

DISCIPLESHIP

Some Basic Prerequisites

Some basic prerequisites of this study are as follows.

Firstly, that the student is sincere in his striving, and is determined to go forward no matter what may be the reaction of the first self. Only those who can clearly differentiate between the two parts of their nature, the second self and the first self, can work intelligently.^{1.1.3,4}

This discernment is fostered by a reflective attitude of mind, and by careful attention to the method of constant observation of oneself in life.

Secondly, that the students have lived long enough and battled sufficiently with deterrent forces of life to have enabled them to develop a fairly true sense of values. It is assumed they are endeavouring to live as those who know something of the true, eternal values of the second self. They are not to be kept back by any happenings to the first self or by the pressure of time and circumstance, by age or physical disability. They have realized that enthusiastic rushing forward and a violent energetic progress has its drawbacks, and that a steady, regular, persistent endeavour will carry them further in the long run, that spasmodic spurts of effort and temporary pressure do not carry them to the goal. They have understood that what instead carries them forward in the long run is a steady, even, persistent striving.

Thirdly, it is assumed that they are prepared to study carefully what is written, to attempt to organize their thinking, and adhere to their meditation work. The organizing of one's thinking and the application of one's thought to the thing in hand throughout the daily avocations are the best ways to make study and meditation periods fruitful and bring about fitness for the vocation of disciple.

What is said here is for those who are seeking to measure up to the need for trained servers. The planetary hierarchy considers in the first place intention and effort. Intention, effort, and persistence: those are the three main requisites for all disciples and initiates.^{1.3.6-9}

Once the first self has clearly grasped that its own causal being exists and has an immense potential, this causal being also begins to make itself felt. Then the man can trust the causal being to carry forward his training to the final result desired. The first self's own thinking, being limited to the space and time of the physical world, being ignorant of all its previous incarnations, cannot afford this trust in life, but it must come down from above, from the lowest 46-consciousness via the centres of the causal envelope.

The necessary work with aspirants to discipleship is twofold:

1) To teach them how to contact the causal being so that they will have in the physical brain a certainty as to that higher reality. This knowledge makes it more difficult for physical, emotional, and mental interests to attract and hold the individual in the corresponding worlds. Consequently, it will be the first step out of the fourth and into the fifth natural kingdom.

2) To give such practical instruction as will enable them to: understand their own being by acquiring some esoteric knowledge of man; control the forces of their own being and learn something of the forces which surround them; unfold their potentials so that they can solve their problems independently, handle their own lives, and become so strong and poised psychically that they force recognition of their fitness as a workers in the plan of consciousness development, as white magicians, and as a disciples of the planetary hierarchy.^{1.1.11-14}

The Understanding of the Heart and Understanding of the Head

The fact that some people approach the problems of life and knowledge with the understanding of the head and others with the understanding of the heart does not depend on their departments and is not a question of the basic distinction between the esoterician and the

mystic. In the rounded-out individual both head and heart must function with equal power and neither must be undeveloped. During the process of evolution, however, individuals are distinguished by the one tendency being predominant in one life and the other in another life. No one can become an esoterician if he has not been a mystic in previous lives, and to a considerable degree a man's understanding of esoterics is based on the mystic understanding he gained in past lives. The basis is made in the responsible love which the individual demonstrates to group and family, a love than can be later expanded to include more and more people and finally all, and also be deepened with the understanding that knowledge grants him. Differences in these respects thus are temporary.^{2.3.1,2}

It is of prime value to recognize the tendency of the life purpose, and to know whether the path of the head or the path of the heart is to be walked in this particular life. A fine higher discrimination is needed here, however, lest illusions supply pretexts for a life in dull inertia. Such illusions may be an inferiority complex, comparison with another and a consequent jealous tendency, or a placid complacency which hampers activity.

Aspirants to discipleship may safely assume as a general rule that they have in the past much applied the heart way, and that in this incarnation the mental unfoldment is of prime importance.^{2.3.33,34}

Requirements for Discipleship

Good character, high conception of right, sound values, and spiritual aspiration are certainly basic and unalterable requirements, yet more is needed for discipleship and contact with the teacher.^{3.6.32}

A man can become a disciple and merit the attention of a teacher only when he is able to do something significant for his fellow human beings.^{3.7.34}

The privilege of being an outpost of the teacher's consciousness requires an unselfishness and a self-surrender for which few are prepared. To be drawn within his aura so that the disciple's aura forms an integral part of the group aura presupposes a purity which few can cultivate. To have the ear of the teacher and to earn the right to contact him at will necessitates a sensitiveness and a fine discrimination which few would care to purchase at the price. Yet the door stands wide open to all earnest, sincere seekers who meet the requirements.^{3.6.33}

Esoteric students can misdirect their energies in idle speculation as to the personalities of teachers and disciples, and – in cases where they appear anonymously or under pseudonym – as to the identities of those personalities. Such things are not just waste of time but also demonstration that those students are not yet ripe for discipleship for a long time to come. A wrong interest in the personalities, the first selves, of others not only serves to postpone the contact with the teachers in the planetary hierarchy and so discipleship, but also becomes a hindrance to the development of the second self. Instead students are encouraged to seek to equip themselves, learn to function in quietness, fulfil their duties and useful obligations, train themselves in the art of right silence of speech, strive for that unshakable poise that comes from an unselfish life motive and forget the selfish satisfaction that might well up in the heart when recognition of faithfulness comes from the watching hierarchy.^{2.5.19}

