

THE ETHERIC ENVELOPE

Introduction

Students are supposed to have an elementary knowledge of the etheric envelope and of its force centres.^{3.8.3}

To begin with, they must recognize that everything that exists has an energy aspect, and that the etheric, emotional, and mental envelopes are energy envelopes, each forming a vehicle for its own kind of energy and conveying energy of the next higher kind – the etheric envelope conveys emotional energy; the emotional envelope, mental energy; and the mental envelope conveys causal energy.^{10.2.18}

The etheric envelope is the force or vital envelope and it permeates every part of the organism. It is the true physical body. The etheric envelope is in the nature of tens of thousands of energy threads woven together to form a web. In certain localities in this web there are special energy centres. There are many (some hundred thousand) such centres, but the most important are seven in number. According to the nature of the force animating the etheric envelope, according to the activity of that force in the etheric envelope, according to the aliveness or the sluggishness of the most important parts of the etheric envelope – the centres – so will be the corresponding activity of the organism.^{10.2.3,15}

The forces which make up the etheric envelope or the various pranas of which it is constructed emanate: 1) From the planetary aura. This kind of prana is planetary prana, which is primarily absorbed by the spleen and determines the health of the organism. 2) From the emotional world and reaches the etheric envelope through the emotional envelope. This kind of prana is desire prana, which affects primarily the centres below the diaphragm. 3) From mental world and reaches the etheric envelope through the mental envelope. This kind of prana is largely thought force and influences the throat centre. 4) From the causal envelope, stimulating primarily the crown, eyebrow, and heart centres.

Most people receive force only from the etheric and emotional worlds, but disciples receive force also from the mental and causal worlds.^{10.2.16,17}

There are five kinds of prana, functioning through and, therefore, constituting the total etheric envelope.

There are five different kinds of causal-mental prana thus corresponding to the five kinds of mental consciousness 47:1-5 and the five modes of existence of the faculty of thought. 47:7 hardly deserves to be called “faculty of thought” and 47:6 too easily becomes a slave to emotional illusions.^{10.2.8,9}

All students should deepen their knowledge and understanding of the etheric envelope, and this for three reasons:

1) The discovery of etheric matter and the etheric envelope is the next step in the scientific exploration of the matter aspect. This discovery will be hastened if thinking people can formulate intelligent ideas about this interesting subject. We can aid in the revelation of the truth by our clear thinking. From the standpoint of the present pronouncements about the ether scientists will eventually arrive at an understanding of etheric forms and envelopes.

2) The etheric envelope forms the basis for immortality, the law of unity (also called the law of brotherhood), and astrology. This is connected with the fact that the etheric envelope is composed of force centres which are linked by force currents with each other and that the etheric envelope as a whole is connected with the nervous system and the rest of the organism.

3) It is necessary to realize that the etheric envelope is vitalized and controlled by thought and can through thought be brought into full functioning activity. This is done by right thinking, not by breathing exercises. When aspirants grasp this, they will desist from much

dangerous practice and instead obtain a normal and safe control of that most potent instrument, the etheric envelope.^{1.4.11-14}

The Etheric World – Solar Systemic (49:1-4) and Cosmic (43–46)

It is today easier to prove that there is a mental world than it is to prove that there is an etheric world. Certain scientists recognize the fact of an etheric envelope, most of them do not, and the masses of mankind are ignorant of it. That which lies closest to us and in our immediate foreground we often overlook, and teachers and guides in the planetary hierarchy note with interest how much emphasis is laid upon phenomena of the emotional world, and how little attention is paid to the more obvious and more easily discerned etheric forms and forces. Given a slight change in the present mode of visual focusing it will be found that the human eye is capable of including an entirely new field of perception and of awareness. Blindly men introvert their attention and become aware of objects in the emotional world, that illusive world of ever-changing forms and yet, they fail to see that which lies immediately before them. In this connection it is the struggle against emotional illusionism, a struggle that is particularly hard for people in the fourth eon, the emotional eon.^{9.5.5}

The four ethers make up a higher three (49:1-3) and a lower one (49:4), which always indicates the three aspects of divinity and the form through which these three interact and must manifest themselves. In this connection it should be noted that the organism is not included, since it is not a cause, but an effect brought about through the union of the three and the fourth. Both in the solar system, the macrocosm, and in man, the microcosm, there are the three higher and the fourth. On a macrocosmic scale these four are the higher four solar systemic worlds, the cosmic physical-etheric world (43–46). On a microcosmic scale these four are downscaled in the etheric envelope with its four ethers (49:1-4) of every life-form of the four natural kingdoms. These four ethers are four kinds of energy constituting the etheric envelope of every form of life in the physical world, and they are receptive to the influence of their higher correspondences, that is to say, energies from the worlds 43–46. This relation between the prototypal trinity (43–45) and the fourth (46) and the reflection or downscaling in the ethers of the physical world (49:1-4) is found in all physical life-forms but manifests itself differently in the four different physical natural kingdoms according to the energy which predominates in the respective kingdom. In each of the four natural kingdoms all four ethers are found, but the fourth ether (49:4) is found in greater measure in the mineral kingdom than in the human, whereas the first ether (49:1) is found in greater proportion in the human kingdom than in the other three kingdoms. This information serves to indicate some of the knowledge which the worker in white magic has to grasp. What is said here might be further illustrated by stating that working in the mineral kingdom, the white magician will work with the fourth cosmic ether (46-energy) utilizing the fourth ether of his own etheric envelope to transmit 46-energy to mineral life-forms, and correspondingly when working in the higher three, physical natural kingdoms (when working in the vegetable kingdom he transfers 45-energy via 49:3 of his own etheric envelope, and so on with 44- and 43-energies).^{9.5.12.22}

General Information about the Centres of the Etheric Centres and Their Energies

Back of the physical form of a human being, responsible for its creation, its maintenance and its use, lies the causal envelope. Back of all activity for the furthering of human evolution as well as of other evolutionary processes stands the planetary hierarchy. Both are centres of energy; both work under law creatively; both for their activity in the physical objective reality proceed from a higher reality, which to man is as yet subjective only (47:3 and higher); and both are responsive (in the great sequence of living beings of ever higher kinds) to vitalization and stimulation from higher centres of energy. For the causal envelope, this higher energy

centre is the second triad; for Augoeides, it is Protogonos; for the planetary hierarchy, it is the planetary government. Some of the factors that the disciple has to learn to recognize during his particular series of incarnations fall into two main groups. The factors of each group are seven types of energy that influence his envelopes of incarnation.

