

**Psychological  
Commentaries  
on the Teaching of  
Gurdjieff and Ouspensky**

**Maurice Nicoll**

**Volume 4**

 **WEISER BOOKS**  
Boston, MA/York Beach, ME

This edition published in 1996 by  
Red Wheel/Weiser, LLC  
P. O. Box 612  
York Beach, ME 03910-0612

07 06 05 04 03 02 01  
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

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#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Nicoll, Maurice, 1884-1953.

[Psychological commentaries on the teaching of G. I. Gurdjieff and P. D. Ouspensky]

Psychological commentaries on the teaching of Gurdjieff & Ouspensky / Maurice Nicoll.

p. cm.

Vols. 1-5 originally published: Psychological commentaries on the teaching of G. I. Gurdjieff and P. D. Ouspensky. London: Robinson & Watkins, 1952. Vol. 6 originally published: Index to the Psychological commentaries on the teaching of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky by Maurice Nicoll. Washington, D. C. : Gurdjieff Society of Washington D. C., 1987.

1. Gurdjieff, Georges Ivanovitch, 1872-1949. 2. Uspenskii, P. D. (Petr Dem'ianovich), 1878-1947, 3. Fourth Way (Occultism)

I. Index to the Psychological commentaries on the teaching of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky by Maurice Nicoll. II. Title.

BP605.G9N53 1996

197—dc20

96-16548

Volume 4: ISBN 0-87728-902-6

6 Volume Set: ISBN 0-87728-910-7

MV

Printed in the United States of America

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials Z39.48-1992(R1997).

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## NEGATIVE EMOTIONS AND THE ILLUSION OF UNITY

### WORK-IDEA

Man is not one but many. Man is not a unity but a multiplicity.

### COMMENTARY

There are very many clever, self-harming 'I's in everyone, which work on the margin of consciousness, so that one does not see what they are doing. For example, many of these clever, self-harming 'I's use their arts to stimulate people to make inner accounts continually—they act in a very silent, subtle way, and if a person is not increasing the area of consciousness by observing himself, he will be unaware that after a time he is filled up with plenty of materials for some explosion. He must understand that an explosion of negative emotions is the result of making, half-consciously, inner accounts over some time. It is not the apparent immediate irritation that causes them. That merely fires off the accumulation of them. One can see that allowing oneself to be charged like an accumulator with material for inner accounts must lead to their discharge, either outwardly, in scenes, such as shouts, tears, or slamming doors, or in cold venom, or any of the various exhibitions that negative states give rise to at the present level of humanity, which is part of our self-study. Are we not very curious objects to study? If one can retain sufficient consciousness not to identify wholly with a negative state, is it not really extraordinary to notice all that goes on in oneself and what a deadly fascination it has, even though one can see it is an ugly and lying set of 'I's that are at work? And is it not extraordinary also that you may clearly see that the object of the negative state and the 'I's producing it is to destroy your happiness, to make you miserable and ill—and yet you feel it drawing you into its power? Yes—this power of negative states is indeed a mystery. It is one of the things that shews us how ignorant we are of what lies in us. The attraction of what you *know* will make you miserable and unhappy cannot be explained easily. It certainly cannot be explained at all if you take yourself as *one*, as a unity. That is one of the major illusions that prevent us from awakening. It is so obvious—and yet we find it so difficult to realize as a practical fact—as a continual inner experience. I have often wondered about the obviousness of the ways in which we are hypnotized. It is almost as if the two Magicians concerned in keeping us asleep on this earth to serve nature did not bother to conceal the mechanism of tricks, having realized what suggestible imbeciles and fools we are and how instantly we fall under the spell of anything they say, even if we have seen how the trick is done. Just say to someone: "How wonderful you are." Ah—well—in a way, etc. But how pleased we are.