Irrelevant interest the habits and methods of specific teachers only handicaps and limits the aspirant. One of the first pieces of advice given those who wish to enter into communication with the teachers is to take their eyes off those things which do not concern them, focus their attention on the needed steps and stages which should demonstrate in their life, and eliminate that preoccupation with their own moods and thought periods, that waste of time and energy which so often takes up the major part of their thought life.^{3.7.20,21}

Those teachers in the planetary hierarchy with whom the average aspirants and proba-

tionary disciples may be in touch in the mental world do not work with aspirants because they personally like or care for them, but because the need is great and they seek those whom they can train to become competent workers. The mental attitude that they look for in aspirants is that of teachableness, the ability to record, remember, and refrain from questioning until they know more. Later the aspirant is urged to question everything. It is worthwhile to remember what one of the teachers said: "Know us for sane and balanced men who teach as we taught on earth, not flattering our pupils but disciplining them. We lead them on, not forcing them forward by feeding their ambitions by promises of power, but giving them information and leading them to use it in their work, knowing that right use of knowledge leads to experience and achievement of the goal."^{3.7.19}

When a teacher seeks to find those fitted to be instructed by him, he looks for three conditions first of all. Unless these are present, no amount of devotion or aspiration, and no purity of mode of living suffices. It is essential that all aspirants should grasp these three factors and so save themselves much distress of mind and wasted striving.

The teacher looks for the aspirant's light in the head, he investigates his reaping, he notes his service in the world.^{3.7.22,23}

The aspirant's reaping is the next factor that a teacher has to consider before accepting a man as a disciple, for in a man's past such conditions may exist as negate his acceptance in this life.

There are three main factors to be considered separately and in their relation to each other.^{3.7.32,33}

First: such reaping-conditioned obligations in a man's present life as would render it impossible for him to function as a disciple. It is quite possible for a man to have reached the stage from the character standpoint, where he merits the attention of a teacher, and yet have duties to work through which would handicap him for active service in this particular life. This the teacher has to consider and this the man's own Augoeides also considers.^{3.7.34,35}

Until that is the case it would be waste of a teacher's time to personally deal with him, for he can be adequately helped in other ways and has, for instance, much theoretical knowledge from books and teachers in the human kingdom. This knowledge he has not put into practice yet, and he has much experience to pass through under the guidance of his Augoeides.

The result quite frequently at this time is that a man will shoulder an abnormal amount of duties and responsibility in this particular life, in order to free himself for service and discipleship in a later life, perhaps without being aware in his physical brain why he does so. He works then at the equipping of himself for the next life by patiently performing his duty.

The teacher also studies the condition of an aspirant's envelopes to see whether in them are to be found states of function which would hinder usefulness and act as obstacles. These conditions are likewise conditioned by reaping and must be adjusted before it becomes possible to admit him into the group of disciples. A disciple is subjected constantly to the play of forces coming to him from three main sources – his own Augoeides, his own teacher, and the group of co-disciples – and unless he is strong, has purified himself, and exercises self-control, these forces will serve but to stimulate undesirable qualities in him, to bring to the surface all his hidden weaknesses. This has to be done before he is accepted as a disciple and admitted into the group; otherwise much of the teacher's valuable time would perforce be given to the elimination of the effects of the disciple's violent reactions on other disciples in the same group.

Another factor that a 45-self has to consider is whether there are in incarnation those disciples with whom an aspirant has to work and who are linked to him by ancient reaping relations and old familiarity in similar work.

Sometimes it may be deemed wiser for a man to wait before stepping onto the path of

discipleship until a life comes in which his own previous co-workers, keyed to his vibrations, and accustomed to work with him, are also in physical bodies, for you enter a teacher's group to render service and do specific work, and not to receive a cultivating training which will make you an adept some day. Disciples train themselves and when ready for any work a teacher uses them. They develop themselves and work out their own liberation. As they progress step by step, their particular teacher lays more and more responsibility upon them. He will train them in service technique, and in vibratory response to the plan, but they learn to control themselves and to fit themselves for service.^{3.7.35-39}

The third factor is that of service, the factor on which the aspirant has the least to say and may very probably misinterpret. The teacher does not look at a worker's worldly force or status, not at the numbers of people who are gathered around his personality but at the motives which prompt his activity and at the effect of his influence upon his fellowmen. True service is the spontaneous outflow of a loving heart and a developed intellect; it is the result of being in the right place and staying there. It is produced by the inevitable inflow of force from the second triad and from Augoeides, not by strenuous activity in the physical world. It is the effect of a man's expressing what he truly is, a potential second self, and not by the studied effect of his words or deeds. A true server gathers around him those whom it is his duty to serve and aid by the force of his life and his spiritualized personality, and not by his claims or loud speaking. In self-forgetfulness he serves; and he gives no thought to the magnitude or the reverse of his accomplishment and has no preconceived ideas as to his own value or usefulness. He lives, serves, works and influences, asking nothing for the separated self.^{3.7.41}

