

NINE

9.1 What Does Evolution Mean for Man?

¹In hylozoics, we study evolution in the widest possible perspective: as a part of the cosmic process of manifestation. This is necessary if we are to have a correct view of its goal. But we must not forget the human side of the matter. If hylozoics is to have a practical value for us, then it must be able to help us to live better and richer lives now, in this existence. The present section and the one following it will therefore explain man's next possibilities of self-development.

²Very generally it may be said that man develops to the same extent that he strengthens, builds, and activates all the positive qualities belonging to the human kingdom. Negative (or worse) qualities ultimately depend on the fact that the opposite positive ones have not been activated to dominating strength: cowardice is possible because courage is undeveloped, hatred is born from lack of love, etc. When all the positive qualities have been humanly perfected, then the individual has in fact passed to the fifth natural kingdom.

³The fact that man develops to higher levels does not in the first place mean that he conquers "esoteric" or mystic qualities that are incomprehensible to most people. Evolution means above all that man intensifies all the positive qualities he already has to some extent. Man is relatively brave, persevering, faithful, unselfish, grateful, judicious, upright, and so on. He is at the same time relatively cowardly, resigned, unfaithful, selfish, ungrateful, injudicious, and unrighteous. At the lowest two stages the negative qualities are stronger than the positive ones. At the cultural stage, the positive qualities slowly begin to dominate the negative ones. At the causal stage the negative qualities are overcome entirely.

⁴Evolution is that process in which occasional superconsciousness is turned into permanent waking consciousness. The boundary between waking consciousness and the superconscious is always individual and conditioned by the individual level of development, reaping, and self-activation. In most people today, this superconsciousness is essentially emotional (48:2,3) and mental (47:4,5). The most important domains to activate are, therefore, the next higher emotionality (48:3), the positive feelings promoting unity; and the next higher mentality (47:5), perspective thinking, common sense.

⁵Evolution is self-realization in the physical world. It is the human, physically waking conscious self, the monad's consciousness in the physical brain, that by its own work gains nobler qualities, deeper understanding, wider competence, greater energy. All this must be clearly expressed in the physical world and in the interplay with other people. Experiences and achievements in the private inner sphere may appear however decisive to the individual. But if they do not result in his making a better contribution in the physical, becoming a better helper also of others, then there is a great risk that his "spiritual experiences" are just self-deception.

⁶To the individual, evolution means an increasingly wider capacity to solve problems. Life is a seemingly endless series of problems and tasks that man has to solve. There is no level where problems cease, no level where man comes to rest, for then evolution would come to a standstill. The problems of life are objective. They affect man regardless of his subjective erroneous view on his own life-task, his ever one-sided interests, narrow attitudes. Such one-sided views always imply blind spots in his judgement or numb fingers in his hand. When man has omitted to acquire important qualities and abilities or chosen to close his eyes to realities, then the law of destiny will put him into situations where he is forced to develop the very neglected (and disdained!) qualities and capacities.

⁷Evolution is a process leading to a higher degree of self-activity. At lower stages, where the majority still are, man is predominantly a passive product of impressions from his environ-

ment and impulses from his subconscious. He is the slave of the massive telepathic pressure from “public opinion” and automatic reactions in his envelopes. Self-activation means that the human monad learns to feel and think more and more independently. In so doing man takes the first steps towards mastering the consciousness of the envelopes, so that he will finally be able to decide himself what he will feel and think.

⁸Evolution is a gradual emancipation from illusions and fictions. The intellectual fictions lose their power as man studies the esoteric knowledge of reality and eventually learns how to eliminate his rooted habit of confusing opinions with facts, abstract theory with concrete reality, speculation with knowledge. Illusions are harder to get at. They are emotional valuations that divert from the goal, conflict with the laws of freedom, unity, self-realization, and activation, create attitudes that are hostile to life and knowledge. Those are wrong attitudes to possession (“money”), esteem (“glory”), and power. The esoteric teachers have inculcated that the most efficient emancipation from illusions is achieved through unselfish service.

⁹Evolution is realization. It is true we say evolution of *consciousness*. But evolution concerns the power or motion aspect just as much. Consciousness cannot be developed merely into ever higher degrees of perception and understanding. Consciousness also must learn how to use the ever higher energies, conquer the corresponding wills and skills. What is the use of omniscience without omnipotence? According to hylozoics, man develops only in so far as he realizes, that is: increases his skill in action. The physical world is the most important one. It is in this world that man demonstrates his level of development by serving, helping, raising others.

