living in harmony with a far higher current, that of the path itself. Individual freedom then means the freedom of acceptance and the freedom of creatively (and responsibly) applying the higher energies (subject to the guidelines of natural law). Decisions are then made in conscious response to higher impression.

On a more practical level, the individual is free to choose the particular path or direction in life (subject as always to karma) and free to choose the values of life. The right to choose (the right to self-determination) is an important one. Not only must the spiritual student exercise his freedom, but the student must take care to allow others to do so also. Values cannot really be impressed upon others; values must be self-realized. Individual freedom (sphere of influence) (rights) should extend only so far as the rights of others are not compromised. The principal means of constructive influence (without interference) is by encouragement and example. The energy value of encouragement (even on purely mental levels) is considerable. Constructive energy (values) can be made available, so that the individual can choose the response (if any), but the energy should not be forced.

The principle of non-interference (in the lives of others) is deeply rooted in the purpose of the differentiation of human lives. That purpose implies creativity and the development of new qualities and characteristics (through diversity and the freedom of expression). Each individual contributes experience and expression to the greater life. Creative (active) consciousness (as distinguished from passive consciousness) cannot be impressed or forced. It must be cultivated through (relative) freedom and tension. Though natural law provides boundaries (and encouragement), the potentialities to be realized would be of an altogether different variety (character) if values (decisions) (paths) were forced explicitly. Forced adherence (for the human evolution) is temporary at best; unless the higher values are accepted (realized) in consciousness (and interpreted and experienced creatively), the individual contributes little to the greater life. The lessons of individual freedom are subtle and many.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 147 - DAIVASURA SAMPAD VIBHAGA YOGA

The sixteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita is entitled Daivasura Sampad Vibhaga Yoga, the yoga of the division (distinction) between the good and evil natures, between heaven and hell. Discussed are the cardinal virtues and the deadly sins, the effects and consequences of the two paths, the triple gate of hell, and liberation from the path of bondage.

Among the cardinal virtues (divine traits) which lead toward God and liberation (deliverance) are: fearlessness, purity, steadfastness in wisdom, generosity (unselfishness), self-control (as to the senses)(self-harmony), austerity, straightforwardness, sacrifice, harmlessness, serenity (truthfulness), compassion, gentleness, modesty (humility), and freedom from pride. Among the deadly sins are ostentation, arrogance, self-conceit, anger, harshness, and ignorance. The cultivation of the cardinal virtues is encouraged by karma (natural law); the deadly sins are discouraged by karma. By living in harmony with natural law, the spiritual student progresses in consciousness. Those who live in direct obstruction to the law bring upon themselves the difficult and painful lessons (encouragement) necessary for ultimate progress.

Heaven and hell are considered both as states of mind and as destinies in consciousness. As a state of mind, heaven is living in harmony with self (and therefore with every other life)(God). As a disposition (and state of consciousness), hell is living in conflict with self (in opposition to natural law). As a destiny, heaven (expanded consciousness)(completion)(freedom) is the consequence of the right-hand (spiritual) path. Similarly, hell (self-destruction) is the consequence of the left-hand path (darkness)(bondage). Progressive reincarnation is a manifestation of the law of evolution; all lives (with or without form) must evolve along a progressive spiral. Even those who live in the bondage of material or phenomenal existence are forever urged onward and upward. But for those very, very few who become absolutely obsessed by selfish endeavors, the path of darkness brings about self-destruction. The (pattern of the) personality is destroyed, and the soul must begin the evolutionary cycle anew with a subsequent lifewave. The law of karma (evolutionary consequence) cannot be compromised. There can be no transmigration (the passage of life into a lower kingdom), for that would be contrary to law. The forms may disintegrate and a few lives may be withdrawn from the present cycle, but only that the life might be free to await a new dawning.

The triple gate of hell refers to three serious distractions (the three doors of darkness) which are especially in conflict with progress: lust (desire), anger (wrath)(hatred), and greed. These tendencies are easily acquired through selfishness and self-centeredness, but are not easily lost. The karma of such self-indulgence must necessarily be serious (the farther one wanders from the evolutionary path, the more severe are the consequences). But even those who are bound by the worst of ways may reform themselves, as the urging of evolutionary intent finally enters the (unconscious) mind. The path of liberation for them is the path of liberation for humanity. As the consciousness of the group evolves, so are the members of the group drawn onward and upward. Thus it is important for the spiritual student to work primarily with the consciousness of humanity (rather than with isolated individuals). The momentum of the lifewave is considerable, and (for the most part) sufficient to carry with it even those souls which are chained to the earth (through desire). May spiritual impulse increase, that group endeavors might achieve the needed maturity, that all of humanity might contribute consciously to the greater life.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 148 - THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

One of the most important (spiritually meaningful) of Buddhist disciplines is the living of the Noble Eightfold Path. The object of the eightfold path (as a system) is to provide a framework or focus for right spiritual living (and all that that implies). The noble path consists of eight interdependent categories or aspects of proper mental and physical practice: right belief, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right exertion, right mindfulness, and right concentration. This contribution of the Buddha Dharma is quite applicable within the lives of serious students of all religious and spiritual philosophies.