The Early Stages of Discipleship

The disciple becomes aware of capacities which are not as yet intelligently under his control. He experiences flashes of insight and of knowledge which seem of no immediate value. He contacts vibrations and phenomena of higher worlds than the gross physical world but remains unaware of the process whereby he has done so, and can neither renew nor recall the experience. Within his etheric envelope, he senses active forces. He cannot as yet control them and he is quite incapable of using them in accordance with his purposes and plans, no matter how hard he tries. All that he can do is to register such phenomena, bearing always in mind that in the early stages of this unfoldment only the coarsest of the pertaining vibrations will be registered on his brain consciousness. He simply has to wait and to bring his mind to bear upon the purifying of his envelopes and the elimination of all that he recognizes as liable to distort his vision. This period may be long or short depending on how much of this is new or only a repetition of experiences he have had in previous lives.

In the training to be given during the next few decades, the unfoldment of emotional vision (clairvoyance) and hearing (clairaudience) will be entirely ruled out, or if the disciple already possesses those powers, he will eventually have to overcome them. The true disciple endeavours to centre himself in the mental envelope with the object in view of transferring his consciousness higher still, into the causal envelope.

The initiates work with the consciousness aspect of human beings, and not with their emotional envelopes.

In working with consciousness the true technique of evolution is applied, for in every kingdom of nature it is consciousness within the forms which is responsible for the development of, and within, the form. Therefore, the main objective of students is to become aware of the causal consciousness and Augoeides, to cultivate causal consciousness, and to learn to live and work as if they possessed it. Until such time as they can control their instrument voluntarily, they would be well advised to train their mental consciousness, study the laws governing manifestation, and learn to include all that which we now cover by the word

“higher”.

When a man can apply this instrument intentionally, voluntarily use it or desist, then his whole status changes and his usefulness increases. Through the use of the intellect, mankind has become aware of the purposes and employment of the physical instrument, the organism. Through the use of a still higher faculty, which belongs to the causal envelope, he learns the intentional, voluntary, and intelligent control of the whole first self (47:4–49:7) and learns to understand the purposes for which it exists. This higher faculty is a higher intellect, causal consciousness.

Only as the man becomes causally conscious does he become of use in the group of a hierarchic teacher, a 45-self. When causal consciousness is beginning to function, then he can pass from the stage of probationer to that of accepted disciple in a hierarchic teacher’s group.

A great deal of training is given to a probationer without his recognizing it consciously. Erroneous tendencies are indicated to him as he seeks with sincerity to train himself for service. The analysis of motive when truthfully undertaken, serves amazingly to lift the would-be disciple out of the emotional world into the mental world. It is in the mental world that the teachers are first contacted, and there they must be sought.

The time will come when the light in the head is not only present but can be somewhat used. The reaping of the aspirant is such that it becomes possible for him, through strenuously applied effort, to handle his life in such a way that he can not only reap his sowing and carry out his obligations, but has sufficient determination to enable him to handle the problems and obligations of discipleship also. His service to others is carried out with the right motive, and is beginning to count and make its power felt, and he is losing sight of his first-self interests while working for the interests of the second self.

⁹The teacher confers with some of his senior disciples, 46-selves, as to the advisability of admitting the aspirant within the group aura, and of uniting his vibrations with those of the group. Then, if decision is arrived at, for the space of two years a senior disciple acts as the intermediary between the teacher and the newly accepted disciple. The intermediary works with the new disciple, stepping down, as it were, the vibrations of the teacher so as to accustom the disciple’s envelopes to the higher frequency. The intermediary conveys to the disciple’s mental consciousness, via his Augoeides and causal envelope, the group plans and guiding ideas, and he watches how the disciple relates to what happens to him in life and to opportunities offered him. He practically assumes, pro tem, the duties and position of the teacher.

All this time the aspirant remains in ignorance of what has happened and is unaware of these contacts going on in his higher envelopes. He, however, notices in himself three signs:

1. Increased mental activity. This at first will give him much trouble, and he will feel as if he were losing in control of thought instead of gaining it, but this is only a temporary condition and gradually he will assume command.

2. Increased responsiveness to ideas and increased capacity to vision the plan of the hierarchy. This will make him, in the early stages, unbalanced to a degree. He will be continually swept off his feet with the one idea after the other. But after a time he regains his poise, and purpose assumes control of his life. He works at his own task, and carries forward his contribution to the activity of the whole, to the best of his ability.

3. Increased psychic sensitiveness. This is both an indication of growth and at the same time a test. He may be tempted to sidetrack his efforts from specialized service to mankind into the exploitation of the psychic powers, and their use for self-assertion. The disciple has to grow in all parts of his nature, but until he can function consciously as a causal self, he must desist from the use of those lower powers. They can be safely used by causal selves only. 46-selves and higher selves have no need to employ the powers inherent in the emotional and

etheric envelopes. These higher selves can access the infallible knowledge of higher atomic consciousnesses (47:1 and higher).