¹⁰By ordinary human standards, evolution is an immensely slow process. A hundred incarnations may pass without noticeable progress. This is due to mainly two factors: repulsive emotionality and passive mentality, or, to put it bluntly: hatred and stupidity. When man begins consciously striving to improve, his development will put on speed, too. The method of activation gives him the tools he will need to do it.

9.2 *Balance Is Necessary*

¹Evolution is supposed to result in a better and not worse balance between man’s different kinds of consciousness and energies. Man is a whole of physical, emotional, and mental nature. If he is to reach his goal in the human kingdom, the activation of his potential causal nature (47:2,3), then his physical, emotional, and mental powers must reach their highest potencies: physical health and vitality, emotional love, and mental intelligence. If any one of these life manifestations is neglected, then man will miss a necessary lifting force; and if any one is suppressed, it means that energies are locked in the envelopes and so block vitalizing causal energies pouring down. Then the result will be reduced vitality, disease, depression, *idées fixes*.

²The organism must receive its due. Exercise, fresh air, relaxation, freedom from rush and tear, regular and sufficient sleep (as much as possible out of doors) are especially important for all “spiritual” workers.

³The importance of diet is often exaggerated by those spiritual seekers who have not yet reached the balancing view of perspective thinking. Everybody should eat the food that makes him the most efficient in the physical world. The organism that is everybody’s inheritance is different from any other and therefore demands individual treatment.

⁴The mystic’s lack of interest in higher mental activation (47:5) and the one-sided intellectualist’s unwillingness to cultivate the higher emotionality (48:3) are equally big mistakes. The mystic often lacks common sense. He may interpret his “revelations” towards sheer absurdity: “I am the cosmic Christ”, “the world exists only in our mind”, etc. The intellectualist often ends up in negative emotionality, a state of permanent irritation and contempt as the result of comparing himself with others. In so doing he may pervert his

superior intellect into pursuing aims that are hostile to life.

⁵Many spiritual seekers today are victims of the mistaken view that you reach higher consciousness by maltreating your so-called lower nature. It is true that, some time in the future, we shall have “grown out of” all consciousness below mentality. But this will only be when we can function with objective self-consciousness in our causal envelope and then quite naturally have lost any interest in emotionality. If we believe that we will reach higher consciousness by denying the lower, then we confuse cause and effect. The child will not grow up by being hindered from playing, but will only be retarded in his growth. By the very play he will be able to mature, and thereupon he will give his toys away to his younger brothers and sisters. It is not by suppressing emotions and urges, our natural playfulness, that we reach higher powers but by gradually ennobling them towards the ideal.

9.3 The Problem of Evil

¹Theology, philosophy, and occultism have tried to solve the problem of evil in various ways. Generally this has resulted in absurdities. Three examples of this:

²Man is born in sin, and he is destined for eternal hell if he does not accept some certain religion. Evil is an illusion that exists just as long as we believe in it. Evil is an eternal principle in existence, necessary to the existence of good.

³According to hylozoics, evil is a terrible reality on our planet and consists in the violation of the right of every living being. Evil manifests itself already in the parasitism of vegetable life and the predacity of animal life. In the human kingdom, evil is far more developed and appears not only in intolerance, oppression, exploitation, killing, etc., but also in the well-organized and intelligent opposition to all essential knowledge of life.

⁴In the deepest sense, evil is the individual's inability to perceive his unity with all the other life. It is his inability of compassion and empathy. It is his inability to understand that every being is a unique individual character that has the natural right to development, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness. Hatred, repudiation, and contempt arise when a man concentrates on (real or imagined) negative traits in another man and overlooks the positive traits that always exist in everybody. Hatred also arises when an emotionally negative person is reminded of his smallness, for instance just by meeting a person of a higher stage. Feelings of envy and inferiority towards people who are at higher stages or are better off are strong motives of hatred in our times. Entire political ideologies have been formulated as rationalizations of such illusions.

⁵Suffering exists only in the physical and emotional worlds, and in these worlds, only in their lower three molecular kinds (49:5-7 and 48:5-7). Only physical suffering may be incurable: pain, old age, disease, death. Emotional suffering can always be cured through an act of determined will, by refusing to suffer, refusing to pay attention to whatever is believed to cause suffering. That presupposes the ability to control your consciousness. That ability can be trained.