Right belief (as to karma) is the holding of right attitude, being at all times free from prejudice, bias, glamour, illusion, superstition, doubt, fear, and animosity; the holding of right understanding, right view, broadmindedness; the holding of right knowledge about the path that leads to the cessation of ill. Right belief also implies freedom from opinion. Right thought implies the living of the highest standard of conduct which the mind can conceive; living the truth that is known or realized; right aspiration towards renunciation, benevolence, and kindness. The link between right thought and right conduct is not a casual one; the harmony (lack of conflict) between belief and practice is most important. The spiritual student is actually obligated (by karma) to put into practice the teachings that are understood and accepted.

Right speech means the control of speech so that it is always true, simple, gentle, and entirely honest; the abstention from idle talk. Right speech is a significant key to living in the lower worlds without being absorbed by mundane matters. The spiritual student needs to develop sufficient poise that speech occurs not for the sake of speech, but only where necessary, useful, and constructive. Idle talk contributes greatly to mundane absorption, while wisdom in speech is essentially creative. Right action means right conduct, abstaining from the taking of life and from taking that which is not given; the development of honest, just, and enlightened relationships with other living beings; to do that which is right to do.

Right means of livelihood is closely related to right conduct. It is the practice of harmlessness, living without hurting or causing sorrow (physically, emotionally, and mentally)(is it possible to cause sorrow?). Right means of livelihood has considerable karmic significance; the spiritual student should be aware of the consequences of livelihood, especially as karma is worked out and a life of service is begun. Right exertion is right effort, perseverance in noble action; the overcoming of all of the illusional life (and glamour); determination and the building of right spiritual momentum, based upon self-control and the wise application of resources. The spiritual student must be willing to work hard (without attachment to the work), if the goal for humanity is to be attained (as the student loses and finds himself).

Right mindfulness is right thinking, the directing of the mind toward the understanding of the supreme wisdom (and the nature and needs of the lifewave); right remembrance and self-discipline; remaining ardent, self-possessed (without distraction) and mindful. Right concentration leads to right meditation (the practice of the inner experience) and right contemplation; the focus of the mind upon appropriate matters, the joy and ease of solitude (higher union), and the cultivation of the deepest equanimity. Right meditation is the spiritual exercise which ties all of the eight categories together, as a means of reinforcement of intent, and as a means of allowing the higher energies to flow.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 149 - I AM THAT I AM

One of the most famous and more potent of esoteric formulae is an ancient biblical mantram for self-identification. In the Old Testament (Exodus 3:14) are found the words 'I am That I am.' This formula is actually a triple (progressive) mantram; each of the three aspects (relating to the personality, the soul, and the monad, respectively) can be used (depending on consciousness and understanding) to achieve integration, identification, or alignment on some level.

The first (basic) mantram ('I am') can be sounded in consciousness (with a suitable focus and realization and projection) to fully integrate and unify the prepared (purified and disciplined) personality. The object is to project the singular and coherent focus of the waking-consciousness upon the personality. Until the personality is properly integrated, the energy and forces of the personality are scattered throughout many (separated) centers of consciousness. Properly projected, the 'I am' dominates the many centers, brings them into cooperative alignment with each other, and integrates the entire personality, by stages, until there is but a single unified and responsive mechanism. The integrated personality is thus a disciplined and easily controllable instrument for the soul to utilize more effectively. For many spiritual students the projection of the 'I am' may require many years of sustained and complemented effort in order to achieve the necessary degree (quality)(completeness) of integration. For others it may be a simple matter of using the 'I am' as a form of recapitulation. In either case, the successive mantrams have little significance until the personality is properly integrated (and sustained in the integrated state automatically without directed consciousness).

The first mantram actually identifies the waking-consciousness with the personality from the standpoint or perspective (source of energy) of the soul; thus it leads the waking-consciousness from integration through alignment with the soul, to the soul itself. It is the second mantram ('I am That') which secures that alignment of soul and personality as the personality is dedicated (through the projection of the mantram as it is sounded in consciousness) to its overshadowing and indwelling source of guidance and meaning. But in order to be effective, the mantram must be projected properly (with understanding), and that cannot be without the inner guidance of the light of the soul itself. These first two mantrams are relatively safe, but are recommended (in sequence) only for the spiritual student who is approaching the alignment of the soul and personality, based upon serious spiritual dedication and preparation. The 'I am That' cannot be achieved without considerable spiritual progress (the cultivation of a spiritual personality). Even the most powerful of mantrams contains no shortcut to progress.

The third mantram ('I am That I am') refers to the ultimate union (alignment) of the soul and its monad. The third mantram is not recommended for indiscriminate use (by the conscious mind), even for the serious spiritual student. The monad must sound forth the call, before the soul can adequately respond; thus the sounding of the (full) triple mantram is only really meaningful on soul levels (not on any level of the personality). Each stage of the triple mantram also carries with it considerable group significance. With group identification or in group alignment, the mantram can be sounded in consciousness, for humanity. With the power of projection, the mantram in its several stages can be applied in various ways, both in the individual sense (seeking group identification through the soul) and in the group sense (seeking humanitarian progress).