It is not the case that the teacher lets an accepted disciple become clearly aware that he is accepted. The esoteric law holds good in discipleship as in the first three initiations that the man goes forward blindly. He hopes, but he does not know. He acts as though he were a disciple, and with care he watches his acts, guards his words, and controls his thoughts so that no overt act, unnecessary word, or unkind thought will break the rhythm which he believes has been set up. He proceeds with his work and intensifies his meditation; he searches his motives; he seeks to equip his mental envelope; he sets before himself the ideal of service and seeks always to serve; and then, when he is so engrossed in the work on hand that he has forgotten himself, suddenly one day he sees the one who has for so long seen him.

This may come in two ways: in full waking consciousness or by the registering on the physical brain of a meeting and an interview during the hours of sleep. In this connection the disciple has three particular recognitions.

1. The disciple recognizes the event as an incontrovertible fact he cannot doubt.

2. The disciple recognizes that he must be silent about this fact. Many years may slip away before the disciple will mention it, and then only to another disciple who is under the same teacher, and only after having received the permission of the teacher to mention it.

3. Gradually he recognizes certain factors governing the teacher's relation to the disciple, so that these factors begin increasingly to govern his own life. Six such factors are enumerated below.

1. He recognizes that his contacts with his teacher are governed by group emergency and need, and deal with his group service. His teacher is interested in him only insofar as he as a monad conscious in the causal envelope can be used in service through the first self in the physical world. His teacher works with his causal envelope and that it is his causal envelope, therefore, which is en rapport with the teacher and not the envelopes of his incarnation. It is the task, therefore, of all disciples to keep the channel of communication open between the causal envelope and the brain, via the mental envelope, so that the teacher can reach him at once and easily.

2. He finds that it is he who shuts the door in the majority of cases through his use of lower psychic faculties, physical disability, and lack of control of consciousness, and he therefore discovers that he has to work constantly and ceaselessly with his first self.

3. He finds that one of the first things he has to do is to learn to discriminate between the vibrations of his Augoeides, the vibrations of his group of disciples, and the vibrations of his teacher. All three are different and it is easy to confuse them, especially at first. It is a safe rule for aspirants and disciples to assume, when they contact a "high vibration" and stimulus, that this is not from the teacher but rather from Augoeides.

4. He finds also that it is not the habit of the teachers to flatter or to make promises to their disciples. Ambition, love of power, and the self-sufficiency are qualities of the first self and do not help him to develop the qualities of the second self. The teachers say nothing to feed pride in their disciples, the sense of being separate or chosen and the sense of being important.

5. The disciple soon finds also that the teachers are not easily accessible. They are busy, ill able to spare even a few moments in which to communicate with the new disciple. The newer the disciple, the more he demands attention and imagines he should have it. The old and more experienced servers seek to fulfil their obligations and carry forward their work with as little contact with the teacher as possible. The aim of every advanced disciple is to carry out his work and be en rapport with the force centre of his second self, which is his group, and thus in steady touch with the teacher, without interviews and phenomenal contacts with him.

6. He finds also that the relationship between teacher and disciple is governed by law and

that there are definite stages in their mutual contact.^{3.6.1-24}

The Two Paths

The prime problem of the aspirant is to dominate the emotional nature. The battle, therefore, is mainly fought out in the emotional envelope, and reaches its most intense point only when the physical envelopes are well-functioning and the mental envelope is well-equipped. The more sensitive the emotional envelope, the stronger its reactions to the physical world and to mental conditions. Hence the fact that disciples and the more highly evolved people have stronger emotional energies and work under greater emotional strain than the less highly evolved and the second selves, who are liberated from dependence on emotionality.^{4.6.11, 6.7.12}

Aspirants and disciples should therefore work actively to control their emotionality, remembering that victory descends from above and cannot be won from below. Causal consciousness must govern and its instrument in the warfare is the trained mentality.^{4.6.12}

The emotional world is the world of dual forces. The first thing the aspirant becomes aware of is duality. The little evolved man is aware of unity, but it is a unity of a lower kind, physical unity, no inner conflict. The highly developed man possesses that higher unity which results from causal (47:2,3) and essential (46:5-7) consciousness having overcome the lower. In between is the aspirant, conscious of duality above all else and pulled hither and thither between the two. His first step has for its objective to make him aware of the opposites and of the necessity to choose right between them. Through the light, which he has discovered in himself, he becomes aware of the dark. Through the good which attracts him, he sees the evil which is for him the line of least resistance. Through pain he can visualize and become aware of pleasure, and heaven and hell become to him realities. Through the activity of the attraction upwards of his awakening second self, he realizes, and is forced to recognize the urge and pull also of the envelopes of incarnation. Once he has become aware of these dualities, he realizes that the decisive factor in the struggle is his awakening causal will, in contradistinction to his selfish will. Thus the dual forces play their part until they are seen as two forces, pulling in opposite directions, and he becomes then aware of the two paths. One path leads to an unlimited number of incarnations, and the other leads through to the kingdom of second selves. One path, therefore, involves him deeper into the matter aspect; the other brings him closer to the consciousness aspect, so that eventually he becomes aware of his causal envelope, through which he can function in the fifth natural kingdom. The one path is the left hand path and the other path is the path of right activity. On the one path, the individual becomes proficient in black magic, which is only the developed powers of the first self, subordinated to selfish purposes: worldly ambition and glory. These forces confine the individual to the lowest three worlds (47:4–49:7) and shut the door which opens on to true life, the opposite of death, the abode of immortality, the fifth natural kingdom. On the other path, he controls his first self and exercises the magic of the planetary hierarchy, working always in the light of the second triad – the light of the causal envelope to begin with – with the consciousness aspect of all forms of life, and laying no emphasis upon the ambitions of the separate self. Clear discrimination of these two paths leads to the understanding that the second path is the same as Buddha called the “noble eightfold path”.