Now because we take ourselves as *one*, we ascribe our negative emotions to ourselves and everything else. If you take yourself as one you will attribute everything that goes on in you to yourself—every thought, idea, mood, memory, feeling, depression, sensation, and so on—in short, all your psychic life. You will attribute your evil thoughts to yourself and you will attribute your good thoughts to yourself. In consequence, you will be identified with everything that goes on in yourself. This is a deeply wrong idea to have of oneself. It is a life-idea of oneself. Actually, it is a terrible idea, that causes endless unnecessary and useless suffering. Let us pursue some of the consequences of this illusion of unity further—we are speaking of a man in life who ascribes everything to himself and who is assured that he is one—a single person, a unity, a Real I, and that all he says, all he vows, all he promises, is true and will be kept firmly. This is a curious idea, once one begins to observe oneself and make a new memory of all one has vowed, promised, etc. In order to grow, a man must first divide himself into two parts—an observing and an observed side. Of course, he cannot do this. Why? Because he is convinced he is in charge of his life and everything he thinks, does, and feels. Why cannot he give up this idea and get another sense of himself, another idea of himself? Because he cannot get over this illusion that he is *one*, in consequence of which he attributes, ascribes, everything to himself.

Now let us see what this means and why this Work teaches you something that nothing else does. You have a negative emotion and ascribe it to yourself in your conceit of being one. In that case you say 'I' to it—and you cannot shift 'I'. You say "*I am negative.*" That is, you have not divided yourself into two—into an observing side and an observed side. But, if you have, you say: "I observe a negative emotion in me." You do not say 'I' to it. If you say 'I' to it you cannot resist its power.

*Amwell, 30.10.48*

## NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE EMOTIONS

### WORK-IDEA

In order to get in touch with Higher Centres it is necessary to destroy all negative emotions. Negative emotions shut the door, as it were, to these Higher Centres.

### COMMENTARY

If we knew what we lost by continually enjoying negative emotions we should be horrified. And indeed, we indulge so frequently in negative emotions, obvious or less obvious, cruder or subtler, open or

concealed, that when the Work teaches us that we must destroy them, it is almost comparable to saying that we must kill our Emotional Centre as it is. But as this is impossible we are told that we must *purify* the emotions. Understand that purification of the emotions in the Work-sense entails the observation of and separation from negative emotions. It is part of the necessary daily work on oneself—that is, the first line of work. It is not something you do for a day or so (and then imagine you know all about *that*) but something you have to do all your life—at least until right crystallization can occur. As we are, if there were a sudden, powerful influx of the intense high-voltage forces from Higher Centres, the result would be a crystallization of our state of being just as it is now. This would be a hopeless situation. Imagine yourself, as you are, fixed like a photographic film or plate when put in the hypo-fixing bath. Nothing could be changed. The interplay between Higher Centres and their transforming forces and our present state is therefore very wonderfully and mercifully adjusted. A man is not allowed to perceive inwardly and understand more than he can bear usefully. He is, as it were, gradually led to see, after a time, a little more about his state, his level of being, and why he should not behave or talk as he does in his mechanical state. If he could be transformed into a new being by the high-voltages of Higher Centres, then the whole plot and plan of creating Man as a self-developing organism would be rendered null—nihil—nothing. Here comes in the source of much negative thinking—namely, why, if there is a God or a Conscious Circle of Humanity, are we not helped straightway? Come, let us be patient with our tiny minds that get everything wrong. The reason why we cannot be changed into marvellous beings is that we have to earn it. Here is a person full of negative emotions. He complains about everything and turns every event into a source of being negative. He argues: “If there is a God, why does he not make everything lovely and satisfactory to me?” What is the answer? This person has got to work on himself. Why? Because he was created a self-developing organism and the events of life were given to him to develop himself. If God or anyone else transformed him into a Conscious Man, a dazzling being, the whole meaning of life on this planet would have to be altered. In fact, the whole of the Ray of Creation and all its increasing laws would have to be annihilated.

Now understand we are born as self-developing organisms as an experiment from the laboratory of the Sun. The Work says that if this recent experiment is a failure, Man will be swept away, made very small, like ants or bees, and another experiment in a self-developing organism made on Earth. In this connection—this deep source of negative emotion—there is the usual remark: “If there is a God, why does he let things happen like war, etc.?” What is the Work-answer? The Work-answer is that Man’s level of being attracts his life. Wars, cruelty, horrors, occur because Man is at the level of being that attracts such things.