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 150 - RAY RELATIONSHIPS

A study of the seven rays provides the basic framework for the entire field of the esoteric psychology. The first step toward understanding the seven rays is to understand the universal and synthetic nature of the rays: what they are (as a synthetic whole) and how they relate to life, consciousness, and form. The second step is to study and understand the nature and characteristics of each of the seven rays in manifestation, both in terms of human psychology (through the monad, soul, and personality) and in terms of universals. The third step is to understand the various basic and applied ray relationships and correspondences. It is this third and final step which brings the deeper understanding of the rays, as comprehension dawns as to how each ray (and each relationship) contributes to the entire field of ray phenomena. And it is this third step which brings the student back to the universal and synthetic nature of the rays, as the cycle is renewed.

The seven rays cannot ever really be separated, one from another; they can be differentiated in various ways, and they can be studied, perceived, and related to individually or collectively (or in certain groups), but the rays remain interrelated, and the energy of any ray is modified and qualified by the other six. No ray can be wholly isolated because of the depth of (internal)(basic) relationships between the rays, and because of the fundamental pattern or structure which supports (allows) the manifestation of the rays in the first place. During the early stages of (universal) manifestation, it might appear that one, two, or three of the rays (the major rays of aspect) exist without the lesser (the minor rays of attribute or the rays which follow in sequence during manifestation), but such is not the case, for the higher (early) rays contain the rays to follow (in latent form, not in any dynamic sense). The integrated whole contains within itself the differentiated aspects and attributes; and within each of the differentiated aspects and attributes can be found the basic integral nature of the whole (and consequently the other six aspects and attributes).

The internal (basic) ray relationships include the distinction between higher (major)(primary) rays and lower (minor)(secondary) rays, the differentiation of the rays into the two paths (the occult or head-centered path and the mystical or heart-centered path), and relationships based (apparently) upon symmetry, polarity, and numerological considerations. Through various ways, at least fourteen significant ray sets can be discerned (derived)(along with sixteen interpretations (relationships)). Each set or group of rays can be studied to obtain further insight into the nature of the (ray) members of the set, the special relationships between rays (and the significance for human psychology and manifestation), and the contribution of each ray (and each set) to the synthetic whole.

The internal ray relationships set the stage for the application of esoteric (ray) psychology to the outer and inner worlds. Applied ray relationships are essentially those of correspondence and analogy, both in the general sense and in a particular (specific) sense. Every plane (and sub-plane) of consciousness, every cycle (greater and lesser), and every lifewave (and stream or set of lifewaves) has a direct and indirect correspondence with the rays. Every aspect of life (spirit)(energy), consciousness (quality)(force), and form (appearance) (matter) is qualified, conditioned, or otherwise related to one or another (or all) of the seven rays. With a comprehensive understanding of the rays and their relationships (basic and applied), the panorama of esoteric psychology opens up innumerable (and interrelated) avenues of understanding in all aspects of manifestation (according to consciousness).

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 151 - SELF-KNOWLEDGE

The understanding of the manifested (objective) universe is generally dependent upon the ability to correlate, interpret, and assimilate information gained through observation and experience (through the senses). But that understanding of the outer world is also (somewhat) dependent upon an understanding of human nature, both in the general sense and in the particular (individual) sense. Man tends to understand the world around him in proportion to how well he understands himself. There are many correlations between the inner (human) and outer worlds; many keys to understanding the universe are held within the human form for those who would know themselves in truth.

Self-knowledge begins with self-observation, self-examination, and self-evaluation. The most important ingredients of this process are honesty (humility) and sincerity. The seeker must be open to the truth about himself, and must remain unbiased by preconceived ideas or conclusions. The exercise of retrospection is part of this process, but it should be complemented by serious spiritual exercise (meditation) and the calming of the entire personality nature. By steps the layers of self-glamour and illusion are revealed for what they are, and the deeper truths about the self (and its relationship to every other life) are uncovered. Each action, activity, feeling, thought, and tendency should be examined carefully. Above all, the motives and intentions should be evaluated, for the motives and intentions are the real keys to understanding any action.

The sincere student should realize that he is influenced (to a certain extent) internally and externally. Each source of influence should be examined and the response of the personality to each influence should be assessed. The student should honestly accept responsibility for his own behavior and his response to any situation. As understanding increases, so can the response be conditioned or qualified by will (intention). The student should be able to apply self-knowledge or understanding to the task of self-improvement (the continuing (probationary) effort of purification, preparation, and refinement) as well as to the task of understanding the reality or purpose that underlies all events and appearance in the manifested universe.

Outer knowledge can be tested inwardly for significance if self-knowledge is based in truth (honesty). In accordance with the awareness (acceptance) of the truth about oneself, will be the ability to discern truth from (within) information or knowledge obtained externally. Similarly, knowledge can be obtained internally and tested for significance. The test for apparent significance depends a great deal on the degree and quality of alignment (of soul and personality) and the quality of values which condition the personality. An individual who is personality-centered will normally accept as significant any impressions which reinforce his own (personality-centered) values and interests; this will, of course, reinforce his continued self-glamour. An individual who is reasonably aligned (with the self) and who is honest with himself (and whose values are predominantly spiritual and impersonal) will accept as significant only those impressions which have some basis in truth (reality), rather than appearance.