⁶Evil and suffering are problems of evolution. At lower stages they are inevitable, since man is ignorant of the laws of life and unable to apply them. At higher stages, man learns to work according to the laws of life and in so doing he sows more good than evil sowing. But he is still afflicted by suffering as a consequence of old bad sowing. Before the monad is able to pass to the fifth natural kingdom, it must have obliterated all its bad sowing sown in the human kingdom, either by reaping the corresponding bad sowing or by voluntarily making good (the method of higher stages). In the fifth natural kingdom and in the ever higher divine kingdoms there is no evil and no such suffering as is due to individual and group egoism.

⁷Good and evil coincide by and large with what furthers and counteracts evolution and unity. Since human beings are found on many different levels of development, what is evil for one individual is not necessarily evil for another. One example of this: Self-assertion is

necessary and a good thing on the lower barbarian levels in order to strengthen early, weak individuality. At higher stages, when man has acquired self-reliance as well as self-determination, self-assertion becomes an evil and hinders his expansion into group consciousness. For the individual, evil is all the lower levels that he has passed in evolution. The particular evil is the level which he has just passed and which still attracts him downwards. Good is all higher levels that he has not yet conquered. The particular good is the level he is just conquering, his concrete ideal that attracts him upwards. This shows that good and evil are relative. On each level, however, good and evil are absolute in their opposition. So they must be, if man is not to end up in a chaos of right and wrong.

9.4 The Laws of Life in Evolution

¹At lower stages, evolution goes on unconsciously and automatically. At higher stages, man can work efficiently for his evolution by applying laws of life. All the seven laws of life always work together in man's evolution. They work in very different ways, however. Three of the laws – the laws of development, destiny, and reaping – work over long series of incarnations without man being able to directly influence them in their effects. They determine the basic conditions of each incarnation. However, within the inescapable limitations that are in any developmental level, destiny, and reaping, man is often able to apply the other four laws – the laws of freedom, unity, self, and activation – efficiently and purposively. Thereby he can indirectly influence the action of the other laws as well. These four laws thus are the most important laws for man from the evolutionary point of view.

²It is an erroneous view of the law of reaping that everything we meet with in life is just reaping (so-called karma). The law of freedom excludes the possibility of so-called blind fate. We have a 99 per cent chance of changing our apparently inescapable destiny. But in order to do so we must have a positive attitude to life, the insight that we have the power to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

³The purpose of the law of reaping is to make us understand life, make us respect unity by showing us in the most tangible manner what the consequence is when we have trodden unity under foot. If we have that attitude, then we should be able to take sufferings and adversities composedly and in a positive way, take them as the trials we must pass in order to gain inner strength and endurance, necessary qualities and abilities.

⁴Usually we take reaping in the negative way. In so doing we worsen the effect of the reaping and sow fresh bad sowing. It is true that man's suffering is self-inflicted. However, only about one tenth of his suffering is bad reaping. The remaining nine tenths must be put down to his negative way of facing his bad reaping: by sorrow, worry, fear, depression, grief, hatred, desire for revenge, and so on. Imagination magnifies and imagination causes us to relive suffering many times over. At the stage of culture man awakens to the insight that he must learn to control his consciousness, consciously keep his thoughts, feelings, and imagination in check. Thereby he has discovered the most efficient weapon there is in his war against suffering. Using it he can learn to overcome the very most of his suffering.

9.5 Positivization

¹Already in the subhuman kingdoms, the monad has managed to acquire a basic tendency. This is either attractive (positive) or repulsive (negative). Having an attractive basic tendency, the monad strives instinctively to adapt to the beings around it, because it – albeit vaguely – perceives its inescapable unity with them. Having a repulsive basic tendency, the monad strives to assert itself against the life surrounding it, to exploit it and to dominate it. The two basic tendencies develop further in the human kingdom into love and hatred, the will to unity and the will to power. Those human monads who have the repulsive tendency must overcome

it, replacing it with the attractive tendency, before they can reach the causal stage. This demands a gigantic work, especially since the majority of mankind on our planet have acquired the repulsive tendency. It is not easy for the minority working to strengthen or acquire attraction, when their environment with its individual and collective negativity (also affecting them telepathically) counteracts that striving. Repulsion is the most massive hindrance to evolution on our planet, collectively and individually.

²From this it is clear that work for attraction – unity, love, understanding, tolerance, brotherhood, co-operation – is the most important evolutionary work that the individual and the collective can do. The necessary basis for this work is the individual's striving for a positive attitude to life.

³Our attitude to everything in life, to other people and to ourselves, is either negative or positive.

