

NINE

THE ETHERIC ENVELOPE AND CONSCIOUSNESS DEVELOPMENT

9.1 General About the Development of Consciousness

¹Being impelled by lower consciousness, higher consciousness is activated, is roused from the slumber of potentiality. Being impelled by consciousness activity in higher emotionality and higher mentality, causal consciousness is activated.

²Each atomic kind is the carrier of a unique and characteristic kind of consciousness. Thus for example emotional consciousness is completely different from both physical and mental consciousness. The successively lower molecular kinds within an atomic kind imply successive reductions, restrictions, or limitations of the consciousness of the atomic kind.

³A lower kind of consciousness cannot ascertain or apprehend a higher kind, let alone understand its nature. A higher kind of consciousness both understands a lower kind and can control it.

⁴You cannot understand a higher kind of consciousness until you have started activating it. People can understand causal (47:2,3) and essential (46:5-7) consciousness only after they have started activating those kinds of consciousness. The individual's greater or lesser understanding of them is dependent on his greater or lesser activation of them. He must misunderstand all descriptions of them until he has activated those higher kinds of consciousness.

⁵The consciousness most important to man is self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is an expression of causal consciousness (47:1-3), is possible only in causal consciousness. Mere mental consciousness (47:4-7) does not suffice for self-consciousness. All kinds of consciousness higher than causal are self-consciousness too. A fully developed causal self has permanent self-consciousness, whereas a mental self has only sporadic self-consciousness. Of course, all higher selves – essential selves (46-selves), superessential selves (45-selves), etc. – have permanent self-consciousness and in addition possess a group consciousness that expands with each higher molecular kind in succession so as to embrace more and more individuals.

⁶The four higher solar systemic worlds (43–46) are the cosmic etheric worlds, the energy worlds of the solar system. Permanent self-consciousness is possible in them, because self-consciousness requires a higher energy level in the monads. Self-consciousness is nevertheless possible in causal consciousness, which is explained by the fact that this kind of consciousness is so close to the cosmic etheric energy worlds (43–46) that energy penetrates down from them to the higher three layers of the causal-mental world, that is to say: the causal world. This fact can be illustrated by the simile of a two-storey house in which only the upper storey is heated during winter. In the cold lower storey it is nevertheless possible to perceive warmth close to the ceiling but not further down. Similarly, the causal world but not lower worlds can be sufficiently energized by the four cosmic etheric worlds.

⁷The process of evolution may also be described as a continuous involution of 46, 45, 44, and 43 matter, cosmic etheric matter, into the individual's etheric envelope. From the physical standpoint, this involution enables the individual to take the five initiations and, in the fifth initiation, to become an esoteric master, a 45-self. The crises accompanying the initiations may also be described as conflicts between cosmic etheric matter penetrating and previous matter of the etheric envelope. The rod of initiation administered by the initiator, the hierophant, at initiation is designed to effectuate the fixation of the involved cosmic ethers so that the initiate will be able to retain them in his etheric envelope. Upon the conclusion of the incarnation, this involved etheric matter is not dissolved along with the etheric envelope, but accompanies the monad to be involved anew in the new etheric envelope of his next incarnation.

9.2 *The Automatic Activation of the Centres*

¹The activation of the centres is a slow process that takes place automatically and contemporaneously with mankind's consciousness development during millions of years. The degree of activation of a centre can be objectively ascertained by higher objective consciousness. The most important criteria for the degree of activation are: the rotation of the centre, the number of spokes released, the luminosity and colours of the centre.

²A centre rotates with greater speed round its axis as the consciousness of which the centre is the carrier is activated. The spokes of the centre are released from the hub and begin rotating themselves as the qualities and abilities that correspond to the spokes are acquired.

³The consecutive order of the activation of the centres varies individually according to the department of the individual's causal envelope.

⁴The centres of envelope consciousness are: throat centre for mental consciousness, solar plexus centre for emotional consciousness, and basal centre for physical consciousness. From these facts alone it is clear that the three centres mentioned must be somewhat active (rotate) in all people.

⁵The esoteric experts on envelope centres divide people according to their most activated centres. The solar plexus centre, which absorbs the vibrations of the emotional world, and the sacral centre, which controls sexuality, are particularly active in the average individual of our times. Therefore, esotericians call the average person a solar-sacral individual. In most cases, this term also indicates that the individual is at the stage of civilization.

⁶At the present general stage of mankind's development, the three centres below the diaphragm are active or positive in relation to the four centres above the diaphragm, which are passive or negative. "Positive" means that the centre in question is an impelling and self-active factor, "negative" means that it is receptive and self-passive, must be activated by another centre, a lower one. Consciousness development consists in the higher four centres becoming positive in relation to the lower three, which then become negative, that is: active only as controlled by the higher centres. This consciousness development presupposes in its turn that people's sense of reality has developed so far that they begin to see the necessity of cultivating the qualities that make it possible to activate the higher four centres. This includes the cultivation of higher emotional qualities, the "qualities of the heart", the development of common sense, and the understanding of the necessity of applying the laws of life.

⁷At the stage of barbarism, mainly the lower centres, those below the diaphragm, are working. At the stage of civilization, the throat centre is activated through the energies coming from the sacral centre. At the stage of culture, the heart centre is activated from the solar plexus centre, and at the stage of humanity the frontal centre is activated from the heart centre and the throat centre.

⁸The frontal centre becomes fully activated only in the causal self; and the crown centre, only in the essential self.

⁹Only the man in whom both the heart centre and the frontal centre are fully activated can become a disciple.

¹⁰When a centre is said to be fully activated, this must be understood in a relative sense: a maximum at the stage of development in question. At higher stages and in higher kingdoms, qualities and abilities, also physical (etheric) ones, are added which are not possible at lower stages and in lower kingdoms. The truth of this should be clear from the following facts. The centres of the etheric envelope are composed of physical atoms (49:1). In all physical atoms there are atoms of all the higher kinds (1-48) involved. Atoms of higher kinds can be activated by the monad consciousness, but not above the evolutionary level of the monad: the essential self can activate mental atoms (47:1), but not essential atoms (46:1); such activation being possible only for the superessential self, etc. The superessential self (having self-consciousness in 45:1) has immensely greater resources of consciousness and activity than the

first self, also where physical matter and the etheric envelope are concerned.

¹¹In addition to the crown and frontal centres there are other centres in the brain or attached to it, seven in all. One such centre is the *alta major* centre situated at the base of the skull.

¹²Most people live in their emotional consciousness, and they are controlled by the energies coming from the solar plexus centre. If man is to be able to live in mental consciousness, it is necessary that the energies from his solar plexus centre are transferred to his heart centre. By learning gradually how to transfer his attention from emotionality to mentality he also acquires the ability of independence of “how it feels”, independence of feelings, and so gains mastery of them. As the individual strives for unity with all living creatures and to the extent that he becomes alive to the “welfare of all”, not just the welfare of his own little egoistic self, energies from the solar plexus centre more and more often reach up to the heart centre.

¹³Those etheric energies of the etheric envelope which vitalize the sacral centre can be directed to the throat centre. This is done through intensive “creative activity”, a complete absorption in literary, artistic, etc., work. All “creative work” is done through energies in the throat centre, which esoterically is called the “creative centre”. Anyone who “lives to create” absorbs energies from the sacral centre, so that no energies remain for sexual activity. This is what is meant by “sublimation”.

¹⁴The heart centre is vitalized through service, and the frontal and crown centres are vitalized through unconditional application of the laws of life.

9.3 Departmental Energies in the Centres

¹Like all the other envelopes, the entire etheric envelope is traversed by vibrations from all the seven departments, this always being of some effect on everything in the envelope. The extent to which energies affect centres in a particular manner is due to the stage of development, the activity of the centres, and the departments to which they belong.

²All the seven departmental energies pour through all the consciousness centres of the envelopes, although with different effects, of course. If this were not the case, then individuals who are at lower stages could not be influenced by the energies of the first four departments, since their centres above the diaphragm are largely inactive and only their throat centre displays some activity.

³On the higher levels of the stage of civilization, where most “intellectuals” and so the leading circles of mankind are at present, the most common relations between departments and centres in the etheric envelope are the following: crown centre – first dept., frontal centre – fourth dept., throat centre – third dept., heart centre – second dept., solar plexus centre – sixth dept., sacral centre – fifth dept., basal centre – seventh dept. The departments of the centres are not constant in the individual, however, but usually change at each incarnation, except in the case of the crown, heart, and solar plexus centres. Those centres remain immutably of the first, the second, and the sixth department, respectively.

⁴Depending on the individual’s stage of development and the departments of his envelopes, the frontal centre can be vitalized by the third, fourth, fifth, or seventh department; the throat centre, by the third or fifth; the sacral centre, by the third, fifth, or seventh; and the basal centre, by the fourth or seventh department.