The first group of forces concerns purely the envelopes of incarnation (47:4–49:7), which are the predominant factors right up to the stage of the probationary disciple.^{5.3.2,3}

The centres have three main functions: 1) They vitalize the organism, thus make it alive. 2) They make it possible for man to develop self-consciousness. The energies conveyed by the etheric centres for this purpose are received from the centre of the causal envelope. 3) They transmit second-triad energies to man so that he can be transformed into a second self. Nothing is said here about the functions of the etheric centres to transmit the energies of the emotional and mental envelopes, but that only the transmissions of physical, causal, and higher energies are classed among the main functions. In other words, the emotional illusion-creating energies and mental fiction-creating energies are not classed among the main functions.

The function of vitalization is shared by man with the animals and with all living beings, and his capacity to move freely in a three-dimensional world is the outstanding faculty developed from that function. Self-consciousness is the prerogative of the human kingdom among the lower four natural kingdoms. When man has evolved, when all parts of his nervous system, his endocrine system, and his envelope centres are coordinated and working in harmonious rhythm, then the energies transmitted from the second triad make their presence felt. The second-triad energy (45:4, 46:1, and 47:1) and not just the consciousness energy (47:2,3) or sentient energy (47:4-7 and 48:2-7) pours through man, the instrument of divine life and the custodian of forces, to be held and used also for the other and lower kingdoms in nature.^{5.3.12,13}

The esoteric aphorism: “to will, to know, to dare, and to be silent”, has a special significance not hitherto revealed and at which only hints are possible. Those readers who have the inner knowledge will understand it at once:

“To will” refers to the ultimate achievement made by the monad when, by means of the combined energies of the first triad and second triad it centres itself in the 45-atom of the third triad. This concerns the basal centre.

“To know” concerns the eyebrow centre. A hint to the monad’s work lies in the expression the “marriage in the heavens”. The “bridal chambre” is the name of that centre in middle of the brain, where the energy of the crown centre, the “bridegroom”, and the energy of the eyebrow centre, the “bride”, have their first “knowledge of each other”, that is to say are united and beget the “son”, the 46-consciousness and its energy (will), in doing which they become the father and mother of the son. The birth of the son – the monad’s transformation into a 46-self – then takes place in the home of the father (the crown centre).

“To dare” gives the clue to the subordination of the first self. The centre intended here in particular is the solar plexus centre, the clearing house of desire and of the emotional forces generally. It is also the main centre of the transmutative work.

“To be silent” refers to the transmutation of the lower creative energy into the higher creative energy. What is to be silent after that is the sacral centre.

These four centres thus are particularly important for the disciple. Through the eyebrow centre the purified first self expresses itself. Through the control of the energies of the basal centre (the “serpent fire”, the threefold idea mentalite) and through raising them all the way up into the crown centre, the monad finally achieves a complete control of the first self and aligns it with the second self. In the sacral centre, the basic force of our solar system, the force of attraction, is transmuted from the reciprocal attraction of the sexes to the attraction of the

first self by the second self. In the solar plexus centre which, being the organ of emotional consciousness and of the lower psychic powers, all lower emotional forces are gathered and transmuted into higher emotional ones and are carried up into higher centres.

The teaching given here is both deep and abstruse, but it is needed for the few, and their numbers will increase as time elapses.

The subject is complex also because the more detailed and so more exact teaching differs between the departments (rays), so that both the theoretical explanations and the practical methods are different for disciples of different departments.

“To will” is the prerogative of the third self. “To know” is the function of the second self. “To dare” is the duty of the first self. “To be silent” is the ultimate destiny of the envelopes of incarnation in their interplay with the second self.

The vital forces are simply the passing through the envelope of the ether. There are many kinds of ether, and all are in motion. One of the concepts, lying back of the astrological theory, is that the etheric envelope of any life-form is part of the etheric envelope of the solar system, and is therefore the medium for the transmission of planetary and solar systemic energies, and of extra-solar or cosmic impulses. These forces and energies are constantly circulating through the ether of space, and are therefore constantly passing through the etheric envelopes of all life-forms. This is a basic truth connected with the idea of unity and the oneness of all manifestation.

The second basic idea is that the capacity of etheric envelope of every life-form to respond to energies and to appropriate, to utilize, and to transmit them is dependent on the condition of the envelope centres, of the chakras. The centres referred to here include not only the well-known seven major centres but numbers of lesser vortices of force, as yet unknown and unnamed in the Occident. The capacity of the etheric envelope mentioned is dependent also on the quality of the very envelope, on its aliveness, and also on the fine-meshed network in which the centres have their place, and which in its entirety is called the “web” or the “golden bowl”. If this web is clear of impediments and of sediment, and if its channels are not clogged, then the circulating rays, energies, and forces can easily use it as a medium and can circulate unimpeded throughout the entire envelope. These rays, energies, and forces can then utilize those centres which are responsive to their vibrations, and can be passed on and through to forms in the same natural kingdom or in other kingdoms. Here lies the secret of all scientific and esoteric healing. Healers are experimenting with the etheric envelope, and yet little real knowledge is theirs. They know little or nothing of the centres in their own etheric envelope, centres through which the magnetic or other currents must flow. They are unaware of the condition of the etheric centres of those they seek to heal and of the nature of the forces they wish to employ. All they can do is to discipline their lives, and so control their desires that they build a clean organism and a clean pure envelope and provide clear channels for the passage of forces from and through themselves to others.