Now listen carefully. It is Man and his level of being that is the cause of all such things and as long as Man does not try to awaken and develop himself, such things will continue *inevitably*. I mean, Man will attract them. We are made as self-developing organisms—that is, *we can work on ourselves and we can change our being—individually*. If we all changed, wars would cease. Study your being. You will find that it is governed by negative emotions in the long run. As long as that is the case, you cannot receive help from a higher level—that is, from Higher Centres. If we are created as self-developing organisms and make no attempt to use this freedom, why blame “God” for not interfering? How could you be a self-developing organism if all the time you were interfered with? Do you see, therefore, that in the purification of the Emotional Centre, which is necessary for contact with Higher Centres—which represent in us the Conscious Circle of Humanity and seek continually to help us, if we could only listen—we must get a right form of thinking, a right mental idea, and so a right attitude as to why things are as they are on this Earth. Gurdjieff, when once asked if wars could be stopped, said: “Yes. But Man must change himself so that certain vibrations do not make him violent. Wars are not caused by Man. The sources are extra-terrestrial—such as two planets crossing each other and causing a tension, a certain vibration. Mechanical mankind translates this vibration into violent emotions and so war results. If Man became more conscious, he might, instead, receive energy in the form of increased consciousness from these vibrations.”

Now, to return briefly to the title of this note—namely, “Negative and Positive Emotions”. All positive emotions come from Higher Centres—and that is why we have to work on negative emotions. Their quality is such that they have no opposites in them. That is, they are Third Force, or, as the Gospels say, “Holy Spirit”. They are “Yes and No”—not “Yes or No”. No one can create, call forth, make, a positive emotion. So Mr. Ouspensky said: “Positive emotions come as rewards.” That is, if you have privately, solitarily, and in the loneliness not of your negative self but your own spirit, decided, made a decision, to work on *you yourself* as regards some source of negative emotion—if you, all alone, in this solitary place in yourself, full of the integrity of your most Real I, have decided, made a decision, not to identify or feed a particular negative emotion—if, in short, you have shut the door and entered into yourself (as it is said in Matthew: “enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret”) then, “your Father, which seeth in secret, will reward you” (Matt. vi.6). What is the reward? You will taste positive emotion for a brief moment—something blessed—that is, filled with such bliss that *nothing* of human love-hate emotions can be compared with it. What we regard as positive emotions, feeling fine, feeling fit, and on top of the world, self-admiration, etc., can turn in a moment into negative emotion. Such emotions, such pleasant emotions,

are not positive emotions; these never change into their opposites but visit us and then withdraw.

But unless we work—really value this work on negative states, struggle not to believe them, clear the Augean Stables of the dung of negative states, erect the God in ourselves, the individual spirit, to fight as Hercules, who cleaned the Stables with the River of Truth, then indeed we are cut off from all inner help and all the deep background that Higher Centres can begin to give, once we build up and make the intermediary receptive instrument. False Personality will prevent this. All humanity could be helped—if they made this receptive intermediary apparatus in their minds and hearts. Yes—but this would, amongst other things, make False Personality and all its spurious values so passive, so weak, that its influence would be negligible. Let me remind you that when my wife and I went to Gurdjieff's Institute in France we were told: "Personality here has *scarcely* any right to exist." Well, reflect on all this for yourselves.

*Amwell, 6.11.48*

## COMMENTARY ON SUFFERING

### WORK-IDEAS

Gurdjieff said:

- (1) "This Work is Esoteric Christianity."
- (2) "People imagine they have something to sacrifice. There is only one thing they have to sacrifice and that is their suffering."
- (3) "A man in this Work must eventually begin to know what Conscious Suffering is compared with Mechanical Suffering."

### COMMENTARY

Everyone suffers. Cheerful people assure you they never suffer. They are always bright, healthy, and so on. Yet they suffer, in spite of this rather tiresome picture of themselves. Everyone suffers *mechanically*. What is mechanical suffering? It is something quite different from conscious suffering. It is something so intricate, so devious, so apparently contradictory, so various, so subtle, so historically long-standing—in short, a habit—that we do not observe it. We do not see its continual, inner, private, petrifying action, like that steady drip of calcium-charged water that builds up those strange pillars in deep caves between floor and roof. The Work teaches that we all, inevitably, have mechanical suffering and that this is the only thing we have to offer as sacrifice. In order to change, one must sacrifice something. Understand clearly and ask yourself—if it ever does occur to you to ask *yourself* a question, which means that you will have actually to think for your-

self of the answer—I say, ask yourself this question: “Can I possibly imagine that I can change if I do not give up, sacrifice, something?” This means simply that you cannot change if you wish to continue to be the same person. To change is to become different. If I want to go to London, I must give up being at Amwell.

