

A LONG THOUGHT ON WISDOM

To conceive the positive there is in all ideals is the main problem of the art of living; to survey them all in their connectedness is the final goal of human wisdom. All true ideals can be derived from the striving for perfection.

As a rule many lives come between gaining knowledge of an ideal, the insight that it is desirable, the understanding that it is necessary, and finally the ability acquired to realize it. Ideals adapted to some certain level of development, that is: next to the level the individual has reached, can be realized if the individual strives purposefully for it.

Qualities and abilities are required to realize ideals. Only those who draw near to the fifth natural kingdom are able to realize the highest ideals. Man is found somewhere among the 777 levels of human development. He has the qualities and abilities corresponding to the level he has reached. The abilities he has not acquired belong to a higher level, and those he lacks. That is no fault of his and no moral defect.

Life-ignorant moralism makes an absolute demand of agreement between life and teaching. Those at the humanist stage have always understood that this demand is absurd. If man were perfect, then he would not need to incarnate. Add to this the fact that the serious faults have been forced on us in order to teach us not to judge. For those who judge will be judged. This is connected with the fact that we cannot see our real faults.

In respect of research, life is a never-ending series of problems of reality through all the higher worlds and kingdoms in nature. It is characteristic that the pertaining problems cannot be solved theoretically but only practically. It is true that you must get to know the facts of existence. But in addition understanding is required and you gain that only by living the life. It is in life that you find the solution, see the solution, not through pondering and speculation. The solution is spontaneous, like a revelation, when you live in unity and for unity. That is the meaning of the ancient saying "love solves all problems". That is why essential consciousness (46) is called "love and wisdom", the two being inseparable. There can be no wisdom without love, only prudence.

Wisdom is acquired by striving to understand, by sympathizing with all living beings, by sincerity, humility, and the desire to serve. Thereby the finest human qualities are acquired. They are not acquired by learning by heart what is said in books. You can learn from the experiences of another if you have these experiences latently yourself. You cannot learn from the experiences of another, if they are above your own level and outside your own past experience. Platon saw that the wise man may become the most skilful in everything he takes an interest in and has an opportunity to reacquire, just because he has these very abilities latently, having acquired them in previous incarnations.

Wisdom is won through self-realization. That is the one and only path. Without practice, everything will remain theory. No theory, however correct, will help anyone to go forward. Realization requires experimental experience. Through such experience new, undreamt-of faculties are acquired.

Wisdom begins by seeing the importance of "evil" for development as an impelling factor, by seeing the importance of the appearance of the latent faults, by understanding the importance of mistakes and failures. Until then, the passivity and omissions of the negative attitude have

been prevalent, laissez-faire has been the most comfortable, the fear of making mistakes has strengthened cowardice. He knows good who knows evil. The perversion of evil, which we experience daily, finally teaches us to see the necessity of good. Evil is lawlessness, and the basis of evil is life-ignorance. Because anyone who has true knowledge and insight does not act against the Law.

Two difficult things are part of the art of living: to learn to love solitude and to acquire the need for being silent about what you know. Both things are necessary. It is in solitude that we profit by what our unconscious can teach us. Anyone who gossips, chatters away himself and other people's confidence, and sows much bad sowing. "To will, to know, to dare, and to be silent" is the sum of esoteric wisdom.

The Sokratean realization that "one is an idiot", thus genuine humility in respect of truth, is the first step on the path of wisdom. Anyone who feels himself important (or feels himself "ready") is far from reaching that insight. Another great mistake is any kind of comparison with those at lower levels. We are all brothers of the same kingdom in nature, and even though the path to the next higher kingdom be of different length, yet it is exceedingly short compared to that remaining for us all. When those of the fifth and sixth and still higher kingdoms call us their brothers, then we have every reason to try to assimilate that view of life: that all living beings make up a universal brotherhood. Anyone who has realized this understands, too, that hatred in all its thousand manifestations is the very perversion of life.

Ignorant people have taken the motto "know thyself" as if it meant: gain wisdom by self-analysis. But in order to know himself, man must know who he has been, his latent possibilities, the full meaning of his incarnation. Man's unconscious is his contact with all the worlds of man. These are not known through self-analysis. And he must know them in order to understand himself. Man is self-blind until he has become Man. Self-knowledge presupposes knowledge of everything else. The last thing he comes to know is himself.

In his egotism man feels that he is the centre of the universe. Everything is valued according to its importance to himself. Wisdom begins where he ceases to be the centre of his circle, instead placing an ideal in it, not in order to become ideal but to forget himself.

The ignorance of life believes that happiness consists in external circumstances and outward things. To most people happiness consists in some illusion: being somebody, knowing how to do something, in their excellence, in glory, wealth, power, etc. That happiness which is never lost lies in the ability, acquired methodically, of forgetting your utterly, comically insignificant personality with all its insistent claims, never satisfied desires, and innumerable causes for alarm; and in cultivating the tendency to unity and in living for some ideal. Anyone who runs after happiness will never find it. Happiness comes to the man who does not need it, who lives to make other people happy.

The mystic thinks he does not need clarity, knowledge, or wisdom, since the dynamic energy of love is sufficient impelling force for him. But experience will teach him, by the consequences of unwise loving actions, that wisdom and knowledge are necessary as well. It constantly appears that human wisdom is not very wise. And so begins the pursuit of true wisdom, and that goes on during incarnations until the individual, through the higher mental development, reaches up to the world of causal knowledge and finds that the prerequisite of wisdom is the understanding that all life is one. Only he is wise who has entered unity, the world of unity. The causal knowledge of reality is not sufficient for man always to live right, to act wisely.

The first self can acquire knowledge, but wisdom is a faculty of the second self. Wisdom requires essential (46) consciousness (intuition in the original and proper sense), consciousness of unity, collective consciousness, consciousness of community. But you are well on the road to wisdom if you make efforts to apply in practice the esoteric knowledge we have received and if you are not content to use it for theoretical study only. Knowledge without application is the direct opposite of wisdom. Our failure to apply the knowledge is the ground of our faults and failings. Along with knowledge goes responsibility, something that most people would heed more if they could study their incarnations.

The whole of the wisdom of life is the simplest of all simple things. Forget yourself and live for something other than yourself. Doing this, however, you must use your common sense, so that you do not throw away yourself on activities that are below your own capacity, but live for those things by which you can best serve mankind, consciousness development, and unity. This is how the great ones live, those in higher kingdoms. Anyone who gives his all to life receives all from life to ever higher degrees. This is the simple summary of the art of living taught by all religions.

My Augoeides: Lead me from unreality to reality, lead me from darkness to light, lead me from death to immortality.