⁴The negative attitude (traditionally called “evil”) includes everything that counteracts the laws of freedom, unity, self-realization, and self-activation. To this belong all tendencies to curtail the right of man to live his life as he thinks fit as long as he does not violate the right of others to the same. To this belong all the moralistic demands of some certain way of life or obedience to convention, all hindrances to the pursuit of knowledge, all restraints on man's aspiration to higher levels, all dictatorial, totalitarian, and authoritarian tendencies except necessary measures taken against violators of the rights of others, everything that tends to instil into man fear, pessimism, discouragement, and the sense of meaninglessness or absurdity (plenty of examples in modern art), all kinds of gossip, slander and prying into other people's private life, all suspiciousness and pettiness. And last and first: all judgement and moralization.

⁵The positive attitude (traditionally called “good”) includes everything that works in harmony with the four laws of life mentioned above. The positive attitude strives for loving understanding of everything human, strives to see what is best in everybody, and wants to disregard the worse side as a matter of principle. It refrains from judging and moralizing, since it has seen deeper and knows that faults are always universally human, that we see only what we possess ourselves, that whoever judges another judges but himself. Since everything can be misunderstood, it must be said here that the positive attitude does not imply neutralism or weakness in the face of violations of rights. The positive man does his best to counteract hatred, falsehood, and violence, intervenes resolutely on the side of the violated, but tries at the same time to understand and not to judge the violator – this attitude requires the ability to distinguish between things and people, the errors and the erring. The positive attitude to life is based on trust in life and trust in self and makes its best to instil the same spirit into others. It wants to bring out and show people their immense possibilities, whatever gives us power, courage, and joy; helps us to overcome our rooted tendency to be hypnotized by hindrances and failures.

⁶We can never do too much in the work to increase positivity in ourselves and others. Here is some advice on how to work.

⁷*Of happiness.* All people strive for happiness. Ancient wisdom tells us that happiness will come to us when we have ceased hunting it for ourselves, when we live in order to make others happy. Happiness is not to be found in outer things and circumstances but in inner contentment. We become happier to the extent that we liberate ourselves from our discontent, our envy, our demands on other people and on life.

⁸*Accept the inevitable!* Certain things are in our power; most things are not. It is no use complaining about the inevitable, grieving, putting up a resistance, desiring differently. Vain desires steal from the will, the power we need so well to make a positive contribution where we indeed can make one.

⁹*Of suffering.* Suffering is inevitable as long as we are human beings. We should as a matter

of principle, without exception, regardless of our sympathy for or antipathy to the suffering person try to help whenever and wherever we can. Suffering is at bottom always self-caused through crimes against the laws of life. It is, however, a misconception of the laws of life to refrain from helping, pleading “the karma of the suffering person” as an excuse. Because when trying to relieve suffering we are the agents of the laws of life.

¹⁰*Of attacks.* When we are under attack by other people, when we are being criticized or blamed, we in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred meet repulsion by repulsion: either aggressively and retaliate with corresponding abuse, or depressively and bed ourselves down in self-pity. However, there is a third method which is positive, constructive, and evolutionary for both parties: impersonal compassion. Using it we listen to criticism in this spirit: “I may learn something of this, however exaggerated and twisted it be. I may learn what another person thinks to be my failings, which can help me to overcome them. I learn something of the nature and functions of man. I exercise myself in the virtue of invulnerability.” And, above all: “I make the best of the relation to this person by meeting wrath with calm for then he cannot do otherwise than regret the matter later, so that we can become friends again.” We are responsible for each other. If we meet unkindness with unkindness, then we unfailingly contribute to the other person’s getting stuck in a negative and painful state.

¹¹*Of fear of failing,* that serious hindrance to evolution. All too often we fail to act, to do what we can out of fear of making mistakes. Hylozoics affords us the theoretical understanding of the fact that man is a very imperfect being, since he is under development. But in some way we still cling to that life-hostile moralism (fomented through the demands of Christianity that man be perfect) saying that “he is perfect who makes no obvious mistakes”. The absurdity of this view is clear from the fact that the passive individual who is sitting back when wrong is being done of course “makes no mistakes”. According to the law of reaping, however, passivity and omission have their consequences, and by no means the mildest ones. One way of shaking off this perverse passivism is to say to oneself, over and over again: “The value I give to myself is not due to my so-called failures but to my sincere attempts and my constant striving forwards.”

¹²*Be slow to accuse others* for problems! Rather seek the causes in yourself, if you are to seek them at all! Don’t be slow to act! Do it now!