The third basic idea to be noted is that life-forms are as yet primarily responsive to the forces which reach them from other life-forms on the planet, to energies of the seven basic types emanating from the seven 49-globes, and also to the life-giving solar second department energy. All life-forms in all the lowest four natural kingdoms respond to these many forces, to these seven energies and to the one ray. Mankind is responsive also to energies of other kinds and to solar systemic rays – all however coloured by the force generated within the solar system.

The work of the esotericians and of the aspirants is to arrive at an understanding of these forces and so learn their nature and their use, their potency and vibratory rate. They have also to learn to recognize their source and be able to differentiate between first-triad energies and second-triad energies, as well as the different type energies (“rays”). To begin with, they should make a clear distinction between energies emitted by the first self through the

mechanical functions of its envelopes of incarnation and the energies emitted by the same first self when being self-active in higher centres and in a state of self-consciousness, thereby also being aligned with the causal envelope.

Broadly speaking, the work of the human kingdom is to transmit energy to the lower natural kingdoms, while the work of the planetary hierarchy, in its relation to the human kingdom, is to transmit energies from the fifth and sixth natural kingdoms, from other 49-globes, and from the solar system. Before these energies can be transmitted to mankind, they must be scaled down and, in the process, be differentiated.

The subject is complex, but students must not get confused. They must learn to give particular attention to certain general principles, and remember that as they tap causal consciousness, they will receive knowledge of the details as well.^{5.3.17-31}

The Work of the Planetary Hierarchy on the Etheric Envelope

¹One of the principal objects of endeavour at the present time on the part of the elder brothers is to stimulate, purify, and coordinate the etheric envelope. The etheric envelope is not only the transmitter of prana but is also the medium for all the energies which we are considering. The importance of the etheric envelope will increase, which is clear also from the following facts:

²1. Since the etheric envelope is of physical matter, the acquisition of etheric objective consciousness is the next step ahead for mankind. This will demonstrate at first as the ability to see etherically and to cognize etheric matter. Also it will be easier for people to realize the correctness of hylozoics after they have acquired etheric objective consciousness.

⁴2. The etheric envelope is the field of exploration immediately ahead of the modern scientist. In time, many medical practitioners will be recognizing it as a fact of nature.

⁵3. Most of the diseases that the organism suffers from at present have their roots in the etheric envelope. There are few, if any, purely organic diseases. Disease has its source in emotional and etheric conditions.

⁶4. Safe and sane clairvoyance and clairaudience depend on the purification of the etheric envelope.

⁷5. The etheric emanations of people can be great contaminators. The purification, therefore, of the etheric envelope will result in a healthier and saner mankind.

⁸Hence, the importance of the etheric envelope. There are many other reasons which will later be emphasized. In beginning to form your ideas on the subject, however, it is the part of wisdom to adhere to wide generalities until the whole matter has taken clear shape in your mind, before you try to grasp the details.

⁹The planetary hierarchy's work on the etheric envelope, however, is not confined only to the etheric envelopes of men. It is a planetary process. The etheric envelope of the earth itself is being subjected to a definite stimulation and vitalization. This vitalization is being attempted in three ways:

¹⁰1. The coming in of the seventh departmental energy ("ray") causes an increased rate of vibration of the physical atoms. This will not be as a sudden and violent change, but so slowly and gradually that man will recognize it in the course of centuries only.

¹¹2. Certain emotional forces influence the planetary etheric envelope so that the internal structure of the atom is changed slowly but definitely. Consciousness in another of the spirals, the fifth (counted from below), is awakened.

¹²3. The third department of the planetary hierarchy (the department of the mahachohan) uses one of the powerful talismans (instruments charged with energy) of the seventh ray.

¹³In all that has been said here about the etheric envelopes of men and about the etheric envelope of the planet, the crux of the whole situation lies in the fact that the five rays,

departmental energies, active at this time have the seventh ray as their predominating ray. The seventh ray is the ray that controls the etheric and the devas of the ethers. It controls the seventh molecular kind of all the solar systemic worlds (43–49) but it dominates at this time the seventh molecular kind of the physical world (solid physical, 49:7). Being in the fourth eon also, when a ray comes in, it has also a special influence on the fourth molecular kind. Note how this works at this time in the three lowest worlds:

¹⁴1. The fourth or lowest ether (49:4) is to be the next region of physical consciousness. Etheric matter will be visible to increasingly more people in the future.

¹⁵2. The fourth region of the emotional world (48:4) holds the majority of people who have left physical life.

¹⁶3. The fourth mental region (47:4) is the region of devachan.^{6.10.1-16}

The Preparatory Work by the Aspirant for the Awakening of the Centres

Consequential upon the aspirants' work at character building, service, and meditation the results in the centres of their envelopes will be direct and desirable, even if invisible, "esoteric", to themselves. Aspirants are often anxious to be told some new thing, and when they are told some old and familiar truth, it fails to make impression on them. Then they do not apply it, and therefore do not progress either.