⁵On lower levels of development, the energies of the third department are best assimilated in the sacral centre; on the higher levels of the stage of civilization, best in the throat centre.

⁶In raja yogis, for instance, the frontal centre is of the fifth; the throat centre, of the third; the sacral centre, of the seventh; and the basal centre, of the fourth department.

⁷In the account of possible combinations of departmental energies in the respective centres, the departmental energies are indicated by numbers 1–7 in the order corresponding to the placement of the centres above down (numbers in extra bold type indicate the crown, heart, and solar plexus centres, which, as said, are immutably of the first, second, and sixth depart-

ments): 1352674, 1432657, 1452637, 1532674, 1732654, and 1752634.

⁸The course of development: 1) 1452637, 1752634; 2) 1432657, 1732654; 3) 1532674; 4) 1352674.

9.4 *The Methodical Activation of the Centres*

¹Normally, centres develop unconsciously in the course of evolution, thanks to refinement of the envelopes (organism, etheric envelope, and emotional envelope), thanks to the acquisition of “noble” qualities. In contrast, every attempt at vitalization of centres in an artificial manner is doomed to failure. Esoteric teachers warn, with the strongest emphasis possible, against directing attention to centres (“playing with fire”). Not even disciples are allowed to do so until they are approaching the end of the stage of discipleship, which demonstrates how much there is to be observed by them before that.

²As a disciple of the planetary hierarchy, the individual receives the necessary instructions on correct observation and experience of the energies in the different centres. These instructions are individual, and the disciple is supervised during the whole process. Such methods as are used in occult sects (yoga schools included) do not result in a contact with the centres of the causal envelope, and consequently they are abortive.

³In occult sects they teach methods that are positively misleading. They start with psychological exercises designed to produce sensations in certain centres of the etheric envelope and study the effects. Then they try to establish contact with the corresponding centres of the emotional envelope, sometimes even with those of the mental envelope. The only right method is contacting the causal consciousness, allowing its energies to influence the centres of the envelopes. The energies to be used are not those of the matter aspect but those of the consciousness aspect. They might appear to be the same kind of energies, but they work differently due to which aspect is the object of attention. There is a great difference between energies working mechanically and those working finally, or for a purpose.

⁴The “science of breath” is subordinate to the “science of the centres”. Breathing exercises are risky, because they may induce energies to affect the wrong centres, resulting in disease. Moreover, in addition to physiological effects they also have psychological effects of which the individual is not aware. The esoterician is emphatically warned not to do breathing exercises without the “careful supervision of a competent teacher”, and also knows what is meant by competent in this case.

⁵The individual activates his centres by acquiring qualities and abilities. Yogis make the mistake of trying to vitalize centres before they are able to rightly use the pertaining energies. The only right development of centres is the indirect and automatic one: the direct endeavour to develop consciousness by acquiring qualities and abilities entails indirectly and automatically the activation of the corresponding centres and petals. The same is largely true of everything in the consciousness aspect like in all normal processes of life. External interference disturbs processes that have once been automatized.

⁶The methodical vitalization of a higher centre is effected through transference of energies of a lower centres into the higher one. The centres of the etheric envelope are in contact with the glandular system of the organism, and the glands in their turn are connected with their particular organs. Vitalization is effected automatically when the organism, the etheric envelope, and the emotional envelope function expediently, which presupposes that a methodical treatment is pursued for many years under the guidance of an experienced teacher. That careful methodical treatment differs according to the departments of the individual’s triad and causal envelopes. If the centres of the etheric envelope are vitalized in an erroneous manner, this will react upon the organism, resulting in disease.

⁷At the present stage of mankind’s development, very few people are ripe for this kind of special training. We must be content with the mere knowledge of the existence of these

centres as necessary to our understanding of the general function of the aggregate envelopes, all of this being things of which the “learned world” largely is quite ignorant.

⁸What has been permitted for exoteric publication hitherto at any event is sufficient to afford a rational conception of the meaning of goal of existence, a rational explanation of countless otherwise incomprehensible things, and a proof of the agreement of the esoteric knowledge with reality. If you compare this with the negative results arrived at by the keenest human minds in their philosophical speculation, you will probably see that esoterics cannot be a product by such minds.

⁹Having become a disciple of the planetary hierarchy, the individual is informed about the condition of his centres, their energies, which of his centres are in need of vitalization in due order, and how this process is to be effected. Before then, vitalization was effected automatically and according to rule through the individual’s striving to acquire qualities and abilities and to use them in the service of life, an attitude which counteracts abuse. In so doing the individual has qualified himself for discipleship, which involves the guarantee that the forces he acquires are used in the right way. The forces that are in this manner put at his disposal are the natural forces of the different worlds, forces which the individual can now assimilate.

¹⁰Before the esoterician can embark upon his training to become a causal self, he must be able to determine what kinds of energies make themselves felt in his life of consciousness and life of action. In so doing he learns which centres of his etheric envelope are active and which are passive. He must also learn how to use these energies in such an expedient way that they harmonize with, vibrate to, the same rhythm as the energies from his causal envelope. Moreover, he must be able to centralize his self-consciousness in the crown and frontal centres and from there to direct the energies of the different departments to the right centres of his etheric envelope.

¹¹Long before this training can be begun, he must have replaced the lower molecular kinds of his envelopes with higher kinds, so that he is able to perceive and to utilize the higher kinds of energies (“finer vibrations”) of his envelopes, energies emanating from the three kinds of matter of the causal envelope (47:1-3).

¹²Having become a disciple of the planetary hierarchy, the individual is taught the only harmless method of vitalizing his seven centres of consciousness. It is true that they have been activated before, automatically through his service, that is, his solving of the practical problems pertaining to service. But full activity is achieved only by applying a special technique.

¹³The seven centres correspond to the atomic kind and the six molecular kinds in each of the worlds 43–49, with their kinds of consciousness and energy, thus the crown centre corresponds to 43; the frontal centre, to 44; the throat centre, to 45; etc. Activation implies that the individual learns the function of each centre and its right use in service, how the energies work and through which organs they work.

¹⁴The will centre of the causal envelope is in contact with the crown centre of the etheric envelope; the unity centre is in contact with the heart centre; and the knowledge centre is in contact with the throat centre. These centres of the etheric envelope are roused to activity through vibrations that harmonize with the “cosmic” vibrations (atomic vibrations), true facts, the facts of reality (not illusions and fictions). In other words: as soon as the individual learns how to think in accord with reality, these centres are vitalized. An interaction is then produced. True facts vitalize the centres of the etheric envelope as well as the centres of the causal envelope. This makes it possible for the individual to receive vibrations directly from the causal envelope. As people at the stage of civilization receive esoteric knowledge, it will thus become possible for them to think in accord with reality and reach higher stages relatively quickly. For this possibility to become a reality, however, it is required that the individual does not merely accept the facts given him but also uses them, and this he does through “meditating” on them, working them into insight and understanding.

9.5 *The Vitalization of the Centres in Consciousness Development*

¹Undeveloped people are vitalized and are impelled to extravert activity through their three centres below the diaphragm: the basal centre, the sacral centre, and the solar plexus centre.

²Average man begins to function primarily through his solar plexus centre, and to use it unconsciously and automatically as a centre for transference of energies that have to be raised from lower centres (those below the diaphragm) to higher centres (those above the diaphragm).

³People who have reached the stage of culture and who consciously or unconsciously are aspirants to discipleship begin slowly to be vitalized and guided by the energies that are transferred from the centres below the diaphragm to the throat centre and from the causal envelope to the throat centre. This transference to the throat centre results in some sort of creative activity.

⁴The disciple at the stage of humanity begins to have his mental envelope controlled by the throat centre; and his emotional envelope, by the heart centre; and he also begins to transfer to the frontal centre the energies raised to the aforementioned two centres. When this has been effected, man is a mental self. Also energies from the causal envelope vitalize the frontal centre.

⁵Also the more advanced disciples at the causal stage are vitalized from two sources: through the energies raised up into the head from all the lower centres and through the energies flowing into the crown centre from the causal envelope and the second triad.

⁶The process is a matter of raising the energies or transferring them from lower to higher centres, as is the case in all consciousness development. The etheric envelope has two major centres of transference – the solar plexus centre and the throat centre – and one centre through which causal energies flow when time is ripe – the crown centre.

⁷Energy is transferred from all the lower centres to the higher, a process that runs through several stages. This transference, which is done within the first triad and its envelopes, runs parallel with the transference of energies of the second triad to the etheric envelope. This transference is not automatic but happens as the result of the individual's conscious action and choices. It may happen slowly, in the course of the normal evolutionary process, or it may be speeded up through the forced training given to the disciple.