Self-knowledge is the beginning of self-realization. In humility and with compassion, the self-realized spiritual student understands himself (at some level) (and knows his limitations) and the world around him, with honest detachment. Such a spiritual student is continually aware of his actions, reactions, and interactions with the inner and outer worlds. Balanced nicely between the spiritual self and the outer world, the self-realized student stands as a responsive and willing servant of life (God) and humanity (the lifewave).

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 152 - SPIRITUAL ABSORPTION

Spiritual absorption means the absorption of the conscious mind (the waking-consciousness)(and the entire personality) in the world of the soul, in direct contrast to the phenomenon of mundane absorption. Spiritual absorption requires the direct cooperation and complete alignment of soul and personality. In the spiritually absorbed state, the waking-consciousness may not have any conscious awareness on personality levels (physical, emotional, and concrete mental) or there may be a form of (indirect) perimetric awareness in which the waking-consciousness is aware of internal (personality) conditions or conditions at the perimeter of the aura, but in either case being detached from any conditions in the lower worlds. There may also be a partially absorbed state in which the waking-consciousness has a (self-imposed) limited ability to interact with the lower state of consciousness and the immediate environment.

Among the goals of the spiritual student are the elimination of the susceptibility (tendency) toward mundane absorption, and the cultivation of the ability to enter and withdraw from the spiritually absorbed state at will. The spiritual student needs to be continuously aligned with the soul and should be able to pass between the spiritually absorbed state and a state of intelligent (and fully conscious) interaction with the lower worlds, at will. Serious spiritual meditation and continued personality refinement are the means of achieving that ability. From the spiritually absorbed state, the energies of the soul (and its group) may flow unimpeded, and even more so than while (simply) in a state of alignment; but there can be little conscious control or direction of those energies in the lower worlds. That is as it should be, for the student who can easily achieve the spiritually absorbed state has a personality that is so purified and disciplined that it functions instinctually as a consequence of personality conditioning and training. The properly prepared personality is an effective extension of the soul itself.

There is, however, a phenomenon of the deception (glamour) of spiritual withdrawal. An individual may (without spiritual achievement) attempt to withdraw from the lower worlds, either temporarily or permanently, while still in incarnation. The appearance (deception) of spiritual absorption may be achieved, when actually the individual is simply absorbed on astral or concrete mental (personality) levels. Those who are especially susceptible to the glammers of the spiritual path might do well to guard against such distraction. The purpose of the spiritual student is not to withdraw from the lower life or world, but to so conquer the lower life (personality) that the interaction (expression) of the individuality (the soul) and its personality with the outer (objective) world becomes spiritually meaningful.

Directly or indirectly, the spiritual student has work to do in the lower worlds; otherwise there would be no incarnation. The student (who can) may find the need for occasional or even frequent periods of spiritual absorption throughout the incarnation, but the purpose of such is to assist in the expression of the (higher) spiritual energies in the lower worlds, for regeneration and the elimination (through spiritual strength) of periods of mundane absorption. The need for balance is (almost) paramount, if the spiritual student is to effectively express the needed energies and serve as a meaningful observer in the human world. Through daily spiritual meditation and continued reference to the aligned state of heart and mind, the spiritual student can remain (reasonably) balanced between the world of activity and the world of the overshadowing (in-dwelling) soul.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 153 - SRADDHATRAYA VIBHAGA YOGA

The seventeenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita is entitled Sraddhatraya Vibhaga Yoga, the yoga of the threefold faith. Considered are faith and human nature in relationship to the three gunas; exaggerated asceticism; the three constituents of nature in food, sacrifice, ascetic practice, and in giving; and the application of the sacred words: Om Tat Sat. The underlying theme is the need for purity (sincerity) of motive in all of the activities of life. Motives and faith are related to a person's nature in accordance with sattva (goodness), rajas (passion), or tamas (darkness). In the sattvika disposition (nature), faith (devotion) is to God and to humanity; in the rajasika disposition, faith is to oneself in relationship with others; and in the tamasika disposition, faith is to oneself entirely.

A man is as his faith is; the quality of consciousness (and disposition) is related to that faith. Actions of the past appear as tendencies (inclinations) and vulnerabilities in subsequent incarnations. Thus a person's nature (faith) is determined by previous experience. The (true) spiritual student (having the sattvika disposition) is characterized by constant faithfulness and pure (selfless) motive (discretion), which have been cultivated. Exaggerated asceticism (and any form of exaggerated or false religious or spiritual activity) (such as psychic demonstration or display) is not a spiritual activity. That which is psychic or superphysical is not (usually) necessarily spiritual. Motive and purpose (and quality of consciousness) determine spirituality; phenomenal powers are (generally) no such indication.