Next, the necessary requirements are stated in the order in which they are important to the average aspirant: 1) character building, 2) right motive, 3) service, 4) meditation, 5) a technical study of the science of the centres, 6) breathing exercises, 7) learning the technique of the will, 8) development of the power to employ time, 9) arousing of the idea mentalite or kundalini. The last and ninth point will not be considered at this stage of the training.^{3.9.1-3}

1) *Character building*. These nine points are to be studied from their force aspect, and not from their ethical or spiritual import. It is the "world of force into which the initiate enters," and it is the training he receives as an aspirant that makes such a step possible. Each human being enters life with a certain equipment, which is the product of past lives of endeavour and of experience. That equipment has in it certain deficiencies, and is seldom balanced. Each human being in each life has a predominant trend towards which all the energies of his nature turn: physical, emotional, or mental. The monad can function as the active nucleus in these energy envelopes, but is in most people mostly passive, controls the envelopes only very little, identifies itself with their consciousness functions, and so denies itself as yet the actualization of its inherent potential.

When the monad awakens to the need of dominating the situation and of asserting its own authority, it has to discover first which type of energy preponderates and is the motivating force in its daily experience. Having discovered this, it begins to reorganize, to reorient, and to rebuild its envelopes. The whole of the teaching on this can be summed up in two words: vice and virtue.

Vice means that the energies of the envelopes of incarnation (47:4–49:7) control the monad, in so doing retaining the monad in those envelopes and counteracting the causal energies (47:1-3). The causal energies are those energies by the aid of which the monad gains liberation from its slavery to the lower envelopes and their energies.

Virtue means that the monad assimilates the causal energies and, using them, controls the the energies of the envelopes of incarnation synthesized in 47:4. The method used by the monad in doing this is that of character building. If, for instance, a man allows himself to be easily irritated and has a nervous disposition, he is told to exercise diligently non-identification in order to acquire inner calm, peace, and self-control. Instead of the restless, self-centred emotionality and the activity of the solar plexus centre, which rules when the monad is centred in the emotional envelope, the monad should, when temporarily centred in

the causal envelope, let the steady, non-identified, and harmonizing rhythm of that envelope control the mental envelope, which then in its turn controls the emotional envelope ((47:4 controls 47:5-7 and 47:5-7 control 48:2-7 according to this pattern: 47:5 controls 48:2,3, 47:6 controls 48:4,5, and 47:7 controls 48:6,7. The etheric envelope is controlled by the emotional envelope at lower stages; directly by the causal envelope at the causal stage. This work of imposing the vibrations of the causal envelope on the envelopes of incarnation is character building, the first prerequisite for the probationer.^{3.9.4-7}

2. *Right motive.* The acquisition of right motive is a constant endeavour in which the initiative shifts the focus as newer and higher motives emerge. An aspirant at the early stages is practically always a devotee. The great ones, the elder brothers, are objects of his devotion and ardent effort, and he tries to serve them. However, they tell him that he should rather direct his devotion to the service of mankind and unity, cooperate in the plan for consciousness development, and so working realize that he is part of unity and is an instrument through which the second self acts.^{3.9.8,9}

3. *Service.* A study of right motive leads naturally to right service. In its objective form, service should correspond to the kind of consciousness that supplies the right motive. Service is first directed to the planetary hierarchy, to the group of disciples of a 45-self, and thence service to mankind. Eventually there is developed a consciousness of the plan and service in accord with the plan.

4. *Meditation.* Meditation is dangerous and unprofitable to the man who enters upon it without the basis of a good character and of clean living. Meditation then becomes only a medium for the bringing in of energies which but serve to stimulate the undesirable aspects of a man's being. Meditation is dangerous when the man has a wrong motive, such as desire for personal growth and for spiritual powers, for it produces, under these conditions only a strengthening of pride and other illusions. Meditation is dangerous when the desire to serve is lacking. Service actually means the utilization of the force of the second self for the good of the group.

5. *Study of the centres.* The disciple is enjoined not to work with the lower centres, nor try to use them intentionally as clairvoyant and clairaudient persons do. All the work done at the centres by aspirants and disciples must be done in the head and from the head. In the head is the seat of the third triad and the will aspect, working through the second triad and the causal envelope. There also is the synthetic expression of the first triad. By understanding the interrelation and interaction of the crown and eyebrow centres the disciple will be able gradually to dominate the first triad by the second triad. Through this domination will subsequently come the control of the activity of the lower five centres so that their work will eventually be automatic.

The presiding intelligence, the monad, in the eyebrow centre and guided by the light in the head will be awake to the interests of the causal self in becoming and as self-conscious as the normal first self can be. By the rhythm of his life oriented towards the second self and by his conscious cooperation with the plan, the disciple in incarnation must act as the agent of his causal being in worlds 47-49.

6. *Breathing Exercises.* Little by little as the disciple makes progress he will receive the needed instruction. He cannot use any breathing exercises securely, however, until he attempts to impose rhythm on his life of every day. The two activities must run parallel.

Breathing exercises have several effects. The effect on the centres of the etheric envelope is the most thorough. This effect follows the trend of the aspirant's thought. If a man directs his thought to the solar plexus centre, that centre will inevitably be vitalized and his emotional nature be strengthened. Hence it is necessary that aspirants hold their meditation steady in the head and so awaken the crown and eyebrow centres.

Breathing exercises produce potent positive) effects, if rightly used over a long enough period of time and as potent negative effects, if wrongly used over a long enough period of time.