By using using his two main instruments, discrimination and non-identification, the aspirant gains that ability which is called the “vital power”, which is not only solar systemic physical etheric energy (49:1-4), but also cosmic physical etheric energy (43–46), 46:7 to begin with.

This double, solar systemic and cosmic, etheric energy eventually activates the third eye, the instrument for clear vision which makes right choice possible and so a quick and steady

progression also possible. Power is grown in silence, and only he who can find a centre of peace and quiet within his head, where the etheric and causal-essential energies meet, can rightly practise that discrimination and that non-identification through which he achieves control of his emotional and mental envelopes.

By learning how to perceive the dual forces and to clearly discriminate between the two paths the aspirant develops the vital power. This vital power demonstrates its first activity in enabling the aspirant to achieve a point of balance where he stands firm and makes a choice.

For the aspirant, the right choice is that between rapid and slow progress. For the accepted and loyal disciple, the right choice it is that between methods of service. For the 45-self, the right is choice is that between the seven great paths.

All lesser choices the aspirant makes prepares him for greater right choices through right discrimination and right non-identification, which lead to right action. This sentence sums up the technique of the warrior upon the battlefield of the world of desire.

The ability of right choice develops and changes as consciousness develops on ever higher levels. First, the aspirant has to struggle with his own desires and illusions, with his sensitive emotional envelope only. Later, as a probationary disciple, he has to wrestle not only with his own first self, but with the forces of the emotional world also, and in so doing comes to see their dual nature. Later still, when the individual has become a truly accepted disciple, in addition to the forces of the two categories just mentioned, he will experience the forces of illusion arrayed against the group of disciples to which he belongs. Such disciples as are in conscious contact at times with their causal consciousness face those hostile forces without fear, and for them there is no defeat, no turning back. Accepted disciples, who battle all the above enumerated factors, plus the black forces arrayed against the elder brothers, can call upon the second-self energies of their group and at rare and indicated moments upon the teacher under whom they work. Thus the work expands and the responsibility increases; yet at the same time there is also a steadily growing recognition of potencies which can be contacted and utilized and which when correctly contacted insure victory at the end.

Augoeides waits until the disciple has made the right choice. And the right choice for the disciple is to rely on the guidance of Augoeides in all important situations until he will be able himself to assume the place of Augoeides, as a causal self and later as a 46-self. When he has done so, he steps into the ranks of the white magicians of our planet and can wield forces, cooperate with the plan, command the elementals, and bring order out of chaos. Then he is no longer immersed in the world illusion, can no longer be held down by the chains of his own past habits and his reaping. He has gained the vital power – the lowest cosmic ether, or the lowest cosmic prana (46) – and stands forth an elder brother.

Such is the path ahead of each and all who dare to tread it. Such is the opportunity offered to all aspirants who have made their choice with non-identification and are prompted by the will to unity and the desire to serve.^{4.6.14-22}

The Training of the Esoterician

Those who are to teach the world more about the hierarchy and who are being trained to be focal points of contact are put through a very drastic disciplining. They are tested in every possible way and taught much through bitter experience. They are taught to attach no importance to recognition by other people. They are trained not to judge from the appearance but from the inner vision. Capacity to recognize the teacher's purpose and the ability to love are counted of paramount importance. Aspirants who seek to be chosen for work as disciples must lose all desire for selfish possession and must be willing at any cost to pay the price of knowledge. As you go on and, as aspirants, study the hidden laws of nature, you will realize the necessity of paying the price. The disciple's acquisition of qualities and abilities belonging

to the second self must keep pace with his acquisition of esoteric knowledge; he must grow equally in being and knowledge. This knowledge grows in three ways:

1. By definite expansions of consciousness, which open up to the disciple a realization of the levels to be attained. Thanks to this he can form a mental conception of what lies ahead for him, and this is the first step towards acquirement. A more advanced disciple shows him in higher worlds the work to be done, much in the same way as a teacher shows the pupil the lesson to be learnt.

2. The next step is the mastering of the lesson and the working out in meditation and experiment of the truths sensed. This is a lengthy process, for the disciple has to assimilate it all and make it part and parcel of his very self before he can go on. He does this work both in the physical world and in superphysical worlds. In mental world the disciple is taught nightly for a short time before proceeding with any work of service. This teaching he brings over into his physical brain consciousness in the form of a deep interest in certain subjects and in an increasing aptitude to think concretely and abstractly on the various esoteric matters that are occupying his attention. He attempts to experiment and tries various methods of studying the laws and in process of time arrives at results that are of value to him. Time passes and as he appropriates and knows more, his knowledge takes a synthetic form and he becomes ready to teach and to impart to others the residue of knowledge of which he is sure.