The respective disposition is manifested (and therefore revealed) in various ways. In food (knowledge)(understanding)(the taste and values of a person), the sattvika disposition is indicated by values which are relatively pure and (spiritually) meaningful. The rajasika disposition is indicated by values which are distorted somewhat by desire (emotional or selfish interest). In sacrifice (worship)(service), sattva indicates performance according to duty, while rajas indicates performance for the sake of personal reward (such as recognition or self-glorification). In the ascetic practice (austerity)(continence) of the spiritual student, the sattvika nature is revealed as a threefold harmony: the purity (meaningfulness)(harmlessness) of physical activity, the purity of words (in peacefulness and truth), and the purity of mind and heart.

The sattvika nature is also distinguished in the giving of gifts according to dharma (duty)(appropriateness)(without publicity), rather than the giving according to expectation (in either direction). Any activity performed with the intention of karma indicates (some) selfishness and the rajasika temperament. Spiritual practice (or any practice) in any form loses its value (purity) to the extent that rewards are sought. To perform any task according to dharma (to do what needs to be done because it needs to be done) is an indication of sattva (goodness). Right motives become increasingly important as the student progresses along the path. As the (necessary) qualifications of the path become increasingly refined, motives and methods take precedence over actions.

The sacred words 'Om Tat Sat' can be used to qualify intentions and activities. 'Om' (purity) can be used as a dedication (a qualified beginning). 'Tat' (It)(That) is a word of sincerity. 'Sat' (It is)(reality)(goodness) can be used as a consecration (benediction). Together, if used properly and sincerely, these three words can clarify any activity. One of the many objects of the spiritual student is the qualification of all of the life and activity with spiritual purpose.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 154 - SPIRITUAL TELEPATHY

Telepathy is communication from one mind (or soul) to another by means other than the senses. There are three forms or levels of spiritual telepathy: concrete mental, abstract mental, and buddhic (intuitional). Any form of clairvoyance or clairaudience which utilizes astral (sense) impressions is not considered to be telepathic in nature. Telepathic communication is above and beyond the plane of astral phenomena. Effective telepathic communication requires a fully-conscious and well-developed (but well-disciplined) mind. It also requires a highly purified and disciplined emotional (astral) nature.

There are two serious stumbling blocks to (valid) spiritual telepathy; both involve personal energy. The first is the emotional nature which can play heavily upon the mind and distort the mental impressions. The second is the mind itself which must necessarily interpret and translate the mental impressions. The validity of impressions received in the waking-consciousness depends almost entirely on the purity of the mind and the emotions. For this reason (and for other reasons) the serious spiritual student must transcend personal energies. Personal desires and interests serve to compromise the mental and intuitional faculties.

The spiritual student is not encouraged to develop psychically or telepathically. The spiritual student is, however, encouraged to continue to purify the entire personality nature and to engage in appropriate spiritual and humanitarian work. Naturally, and as a consequence of the purified and disciplined personality, the higher (telepathic and intuitional) faculties will be developed, without effort. But the heart and the mind should be in the right place, first. The purpose of spiritual telepathy is to aid in the sharing of spiritual energies (thought-forms)(ideas)(understanding)(realization). Purposeful and helpful spiritual energies can be shared (projected)(transmitted) through focussed meditations. The proper reception and interpretation of (meaningful)(impersonal) telepathic impressions (to aid in understanding) is also a matter of (purified)(disciplined)(responsive) mental quality and the (spiritual) meditative life. Wherever the student is absorbed in the lower worlds (personal energies), there is no real (valid)(conscious)(consistent) telepathic impression or insight.

Concrete mental telepathy is a form of communication between minds (personalities) involving externalized thought-forms. Abstract mental and intuitional (buddhic) telepathy involves communication between souls (in a group context) and internalized thoughts (ideas) which can be translated by the waking-consciousness into (concrete) thought-forms. External (mental) impressions (forms) must pass through the mental aura and are therefore subject to distortion depending on the quality of the mind. Internal (mental) impressions (from or via the soul) are subject to translation and interpretation by the concrete mind. It is quite essential that the mind be disciplined and aligned properly with the soul, if the impressions are to remain valid.

This problem (of reception, translation, and interpretation) is further complicated by the tendency of the lower (concrete) mind to fabricate internal thought-forms and pass them off to the waking-consciousness as higher impressions. This is one of the dangers inherent in personal energies. Wherever there is desire or personal interest, the lower mind is invited to masquerade as the soul (or as the teacher). This form of self-deception is quite subtle and quite serious. If spiritual telepathy is to be a means of understanding and realization and a means of sharing spiritual energies, then the need for clarity (and purity) of mind and emotion cannot be over-emphasized.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 155 - BASIC RAY RELATIONSHIPS

The basic ray relationships have to do with the internal structure and inter-relatedness of the seven rays. In understanding how the various rays relate to each other, the student comes to understand more fully the energy nature of each of the rays, the rules and ways in which that energy nature can be applied, and the application of ray phenomena as the foundation of universal manifestation. The two fundamental divisions of the seven rays are vertical (higher and lower) and horizontal (parallel).