⁸Within the framework of this major process of activation, the following transfereces of energies take place:

⁹1) The energy of the basal centre, the organ of physical will, is raised and brought up along the etheric counterpart to the spine to the crown centre, the organ of causal will. During this transference, the energy passes through the frontal centre.

¹⁰2) The energy of the sacral centre, the organ of physical, sexual creation, is raised to the throat centre, the organ of intellectual creation.

¹¹3) The energy of the solar plexus centre, the organ of egoist, personal desire, is raised to the heart centre, the organ of impersonal, altruist love and of service.

¹²In the perfected causal self, these energies are raised, controlled, or directed through will energy from the second triad. At that point, the sacral and solar plexus centres are no longer the abodes of sexuality and emotionality, respectively, but become receivers of the energies of the second triad and mediators of energy (light) originating from special collective centres of the etheric world.

¹³All these centres are developed and activated in seven stages. During each one of these stages, one centre or more leave their mark on man's outer and inner life.

¹⁴1) To begin with, the activity of the centres is sluggish and half asleep. The light they emit is faint, the point in the middle of each centre (the "jewel in the lotus") is at a quiescent stage. The energy pouring through is sufficient only to maintain life and instinctive vital functions as well as the ability to react to impulses from the emotional world via the emotional envelope. The individual is at the stage of barbarism.

¹⁵2) The energy is raised and intensified. The luminosity of the centres is strengthened, and

the solar plexus centre in particular is powerfully activated. Man's life is essentially focussed in the centres below the diaphragm, the basal and sacral centres more than the solar plexus centre. The four centres above the diaphragm are weak, faint in their light, and relatively inactive; on the other hand, their "jewels" are more dynamic than before. The individual is found at the stage of civilization, lets himself be swayed by his emotionality, and uses his intellect to satisfy his emotional desires. The centres are mainly receivers of physical and emotional impulses but also respond to mental impressions.

¹⁶3) At the third stage, the first transference of energy is made. This may take a long time, going on for many incarnations. The centres below the diaphragm are fully awakened, their activity is strong, their light is lively, their interaction is intensive, so that a complete magnetic field is set up that comprises the entire region below the diaphragm and is powerful enough to reach up beyond it. The solar plexus centre becomes the dominant organ instead of the lower two centres. The solar plexus centre becomes the receiver of the energy flows coming from below, absorbs them and begins to transfer them to the higher centres. The individual's emotionally controlled intellect develops powerfully. He becomes aware of the doubleness of his nature: the lower that he is and the higher that he will become.

¹⁷4) During the fourth stage, the transference is continued. It mainly concerns the raise of sacral energies into the throat centre. Transference of solar plexus energies to the heart centre also occurs, but still to a very small extent. This stage is very long and difficult. The majority of present mankind are at the third and fourth stages.

¹⁸5) During the fifth stage the heart and throat centres are activated. The individual is intellectually creative in some respect and slowly becomes group conscious. His reactions still have selfish motives, but he sometimes experiences periods of visions and spiritual aspiration. He feels attracted to the life of the mystics.

¹⁹6) During the sixth stage, there is a second transference of energy, and the frontal centre, which controls the integrated (mentally controlled) personality, becomes active and dominant. During this state, emotional life and mysticism tend to be neglected in favour of the mental striving of the personality. The individual becomes a powerful personality dominated by his intellect. The centres below the head are all active, while the centres below the diaphragm are subordinated and governed by their higher counterparts. The frontal centre is lively and forceful, the throat centre is intensively active, and the heart centre is rapidly awakening. The individual has reached the stage of humanity.

²⁰7) During the seventh stage, the crown centre is activated and begins to radiate; this being the result as the energies of all the lower centres begin to be transferred to that highest centre. This also has the effect that the second triad begins to pour down its energy into all the centres of the etheric envelope via the crown centre. Moreover, the "jewels" at the centre of each centre only now become strongly active, radiant, magnetic, so powerful in their outpouring of force that they "put all surrounding light into the shadow". The individual has attained the causal stage.

²¹When the seventh stage has been attained, all the centres of the etheric envelope are put into expedient activity through the energies coming from the second triad ("unity") and the third triad ("will"). There is a last and final transference of all the energies of the etheric envelope to the crown centre through the awakening of the basal centre. The "marriage between the poles" is made when the energy from the basal centre completely enters the crown centre and the energies from the third triad via the crown centre completely penetrate into the basal centre. Then the individual has become a causal self, he (the monad) is sovereign in the crown centre, and controls from it all the lower centres with his continuity of causal consciousness unbroken between all his incarnations.

²²Energies from the four centres of the causal envelope do not mediate perceptible consciousness at the lowest two stages of man's development, the stages of barbarism and

civilization. Instead, the individual receives guidance from his instinct (his latent experience from previous incarnations) and through the vibrations issuing from that collective or group being in mankind to which he belongs.

²³It is only at the stages of culture and humanity that the causal energies in the centres of the etheric envelope convey consciousness that becomes apprehensible in the physical brain. The etheric centres that convey causal energy are five in number: crown, frontal, throat, heart, and basal centres. The energies of the solar plexus and sacral centres will in time be completely transformed and transferred to the heart and throat centres, respectively, and it is presupposed that this process is finished or at least in full swing before causal consciousness is activated.

²⁴The splenic centre, too, is comprised in this process of evolution, although not in some energy transformation connected with consciousness evolution, such as occurs in the five centres just mentioned. On the other hand, the activation of causal consciousness has the effect that the individual acquires the ability to intentionally distribute prana from the spleen centre to the other centres. Moreover, the spleen centre has its counterpart in the crown centre, and when this higher centre for the distribution of prana is awakened, it becomes the organ of esoteric healing. Through this organ, the healer absorbs prana from the planetary ether by an act of will and radiates (exhales) it in an act of compassion to the individual to be healed.

²⁵It should be noted that the number twelve appears in three of the higher centres of the etheric envelope. The heart centre has 12 petals. The frontal centre has $8 \times 12 = 96$ petals. The crown centre has an inner circle of 12 petals and an outer circle of $8 \times 10 \times 12 = 960$ petals. Everywhere where the number twelve appears in the etheric envelope, this indicates a definite connection with the four centres of the causal envelope, which together form the twelve-petalled lotus. The number eight indicates the duality of $4 + 4$, where the one four represents the four envelopes of incarnation (the triad, mental, emotional, and etheric envelopes) and the other four represents the causal envelope with its four centres. The connection mentioned consists in the fact that the last of the four centres of the causal envelope, the inmost three petals, unfold only as the heart, frontal, and crown centres of the etheric envelope are fully activated and have all their petals opened. This takes place only in the causal self.

²⁶When the monad, having centred itself in the crown centre, intentionally and by an effort of will, raises the energies that are gathered in the basal centre, then the energies are drawn through the magnetic fields of the different centres up along the spine and are mixed in the process with the double energy issuing from the spleen centre. Then the etheric counterpart of the spine and the five centres attached to it are roused to activity, and finally all the energies are gathered into one single current. In this process, idea mentalite (kundalini) rises from the basal centre and passes through the higher centres, burning the etheric films that separate the etheric centres from their counterparts in the emotional and mental envelopes. This vitalizes the etheric envelope intensely. Thereupon the monad is able to leave at will the two physical envelopes in the waking state and then has continuity of consciousness between the physical, emotional, mental, and causal worlds for all time to come, unless bad reaping prevents it. This process presupposes that the disciple has built the antahkarana, the bridge connecting the first triad and the second triad.

²⁷The centres of the etheric envelope become active in four dimensions, “wheels turning upon themselves”, when the individual is busy activating the last two petals of the unity centre of the causal envelope. This in its turn presupposes that he has aligned the centres of the mental, emotional, and etheric envelopes, so that there is a direct contact from the causal to the physical; moreover that he has through meditation achieved a control of both the emotional and mental envelopes.

²⁸He must be able to radiate his energy and to have a magnetic effect on others, so that he reaches what is inmost and best in them, their heart centres in particular.

²⁹When the radiation of the etheric envelope has increased to a certain level, begins the

destruction of the atomic film. At first there are rents in it, and through these the disciple becomes aware in his physical brain of what happens in the emotional and mental worlds and through his causal envelope contacts his teacher in the planetary hierarchy.

³⁰The crown centre increases its activity and becomes capable of receiving flashes of causal consciousness. This happens only occasionally at first but increasingly often as the rents in the etheric web become more numerous.