Now notice carefully what we have to give up. The sacrifice the Work seeks is that of our habitual, mechanical suffering. Of course, people will at this point justify themselves and say they have no such suffering, or that what suffering they have is logical and reasonable. Oh, this self-justifying that you all go in for. But notice especially where this teaching, which belongs to the Fourth Way, begins in regard to what you have to give up. Not with your sins in any ordinary sense, but with what the Work regards as a great, even perhaps the greatest sin—namely, being identified with “Mechanical Suffering”. A man, a woman, the Work teaches, must sacrifice their suffering. Mechanical suffering leads nowhere. A man, a woman, cannot *awaken* if they retain this dreadful weight, their mechanical suffering, and nourish it, by a continual process of justifying it. In the Work-sense there is no justice on this planet where everything happens in the only way it can happen. How can there be justice in a world of sleeping people—of people who are not yet conscious—of people who are governed by their negative emotions and finally by hate? Now how, when you begin to see your own mechanicalness in your behaviour, can you blame others who were equally so? Were not those who you think caused your suffering mechanical people? Remember that in such a case you can only *forgive*, which in the Gospels means, dazzlingly, “cancel” the debt. Yes, but this is possible according to your level of being. A low level of being forgives no one. It only sees its own merit. That surely is a key to how to reach a higher level of being. When, through self-observation and work on yourself, you see more and more clearly that you are as bad as anyone else, then you ascend the Ladder of Being which ends in Divine Being—which forgives all—a thing we cannot remotely understand as we are at present with our store of negative emotion. Why? Because we are all low down in this total Scale of Being, which means we include very little in our consciousness of what we are like ourselves, projecting on to others all we cannot accept as being in ourselves, so we are very brittle to insult. But as Consciousness increases we include more and more as being in ourselves, with an increasing lack of conceit, until we cannot be insulted. Nor, then, do we judge. How can I, if I realize I am worse than you, judge you? At present, of course, we *pretend* we do not judge—a quite different matter, a matter of being full of meritorious virtues and so of swelling up the False Personality which imitates every virtue inartistically and so causes much weariness and boredom to others, like a bad play. How many bad plays walk the streets of London, male and female. I fancy I am saying something similar to a remark made by Mr. Ouspensky when he was first teaching. He called attention to the fact that



most people whom we meet in the street, in the club, at tea, at dinner, are dead, and died often years ago. Now a man, a woman, with Magnetic Centre, who seeks to find something more than life does not so easily die. But life alone makes us dead very soon. We die life-millionaires, working day and night for fifty years, say—yes, but we died perhaps years ago. This is a matter we all have to reflect on. The Work does not invite us until we reach a certain life-value called “Good Householder”. This is the *first* education—the formation of a good educated life-personality. But there is a second education and always has been. This is for those who do not believe that life can be explained in terms of itself. It is for those Good Householders, those educated and responsible people, who do not really believe in life and yet carry on their duties. And those Good Householders who believe still further that there is and must be something else and seek for it—that is, those Good Householders, whose being is characterized by the possession of Magnetic Centre—will understand how this Work offers the second education for men and women who have fulfilled the conditions necessary for attaining the level of Good Householder.