Nothing much is to be said of the three last mentioned requirements for the time is not yet ripe for their correct understanding.^{3.9.10-17}

The Study of Energies by the Aspirant and the Disciple

The energies of the first self are energies of the matter aspect. The energy of the second self is that of the consciousness aspect, and essential energy (46) in particular. The object of human evolution is to bring this 46-energy into full manifestation in physical man and this through the utilization of the first self, though not directly through the envelopes of the first self (47:4–49:7) but only when these are completely controlled by the causal envelope, a condition that obtains in the fully developed causal self.^{10.2.18}

What the aspirant has to do is first to learn the nature of the energies or pranas which have brought physical body, principally the etheric envelope, into manifestation and which keep it in such a condition that he can or cannot rapidly achieve the goal he sets himself as a causal self or at least when in self-conscious contact with Augoeides. This lesson involves arriving at the knowledge of those forces which are peculiarly potent in his life and which seem to direct his activities. This will bring to him the knowledge as to which centres of his etheric envelope are awakened and which are dormant. This all aspirants have to grasp before they really can apply themselves to the real training for discipleship.^{10.2.20,21}

Second, he should try to grasp the relation between his personal mental, emotional and physical etheric energies, and those same forces as they are found in their corresponding worlds and govern the manifestation of the macrocosm.^{10.2.22}

Third, he should study the reactions on others of whatever energy he is expressing through his first self. Through a close study of his personal “effect” on his fellowmen, as he lives among them, and as he thinks, speaks and acts, he learns the nature of that type of force which may flow through him. He can arrive, therefore, at an understanding of its type, its quality, its strength, and its speed. These four qualifications warrant consideration and elucidation.^{10.2.25}

The conscious disciple has the additional task of, first, learning to work with these energies in an intelligent manner in order to bring about three happenings: 1) A harmonious cooperation with his own Augoeides, so that the force of the second triad may impose its rhythm on the forces of the first triad. 2) An intelligent response to and affiliation with the group of world servers who at any given time have undertaken the work of directing, by the power of their thought, mental, emotional, and physical-etheric forces and so leading the whole creative body forward along the line of the plan of the planetary government. The “new group of world servers” is not meant here, but the planetary hierarchy itself. 3) The production in the physical world of a first self adequate for its creative task and capable of those activities, emanating from the intellect, which will enable it to further the work of the directing agencies.

Second, learning to live as a causal self and, therefore, free from identification with the first self. This develops three faculties: 1) The ability to withdraw attention into the crown centre and from there to direct the life of the first self. 2) The power to pass through the various centres in the etheric envelope those universal forces and energies which are needed for world work. The disciple has to do this consciously and in full awareness of the source from which they come, of the mode of their activity and of the purpose for which they must be used. This involves also the understanding of which force is related to which centre. This consequently involves the necessity to develop the centres of the etheric envelope, to activate them to a higher energy level and to harmonize them into a unified rhythm. 3) The capacity, therefore,

to work at will through any particular centre. This is possible only when the monad, being self-conscious in the causal envelope and working through the eyebrow centre, controls the lower centres and when the idea mentalite in the basal centre has been made to rise through all the intervening centres all the way up into the head. This energy has to pass up through the etheric counterpart of the spinal column, sushumna, and burn its way through the webs which separate centre from centre.^{10.2.23,24}

The Right Direction of the Energies of the Etheric Centres

It is simple to grasp intellectually the data given about these centres of force. It is most difficult to bring about the rearrangement of the forces flowing through these vortices, and to learn to function consciously through the higher centres, subordinating the lower centres to these higher ones. This has to be done also without laying the emphasis on the matter aspect as many do when they try to vitalize the centres.

The three centres below the diaphragm, the basal, sacral, and solar plexus centres, which are at present the most potent and the most “alive” in average man, require to be reorganized, reoriented, and to be brought from a state of positivity into that of negativity. Equally, the four centres above the diaphragm, the heart, throat, eyebrow, and crown centres, must be awakened and brought from a state of negativity into that of positivity. In this respect, “negative” means passive, receptive; “positive”, active, assertive, and impelling.

This has to be brought about in two ways. First, by the transference of the positive energy of the lower centres into the higher centres, and secondly by the awakening of the crown centre by the demonstration of the activity of the will. The first effect is produced by character building, and by the purification of the envelopes of incarnation. The second is the result of meditation and the development of organized purpose, imposed by the will on the daily life. Character building, clean living, control of emotional reactions, and right thinking. As we live purely and rightly, we are verily and indeed working with forces, subordinating elementals to the bidding of the conscious monad, and activating a live mechanism which has hitherto been almost only potential. When the energies lying in the basal centre are raised through the central channel and via the solar plexus centre (a purifying centre) and the alta major centre reach the eyebrow centre, then the first self is transformed into an instrument for the awakening second self.

When the energies of the sacral centre, the source of physical sex life and sex interest, are sublimated, reoriented and carried up to the throat centre, then the aspirant becomes a conscious creative force in higher worlds; he becomes a co-worker with those who will bring about eventually the “new heavens (causal-mental world) and the new earth” (physical world).

¹When the energies of the solar plexus centre – expressions hitherto of emotional desire and the source of the emotional life of the first self – are equally transmuted and reoriented, then they are carried to the heart centre and there is brought about as a result group consciousness, group love, and group purpose which make the aspirant a server of mankind and a fit associate of the elder brothers.

¹When these three transfers have been consummated, then an activity begins in the crown centre, the highest controlling centre, an activity that the monad brings about by the will of causal consciousness.

As these changes and reorientations take place, the disciple begins to awaken psychologically to new, higher states of consciousness; to new, higher states of being.

If aspirants prematurely develop the higher faculties, they are raised directly out of emotionality into essentiality (46), but leaving mental and causal consciousness (47) totally undeveloped. When this is the case, then a hiatus or a gap occurs in the equipment which the

monad must use in the three worlds of the first self (47–49). Mentality, with its interpreting, organizing, understanding faculty, is unable to play its part. Where the aspirant's understanding and mental ability are deficient, there is danger of misapprehension, of credulity, and of wrong interpretation of the phenomena of other states of being. He will also lack a sense of values, so that he will over-estimate non-essentials and fail to grasp essentials, such values as concern the realities of the second self.