³¹The transfer of energies from lower etheric centres to higher ones is actually done in two stages. In the first stage the energies from the three centres below the diaphragm (the basal, sacral, and solar plexus centres) are raised into the heart and throat centres and into a centre between the shoulder blades. This third centre is not one of the seven major centres but is a centre which the aspirant forms and activates temporarily during the process of energy transference.

³²At the second stage the energies of the lower seven centres – frontal, throat, heart, solar plexus, splenic, sacral, and basal centres – are raised in succession into their counterparts within the crown centre. These seven head centres are the counterparts in the etheric envelope to the seven departments of the third triad.

³³The negative and positive forces of the etheric envelope find expression through ida and pingala, respectively. In this connection, the energies from the first triad are characterized as positive in contrast to the energies from the second triad as negative. What is meant here is that the normal individual in the human kingdom in his consciousness and in his consciousness energies is active, driving, or “positive” almost exclusively in the first triad, and that the consciousness and consciousness energies of the second triad are in a passive, mere receptive, or “negative” state.

³⁴In the average individual, these forces express themselves in an unbalanced way as long as idea mentalite is not united with them. Thanks to the negative energies coming through ida, the individual is receptive to “higher ideas”, that is true. However, on account of the dominance of the first triad, these energies usually become too emotionally coloured, well-meaning but lacking in organization and concretion and so without much power, so that they do not lead to achievement. Thanks to the positive energies coming through pingala, ideas certainly become more mental or concrete, but concretion usually happens too fast, at the cost of expediency (agreement with the causal ideas) and with motives of personal ambition and profit more than ideality.

³⁵On the other hand, if sushumna (corresponding to sutratma) and its energy, idea mentalite, can be used, then the centres become so vitalized and opened through the action of idea mentalite that the individual can receive magnetic, form-furnishing energies from the centres of the causal envelope, so that reality ideas can be rightly apprehended, rightly concretized, and rightly realized.

³⁶There is full activity between the crown centre and the basal centre only when a direct connection has been established between the third triad and the physical etheric envelope (the first triad physical atom). Then all the centres of the etheric envelope are vitalized. At that stage, the individual is a manifestal self (43-self) who has only a manifestal envelope and an etheric envelope for his activity in the physical world. Then the intermediate envelopes are dissolved or inactive, and instead the energies are conveyed through the triad chain. If envelopes 44–48 are dissolved, the 43-self of course forms new ones immediately and automatically whenever he needs them for work in the lower worlds.

9.6 How Energies Transform the Etheric Envelope

¹The individual’s efficient consciousness development requires the complete transformation of the etheric envelope. This transformation is the result of cooperation between incoming energies and those of the etheric envelope itself and is effected in three stages.

²At the first stage, the etheric envelope is still untransformed. The incoming prana is received by the three prana centres and is absorbed by the entire envelope, in which process the etheric envelope is kept healthy and communicates its health to the organism. At this stage, the etheric envelope has an important function in being a partition wall between the superphysical and physical energies, protecting in this manner the individual from energies which, at this stage, he would not be able to control.

³At the second stage, the transformation begins as the result of man's consciousness development. Prana begins to be united with the energy of the basal centre and to slowly drive the united energy up from lower to higher centres. If the individual is content to go along with the majority of mankind in the slow jog-trot of millions of years, then the energies will be raised to the solar plexus centre only. However, if he learns about esoterics and decides to become an aspirant to discipleship, then he strives methodically to acquire qualities and abilities and in so doing raises his energies above the solar plexus centre. This is the content of all esoteric training.

⁴At the third stage, prana – the radiant energy of etheric matter – is united even more efficiently with the inherent energy of the etheric envelope. One of the results of this is that the etheric envelope becomes more receptive to causal influences. Another result is that the united energies rise more rapidly in the threefold central channel. In particular the process is hastened when the rising energy reaches the prana-receiving centre between the shoulder blades. Through this, the threefold basal energy and the threefold prana are definitively merged. This coincides with the individual's taking the first planetary initiation, which implies that the energy also is fixated in some one of the three higher centres – the crown, heart, or throat centre – which centre being dependent on the department of the individual's causal envelope: first, second, or third department.

⁵As a result of this merging of the energies, the centres of the etheric envelope are transformed. Their radiation of energy is intensified, and their rotation changes from three- to four-dimensional. The three major head centres – the alta major centre, the frontal centre, and the crown centre – are activated, and a circulation of energy begins between them similar to that between the three prana-receiving centres. Previously these head centres were pretty isolated from each other, but now they are united in a triangle of energy. In the activation of the head centres, idea mentalite affords to the centres power of radiation, while prana produces increased rotation and the other activity.

⁶Idea mentalite has a purifying effect on the atomic film of the etheric envelope, an effect that is strengthened as the activation of idea mentalite is intensified. After idea mentalite and prana have begun to merge, the atomic film gradually dissolves. This process is normally concluded when the individual has become a perfected causal self. By then he should also have attained continuity of consciousness between sleep and wakefulness as well as from life to life throughout his incarnations. Exceptions from this rule occur in the cases of those who have voluntarily and for definite purposes (assignments assumed) refrained from dissolving the atomic film, a process which can be stopped by an act of determined will.

⁷During the time that elapses between the first and fourth initiation, corresponding to the stages of humanity and ideality, the rising energies gradually purify the threefold central channel and the entire etheric envelope, until all obstructive matter is burnt away. As idea mentalite and prana clear the channels and activate the centres, the energies from the causal envelope penetrate more efficiently down into the etheric envelope. In response to the penetrating causal energies, the crown centre of the etheric envelope re-emits to the causal envelope energies it received from there. The exchange of energies between the etheric and causal envelopes are intensified in the process. The mental energies developed by the individual during his incarnations is intensified through the individual's own mental activation (right knowledge, right insight, right understanding, right realization), so that finally they burn through the

protective envelope surrounding the crown centre of the etheric envelope. This makes it possible for the individual to direct idea mentalite intentionally from the mental world. By means of his mental energy the individual blends first prana and idea mentalite, and secondly blends those etheric energies with the mental energies. The united result of those blendings is the destruction, under law, of the outermost protective film of the etheric envelope. This has the result that the individual becomes causally conscious in his physical waking consciousness, and it also entails unbroken continuity of causal consciousness through all his incarnations.

⁸The downrush of causal energies and the rise of etheric energies under the control and direction of mental consciousness also brings about the purification of the emotional and mental envelopes so that they are emptied of such content as is unserviceable for consciousness development and only become mediators of the rising and downpouring physical-etheric and causal energies.

⁹The processes described above are completed as the first three initiations are taken, whereupon, as the man prepares for the fourth initiation, the remaining hindrances in his etheric, emotional, and mental envelopes are destroyed.

¹⁰Idea mentalite is first united with prana in the centre situated between the shoulder blades. Being thus blended, idea mentalite and prana then rise up into the head, where they are united with the mental energy that vitalizes the three major head centres.

¹¹When idea mentalite and prana are united with mental energy, the result is that the entire etheric envelope is enormously vitalized. The crown, frontal, throat, and heart centres in particular are vitalized. These higher four centres then form a particular energy field that has an attractive effect on the energies of the third triad. Energies pouring in from the third triad activate the crown centre in particular. When the crown centre is vitalized, all the other centres are stimulated as well.

¹²Only when the causal self has acquired some degree of essential (46) consciousness (46:5-7) and, using the unity energies of this consciousness, controls the causal envelope, which then in its turn controls the envelopes of incarnation, may idea mentalite and prana be blended with mental and causal energies without endangering the individual.

¹³From the energy point of view, the liberation of man means that the energy of the basal centre is transferred to the higher centres.

¹⁴The merging of idea mentalite and prana is done automatically and naturally through the slow evolution in the human kingdom and is the cause of the rude health that man should normally enjoy if he lives cleanly and has his thought and feeling turned to higher things. If the energies are to rise still higher in the central channel, this must be the result of the man's active work for his own consciousness development. When the individual in such a manner has succeeded in raising the merged prana and idea mentalite energies further, so that they have reached the throat centre, they are united with the mental energies radiated by that centre. The mental energies from the throat centre form a triangle with the energies from the frontal and crown centres.

¹⁵Later, when the united energies have been raised up into the head, they first enter the centre at the base of the skull (often called the alta major centre), from which they circulate in the triangle that this centre then forms with the crown and frontal centres. There is no natural connection between the central channel and the alta major centre, and to make the energies pass to that centre the individual must bridge the gap by building a channel in etheric matter. This channel is an etheric counterpart of the so-called rainbow bridge, which he builds in causal matter between the causal envelope and the mental atom of the second triad.