¹³*Of trust in self.* Generally, we are too dependent on how other people view us and value us. Being under this force we strive to please others and have an inner compulsion to justify our actions before others. We need to strengthen our trust in ourselves. A good beginning is to refrain, on principle, from giving others glimpses of our private life, from explaining motives for our private standpoints, etc. That is a right granted us by the law of freedom. It is a method working on the side of evolution also because it is a non-aggressive way of efficiently counteracting general gossip and curiosity.

¹⁴*Of gratitude.* Every day we should contemplate, for a few minutes, how immensely much we have got for which we should be grateful, how many favours, opportunities, possibilities life grants us almost every moment, how we could use them better in the service of life and in so doing pay off on the debt account. Motto: “Be grateful for everything!”

9.6 Activation

¹In hylozoics, the teaching of the three aspects of existence is fundamental. The beginner is overwhelmed by the idea that everything has a consciousness aspect. But then he must not forget that everything also has a force or energy aspect. It is not enough to develop higher kinds of consciousness, to perceive and understand more and more. It is precisely equally important to develop higher kinds of will and ability, higher kinds of skill in action. For only then you will be able to realize what you have understood. Realization is in the motion or

power aspect.

²In our times, more and more people awaken to the insight that the meaning of life is not in the values of the matter aspect (the acquisitive society) but in those of the consciousness aspect. It is perhaps inevitable that this growing movement for a “new age” is one-sidedly directed to “higher consciousness” as a goal in itself, since most people end up in mysticism and begin striving for “spiritual experiences”. The mystic thinks that ecstatic states are a final goal and when he has reached them he has “reached union with god”. The esoterician, on the other hand, regards such experiences as a “mere beginning”.

³The esoterician knows that this activation of consciousness must be given an outlet in the physical world as well. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that it is in physical life, by struggling with its problems and solving them, that man acquires all the qualities necessary for the higher evolution. Those qualities are essential, which means that they must be humanly perfected before the monad is able to pass to the fifth natural kingdom.

⁴The essential qualities are perfected through a serving attitude resulting in a life of service. Service makes us activate our higher emotionality and then helps us to keep our consciousness on that level. Service helps us to keep our attention away from the negative emotions of other people and hinders such emotions from arising in ourselves: emotions of egotism, self-pity, irritation, aggression, depression. Service helps us to see things, people, and ourselves in a more realistic perspective. Service helps us to liberate ourselves from many illusions and fictions.

⁵Self-activation, extravert activity, and service are necessary to efficient evolution also to counteract a too great and useless sensitivity. The explanation is this. Upon the activation of a somewhat higher kind of consciousness follows a greater sensitivity and impressionability. This turns into suggestibility and vulnerability if the individual does not simultaneously learn to control his consciousness, learn to decide himself what his consciousness is to contain. Also extravert work accustoms consciousness to self-activity, to active attention, and in so doing counteracts efficiently the tendency to passivity, impressionability, suggestibility, vulnerability.

⁶One third of our life time we use up for ordinary sleep. In addition, most of our so-called waking hours we live through in some kind of half-sleep. Then we are little more than mental robots, and the self is neither wide awake nor particularly attentive. We see without looking, hear without listening, talk without reflecting, and our so-called thinking is little more than a chain of mechanical associations. When occasionally awakening to a state of greater wakefulness, it is like being roused from sleep, so we have no exact or clear memory of what we have just done or thought about. Only when some certain thing catches our interest do we give it our full attention. However, even in this state of heightened attention we in most cases still lack self-consciousness, the insight of “I am here now”, “I am looking at that thing”, etc. It is in a way frightening to see that one is much more mechanical than conscious, and that one practically does not possess self-consciousness. Instead of being frightened, however, we could use this insight as the starting point in our work upon ourselves.

⁷For we have no incentive to work hard to acquire something that we presume we already possess, namely self-consciousness. Just a bit of self-observation is enough to convince us of the fact that this presumption is a piece of self-deception. Only those who have trained themselves in self-observation and self-remembering for a very long time possess permanent self-consciousness; we others have it for five seconds or so once in a while. All this is indication that mentality is still but faintly developed in mankind. Man is essentially an emotional being.

⁸However, we can develop mentality and, with it, its most important quality: self-consciousness. We can learn to control our thoughts so that it will be we who decide what we are to

think and not to think. We can learn to live in inner, subjective, reality as well as outer, objective, reality with a heightened degree of self-presence. The two decisive factors are our understanding of the fact that we are not self-conscious but can become so, and our power to control attention. Now and then, for brief intervals, we remember this fact and become more awoken. But after a short while the robot takes over and we forget ourselves. Thus we have some capacity for self-remembrance, but we constantly forget to use it. We really should be able to do so many times a day.