In these cases, energy may pour into the force centres, but because there is no intelligence to direct it, it will run riot and produce deplorable effects, such as over-emphasized personalities, of superstitious devotees, of credulous followers of leaders, of fanatical unbalanced idealists, and of those warped minds which arrogate to themselves powers and positions which are not theirs; cases of sex perversion, brought about by over-stimulation of the sacral centre, cases of neurosis, over-sensitivity, and emotionalism, brought about by the premature vitalization of the solar plexus centre, and lastly the cases of insanity, brought about by over-stimulation of the brain through erroneous meditation. It is clear therefore why it is necessary to proceed slowly and to develop the mental faculties and methods, so that the mental understanding and ability to reason logically, clearly, and sanely may parallel the growth of causal consciousness.

If aspirants have a pure character, if they strive, meditate, study, and serve, certain changes will take place within them, a dynamic awakening from the depths of their being, a vitalization which will activate their incipient second self. This expresses itself as energy through the etheric envelope, and the energy thus expressed will change the aspirants' life focus and interests. This energy is sevenfold in nature and utilizes the seven principal centres of the etheric envelope as its agents.

It is not possible for the aspirant and the disciple at the early stages to work with and utilize all these seven types of energy intelligently. The emphasis, for training purposes, is laid upon only three of them. These are:

1. Will, strength, or power, through the crown centre. This energy comes from the third triad (43:4), via the second triad (45:4), and the causal envelope (47:1). Up to the third initiation all that the disciple needs to grasp is that the will energy of the causal envelope (through the causal centre's third row of petals, counted from without) should control the first self, via the mental envelope to the crown centre of the etheric envelope, the brain and the central nervous system generally. When this is the case the crown centre begins to function.

2. Love–wisdom, through the heart centre. When this centre is awakened, its energy leads to that expansion of consciousness which initiates a man into his group life. He awakens this centre by developing group interests, by cultivating inclusiveness, and steadily losing interest in the separative and selfish desires of the first self. Then the heart centre controls the solar plexus centre, transmutes and reorients its desire energy. He loses the sense of separateness, and finally reaches the realization that he is one with his Augoeides, with all mankind, with all monads in all natural kingdoms. This energy comes from the third triad (44:1), via the second triad (46:1), the causal envelope (through the second row of petals, 47:2), the emotional envelope, and reaches the heart centre of the etheric envelope, and the blood stream.

3. Active intelligence, through the throat centre. This is the energy which creates and vitalizes forms in accord with the expedient and intelligent purposes of the monad. This energy proceeds from the third triad (45:1) via the causal envelope (the outermost row of petals of the causal centre, 47:3) and the throat centre of the etheric envelope, and passes from there to the etheric envelope as a whole and all the cells of the organism. In the little evolved man, this energy simply passes through the throat centre without activating it, goes to the sacral centre and activates it instead.

The relationship of the crown centre to the basal centre and their interaction will not be considered here, nor will the function of the solar plexus centre as a clearing-house for the lower energies be touched upon. The presentation made here is a broad and general description of the three principal energies from the third triad and their pathways into man's energy system. It is important that aspirants grasp the main points of the teaching to begin with.

Every human monad in the course of evolution works his way to one of the three major departments. All have eventually to express intelligent creative faculty (pre-eminently in world 45), divine love (44), and the will to realize the plan (43).

The first centre which the aspirant seeks consciously to energize and on which he concentrates, is the heart centre. He has to learn to be group conscious, to be sensitive to group ideals, and to be inclusive in his plans and concepts, and not be actuated by first-self attraction, and the motive of reward. Until the heart centre has awakened in this manner, he cannot be trusted to wield the creative powers of the throat centre, for they would be abused for self-aggrandizement and ambitions of various kinds.

None of these unfoldments starts from a condition of complete passivity. Human beings are in process of evolution. Also in those who are not aspirants or disciples, certain aspects of their force centres are already active, namely those which express the qualities of the first self, whereas those expressing the qualities of the second self are still passive.

The problem with many aspirants today is that their solar plexus centre is wide open, actively functioning, and almost fully awakened. The work of transmutation is however going on simultaneously, leading to a good deal of difficulty and to chaotic conditions. The heart centre is also beginning to vibrate, but is not yet awakened. The throat centre is frequently prematurely awakened, through the transfer of energy from the sacral centre.

As the heart centre is awakened and the throat centre is activated, a definite relation is set up and there is an interaction of their energies. This activity in its turn brings about a response from, and interaction with, those parts of the crown centre through which the energies always animating the heart and throat centres normally pass. This responsive activity and interaction brings about two results, and these should be most carefully noted.

The first result is that a particular connection of light – carrier of self-consciousness – is set up between the crown centre and the heart and throat centres. These two lower centres in their turn are responding to the energies being raised from the centres below the diaphragm.

The second result is that the eyebrow centre also begins to be activated. This centre synthesizes in time the $(4 + 6 + 10 + 12 + 16 =)$ 48 energies of the lower five principal centres with its own 96 energies. Thereupon the crown centre synthesizes the energies of all the seven centres.

The task of the eyebrow centre is to align the etheric envelope with the causal envelope, so that the etheric envelope, in its activities, will eventually be perfectly obedient to the monad, when self-conscious in the centre of the causal envelope, which it is when man has become a causal self. The two parts of the centre have reference to the two "light bodies", the causal envelope and the etheric envelope, and also to the two aspects of the activity of both envelopes: the subjective consciousness aspect (understanding, insight) and the objective energy aspect (realization).^{3.8.6-28}

In all truly esoteric groups, there should be forming a group of people who have an intellectual understanding of that instrument which the heart, throat, and eyebrow centres make up together. That group should be constituted of those who are submitting themselves to a discipline and a training which will make the use of this instrument a demonstrated fact to them. One of the tasks of the planetary hierarchy is to stimulate these centres in man so that they are awakened to right functioning activity and can be used in the new age recently begun.