3. By teaching others one receives further knowledge. When the disciple in his teaching defines truth, he consolidates the facts he has learnt, and, in the interplay with the intellects of other people, his own vibrations become keyed up to ever higher worlds, and thus fresh realization and fresh reaches of truth pour in.

When he has, in this way, mastered one lesson, a further one is set, and when he has learnt a particular series of lessons he “graduates”, that is to say, he passes an initiation. The whole group he teaches is benefited by his step forward, for every disciple carries those he instructs along with him. What benefits one monad benefits the whole group.

The first initiation stands for commencement, the first contact with the 46-consciousness (46:7), symbolized in the birth of the Christ child. The disciple has built a certain structure of right living, of right thinking, and of right action. The 46-consciousness enters this form and makes it come alive. Herein lies the difference between studying a theory and making that theory a part of yourself. You can make yourself a perfect image of an ideal but still lack something essential, vitally necessary. What is this something? The manifestation of the essential life, the 46-consciousness and the 46-energy. The first initiation indicates that this life has been born, and from now on it exists in the disciple, however faint it may be. Thus most of its growth remains to be done.

The second initiation marks the crisis of the control of the emotional envelope. After this initiation the disciple has to demonstrate his complete control of his three lower envelopes – organism, physical etheric, and emotional, but not yet mental. Then comes the third initiation and control of the mental envelope by the causal envelope. The fourth initiation implies the monad’s control of the causal envelope through its new 46-envelope and its passing to the second triad.^{6.7.1-7}

The path is, therefore, a path on which the disciple experiences steady expansion of consciousness with increasing sensitivity to the higher vibrations. This works out at first as sensitiveness to the inspiration of Augoeides, and this sensitiveness is one of the most necessary faculties in a disciple.

Aspirants, probationers, and disciples never work in large groups, but singly or in twos or threes and nine at the utmost. The esoteric significance of these numbers is necessary to the success of their work.

In the work the first self must be submerged to the awakening second self. Aspirants must live harmlessly in thought and word and deed. In this way each one of you will become an outpost for the consciousness of the planetary hierarchy and provide a centre of energy through which the hierarchy can work.^{6,7,9-11}

The Aspirant as a Conscious Focal Point of Energy

Every aspirant is a focal point of energy and should be, in his place, a conscious focal point. In the midst of the confusion and unrest he should make his presence felt. The law of action and reaction works here, and often the Great Ones (foreseeing the need of just such points of inner contact in periods of world unrest, such as the present) gather into certain localities those who are aspirants to service. They act as a balance and aid the general plan, and at the same time they themselves learn much-needed lessons.

Aspirants should not resist the mechanical forces of the envelopes of incarnation or try to fight them, for in so doing they aggravate chaos. Aspirants should instead direct their effort towards making contact with Augoeides, and keeping it stable and steady, and being in such direct alignment that the force and power of Augoeides may be poured on and through the envelopes of incarnation (47:4–49:7). This pouring through will bring about a steady radiation which will affect the surroundings exactly in proportion to the extent of the inner contact, and in direct relation to the clarity of the channel linking the physical brain to the causal envelope. The aspirants should also strive after that self-forgetfulness which merges itself in the good of those contacted. This self-forgetfulness refers to the lower self. Self-remembrance and self-forgetfulness should be exercised simultaneously.

The man who aims at providing a point of contact, between restless mankind and the planetary hierarchy who work for constructive ends and order, should likewise use that most necessary factor of common sense in all that he does. This involves always obedience to the law of economy of force, due to discrimination, and a true sense of values. Where these abilities are present, man will economize with time and energy, eliminate excessive zeal, and the Great Ones will be able to depend upon the aspirant as a wise helper.

All esoteric training has in view the development of the aspirant so that he may indeed be a focal point of second-self energy (45:4–47:3). Under the law, this training will be cyclic. Times of activity succeed times of rest, and periods of registered contact alternate with periods of apparent silence. If the aspirant develops as desired, each period of passivity is succeeded by one of greater activity and of more potent achievement. This alternation is due to the effect of the law of periodicity, which must be borne in mind. The same law governs a solar system, a planet, and a human being, for they are all centres or focal points of energy in a greater being. Success in esoteric work is largely due to the degree of development of the ability to apprehend causal ideas which emanate from Augoeides, from your causal group, or from the teacher in the planetary hierarchy. What is lacking as yet with the majority of aspirants is a synthetic consciousness (at least in 47:5) and the capacity to hold and register continuity.