¹⁶This work is not done by intentional manipulation of the kinds of matter in question. It is not done at all by means of the matter aspect, but only using the consciousness aspect, quite unintentionally, as the individual activates his waking consciousness and has it more and more often centred in higher mental and causal kinds of consciousness, more and more often

is self-conscious in those kinds, thinks more synthetically (in a surveying, summarizing manner), in increasingly better agreement with reality. It is an indispensable requirement that he applies his knowledge and ability in activity of service and work for mankind. Egoists, who are mainly occupied with their own development, are not able to attract the energies of unity from 46 which are necessary to the ascension.

¹⁷When the gap between the central channel and the alta major centre is completely bridged, the etheric envelope becomes co-ordinated with the mental envelope and the energies of those two envelopes are blended.

¹⁸Present-day mankind has succeeded in raising the energy in one of the three channels. At least two thirds of the energy from the basal centre go to the sacral centre instead. If the merged idea mentalite prana energy is to be completely united with mental energy, it must be able to rise unobstructed up at the least two of the three channels. Only when it can rise unobstructed in all three in the individual's correct order, is the energy of the basal centre, idea mentalite, wholly activated and can puncture the physical atomic film. When this happens, all the three channels become one.

¹⁹The fact that energies rise from the basal centre to the crown centre in the right order means that in this process they run through the most important centres of the etheric envelope in definite geometric patterns. Each such pattern comprises three centres and forms a so-called triangle of energy. It is important in addition that the energies run through the centres of the triangle in the right order, which is determined by the department (ray) to which the individual belongs.

²⁰The following major energy triangles are formed during the individual's evolution in the human kingdom:

emotional self: basal centre, solar plexus centre, and heart centre;

mental self: basal centre, heart centre, and throat centre;

mental self having incipient causal consciousness: heart centre, throat centre, and five head centres;

causal self: heart centre, throat centre, and seven centres in the head

perfected causal centre having some essential consciousness (46:5-7): heart centre, seven head centres, frontal centre, and crown centre.

²¹The fact that each one of these energy triangles starts functioning at a certain stage of man's consciousness development does not mean that the triangle is alone in its activity at the time. As soon as the energy has a free passage in the channels uniting three centres into a triangle this triangle becomes activated and continues to be active, even if some other triangle temporarily is the most active one.

²²The so-called prana triangle – the three centres that receive radiant prana from without – has an exclusively physical significance and, therefore, is unessential to consciousness development. Idea mentalite lies in the basal centre and its main function, where the normal individual is concerned, is to vitalize the etheric envelope.

²³During the individual's evolution, idea mentalite unites with other energies three times. The first time idea mentalite is merged with the prana of the etheric envelope in a centre between the shoulder blades. The second time it is united with mental energies in the throat centre. The third time idea mentalite is united with superessential (45:1) energy from the third triad at the point where the united etheric and mental energies issue from the crown centre.

²⁴The function of each one of the three channels is to unite the energies mentioned. The energies circulate, and when all the major centres of the etheric envelope are fully activated, then all energy triangles are functioning as well.

²⁵When idea mentalite has merged with prana, the centres become three-dimensional in their activity. When the merged idea mentalite and prana energy is united with mental energy, the centres become four-dimensional. When the united idea mentalite prana mental energy is

united with superessential energy, the centres become six-dimensional.

²⁶As energy rises in the three central channels, activity is intensified not only in the centres but in every atom of the etheric, emotional, and mental envelopes. This intensification of activity has the effect that coarse and unserviceable matter is thrown out of the envelopes and also that matter corresponding to the now higher frequency of the envelopes is attracted to them and incorporated with them.

9.7 *How the Centres of the Etheric Envelope Appear to Higher Objective Consciousness*

¹To higher objective consciousness appear four clearly distinguishable parts of a centre in the etheric envelope: the outermost sphere of radiation, within it radiations of energy in the form of “spokes” or “petals”, further a triangle of energy, and finally in this triangle a point of intensive radiation.

²The *sphere of radiation* is the outgoing vibratory effect of the centre, which increases as the centre is activated in the course of evolution. These spheres of radiation, one around each centre, form the aura of the human being. This is the real aura, not to be confused with the so-called health aura, which makes up only a part of the radiation of the etheric envelope. It is from his study of the aura the esoteric teacher (at least a 46-self), using his objective consciousness, sees whether the individual in question has his centres above the diaphragm activated or not, the degree of activation there is in individual centres and in their petals, whether the controlling departmental energies (those five which together constitute the individual’s “type”) are to be considered sufficiently clear in their expressions; moreover, whether the monad in the triad directs its attention and thus its energies outwards to the surrounding world or inwards to its own real or imagined problems, whether the monad is principally centred in the first or in the second triad, and whether there is a conflict going on between the monad’s interests as a first self and as a second self in becoming, that which in the older esoteric terminology was called the struggle between the personality and the soul, or between the “lower self” and the “higher self”.

³The study of the aura thus reveals much to the individual who has the ability to read it with accuracy, an ability that would be abused without fail at the present stage of mankind’s development. Therefore, we should be grateful that such a capacity is exceedingly rare and is possessed only by advanced disciples and initiates.

⁴It is the aura, and its potency of attraction and its stability, which also holds a group of individuals together, which also keeps an audience listening, and which makes an individual of importance to those in his environment. The sphere of radiation is easily determined through its effects on people in the vicinity. An emotionally unbalanced individual having an overactive solar plexus centre can spread much disquiet around him. An advanced individual who intentionally, consciously, and creatively directs energy from his heart and throat centres can carry inspiration to hundreds of people.

⁵The *petals* or *spokes* are the actual carriers of the consciousness of the envelope. Therefore, the higher the molecular kinds of which they are made, the higher the kinds of consciousness of which they can be carriers. It deserves to be pointed out that all consciousness expressions have a matter aspect as well as an energy aspect. All mental, emotional, and physical qualities and abilities thus correspond to definite molecular kinds and their 49 subdivisions with the pertaining kinds of energy, and all have their given positions in the corresponding centre of the mental, emotional, or etheric envelope. If an important quality is lacking, this means that the corresponding petal is not activated.

⁶The state of consciousness is always indicated by the size, the colour, and the activity of the energies which compose the petals. The degree of unfoldment of the petals is determined by the governing departments as well as by the developmental level of the monad. The

intensity of radiation, demonstrating in the strength and clarity of the light, is also determined by the orientation of attention in a certain life as well as by trend of thinking of the monad, all according to the principle “energy follows thought”. For instance, an individual at the stage of the disciple might have his natural focus in the solar plexus centre, but thanks to his determined orientation to higher ideals, he can direct this energy to the heart centre. This produces a temporary atrophy of the solar plexus centre below the diaphragm and a corresponding stimulation of the heart centre above the diaphragm.

⁷The central triangle of energies indicates unmistakably the departmental energies of the three triads. From this a 45-self is able to see which of these three energies is the dominant one. This is not possible to lower selves, who instead must try to conclude this from the character of the petals and the sphere of radiation. Erroneous conclusions are possible here to 46-selves and lower selves, but not to a 45-self.

⁸The *point in the middle* of each centre is its contact with the third triad, the channel through which energies from the third triad and its worlds (43–45) pour down into the centre. In the centres of the etheric envelope, these points are the anchorage of the third triad in the physical world. The points mediate all the vital energy that can reach the centres from the third triad and its worlds, the highest three worlds of the solar system. These “points of life”, or “jewels”, as they are called, are potentially the manifestations of the highest kind of will, consciousness, and knowledge that the monad can acquire within the solar system. The other three parts of a centre – the sphere of radiation, the petals, and the triangle of energies – are only in their turn envelopes, manifestations, and instruments of the points of life. The points of life are vehicles of those energies promoting evolution and expansion which cause the monad to seek to return to its “home”, ascending through the worlds, those energies which cause the monad to have the experiences and make the experiments that lead to the acquisition of qualities and abilities that are essential to consciousness development.

⁹There are seven of these points of life, one in each of the seven major centres. They are expressions of the basic septenary of motion, consciousness, and matter, also of the seven subdivisions of the department of the monad’s third triad.

¹⁰In the development of the individual, that time comes when the other energies of the etheric envelope are lost to sight in the intensive radiation from the seven points of life. Then the light emitted by them together has the colour of the crown centre. By that time all the centres are fully developed and mutually united through a line of living energy. Of the seven, those three points of life then dominate which correspond to the first three departmental energies.

9.8 *How the Disciple Uses his Transformed Etheric Envelope*

¹At the end of his sojourn in the human kingdom, the disciple has fully activated the energies of his envelopes of incarnation. The individual is then able to use the energies of the centres intentionally and consciously in his contacts with other people. The centres and their energies become the instruments of the disciple in his service of evolution, unity, and mankind.