\* \* \*

Let us come now to the idea of conscious suffering as distinct from mechanical suffering. Gurdjieff said: “This Work is Esoteric Christianity.” He meant that this Work lies hidden in the New Testament. Let us take an example. The Work teaches that mechanical suffering is useless—it leads to nothing—but that conscious suffering leads to inner development. Can we find any parallels in the New Testament? I would say that in the Gospels, in the Sermon on the Mount, for instance, we find ample—in fact, copious verification. But let us take a clear example from Paul. He has written a letter to his group at Corinth cursing them for not working on themselves. He explains that to feel one has not been working—that is, that one has been fast asleep in life and its vexatious daily troubles and therefore identified with the events entering from outside *via* the senses—this is to suffer in another way. He calls this “godly suffering”. I will quote the passage:

“For though I made you sorry with my epistle, I do not regret it, though I did regret; for I see that that epistle made you sorry, though but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry but that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold, this self-same thing, that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves . . . ” (II Cor. vii.8-11)

Now this rather outworn terminology masks the real meaning. What Paul is saying is that *to suffer because you have behaved mechanically* can

lead to something. And so he says that the suffering of the world leads to death—that is, mechanical suffering. From this brief example one can see what Gurdjieff meant in saying that this Work is Esoteric Christianity. Esoteric means simply *inner*—not obvious. People easily read the New Testament without seeing what is meant. The Work, once you begin to understand what it is saying, opens your mind to innumerable things said in the New Testament. Now reflect on this remark: “The sorrow of the world worketh death.” Do you see that in these words is the same idea as “mechanical suffering is useless for self-development and puts us to sleep—that is, death? A man, a woman, must sacrifice their mechanical suffering”. What then replaces it? What replaces it is *suffering because you are suffering*. That is, you must replace the luxury of mechanical suffering by suffering because you still love mechanical suffering.

In one of the Gnostic Books—the Acts of John—which are not included in the ordinary New Testament, there is a passage which runs in this way. It is connected with the Sacred Dance that Christ performed with his disciples:

“If thou hadst known how to suffer, thou wouldest have been able not to suffer. Learn thou to suffer, and thou shalt be able not to suffer.”

*Amwell, 14.11.48*

## NOTES ON DIFFERENT QUALITIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

### WORK-IDEA

The Work teaches that we have four states of consciousness, two of which we know and two of which we do not know.

### COMMENTARY

The person who thinks only of himself or herself is most asleep in the Work. When we are identified with the False Personality we are most asleep. To be awake is to have no False Personality. Even those of you who have had moments, however brief, of being relatively free from False Personality know already that there is a definite new state of oneself possible in this respect. We have to declare to ourselves each definite experience and privately register its validity—otherwise the Work has no structure within us. You will make the Work a very weak boneless thing in yourself if you do not realize and stand for a single part of what it teaches through your own practical experience and hold on to its veracity. You will be what Gurdjieff called a *weak* person. Now a man can be given the state of being free from False

Personality in times of stress, war, illness. Then he knows or should know there is another state of himself available. He has seen it for himself. By knowing this, by affirming it to himself deeply, he verifies the Work. So he makes the Work real to himself and so it becomes real in him—that is, helps him, transmits force to him. It begins to calm him, widen him, a very important early result. But if a man is always arguing to himself about words used in the Work, or, worse still, never really thinks about it, how can it connect with him? As Gurdjieff said: “Do not listen to the words—try to hear internally the meaning.”

One reason why we do not establish the Work in ourselves is because we only think of ourselves—yes, all the time. This is Internal Considering. False Personality is only concerned with itself and is always fascinated with how it is treated. We are most asleep when identified with it. You can see why. All emotions turn into False Personality. Now to think of the Work means stepping out of False Personality. But the False Personality hates the Work, because the Work will eventually destroy it. Every act of Self-Remembering weakens the False Personality. At the third level of consciousness False Personality cannot breathe—cannot exist. It lives in the second level of consciousness—the so-called Waking State.

So we are told that at our level of consciousness we cannot change. We are driven by life—by flattery, by lovely false smiles, by paint and polish, by inventing ourselves and all the rest. It is excessively tedious to enumerate once more all that belongs to False Personality and its endless manifestations. Even the quietest little lady, living with her dog, is just as full of False Personality as is a magnificent example of a man always well-dressed, whose portrait is in every paper. Yes—but what are *you* behind all your spit and polish? It is this deeper level to which the Work directs attention.