The vertical differentiation of the rays involves the process of manifestation itself, as the three major rays of aspect (the upper division)(1,2,3) are reflected (transformed) into the four minor rays of attribute (the lower division)(4,5,6,7). The major rays are also the rays of inward direction (introspection). The three rays of outward direction (expression)(experience)(5,6,7) also form a set; each set constitutes a ray relationship. The rays of the third aspect (3,4,5,6,7) form the largest significant set (short of totality), which sums to 25 and reduces to 7. The minor rays sum to 22 and reduce to 4, which is significant since the Fourth Ray is the ray of balance (contrast) between the lower and higher elements. This relative distinction of higher and lower sets does not necessarily indicate relative importance. The major rays (1,2,3)(as a group) are reflected into the minor rays in three ways, as shown by the three lower sets: (3,4,5,6,7), (4,5,6,7), and (5,6,7). This particular distinction of ray relationships holds the key (for correspondence) to all generalized vertical relationships (such as the relationship between the soul and its personality).

The horizontal differentiation of the rays involves the manifestation of ray energy (life) through two parallel streams or paths: the set of occult rays (1,3,5,7) and the set of mystical rays (2,4,6). The occult (odd-numbered) rays are particularly head-centered, whereas the mystical (even-numbered) rays are particularly heart-centered. This horizontal distinction must ultimately be superimposed upon the vertical in order to form a basic ray matrix (for the purpose of synthesizing the contributions of each path). Each of the two distinctions (vertical and horizontal) constitute a basic duality. The mystical path reduces to 3 (the largest single-place integer of base 4 (a perfect number (power of 2))), whereas the occult path reduces to 7 (the largest single-place integer of base 8 (likewise a perfect number)). Together, the two paths (the seven rays) reduce to 1 (totality).

Another important relationship involves higher and lower correspondence through an intermediate. The three sets of rays which demonstrate the intermediate relationship are (1,4,7), (2,4,6), and (3,4,5), all of which sum to 12 and reduce to 3. Each is centered on the ray of balance, and each involves a reflection about that point of balance. The central significance of the Fourth Ray should not be overlooked. Each of the these three sets has an associated spread: (1,4,7) is broad; (2,4,6) is moderate; and (3,4,5) is fairly narrow. It is interesting to note that the mystical rays also form the moderate, intermediate set. Another derivative of major relationships involves complements and reflections, by pairs. The special case includes the three complements (1,6), (2,5), and (3,4). The general case includes the three simple reflections (1,7), (2,6), and (3,5). The special case reduces to 7, while the general case reduces to 8. The real significance of the reflections is that each ray and its reflection constitute a single energy (quality) perceived in different ways. Each of the sets (and basic ray relationships) can be studied in order to discern the contribution of each to the evolution of the seven (the One) and all that is contained therein.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 156 - HONESTY

One of the most fundamental of qualities to be cultivated by the spiritual student is honesty. It is not enough merely to meet the orthodox standards of honesty; the spiritual student is (ultimately) expected to achieve the very spirit of honesty, the deepest intention and experience that is the realization of truth (reality) that exists at the core of one's being. Honesty is actually a very simple quality, but the implications for the spiritual student are quite considerable.

Basically (literally), honesty means fairness and straightforwardness of conduct; and adherence to the facts. Honesty is directly related to both integrity and sincerity. Honesty implies a refusal to lie, steal, or deceive in any way. One of the problems associated with honesty (and dishonesty) is the matter of interpretation (perspective) and meaning. Fortunately, as spiritual consciousness is evolved it becomes (increasingly) easier to discern truthfulness. Considerable effort (intention) may be needed for the student to cultivate (and refine) the concept and expression of an honest nature. It may not be so easy to be completely honest in thought, in word (speech)(communication), and in deed (action). To the extent to which it is possible, however, the spiritual student must endeavor to be entirely honest in every way.

One might ask at this point, why honesty is so important. The answer is that the cultivation of an honest nature is very closely related to the realization of truth (God) itself. If the student earnestly seeks truth (the God within)(reality), then the student must become truthful, in every possible way. How can a student expect to realize truth unless he is of a nature quite similar to truth? There are other reasons why honesty should be quite important to the student. The consequences of dishonesty are of a nature to undermine and impede spiritual progress. Dishonesty is related to disharmony, not only between individuals but also between the individual and the various cosmic (spiritual) laws, and between the personality and the (overshadowing)(indwelling) soul. Dishonesty actually creates (and sustains) the disharmony (which might be called illusion) which is a barrier between what is said (thought)(done) and what is true (real)(meant). Honesty, on the other hand, sustains reality and discourages illusion.

There are many forms of dishonesty, some quite obvious, others rather subtle. To say one thing and mean another is a form of dishonesty. To believe something but not to live in accordance with that belief is dishonest. To misrepresent oneself, to pretend, or to wear a face (facade)(appearance or behavior) is to be dishonest (to be in disharmony with reality or oneself). Dishonesty is also possible by omission or implication. Dishonesty (disharmony) is also related to disease. Wherever a discrepancy exists between what is said or done and what should be, there is disharmony. Awareness of such (by the person involved) implies dishonesty; lack of awareness of such implies either self-deception (which is worse than dishonesty) or ignorance (darkness).