⁹The training of attention is the basis of all methods of activation taught in the esoteric schools. This begins with the question: when you attend to something, is your attention controlled by some mechanical tendency or do you control it? Being fascinated by a TV show so that you forget yourself for close on two hours is an instance of the lowest kind of attention: robot control. Studying yourself and the other person while the two of you are conversing is an instance of attention of the next higher kind: self-control. Attention of the third and highest kind is achieved when you are able to attend to an external object (a flower, for instance) or an internal one (your own thought process) while at the same time being self-conscious (“I am here right now”). Attention of this third kind can be symbolized by an arrow pointing in both directions. This is very difficult, and in the beginning it is achieved only at rare intervals. However, unflagging hard work will yield results, so that in the end a permanent state is achieved. That work is necessary since this state is the basis from which all higher kinds of consciousness are developed. They could all be described as a series of more and more powerful kinds of permanent self-conscious attention.

¹⁰There is nowadays a great interest in various forms of meditation. From the esoteric point of view, three stages are to be distinguished: concentration (a preliminary stage), meditation proper, and contemplation. Concentration is the same as self-controlled attention: you pick an object to attend to and do so for as long as you can keep your attention, not allowing foreign thoughts or associations to come into the process. Meditation is that higher quality of self-controlled attention where you simultaneously remember yourself, exercise self-remembrance: I am thinking this. If you lose self-consciousness at this stage, the result is trance or ordinary sleep. If you succeed in keeping self-consciousness, however, you may reach the third stage, that of contemplation, where the object of meditation is seen in the light of a higher kind of consciousness, so that illumination, that is, higher insight, ensues.

¹¹Needless to say, forms of so-called meditation where attention is not controlled and self-remembrance is not exercised are not efficient for the achievement of higher consciousness, and so really should not be called meditation.

¹²There are risks to meditation. If you have some wrong motive – the desire to become great and important, to gain occult powers, etc. – meditation will do you more harm than good. The motive of our meditation should always be to perfect our tools for the service of evolution. Meditation should never concern uncertain things or hypothetical problems but only real or at least probable things, otherwise you will engrave existing fictions and illusions deeper into your consciousness.

¹³The greatest effect of meditation is achieved when it is exercised daily and then preferably at the same time. It should be short (five minutes are enough) and be interrupted as soon as concentration cannot be kept anymore and thoughts start wandering.

9.7 Thought Power

¹Thought is the most powerful, most important energy man can use for his purposeful evolution. The following seven insights can be utilized in this work of his:

²(1) *Energy follows thought.* Every thought and feeling is a cause that has an inevitable effect. It takes shape in some way or other. The corollary is true as well: everything you want

to take shape, everything you strive for or want to achieve, must first have been thought. Everything you think of, observe, regard with attention, is influenced. Thereby it is reinforced and vitalized.

³(2) *Thought is reinforced by repetition.* The energy effect resulting from every thought and feeling is reinforced by repetition. The more often you repeat a certain consciousness content, the stronger it will get, the more easily it will recur in your consciousness. Finally it will manifest itself in action quite automatically.

⁴(3) *Do not fight the negative!* Since everything that consciousness attends to is reinforced, you should not fight undesirable, negative qualities, not dwell on them in thought and feeling, not deliberately “break with the past”, not fight faults and failings. For such an attitude just leads to a hopeless war against them. On the contrary, you ignore them, resolutely refuse to give them any attention at all, and concentrate on the opposite, good qualities. In so doing you starve out the negative qualities, and they will pine away for lack of nourishment.

⁵(4) *Thought can never be lost.* Nothing that has ever passed through attentive waking consciousness will ever be lost. Everything is preserved in memory, which is the subconscious, and lives on there with its greater or lesser force. Like memories so also acquired qualities can never be lost, can become latent but can be resuscitated. From this it follows that every least positive thought or feeling has a permanent effect in the great positivizing work, becomes a big or a small brick in the great construction work. Therefore, no work in the service of good will ever be done in vain.