Now in the so-called Waking State, in which we live—that is, in this second state of consciousness—all sorts of lies pass as truths. Yet we were born with the capacity to live in the third state of consciousness, where lies are impossible—becoming so obvious—and no one can deceive another. So, in this short note, let us hear again what Gurdjieff said about those states of consciousness possible to Man, understanding clearly that a *higher* level of consciousness is characterized by the fact that one is conscious of more, so that one is more awake and so not so easily deceived. To be more conscious, to be more awake, means that you have more light, and so perceive more, mentally and emotionally. Notice in what follows that Gurdjieff said we were born with the right to live in the third state of consciousness. Man can know four states of consciousness. The first is called Sleep with Dreams, the second the so-called Waking State, the third the State of Self-Remembering, and the fourth Objective Consciousness. It is only the two higher states that can communicate with the two Higher Centres from which come Positive Emotions.

Let us now quote Gurdjieff's words about the states of consciousness:

“The two higher states of consciousness are inaccessible to Man, and although he may have flashes of these states, he is unable to understand them from the point of view of those states in which it is usual for him to be. The two usual, that is, the *lowest states* of consciousness, are first, *sleep*, that is a passive state in which Man spends a third, and very often half his life, and then the state in which men spend the other part of their lives, in which they walk the streets, write books, talk on large subjects, take part in politics, kill one another, which they regard as active, and call ‘clear consciousness’ or the ‘waking state of consciousness’.

“The third state of consciousness is ‘*Self-Remembering*’ or Self-Consciousness, or Self-Awareness. It is usual to consider that we have this state of consciousness, or that we *can* have it if we want it. Our science and philosophy have overlooked the fact that *we do not possess* this state of consciousness and that we cannot create it in ourselves by desire or decision alone.

“The fourth state of consciousness is called the *Objective State* of Consciousness. In *this* state a man can see things *as they are*. Flashes of this state of consciousness also occur in Man. In the religions of all nations, there are indications of the possibility of a state of consciousness of this kind which is called ‘*Enlightenment*’ and various other names, but which cannot be described in words. But the only *Right Way to Objective Consciousness* is through the development of *Self-Consciousness*.

“If an ordinary man is artificially brought into a state of Objective Consciousness and afterwards brought back to his normal state, he will remember nothing, and he will think that for a time he had lost consciousness. But in the state of self-consciousness a man can have flashes of Objective Consciousness and *remember* them. The Fourth State of Consciousness in Man means an altogether different state of being, and it is the result of *inner* growth and of long and difficult work on oneself.

“But the Third State of Consciousness constitutes the natural right of Man *as he is*, and if a man does not possess it, it is only because of the wrong conditions of his life. At present this Third State occurs in Man only in the form of very rare flashes and it can be made more or less permanent in him only by means of special training.

“For most people, even for the educated and thinking people, the chief obstacle in the way of acquiring ‘self-consciousness’ consists in the fact that *they think that they possess it*—that they can ‘do’, have ‘will’, and a permanent and unchangeable ‘I’. It is evident that a man will not be interested if you tell him that he can acquire by long and difficult work something that in his opinion he *already has*. On the contrary he will think either that you are mad or that you want to deceive him with a view to personal gain.

“The two higher states of consciousness are connected with the functioning of the two ‘Higher Centres’ in Man.”

(cf. *In Search of the Miraculous*. P. D. Ouspensky [Routledge, Kegan Paul Ltd.], pp. 141-142.)

## NUMBER 4 MAN IN RECURRENCE

### WORK-IDEA

- (1) A man must be a Number 4 Man before he can become a Conscious Man.
- (2) Everything repeats: everything recurs.

### COMMENTARY

A Number 4 Man in the Work is called a Balanced Man. Life does not produce him. It is only through work on himself that he can reach the state of Number 4 Man. If he dies as Number 4 Man, in recurrence, he will have to do it all over again—but, as Mr. Ouspensky taught, it will be easier for him and it will all begin earlier, so that he will have more time.