This subject is of vital importance to the modern aspirant, for this instrument of three

combined centres constitutes part of the inner structure which he must learn to master and consciously employ before any true creative work is possible. The word “creative” is used here in an esoteric sense.^{3.8.1,2}

The Awakening of the Centres

The main task of the aspirant is the handling of energies, both in himself and in the physical world. This consequently involves an understanding of the centres and of their awakening. But understanding must come first, and the awakening at a much later date in the sequence of time. This awakening will fall into two stages:

²First, there is the stage at which the aspirant, by the practice of a disciplined life and by the purification of the thought life, brings the seven centres automatically into a condition of right rhythm, right vitality, and right vibratory activity. This stage involves no danger, and the disciple is not permitted to direct his thought to the centres, nor seek to vitalize them. He must keep his attention directed steadily to the task of purifying the envelopes in which the centres are found, and these envelopes are primarily the emotional envelope, the physical etheric envelope, and the organism, remembering always that the endocrine system with its seven major glands, in particular, are the expedient organic manifestations of the seven major physical etheric centres. At this stage, the aspirant is working all around the centres and is dealing with the living envelope matter which completely surrounds them. This is all that can be safely undertaken by the majority of aspirants, and it is at this stage that the bulk of the aspirants in the world today are found and where they must remain for a long time to come.

Secondly, there is the stage at which the centres, through the effective work of the earlier stage, can become the subject, under proper direction by a teacher, of definite methods of awakening and of charging, – the methods differing according to the departments of the aspirant’s triad envelope and causal envelope. Hence the difficulty of the subject and the impossibility of giving general and blanket rules.

This method, first of a long period in which the envelopes are purified and later of a period in which the envelope centres are vitalized on the basis of knowledge and understanding, is the one method employed by the planetary hierarchy. Steadily the hierarchy have been working at the task of clarifying world matter, bringing about world purification on a large scale. This is the first stage of the work and became generally possible when man, during the past few centuries, became a thinking entity in a truer sense and on a wider scale.

One evidence of the success of the world movement towards pure living and the destruction of that which hinders is that the work of the second stage is now in process of initiation. The hierarchy, for the first time in world history, can now work directly with the centres in the envelope of mankind. Thus we have now the formation of the new group of world servers, who, in their totality throughout the world, constitute the heart centre and the eyebrow centre of the etheric envelope of mankind. Through the heart centre, energy from the second triad can begin to flow in and vitalize all the centres, and through the eyebrow centre, people can see the vision and sense and know the higher worlds.

Two other matters should be pointed so as to clarify the entire situation. There is much confusion on the subject of the envelope centres and much erroneous teaching, leading many astray and causing a great deal of misapprehension.

First, it should be stated that the aspirant should never undertake work such as an effort to awaken the centres while he is aware of definite impurities in his life, or when the organism is in poor condition or is diseased. Neither should it be undertaken when the pressure of external circumstances is such that there is no place or opportunity for quiet and uninterrupted work. It is essential that for the immediate and focused work on the centres there should be the possibility of hours of seclusion and of freedom from interruption. This cannot be too strongly

emphasized, and it is done in order to demonstrate to the eager aspirant that at this period of time there are few whose lives permit of this seclusion. This is however a most beneficent circumstance and not one to be deplored. Only one in a thousand aspirants is at the stage where he should begin to work with the energy in his envelope centres and perhaps even this estimate is too optimistic. Better far that the aspirant serves and loves and works and disciplines himself, leaving his centres to develop and unfold more slowly and therefore more safely. Unfold they inevitably will and the slower and safer method is (in the vast majority of cases) the more rapid. Premature unfolding involves much loss of time, and carries with it often the seeds of prolonged trouble.

Over-stimulation of the brain cells is necessarily one of the results of the merging, by an act of will, of the energies which circulate in the human organism. Such stimulation can produce insanity and the breaking down of the cellular structure of the brain. Over-activation of the brain cells can also induce that internal friction between them which will eventuate in brain tumors and abscesses. This cannot be too strongly emphasized.

All work with the envelope centres is based on the fact that the physical etheric energy of the cells which compose the organism must be united with the energy of consciousness. This latter is the energy, present in physical matter yet different from the energy of physical matter itself, which underlies the entire nervous system and because it so underlies it produces sensitivity and awareness. It is the cause of the ability to register and record impression. This energy is fundamentally 45:4- and 46:1-energy, but in the lower four natural kingdoms mainly 47:1-energy. When it unites with physical atomic energy (49:1) and with the 43:4-energy, then the being of the third self comes into its fullest manifestation and the great work is completed. But it is a most dangerous undertaking, when induced before the envelopes and their centres are ready to deal with it.

This union of three can be safely undertaken only by the highly organized and rounded-out human being, by the one who has acquired the capacity to focus his attention in the head and from there to direct the entire process of union. It involves the ability to withdraw the consciousness into the etheric envelope and yet at the same time to preserve – in full awareness – a point of contact in the head, and from that point direct the robot, the organism. It presupposes, if successful, certain etheric conditions in the organism. One of these is the process of burning through or destruction (partial or complete) of any obstructions found along the sushumna which could prevent the free rising of the kundalini energy. Before this is done the kundalini fire, the idea mentalite, lies quiescent and potential in the basal centre.

Each of the seven major centres of the etheric envelope is situated along the central channel, sushumna, and is separated from the one above it and the one below it by an etheric protective web. This protective web has to be burnt away and dissipated before there can be the free play of the energies of the etheric envelope. A complete network of nadis and centres underlies and is the subtle physical counterpart of the gross physical nervous and endocrine systems. A little clear thinking therefore will demonstrate the need for excessive care, for injudicious interference with the energy system of the etheric envelope will obviously have immediate effects on the organism and these effects in their turn will definitely affect what the psychologists call “behaviour”. There are four of these circular “webs”, lying between the five centres directly connected with the sushumna, arranged as follows: 0/0/0/0/0, and three are to be found in the head. These three bisect the head, and form a series of crosses, as follows: ✕

This cross in the head separates the eyebrow centre from the crown centre, for it lies between these two centres, and at the same time forms a protective shield between the eyebrow centre and the throat centre.