⁶(5) *Thought is inexhaustible.* This is just another formulation of the law of giving, which says: “To him who gives will be given. He who holds back will lose.” We will never fear that we shall reach a limit in our ongoing conquest of the powers of thought as long as we constantly give out to others what we have received. Nor will we, when so giving out, fear that we shall be exhausted or go without our share in it. The more we give, the more we receive to give. The energies that sustain us do so not by being stored in us but by pouring through us. Or to use a likeness from the Bible: You can walk on water but not stand on it.

⁷(6) *All things are symbols.* Physical events, actions, or objects either are or can be made symbols for states of consciousness and inner qualities and so remind us of them. This law of symbols we apply negatively more often than not. Happenings, people, things we allow to remind us of negative experiences we have had in connection with them or such things as resemble them. The symbols lead their own lives in the subconscious, acting destructively from there in the form of irrational aversions, inhibitions, phobias. However, man can by acting consciously make physical events symbols of inner positive states and qualities: joy, courage, trust, liberation, love, hope, and so forth.

⁸(7) *Thought liberates us by deidentification.* Our identifications bind us. The most typical features of almost all our consciousness activities are mechanicalness, absence of self-consciousness, and identification. They are but three aspects of the same condition. Identification is so common a feature that we hardly notice it; it is the water we like fish live and swim in. Generally, it can be described as a mechanical force inside us that directs our attention to some object – thing, person, event, thought, feeling, etc. – so that we become completely absorbed or lost in it, in which process we temporarily also lose our power of self-remembrance, self-consciousness, and will.

⁹You can make the following experiment. If you have some power of self-observation you know that in your life there are certain recurrent situations, which are negative, unnecessary, and self-caused. There are, for instance, conflicts with other people, your demand for other people’s consideration, your feeling that you do not have the attention you deserve, etc. During a conflict with another person, negative emotions arise that are unnecessary and harmful. Those emotions swallow you up so that, for the time being, you do not know of

anything else – you are identified with those negative emotions: “I am angry”, “I am sad”, “I feel hurt”, etc. Now, the experiment consists in your trying to “catch yourself” just before you are carried away by this negativity. In other words: you try to self-remember just before such situations tend to arise. You must make this experiment many times before you will have significant results, and there are three stages on the path to success. At the first stage, you do not even remember, until long afterwards, that you should have tried to “catch yourself”. At the second stage, you do remember – at once afterwards and yet too late – and you leave the state of identification with the insight: “Right now, I am awake, but only a moment ago I was fast asleep.” The third stage is the stage of success: you wake up just in time and hinder the robot within you from taking over.

¹⁰This experiment is valuable in a double sense. It demonstrates to you that you are a robot and asleep, but can become a self-conscious, awakened being. It shows you a way to improve your relations with other people.

¹¹A few insights that may be of some use: Do not say: “I was angry.” Say: “A feeling of anger took possession of me.” All art of living can be summed up in the words: “I am not my envelopes. My envelopes desire this, but I do not desire it.”

9.8 *Methods of Activation*

¹The following six methods of activation are based on the seven insights of thought power. They are efficient if used regularly and have no negative effects if used in the manner prescribed in Chapter 9.6.

²(1) *Self-Observation*. You exercise observation of yourself, your inner states. You do not try to control or influence them, not to suppress them in any way, not to analyse and least of all to criticize. You just observe the ceaseless flight of thought, how one association follows the other without pause. You are quite concentrated on self-observation as long as you exercise but interrupt it whenever you sense the slightest discomfort or stress. This exercise can be done as often as you like, for some minutes at a time.

³Eventually you notice the positive effects of this simple exercise. Unrest, inner division, and dissipation (which more often than not are due to telepathic mass pressure) are reduced, concentration, calm, inner harmony increase. Undesired feelings and thoughts do not assert themselves as much as before. Often they are eliminated before reaching the threshold of waking consciousness.

⁴(2) *Meditation on desirable qualities*. You concentrate your attention on a particular, chosen quality for five minutes at the most. You study it from all sides, conceive of it as increasing in strength, visualize yourself in situations where it is put to the test. The exercise should be done every day and preferably at the same time, and so that you change the qualities on a regular basis. There are twelve months and twelve essential qualities. In order for the exercise to yield results it must not be a mere intellectual play. Feeling and imagination must enter into it, so that the qualities referred to become the objects of desire and longing. Also this attitude can be trained forth in meditation.

⁵Meditation on qualities makes it easier to acquire them. Admiration is a powerful force for the realization of ideals. A small boy once heard his parents talk admiringly about a man who with a great presence of mind had saved the lives of many people when a ship went down. This made an indelible impression on the boy. Thereupon, whenever he heard or read about disasters, he imagined himself into the situation, reflecting on how he would have acted. As an adult, at a serious train accident, he was the only one to keep his head cool and so could do a great service to his fellow men. Unknowingly he had meditated on the quality of self-presence and so had acquired it.