It is essential that the spiritual student cultivate truthfulness in all regards; to be as honest as possible in all dealings with others (inwardly and outwardly), and to be entirely honest with oneself. Self-honesty is the very basis or foundation of truthfulness, for in self-honesty there is cultivated an awareness of truthfulness. There is no substitute for the cultivation of humility, honesty, and truthfulness in matters large or small, if the student expects ever to find the true self. It is necessarily a progressive cultivation, for as momentum builds, the student will realize more and more the nature and reality of truth and his relationship to (That) truth.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 157 - TENSION

Tension refers to stress or pressure, whether it is physical, emotional, or mental in nature. Understanding tension in both the orthodox and metaphysical domains can be quite helpful to the spiritual student, for tension is involved in the structure and manifestation of the universe, and tension is involved in every stage of experience and evolution. Wherever force exists, a tension of some sort is present. Wherever there is mass (matter); wherever there is motion; and wherever there is consciousness, there is tension. Every aspect of the form world involves tension. Every atom of matter is a force-field that is held in place through tension. Every interaction between forms or between form and consciousness incorporates tension. Wherever there is an opposition of forces, and wherever there is balance, there is tension. For tension is directly related to energy and interaction (communication).

Without tension, matter could not be held in place; the human form could not exist; and human consciousness could not be focussed at all. Without tension there would be no potential (future). Tension might even be defined as the urge or impulse to progress or release (to achieve potential). Tension is inherent in the laws of karma and evolution. Therefore, tension is directly related to the plan or purpose of life, and the manifestation (fulfillment) of that plan. Wherever there is an objective that is unsatisfied there is a tension (contrast) (conflict) between what is and what should be, between existence and anticipated existence (destiny). That tension is a manifested force that urges progress toward completion. The law (plan) of evolution places continuous pressure (tension) upon humanity, and in various ways upon all who are a part of that life-wave. Similarly, karma places pressure upon every unfulfilled energy, whether it belongs to an individual soul (in perspective) or to the group or lifewave. The pressures of evolution (and karma) are continuous but not necessarily constant; those pressures and tensions are continually changing in magnitude, type, and application, as the dynamic interaction of life (purpose), consciousness, and form progresses.

Tension might also be defined as the accumulation of energy, and it is in this respect that the spiritual student might (especially) well be aware, for everyone is continually receiving and accumulating and transmitting energy. The spiritual student actually invokes and attracts (consciously or otherwise) spiritual energies to be utilized constructively and shared appropriately. If these energies are allowed to accumulate without proper disposition, then the energy tension will necessarily find its release in ways which may not be intended. Disease (disharmony) is almost universally a matter of unresolved and unreleased energies. If the energy is released improperly (or selfishly), then disease (of some sort) may be the consequence. Or if a needed lesson is not learned, then the energy of the lesson may accumulate in the form of tension.

Tension in itself is neither good nor bad. Some forms of tension are absolutely essential to life and progress. Other forms of tension may come and go according to karma (action, the sending forth of energies; and reaction, the tension or consequence of those energies). In every form of tension there is information (lessons)(purpose). The esoteric student may (eventually) be expected to determine the cause of every tension to be faced or experienced, so that appropriate release and resolution can be achieved. Psychological tension must also be resolved appropriately, just as the tension that forms the foundation of existence must ultimately be released (completed). The relatedness of tension is quite profound; may understanding increase.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 158 - MOKSHA SANYASA YOGA

The eighteenth and final chapter of the Bhagavad Gita is entitled Moksha Sanyasa Yoga, the yoga of liberation (freedom) through renunciation. The chapter consists of a comprehensive summary and recapitulation of the preceding seventeen chapters, though in somewhat different terms. Considered is the primary thread of the treatise: renunciation (and self-surrender). Two forms of renunciation are viewed (almost) interchangeably. Sanyasa in its highest (human) form implies the renunciation of (all) personal desires (glamours). Tyaga (in its highest form) implies the abandonment (renunciation) of the fruits of all works. As freedom from mundane absorption is achieved, and as spiritual work is entered (performed)(with proper attitude), then liberation (potency) is attained (almost incidentally).

Renunciation is further clarified by a consideration of the three constituents of nature (with emphasis on the sattvika temperament) in metaphysical doctrine (knowledge), in works, in the agent, in the intellect, in constancy, and in happiness. In the renunciation (transformation) of (lower) knowledge is found the higher (unified) knowledge (truth), that inner and inclusive realization of the continuity of all life. In works the higher (sattvika) disposition is shown wherever work (action) is performed without attachment to the work or to the fruits of the work. It is important for the evolving spiritual student to (begin to) work from duty and without becoming entangled in the work itself. Such entanglement suggests continued bondage and distraction on personal (personality) levels. The work of the disciple is the work of appropriateness, to do what needs to be done, whether it is mundane and necessary or entirely spiritual, whether the work is associated (attracted) by karma or dharma (or both). Renunciation is disentanglement (fulfillment), not withdrawal.