These etheric webs are in reality disks, rotating at specific rates, which differ for the different centres, and according to the point in evolution of the system of centres concerned.

Only when these webs are burnt away by the ascending and descending energies can the very centres be seen. Many clairvoyants confuse the centres and their protective sheaths, for the latter have a radiance and light of their own.

As the monad achieves an increasingly high capacity for vibration through purification of the envelopes and self-discipline, the 47:1-energy causes the centres also to increase their vibration, and this increased activity sets up a contact with the protective webs above and below them. Through the interplay of energies thus produced between centres and protective webs, the latter are gradually worn away, so that in the course of time they become perforated and are dissolved. Many aspirants feel convinced that they have raised the kundalini energy from the basal centre and are consequently making rapid progress, whereas all that they have accomplished is to burn or “rub through” a web at some point or other up the sushumna. A sensation of burning or of pain in any part of the spine, when not due to physiological causes, is, in the majority of cases, due to the piercing of one or other of the webs, through the activity of the centres allied to them. This happens very frequently in the case of women in connection with the solar plexus centre, and with men in connection with the sacral centre. Both these centres – as a result of general evolution – are exceedingly active and highly organized, for they are the expression of the physical creative nature and of emotionality. A non-physiologically caused sense therefore of burning and of pain in the back indicates usually undue activity in a centre, which produces destructive results on the protective apparatus, and is no true indication of spiritual unfoldment and superiority. It may indicate the latter, but it should be remembered that, where there is true spiritual growth, pain and danger are in this connection practically eliminated.

There has been much loose talk about the raising of the kundalini fire and much misapprehension in the matter. The aspirant can be assured that this energy is most difficult to raise, and that it can be done only by a definite act of the will and through the intense mental focusing and concentrated attention of the man, having his consciousness gathered in the head. Only when there is united effort of a fivefold kind, and only after repeated failure, does the vitalizing energy course through the entire organism and bring to life the true man, the causal self.

The second point to be touched on is that all this deeply esoteric work must only proceed under the direction of the skilled teacher. The aspirant is told that “when the pupil is ready, the teacher will appear”. If he takes this saying as a platitude, then he settles comfortably back and waits, or focuses his attention upon an attempt to attract the attention of some teacher, having apparently settled in his mind that he is ready, or good enough to be a disciple. He naturally gives himself a spiritual prod at intervals, and attends spasmodically to the work of self-discipline and of purification. But steady and prolonged undeviating effort on the part of aspirants is rare indeed.

It is indeed true that at the right moment the teacher will appear, but the right moment is contingent upon certain conditions which the aspirant induces himself. When the process of purification has become a lifelong habit, when the aspirant can at will concentrate his consciousness in the head, when the light in the head shines forth and the centres are active, then the teacher will take the man in hand. In the meantime he may have a vision of the teacher, or he may see a thought-form of the teacher, and may get much real good and inspiration from contact with such reflected reality, but it is not the teacher and does not indicate the stage of accepted disciple. Through the light causal consciousness, he can know Augoeides. Therefore seek the light of your own Augoeides, and know him as your director. When you have established contact with Augoeides, he will, so to speak, introduce you to your teacher (that 45-self who has assumed the task of teaching the disciple). It is not the case that the teacher waits with eagerness to make your acquaintance. But it should be remembered that when a

teacher takes an aspirant into his group of disciples, that aspirant is, for a long time, a liability and often a hindrance in the great work.

Aspirants over-estimate themselves quite often, which also appears when they repudiate such an idea as the one just expressed. Subjectively they have a real liking for themselves and are frequently puzzled as to why the great ones give them no sign, nor indicate their watching care. They will not and they need not until such time as the aspirant has used to the full the knowledge which he has gained from lesser teachers and from books. Aspirants must attend to the immediate duty and prepare their mechanisms – their envelopes with their acquired qualities and abilities – for service in the world, and should desist from wasting time and looking for a “master”. They should strive to achieve mastery where now they are defeated. In the life of service and of struggle they may then reach the point of such complete self-forgetfulness that the teacher may find no hindrance in his approach to them.

Specific instructions cannot be given as to the awakening of the centres and the burning of the etheric web which will result in the release of energy. Such information is too dangerous and too intriguing to be put in the hands of the general public, who are driven by desire for some new thing, and lack right poise and the needed mental development. The teaching to be given in any particular case to each individual disciple and the methods to be applied are dependent on too many factors for a general rule and instruction to be given. The teacher must consider the disciple’s departments – not just the departments of his envelopes of incarnation but also those of the causal envelope, the second triad, and the third triad –, sex, and level of development, and also the mutual balance of the centres. The last point mentioned means that he must consider whether centres are over-developed in one case and under-developed in another. The teacher has to study the quality and the brilliance of the light in the head, for they indicate the measure of causal control of the envelopes and the relative purity of the envelopes. He must also carefully deal with the various etheric webs connected with the centres as with the centres themselves, and consider in this the rate of vibration of the webs and of the centres. The centres have to be harmonized with each other, and this is most difficult to bring about. These are only a few of the details that the teacher has to note, and it is apparent therefore that only the teacher, the 45-self, who has achieved synthetic vision and can see a man “whole”, or as he really is, can give those instructions which will reverse the ancient rhythm of the centres, destroy without pain and danger the protective sheaths, and raise the idea mentalite from the basal centre to the exit in the crown centre.

The disciple will find such a teacher when he has carried forward his life work under the direction of his Augoeides, when he has grasped the theory of the science of the centres, and has mastered and controlled his emotionality and its corresponding centre, the solar plexus centre.^{10.5.1-21}

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