If emotional or mental chaos exists, then again the causal ideas do not reach the brain and the brain makes no record of the impressions that are nevertheless received by the causal envelope. If fatigue is present and the organism is in need of rest, then likewise the impressions fail to be recorded. It is the centres in the etheric envelope which are vitalized and become active in this work of contact and consequent transmission of energy. If therefore the vitality is low and the pranic fluids are not assimilated, then the whole faculty of contact is lowered and the centres fail to register vibrations. When again the stimulation is adequate and the disturbances mentioned are quieted, then again the ideas may reach down, and so a fresh cycle of receptivity may be begun.^{6,1,3-7}

Hindrances to Esoteric Study and their Overcoming

One of the main hindrances to the correct apprehension of the laws of esoterics and their practical application lies in the fact that the Occident is comparatively young and that rapid changes have been the outstanding feature of European civilization (its American daughter included). The history of Europe dates back a bare three thousand years, and that of America about as many centuries. Esoterics flourishes in a prepared atmosphere, in a highly magnetized environment, and in a settled condition which is the result of the work of many ages in the mental world.^{1.4.18}

These conditions are not to be found in the West, where constant change in every branch of life is found, where frequent rapid shifting of the course of events causes wide disturbances which militate against any work of a magic nature. The amount of force required for such work does not warrant the results to be obtained.^{1.4.20}

Another hindrance is to be found in the strong development of the lower mentality. Yet it has had its given place in evolution, has been necessary for the development of comprehensiveness. Through his effort to grasp esoterics the Occidental will contact his causal consciousness, and thus build more easily the bridge between the mental and the causal. The Pythagorean hylozoic mental system, rightly understood, is precisely the ultimate synthesis which will supersede both European and Indian philosophy.^{1.4.22}

Everything in human life is subject to immutable laws. In the attempt to find those laws, in order to conform to them, the esoterician begins to work off his bad reaping, and thus does not contribute any more to the illusionism of the emotional world. When the individual has become a causal self having objective causal consciousness, so that he can compare his previous lives with his present one, then he can make rapid progress in living by law. When, as a 46-self, he can also look into the future and see succeeding lives, then he has finished sowing in the human kingdom and masters all causes in his lower envelopes.

The more the individual considers changes and events in the light of all preceding events, and the longer and more accurate his memory, the more he can dominate all situations that he is faced with.^{1.4.28,29}

The third hindrance grows out of the preceding one. It consists of the emphasis that has been laid in the West on the matter aspect. This has, in its turn, resulted in three conditions.

1) The world of ideas, or of subjective consciousness, is not recognized by science. Mystics and clairvoyants recognize, on the basis of their own experiences, the existence of the "spiritual world", but scientists in general do not believe in a superphysical reality. All that earlier races and peoples valued most in life and thought is now approached skeptically.

2) People in general are suppressed and inhibited in their spiritual quest. Science denies the divine and spiritual. The answers to the questions given by theology are increasingly rejected by people. The understanding awakening in many individuals finds no room in public life. Instead public life is increasingly occupied by deification of physical things, the organism, emotions. On the other hand, there is seen in many people a tendency to eliminate inessentials and to value essentials.

3) A third condition of affairs grows out of the above two. When the "life of the spirit" is negated, when the life that is being led concentrates itself on things physical and apparent, then existence has no meaning and no goal, the true incentive to right living is lost, and there is no right conception of the future.^{1.4.31-34}

A fourth hindrance is found in the organism, which has been built up by the aid of meat and fermented foods and drinks, and nurtured in an environment in which fresh air and sunlight are not paramount factors. The result can be seen in organisms unfitted for any strain such as esoterics imposes, and which form a barrier to the influx of higher kinds of energies. When

fresh fruit and vegetables, clear water, nuts and grains, cooked and uncooked, form the sole diet of people, then will be built organisms fitted to be vehicles for highly evolved monads. They patiently await the future cycle which will permit of their fulfilling their destiny. The time is not yet, and the work of elimination of what is wrong and adjustment to what is right must be slow.^{1.4.37}

Certain particularly important realizations must be gained before the hindrances can be removed. These realizations might be summed up as follows:

1) The realization that in the discharge of the next duty and the adherence to the highest known truth lies the path of further revelation.

2) The realization that dispassion is the great thing to cultivate, and that one must develop the will to undergo joyously any amount of temporary inconvenience and suffering in the work for the future glory.

3) A realization that synthesis is the method by which one attains understanding, and that the middle path that leads straight to the goal is wandered by applying the right balance between the opposites manifesting themselves in pairs.^{1.5.1-4}

The Treading of the Way

No man is a disciple who is not a pioneer. A registered response to spiritual truth and a realized pleasure in forward-looking ideals do not constitute discipleship. If it were so, the ranks of disciples would be rapidly filled and this is sadly not the case. It is the ability to understand the next realizations which lie ahead of the human intellect which marks that aspirant who stands at the threshold of accepted discipleship. It is the power, acquired through strenuous inner experience, to see the vision of what is next impending and to grasp those concepts in which the intellect must necessarily clothe it, which give a man the right to be a recognized worker with the plan. It is the achievement of that spiritual orientation, held steadily – no matter what the outer disturbance in the physical life may be – that signifies to those who watch and seek for workers, that a man can be trusted to deal with some small aspect of their undertaken work. It is the capacity to submerge and to lose sight of the first self in the task of guiding mankind, under inspiration by Augoeides, which lifts a man out of the ranks of the aspiring mystics into those of the practical esotericians.