⁶(3) *Visualization*. You observe an object intensely during a minute. Then you close your

eyes or cover the object and try to reconstruct it to your inner eye as faithfully and as detailedly as possible. It is a matter of character whether you prefer to visualize with open or closed eyes – the two methods are equivalent. Of course you can visualize pictures from memory, mentally write letters and figures on a blackboard, recall faces you have seen during the day, etc. Visualization increases your power of concentration and activates mentality.

⁷(4) *Occultations* are actions of “heroism in miniature”. This means that you do the very opposite of what the lazy part of yourself wants to do without your putting up an internal resistance. For example: to take the stairs instead of the lift, to not watch that TV show but take a walk with the dog instead. Two things are important: That action follows immediately on the resolution without preparation, afterthought, or inner persuasion. That you do what you have decided cheerfully, without negative emotions.

⁸Occultations strengthen mental will, reduce the tendency to passivity and negativity. They can be performed as often as you like. They are particularly valuable when doing them we can improve our relations with other people. We can let the negativity and aggressiveness of others be the “mental wall bars” against which we train our positive will – by remaining calm and unchangingly polite despite the abuse directed at us. This is training the will to unity.

⁹(5) *Charging*. During one minute at the most you concentrate your attention intensely on a certain positive idea or quality and simultaneously imagine that you transfer this concentrated energy to an object or an action. Then you direct attention to something else.

¹⁰The effect of the exercise is as real as the energy transference – according to the law saying that energy follows thought. The thought of power is power and gives power. Using it you positivize those surrounding you and yourself. The charge remains for a long time and is reinforced by repeated charges. A new contact or just the association of thought with the thing charged evokes the positive idea in the consciousness of the charging person according to the law saying that all things are symbols. In this manner you may surround yourself with quite a set of mental power stations radiating positive energy of all kinds. Using positive energy you can charge gifts, favours, handshakes, everything you like.

¹¹Just one warning: Do not give any energy to the “unworthy”, malicious people who return evil for good. “Love is an impersonal energy” – an axiom in esoterics. This implies, among other things, that with our love energies, if they are strong enough, we intensify the various tendencies already existing in the person to be charged. If these are predominantly negative, then those are the ones that will be the most reinforced, like the warming rays of the sun cause beautiful flowers to grow, but thistles as well.

¹²(6) *Self-Remembrance*. You will recall what was said about this in Chapter 9.6. Make a pact with yourself to self-remember, say three times a day for at least three minutes at a time. If you think that too small a commitment, just see if you can keep it up even for a week. This is very hard work, but necessary, if your aim is to produce self-consciousness.

¹³However, you will have to make your own experiments to convince yourself why it is better to self-remember than not to do it. You will find that the best method is to compare states of consciousness: you are always moving from a state of relative wakefulness or self-consciousness towards a state of relative sleep or mechanicalness, or vice versa. For example, ask yourself about a thing you regret having done: could I ever have done it in a state of self-remembrance?

¹⁴It takes some time to find the knack in self-remembrance. In a way it is like learning to ride a bicycle: every normal person can do it, it is impossible to do it at once, but all of a sudden the skill is there. Unlike riding a bicycle, however, you have to regain the skill every time you remember to remember yourself. And it takes some time to learn to tell the difference between imagination about self-remembrance and real self-remembrance: the same difference as between imagination about work and real work. Real self-remembrance has a

feature of strangeness, like when you awaken one morning after sleeping in a strange house: “I am here. How strange!” It has an aspect of heightened aliveness, impressions being more vivid. It is also accompanied by a calm though strong optimism, like the insight of the mystics that “all is well”. One important characteristic of real self-remembrance is that it never hinders or impairs normal consciousness functions, whether those of thinking, feeling, or moving. It is “above” those functions, not detracting quality from them but, on the contrary, adding quality.

¹⁵Self-remembrance has many quality degrees in an ascending scale. Eventually you will learn to “put more and more into it”, using it in connection with more and greater ideas, observing in several directions, engaging several consciousness functions simultaneously: thinking, feeling, receiving sense impressions, and moving muscles with self-presence and intention. Once you have discovered this world of self-remembrance you will never see the end of its riches.

The above text constitutes section Nine of *The Explanation* by Lars Adelskog.
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