²According to the planetary hierarchy, the technical detailed knowledge of the number of petals of each centre, their colours, and Sanskrit names, etc. is unessential. On the other hand, what is essential to the esoterician is to strive to acquire the qualities and abilities of which the petals will become carriers. In this connection it is important to understand that the number of petals of a centre indicates the number of different energies that the esoterician can acquire to express in his service.

³For example, the heart centre of the etheric envelope has twelve petals. This centre is a reflection of the centre of the causal envelope, which also has twelve petals. The latter are vehicles of the twelve essential qualities which every aspirant to discipleship strives to acquire. The twelve petals of the heart centres of the mental and emotional envelopes correspond to the mental and emotional understanding of the essential qualities, and the twelve

petals of the heart centre of etheric envelope correspond to the ability to realize these qualities in the physical world.

⁴The petals of the etheric heart centre are organs of physical realization, those of the emotional heart centre are organs of emotional understanding, and the petals of the mental heart centre are organs of the intellectual understanding of these qualities. The petals of the centre of the causal envelope, a centre consisting of four parts, is the organ of causal understanding of those qualities as well as of the complete realization of them. From this you may understand why the causal and etheric envelopes are said to be man's most important envelopes and, indeed, the only indispensable ones.

⁵It is very important to understand that the centres are activated through the acquisition of the corresponding qualities and abilities in lives of service and self-sacrifice, not through meditation or concentration on the centres and their energies. The centres are brought into proper action automatically by right living, by cultivating consciousness, by right thinking, and by loving activity.

⁶It is the consciousness aspect that makes the form magnetic, causes it to receive, reject, and convey energies. Thus the degree of consciousness development in the form of life determines the nature and quality of its flow of energy and its sphere of radiation.

⁷The etheric envelope of the individuals of the human kingdom (and only of the human kingdom) is now composed of all four kinds of etheric matter (the atomic kind included), 49:1-4. The purpose of this is that eventually, when the majority of mankind is "spiritually developed", that is, the individuals have started to activate their second triads, the four kinds of matter of the etheric envelope will convey energies from worlds 43-46. This will be the result of conscious work at activation. It will be made possible through the work of the planetary hierarchy and government in the so-called initiations.

⁸This work at transforming the etheric envelope into a mediator of energies from worlds 43-46 is concluded when the individual has become a 46-self and can dispense with, not only his emotional and mental envelopes, but also with his causal envelope. If he subsequently desires to be active in the physical world, he can form an etheric envelope only, which directly and without intervening envelopes will then be the perfect manifestations of essential (46) consciousness and will.

⁹Disciples belong to some one of the seven departments of the planetary hierarchy. Disciples belonging to any one of departments 4, 5, 6, or 7 will eventually pass to some one of departments 1, 2, or 3. This passing can be done when the etheric envelope has a sufficient amount of involved essential (46) matter, thus cosmic etheric matter of the lowest kind.

9.9 Working with the Cosmic Ethers

¹The ability to work with cosmic etheric matter, thus energy and consciousness in worlds 43-46, is achieved only when the essential consciousness (46) awakens and is able to scale down its ideas to causal and mental consciousness. Intuitions are ideas clothed in cosmic etheric matter. Only when man becomes receptive to such ideas will he begin to master the technique of controlling etheric energies. Thus only when man starts to acquire essential consciousness, will he receive the permission to work consciously with etheric energies.

²All of this is actually an example of the great process of creation. Ideas issuing from the essential world (46), the lowest cosmic ether, must first be clothed in causal matter, then in mental matter, subsequently to be energized with emotional matter, finally, if they live so long, to assume physical form, at first etheric forms, then gross physical ones. The fact that many "brilliant ideas" are never realized need not be due to some inherent error in them. It can also be due to the fact that the individual neglects to use emotional energy and concretize the idea in the physical world. Many thinkers have their total attention directed at things mental, are content that they have reached clarity and understanding themselves.

9.10 Risks Involved with Wrong Activation of Centres

¹It is important to understand that the etheric envelope functions as a protector from and a separator of energies, which otherwise would be dangerous to the individual as long as he is found at lower stages of development.

²No one should embark on attempts at vitalizing the centres of the etheric envelope except when under the supervision of an esoteric master, a 45-self. The methods of treatment used by yogis are exceedingly risky, particularly for a Westerner whose physiological conditions are quite different from those of an Oriental. The planetary hierarchy warns, and emphatically, for the dangers of “playing with fire” are great. It is not a matter of only one incarnation, but the effect of mistakes extends over several lives.

³There are greater risks involved with stimulating or developing the centres that are not connected with some major bodily organ than the centres connected with such organs. The frontal centre is of the first category mentioned, the solar plexus is of the second one. Where the solar plexus centre is concerned, possible surplus amounts of energies can be received by the organs of digestion and the liver. The corresponding is not possible where the frontal centre is concerned, and so this centre is especially well protected from too rapid activation, through being provided with a particularly strong protective envelope, and other measures. This often has the result that the frontal centre is little activated, comparatively speaking, even in individuals who are otherwise highly developed.

⁴Should the individual, by the power of will or through a one-sided development of his mentality and without the requisite essential qualities and the abilities connected with them, succeed in uniting prana and idea mentalite and make them rise through the central channel, he stands in danger of obsession, insanity, physical death, or of serious bodily disease. (Obsession means that the individual, the monad, has been driven out, completely or partially, of his two physical bodies, which then have been correspondingly possessed by an emotional being that wishes to have experiences in the physical world but does not want to go through the arduous process of incarnation.) Since the energy rising out of the basal centre cannot reach the crown centre but instead is turned backwards and downwards, it enters the sacral centre and vitalizes it strongly. The energy is forced back in this manner because the central channel is still clogged.

⁵An additional danger lies in the fact that the uninitiated man does not know the departments of his envelopes and so is ignorant of the order in which the energies should traverse the different centres and which triangles they should form in the process. Inevitably he makes serious mistakes, even if, contrary to expectation, he would succeed in making the idea mentalite rise. The result is that the energy burns its way and so destroys tissue. Even in the best event this means that he delays his development for several incarnations, since he must devote much time to repairing the injuries he has caused himself.

⁶If the individual persists from life to life in such procedures, if he neglects to develop higher, “spiritual” qualities and faculties (those of the second self), and concentrates on the manipulation of matter for selfish ends, he may bring upon him irremediable injury. By uniting prana and idea mentalite in a wrong manner, he may “succeed” in completely destroying the physical atom of the first triad and in so doing make the first triad as a whole unusable. Subsequently the monad must acquire a new triad and thus begin its evolution from the mineral kingdom all over again, a delay that is estimated to cost the monad about thirty eons.

9.11 Etheric Vision

¹Etheric vision is the individual’s ability to perceive vibrations within the etheric molecular kinds of the physical world (49:1-4). Etheric vision is ordinarily mediated by the etheric parts of the physical eyes. Do not forget that every organ, every cell, has its etheric counterpart! Impressions of etheric matter are transferred by etheric vibrations which are received by the etheric counterpart of the retina and are conveyed to the brain via the optic nerve.

²However, etheric vision can as easily, and often more easily, be mediated by other sensitive areas of the etheric envelope. In particular this is true of the seven major centres, and primarily the frontal centre. Such a faculty of vision in sensitive areas of the etheric envelope usually is due to the fact that the corresponding centres of the emotional envelope have reached a higher development than the normal one.

³That individual who wants to develop consciousness is wise to pay attention only to the impressions he receives through the higher four centres – the heart, throat, frontal, and crown centres – and consistently disregard impressions through the lower three centres, thus the basal, sacral, and solar plexus centres.

⁴There are two kinds of etheric vision, the lower and the higher. The lower kind is most common in animals and in mentally very undeveloped people. This variety of etheric vision is not an exact and definite sense perception conveyed through a specialized organ, but rather is a sort of massive sensation belonging to the whole etheric envelope, and is practically beyond the individual's control. The etheric envelope is in exceedingly close relationship with the nervous system, so that impressions impinging on one of them are also received by the other. In this lower kind of etheric vision, impressions are received almost exclusively by the autonomic nervous system. The autonomic nervous system (made up of the sympathetic and parasympathetic subsystems) contain much etheric matter, relatively speaking, and hence is particularly sensitive to vibrations from the etheric world and the lower regions of the emotional world.

⁵In more developed individuals this vague sensitivity has disappeared as mental consciousness has developed. Later on, when man starts to develop the higher kinds of consciousness, he regains etheric vision, but this time that of the higher kind. This is precise and exact, is under the control of the will, and exercised through definite etheric sense-organs. Impressions are received and processed in the central nervous system, not in the autonomic nervous system.

⁶Etheric vision may be temporarily activated by external influences, for example nervous tension as a result of stress or exhaustion, serious disease, a blow to the brain in accidents, a powerful electric shock, drugs, and alcohol. The etheric envelope is peculiarly sensitive to alcohol.