This work is of such proportions that it will occupy all of a man's attention and time. It will lead him to efficient expression in his first self life task and to a steadfast application of the creative and magical work. Discipleship is a synthesis of hard work, intellectual unfoldment, steady aspiration, and spiritual orientation, plus the unusual qualities of positive harmlessness and the opened eye which sees at will into the world of reality.

The disciple must: 1) enquire the way and find it, 2) obey the inner promptings of Augoeides, 3) pay no attention to any worldly consideration. 4) live a life which is an example to others.^{10.4.5-7}

1. *Enquire the way and find it.* 45-self K.H. has told us that a whole generation of enquirers may produce only one adept. It must be so for two reasons:

First, the true enquirer is one who avails himself of the wisdom of his generation, who is the best product of his own period and yet who remains unsatisfied and with the inner longing for wisdom unappeased. He recognizes a step further on and seeks to take it in order to gain something to add to the quota already gained by his compeers. Nothing satisfies him until he finds the way, and nothing appeases the desire at the centre of his being except that which is found in the knowledge and wisdom of the planetary hierarchy. He is what he is because he has tried all lesser ways and found them wanting, and has submitted to many guides only to find them "blind leaders of the blind". Nothing is left to him but to become his own guide and find his own way home *alone*. In the loneliness which is the lot of every true disciple are born

that self-knowledge and self-reliance which will fit him in his turn to become a master some time in the future. This loneliness is not due to any separative spirit but to the conditions of the way itself.

Secondly, the true enquirer is one whose courage is of that rare kind which enables its possessor to stand upright and to sound his own clear note in the very midst of the turmoil of the world. He is one who has the eye trained to see beyond the fogs and miasmas of the earth to that centre of peace which presides over all earth's happenings. This again brings loneliness and produces that reserve which all less evolved souls feel as aloofness when in the presence of those who are forging ahead.

Only those flower forth into adepts in any specific generation who have worked out their reaping alone and who have intelligently taken up the task of treading the path.

2. *Obey the inner promptings of Augoeides.* Here "inner" refers to "non-duality", that is to say, the aspirant or disciple shall never consider these promptings as coming from without, from another being, another individual, but from within himself as it were, from his "better self". As long as the aspirant speaks about promptings and inspirations as coming from other beings, however "elevated spirits" or "guides" be involved in this, he runs a real risk of being misled by beings in the emotional world. Augoeides lives in unity and guides man to unity; therefore, he never manifests himself to man in such a manner as to weaken man's true experience of unity and to strengthen his fiction of duality. Well do the teachers of the race instruct the budding initiate to practise discrimination and train him in the arduous task of distinguishing between instinct and intuition, lower and higher intellect, desire and spiritual impulse, selfish aspiration and divine incentive, the urges emanating from the mechanical functions of the envelopes of incarnation, and the help to consciousness development given by Augoeides.

It is no easy or flattering task to find oneself out and to discover that perhaps even the service we have rendered and our longing to study and work has had a basically selfish origin, and resting on a desire for liberation or a distaste for the humdrum duties of everyday. He who seeks to obey the inspirations of Augoeides has to cultivate an accuracy of summation and a truthfulness with himself which is rare indeed these days. In the secrecy of his own meditation let him not gloss over one fault, nor excuse himself along a single line. Only thus will he train himself in spiritual discrimination.

3. *Pay no consideration to the prudential considerations of worldly science and sagacity.* It will be necessary for him to run counter consistently to the world's opinion, and to the very best expression of that opinion, and this with frequency. He has to learn to do the right thing as he sees and knows it, irrespective of the opinion of earth's greatest and most quoted. He must depend on himself and on the conclusions he himself has come to by his own realization. It is here that so many aspirants fail. They do not do the very best they know; they fail to act on their best realization, at which they have arrived in their moments of meditation when in contact with Augoeides. It is to the aggregate of these unaccomplished details that the big failures are due.

There are no trifles in the life of the disciple and an unspoken word or unfulfilled action may prove the factor which is holding a man from initiation.

4. *Live a life which is an example to others.* Service in the group and through the group is simply the life of example. He is the best exponent of the ageless wisdom who lives each day in the place where is the life of the disciple; he does not live it in the place where he thinks he should be in the opinion of the first self. Men fail to make good where they are because they find some reason which makes them think they should be elsewhere. Men run away from difficulty, from inharmonious conditions, from places which involve problems, and from circumstances which call for action of a high sort and which are staged to draw out the best

that is in a man, provided he stays in them.

The adept speaks no word which can hurt, harm or wound. Therefore he has had to learn the meaning of speech in the midst of life's turmoil. He wastes no time in self-pity or self-justification for he knows that the law has placed him where he is, and where he best can serve, and has learnt that difficulties are always of a man's own making and the result of his own mental attitude. If the incentive to justify himself occurs he recognizes it as a temptation to be avoided. He realizes that each word spoken, each deed undertaken, and every look and thought has its effect for good or for evil on the group.

Is it not apparent therefore why so few achieve and so many fail?^{10.4.9-19}

L.A. November 18, 2014.