In the agent, the sattvika disposition is a perspective which is also free from attachment, as the spiritual student attains a non-egotistical and stoic temperament (indicating freedom). As God is realized, so is the distinction of (the nature of) the agent clarified. The sattvika disposition contributes the quality of discernment to the intellect. As personality values are renounced (transcended), the wisdom of (realization of) discernment (appropriateness) is achieved. In constancy (consistency)(firmness) the (student having the) sattvika temperament remains ever poised with spiritual fortitude. And in the (quiet) happiness born of self-realization does sattva prove again to be quite superior to the senses, as the pleasures of the lower life lose their hold on the spiritualized student.

One of the keys to (appropriate) renunciation is the acceptance and performance of dharma (which is complementary to the right attitude toward karma). Liberation is not (cannot be) attained by avoiding karma or by declining to accept responsibility. Liberation is attained through the proper fulfillment of karma. In wisdom is this distinction well-known. Work should not be suspended; work should simply be placed in a more (spiritually) meaningful perspective. The performance of duty without attachment is the needed form of renunciation.

Perfection cannot be attained without practice (effort) and the elimination (renunciation) of self-centeredness. It is this mastery of self that is the object of the synthesis of karma yoga, bhakti yoga, and jnana yoga, as set forth in the Bhagavad Gita. Self-surrender is the achievement of selflessness. As the ego (lower self)(personality) is conquered, the will (unity) of the lower self is uplifted and aligned with the (divine) will of the One (soul). Self-surrender is merely completion (ultimate fulfillment).

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 159 - PRIVACY

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

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

As the spiritual student progresses in self-mastery, his own thoughts and feelings become purified and well-disciplined, almost completely contained (coherent)(controlled). Without such discipline (focus), thoughts and feelings are usually scattered indiscriminately and unconsciously. The thoughts and energies of the spiritual student should not be wasted, for with each moment comes an opportunity for useful spiritual work, and the effective application of resources and abilities for the good of humanity. Though the spiritual student may need occasional periods of solitude to place the thoughts (and aura) in order (or for serious and undisturbed contemplation), there is still no real privacy. With purified mind and emotions there is simply no basis for compromise or embarrassment; in truth is born true humility and its commensurate fearlessness and selflessness.

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

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

A COMMENTARY ON THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

No. 160 - APPLIED RAY RELATIONSHIPS

The proper application of esoteric (ray) psychology to the outer and inner worlds can offer (yield) considerable information (insight)(understanding) of life and consciousness (purpose and experience). The applied ray relationships are essentially those of correspondence and analogy, both in the general sense and in the particular (specific) sense. In fact, ray psychology (and the esoteric (theosophical) teachings in general) would be of little significance were it not for the powerful tool of correspondence. The quality and characteristics of any of the seven rays (or any meaningful combination) may be applied to any valid correspondence, to learn (understand) by association.

Every class or set of seven members can be (intuitively, if not rationally) analyzed in terms of the seven rays and their relationships. The seven planes of consciousness are directly associated with the seven ray energies: the physical plane (1,7), the astral or emotional plane (2,6), the mental plane (3,5), etc., depending on relative sequence. For example, the character of the physical plane can clarify the nature of the First Ray (and its reflection, the Seventh Ray), and vice versa. The same is true for the various (seven) elements of the human constitution. Through the (2,4,6) relationship, the human monad is related to the intuition (buddhi) and to the astral body. The upper triad of atma-buddhi-manas is related to the rays (3,4,5) by virtue of correspondence with the seven planes of consciousness; but the upper triad (the soul) is also directly related to the rays (1,2,3) by virtue of having three relative aspects. The soul, as a class, is qualified by the Second Ray (and its reflection, the Sixth Ray), as the soul is the second of three major aspects (the monad, the soul, and the personality).

Similar analysis can be applied to the seven kingdoms in nature (of which the human kingdom is the fourth) and the seven lifewaves which inhabit the seven kingdoms. Superimposed upon (the analysis of) any set of seven elements may be the various cycles (greater and lesser) that manifest in a triple (for the three major rays) or septenary (for the seven rays) fashion. The present incarnation of the Solar Logos is the second of a series of three, and is therefore qualified by the Second Ray. The present Aryan root-race is the fifth in the (present) sequence of seven, and is therefore qualified by the Fifth Ray (which implies some emphasis upon mental evolution since the Fifth Ray also corresponds with the mental plane (and especially with the concrete mental)). And wherever there is qualification by one ray, there is (subtle) qualification by the other rays to which it is especially related (through the basic ray relationships, which vary in relative significance).

Aside from (in addition to) the general ray associations, certain elements may be qualified individually. The soul (as a class) may be governed by the Second Ray in the general sense, but an (apparently) individual soul may be individually qualified by any one or another of the rays (in the particular sense). Particular qualification (and the implied relationships) must then also be taken into consideration. The ray relationships between a person's soul (ray) and personality (ray) might be analyzed, or the relationship between individuals might be considered in terms of ray relationships. It is essential, in dealing with the particular sense, to also consider the degree of development along ray lines. A Second Ray personality may be relatively undeveloped and demonstrate the weaknesses of that ray, or it might be rather well-developed and drawing upon integrated relationships with other rays. There is much to be considered, and much understanding to be gained through applied ray relationships.