⁷Etheric vision asserts itself much more easily in deep brain wave states: deep alpha (10–7 Hz), theta (7–4 Hz), and delta (4–0.5 Hz).

⁸Also (auto)suggestion and hypnosis facilitate spontaneous occurrence of etheric vision. Certain ceremonies and rites that induce autosuggestion may induce etheric vision as well. It is not advisable to subject oneself to hypnosis to obtain etheric vision. Hypnosis makes the individual a slave to another individual and so wars against the law of self-realization.

⁹A person who has succeeded in gaining the friendship of etheric nature-beings may be helped by those creatures to attain flashes of etheric vision, so that the person may see his etheric friends. Such nature-beings are intensely shy and distrustful of men and object to the physical and emotional emanations of the average man: of his animal diet, alcohol, and tobacco, as well as of his low and selfish feelings, such as desire, anger, and depression. In contrast, people who are pure physically and psychically, who nourish strong, unselfish, and lofty feelings, create the kind of atmosphere in which nature-beings delight to bathe. Almost all nature-beings are fond of music, and some are especially attracted by certain melodies.

¹⁰One method of developing etheric vision is by utilizing the imagination. You try to “imagine” what the inside of a gross physical object, such as a closed box, would be like. This is not the same as guessing, but is an effort of strained attention, an attempt at seeing what cannot be seen with gross physical eyes. After many such attempts you are right more frequently than chance would yield, and shortly thereafter you begin actually to see etherically that which at first you only imagined. This method of acquiring etheric vision has been applied by the zuñi people, an Indian tribe living in south-western United States.

¹¹Many people are able to see the etheric radiation surrounding organisms, the radiation

emitted from the fingers in particular. Fewer people can see the etheric radiation issued by iron magnets, crystals, and a copper wire one end of which has been exposed to sunlight. If you first shut yourself up in a dark room for three to four hours, your retina will become more sensitive, so that you will find it easier to see etherically. A rather common experience of incipient etheric vision is the ability to see objects in a dark room through closed eyelids.

¹²Living organisms, such as human beings, animals, plants, as well as crystals and metals, emit etheric radiation that can be seen with etheric vision. However, etheric radiation is not emitted by organisms that are under the influence of anaesthetics, nor by dead organisms. Anaesthetics expel etheric matter from the organism, which of course prevents etheric radiation.

¹³A full and controlled etheric vision enables the individual to see through even the densest kinds of gross physical matter. A stonewall appears as a light mist. The contents of a closed box can be clearly perceived. A letter in a sealed envelope can be read. With a little practice it is also possible to find a passage in a closed book.

¹⁴When etheric vision is perfectly developed it is completely under the control of the will, so that it may be used or not as the individual wishes. Then it is as easy to change from ordinary gross physical to etheric vision as to alter the focus of the eyes. This change is in reality a change of the focus of consciousness.

¹⁵The earth is transparent to etheric vision to a certain extent, so that using it you can see several meters into it, much as in fairly clear water. Therefore you can see animals burrowing underground, or a coal seam, an oil deposit, or a vein of ore, if they are not too deep below the surface.

¹⁶Human, animal, and plant organisms are largely transparent, so that you can see the internal organs at work and so discover and diagnose diseases.

¹⁷Etheric vision reveals the existence of many otherwise invisible beings, such as the nature beings that have etheric envelopes: the elves, brownies, and trolls of Nordic folklore; the fairies, salamanders (fire spirits), sylphs (air spirits), undines (water spirits), and gnomes (earth spirits) of traditional magic.

¹⁸Just as there are etheric eyes which see forms that are invisible to most people, there are etheric ears which hear sounds that are inaudible to most people. In the future, artists endowed with etheric vision and composers possessed of etheric hearing will afford us artistic creations of a hitherto unsurpassed beauty.

9.12 Basics on Working with the Etheric Envelope

¹The etheric envelope should be conceived as an instrument for the execution of the will of human consciousness in physical matter. The etheric envelope conveys, or mediates, human thought and emotion to the organism and in so doing anchors man in the entire physical world, the gross physical as well as the etheric part of this world.

²The etheric envelope wields its influence through reflex action as well. This means that thoughts and emotions that are received by the etheric envelope can be reinforced in it and be redirected from it (bounce back or be reflected) to the mental and emotional envelopes, reinforcing their activity. In this way, the etheric envelope can be used as an instrument for human mental and emotional consciousness development.

³The individual's work with etheric energies is always intentional work with his own etheric envelope. The etheric envelope is partially under the control of the will. It can in certain respects be controlled through directed attention.

⁴At the present stage of mankind's general development, the etheric envelope of the majority of individuals is undeveloped, relatively speaking. The physical consciousness of the normal individual is consciousness in his organism and consciousness of the "visible", gross physical world. He is unaware of his etheric envelope just as he is unaware of the etheric world. The first step towards developing the etheric envelope is to pay attention to it, to the fact of its existence;

to think about it, learn more about it (theoretical study of it). The second step is to study the etheric envelope practically, beginning to discern it in oneself and in other people, also in animals, trees, etc. Not merely seeing it but also sensing the existence of the etheric envelope, which is done more easily in deep, relaxed states. By being constantly heeded the etheric envelope itself becomes more aware, responds better to the individual's will impulses.

⁵In itself, by itself, the etheric envelope is an entity in its own right, a being that is part of evolution. It is not, like the emotional and mental envelopes, part of involution. Being an evolutionary entity the etheric envelope has the capacity of self-activity, although of a much lower degree than that of the conscious human self, so that the etheric envelope can be put wholly under the control of the individual's will. However, this last mentioned point is a very distant goal of human evolution.

⁶At every moment the etheric envelope performs countless functions. Without them, we would be unable to live from the one second to the other. All of this is going on constantly within our system without our knowing the least about it until we begin to study the etheric envelope. Practically all activity by the etheric envelope takes place below the threshold of waking consciousness and should go on in that way. However, the etheric envelope also has a huge unused potential, and this is what we should learn how to use.

⁷We may compare our etheric envelope to a faithful servant, working busily, whom you, his master, hardly care about. If you begin to pay attention to him, give him your care and love, he will be even more devoted to you, be ready to work even more, be prepared for more and greater tasks. If we acquire a more profound knowledge of the etheric envelope, we realize that we can systematically, methodically train the etheric envelope to perform functions that require more intelligence, accuracy, and finality than is possible at present.

⁸The human normal individual is ordinarily unconscious in two of his envelopes: the causal envelope and the etheric envelope. The consciousness of the causal envelope is part of his superconscious which he will in time learn how to activate so that, towards the end of his sojourn in the human kingdom, he will be capable of waking consciousness in this envelope and have his consciousness centred in it in a natural way. This transition from the mental to the causal envelope is effected through the building of the so-called rainbow bridge (Sanskrit: antahkarana), which is possible only for advanced esotericians.

⁹In contrast, the consciousness of the etheric envelope is not part of the superconscious but has relapsed into the subconscious after mankind, by passing to the stage of civilization, moved the centre of its waking consciousness from physical sensations to emotions. In the future, the consciousness of the etheric envelope will be activated once again, but this will not happen in the manner of the activation of causal consciousness. Etheric consciousness will only need to be roused from the slumber of inactivity, a much easier procedure.

9.13 The Importance of Meditation

¹The importance of meditation to consciousness development can hardly be overrated. There are many different methods of meditation by which one achieves more or less the same kind of results. What is common to them all is that the individual directs his attention inwards, at his mental processes, checks the flow of automatic thought associations, the "inner babble", and keeps attention fixed at one single idea.

²Regularity is an important feature in this. Meditation need not be long, but it should be exercised every day, preferably at the same time. Daily regularity builds up more permanent, harmonious rhythms in the etheric, emotional, and mental envelopes and in their centres.

³Attention uses up much of the energy of the brain and the other parts of the nervous system. If attention is occupied with issues concerning the esoteric knowledge, consciousness development, and other such reality ideas as in their extent reach beyond physical existence, the brain is replenished with vitalizing energies coming directly from the causal envelope. On

the other hand, if attention is occupied exclusively with the things of physical everyday life, the brain misses this additional supply of energy.

9.14 The Importance of the Devas to Consciousness Development

¹In the future, the devas will approach nearer to mankind. Thanks to the higher frequency of vibration they radiate and the superior knowledge they possess they can, in cooperation with the planetary hierarchy, help mankind. They have much to teach us, for example about colours and sounds and their effects on the etheric envelopes of humans, animals, and plants. When what they have to impart is apprehended by the human race, disease will be offset. The group of violet devas who work within the four ethers will be especially active and they will work in the four main groups of people who are in incarnation at any given time. Four departments dominate at any period, with one of the four more potent than the other three. This principle is symbolized in the four castes of India, and you will find also that these four castes are found universally throughout the planet.

²These four groups of devas are a band of servers, pledged to the service of Bodhisattva Maitreya, and their work is to contact men and teach them along certain lines.

³They will teach mankind to see etherically, and this they will do by heightening man's capacity for vibration by interaction with their own.

⁴They will give instruction in the effect of colour in the healing of disease, and particularly the efficiency of violet light in curing those organic sicknesses that originate in the etheric envelope.

⁵They will also demonstrate to the physicalist thinkers of the world the fact that the super-physical worlds exist and that it is possible to contact devas in those worlds as well as discarnate human beings who have no physical envelopes – neither organisms nor etheric envelopes.

⁶They will train human beings in the knowledge of superhuman physics. Using this knowledge people will offset gravity and move more rapidly, noiselessly, and smoothly. In the human control of etheric energies lies the overcoming of fatigue and the power to transcend the boundaries of time.

⁷They will teach mankind how rightly to nourish the organism and the etheric envelope and to draw from the surrounding ethers the requisite food. Man will concentrate his attention on the etheric envelope, and the health of the organism will be increasingly automatic.

⁸The devas will also teach human beings as individuals and as a race to expand their consciousness to include the superphysical. The etheric web separating the physical world from the presently invisible worlds will be discovered by science, which will understand its function. The web will be destroyed by human beings when they have found how to penetrate it.

⁹Thanks to the increasing sensitivity of people and the steady thinning of the separating web, people's telepathic faculties and their power to receive inspiration will increase and be more prominent. Thanks to the growth of these faculties and the increase of the knowledge of the power of colours and sounds, the work of the planetary hierarchy will be better understood by ever more people, which also will contribute to the emancipation from the illusions and fictions of the past and will promote the work at passing to the fifth natural kingdom.

9.15 Etherization

¹The acquisition of etheric objective consciousness is the next step in the collective consciousness development of mankind. Etheric objective consciousness above all implies the ability to see etherically and to perceive etheric matter.

²Etheric matter is that field of research which is next in turn to be discovered by scientists. In our times, increasing numbers of physicians in conventional and alternative medicine acquire etheric vision.

³Most of the diseases of which modern people suffer are rooted in the etheric envelope. There are not many purely organic diseases. Diseases originate in bad conditions of the etheric and emotional envelopes.

⁴Secure and sound superphysical objective consciousness (clairvoyance and clairaudience) are due to the degree of purification of the etheric envelope.

⁵The etheric emanations of human beings may carry serious psychic and physical infection. Therefore, a general purification of the etheric envelope entails a more harmonious and healthier mankind.

⁶These examples demonstrate the importance of the etheric envelope, the importance of the knowledge of it, and the fundamental role of etherization as the next step in the evolution of mankind.

⁷In fact, etherization is a process going on in all the natural kingdoms of the planet. In the lowest three natural kingdoms, it is a matter of systemic etherization only, that is: the monads become increasingly sensitive to systemic etheric energies, 49:1-4.

⁸Thus etherization goes on in the mineral kingdom as well. As mineral monads are absorbed by plants and experience the process of vitalization in them, mineral consciousness learns to receive and adapt itself to etheric vibrations (gradually to ever higher from 49:7:7 to 49:4:1), a condition of entering the vegetable kingdom. The purpose of the human organism, too, is to strive towards “etherization”, a process that is facilitated by leading a healthy life, eating pure, vital food, avoiding poisons and impurities, etc.

⁹When natural science eventually familiarizes itself with etheric energies, it will discover the causes and effects of consciousness activation. This applies especially to those scientists who have innate etheric objective consciousness (etheric vision), a phenomenon met with more and more frequently.

¹⁰In the fifth and sixth natural kingdoms, etherization is cosmic, that is, entails increasing sensitivity to ever higher energies in the cosmic etheric world, 43–46. Cosmic etherization goes on in the human kingdom, too, although as yet only in the elite few in number. However, physical mankind participates unconsciously in the ongoing solar systemic etherization.

¹¹Thus the term “etherization” as a designation of the further evolution of the human monads has a double import: solar systemic etherization and cosmic etherization. Solar systemic etherization also means that objective consciousness is acquired in the solar systemic ether, in 49:4 to begin with. Cosmic etherization means the acquisition of consciousness in the cosmic ether, 43–46, at first subjective consciousness only, but later objective consciousness as well, beginning in 46.

¹²The analogy of cosmic and solar systemic ether also appears in the fact that man acquires etheric objective consciousness to the extent that he reaches beyond the worlds of man (47–49) and acquires essential (46), superessential (45), etc., consciousness. Also, the strongest possible protection against abuse is contained in this. Without the acquisition of the “qualities of the heart” (46) and “impersonal will in the service of unity” (45), the temptation to abuse the “magic” powers connected with etheric objective consciousness would overwhelm the individual. The development of etheric vision and the ability of magic without a parallel endeavour to acquire consciousness of unity (46) and will of unity (45) is a path on which the aspirant runs the risk of eventually ending up in the black lodge.

¹³There are also direct connections between the four aspects of the law of reaping and the four ethers, 49:1-4, and also the four worlds 43–46. These connections will be studied by a future branch of esoteric research.

¹⁴Etherization is an individual as well as collective process. The collective process is the more important one and implies, where mankind is concerned, that there will be human races endowed with etheric visions and even etheric races.

¹⁵A new racial formation is impending, the sixth sub-race of the fifth root-race. It has been

calculated that the fourth branch-race of this sixth sub-race will be able to acquire physical etheric objective consciousness (or etheric vision); the sixth root-race, emotional objective consciousness (or clairvoyance). In the sixth root-race, between its second and third sub-races, the individuals will definitively leave the organism and pass to the etheric envelope as their lowest envelope. The third sub-race will consequently be an etheric human race in the proper sense. In all the subsequent races evolving during the remaining globe-period, physical man will be exclusively an etheric being, thus the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh sub-races of the sixth root-race and the entire seventh root-race. The period of incarnation, or the life-time of the personality, of the individual in the etheric races equals the age of a branch-race.

9.16 *The Buddha Gives an Account of Etheric Human Races*

¹The following excerpt from a Buddhist scripture, the *Aggaññasutta*, being part of the collection of long sermons in Pali (the *Dīghanikāya*), provides an interesting illustration of the fact of etheric human races. The reader's attention is called to the fact that this account is based on a cyclic perception of time: processes of the distant future coincide with those of the remote past. The fact is that human evolution on our globe will not only conclude with etheric human races, but was also begun with such races. We shall ascend to the etheric because we once descended from it.

²Gautama Buddha himself gives the account to novice Vāsettha – and novice Bharadvāja, though he is not mentioned in the translation below – about the first and last ages of human beings as radiant beings of light:

³“There comes a time, Vāsettha, when, sooner or later, after the lapse of a long, long period, this world passes away. And when this happens, beings have mostly been reborn in the World of Radiance; and there they dwell, made of mind, feeding on rapture, self-luminous, traversing the air, continuing in glory; and thus they remain for a long, long period of time. There comes also a time, Vāsettha, when sooner or later this world begins to re-evolve. When this happens, beings who had deceased from the World of Radiance, usually come to life as humans. And they become made of mind, feeding on rapture, self-luminous, traversing the air, continuing in glory, and remain thus for a long, long period of time.

⁴“Now at that time, all had become one world of water, dark, and of darkness that maketh blind. No moon nor sun appeared, no stars were seen, nor constellations, neither was night manifest nor day, neither months nor half-months, neither years nor seasons, neither female nor male. Beings were reckoned just as beings only. And to those beings, Vāsettha, sooner or later after a long time, earth with its savour was spread out in the waters. Even as scum forms on the surface of boiled milky rice that is cooling, so did the earth appear. It became endowed with colour, with odour, and with taste. Even as well-made ghee or pure butter, so was its colour; even as the flawless honey of the bee, so sweet was it.

⁵“Then, Vāsettha, some being of greedy disposition said: Lo now! What will this be? and tasted the savoury earth with his finger. He thus, tasting, became suffused with the savour, and craving entered into him. And other beings, following his example, tasted the savoury earth with their finger. They thus, tasting, became suffused with the savour, a craving entered into them. Then those beings began to feast on the savoury earth, breaking off lumps of it with their hands. And from the doing thereof the self-luminance of those beings faded away. As their self-luminance faded away, the moon and the sun became manifest. Thereupon star-shapes and constellations became manifest. Thereupon nights and days became manifest, months too and half-months, the seasons and the years. Thus far then, Vāsettha, did the world evolve again. (*Aggaññasutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*, translated by T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids)

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