We are taught that there are seven categories of Man. Number 1, Number 2 and Number 3 are mechanical. Each is characterized by having its centre of gravity only in one of the three centres—that is, Number 1 Man's psychology is that belonging to Instinctive-Moving Centre, Number 2 Man's psychology belongs to Emotional Centre, and Number 3 Man's psychology to Intellectual Centre. These three sorts of people form the Circle of Mechanical Humanity. They are all incomplete. They can never understand each other. To reach his full possible conscious development, a man must first "balance his centres"—that is, become Balanced Man. He must be able to employ *all* his centres, not only one. This is a very important—no, a tremendous—idea. Here, for example, is a man who is always counting, adding up, or recording, and making everything as exact as possible. He gains his sense of himself from his careful exactness. He is not much interested in nature or art or reading or, in fact, anything else. We have, therefore, a picture of a man who is one-sided, whose real life is confined to the activities of a small part of his centres. Psychologically his problem is to inhabit other centres—other rooms—in the big three-storey building that is himself. Understand that it is not that one centre is lower or worse than another. All are necessary—top, middle and lower storey. Each contains marvellous machines, marvellous radios. Now a one-sided man can become easily ill psychologically because he is so *unbalanced* in the Work-sense. He wears himself out by living in so small a part. To ordinary understanding a man who always says and does the same thing is regarded as steady and reliable, and so a Balanced Man. But in a situation foreign to him, he will find himself distressed and incapable. Or he cannot think about ideas to which he is not accustomed. In short, underneath his façade, he is rather helpless, once life changes a little. As long as life remains much the same, he appears reliable and balanced. Yes, life balances him, as it does most

of us. Life gives us a mechanical balance. But this does not mean we have any real conscious balance in ourselves. If we could use all centres in the three-storey house equally and used each one for the right situation, then we would become flexible to life. It is in this flexibility that the idea of *balance* lies and so of Number 4 Man. Regard a man crossing a tight-rope. Is he rigid, always the same? On the contrary, he is continually altering his position and indeed this ordinarily is called *balancing*. So Balanced Man, in the Work-sense, or Number 4 Man, if you were to meet him, might seem strange and contradictory to your view of a balanced man as a rigid man always the same, who always behaves in the same way and always repeats the same things, and so, from your way of thinking, is a reliable man. Do you see what is meant? Do you see how the Work uses its words in a special manner, which does not correspond with their ordinary usage?

#### *Our Aim is to Become Number 4 Man*

Now, in making a Work-aim, try to observe what functions need development in you. You cannot approach balance if centres are undeveloped. Undeveloped centres, undeveloped parts of centres, like uninhabited rooms in yourself are, so to speak, blank spaces in you. What functions do you notice that you lack? Can you express your thoughts? Can you formulate, for instance? Are you very ignorant? Well, try to do something about it. It is not what you can do, ordinarily speaking, but what you cannot do that requires to be developed. Can you use your hands? Well, if not, you must learn to do so. Do you understand anything about art? Well, begin to try. Have you read anything? Well, start. There is no manifestation in culture that is not the expression of the activity of one centre or another. To think one can develop and grow in understanding without knowing something of what can be known—is not this rather a silly idea—this expecting something for nothing? Suppose everyone were annihilated save you? Could you hand much on to another new creation of mankind? Could you descend as a teacher among them? Mr. Ouspensky once said to me: “In the Fourth Way you must know something of everything known.”

An unused function, which signifies an unused part of a centre, remains outside one’s consciousness. Since the Work aims at increasing consciousness, a narrow, small, one-sided man or woman, living, so to speak, in one small room of their large three-storey being, will not be able to develop. They will live and die undeveloped, even if they have made a million by small transactions. And since they have changed nothing in themselves, their lives will recur as before. Not only so, but each recurrence may be on a worse level.

#### *At what Level does a Man cease to Recur?*

To escape recurrence, a man must reach the level of Number 5 Man—that is, the outer circle of the Conscious Circle of Humanity.

The Conscious Circle of Humanity is composed of Number 5, Number 6 and Number 7 Man, who *need* not recur. But to reach this freedom a man must *first* become Number 4 Man. What can this mean? Well, he must be able to see things with different centres and not only from some narrow, acquired attitude, so that where he saw only one thing formerly and judged it violently from his notions of good and bad, he sees many things. As regards himself, he no longer sees himself as good and others who do not agree as bad. He no longer sees and values himself, as he once did, but sees himself from many sides and accepts his contradictions. He no longer takes his being for granted but has become conscious of so many things in his being which were in darkness to him before and which he blamed others for, that he no longer judges from one harsh intractable angle nor is he continually putting people, even those he loves, in prison. Everything broadens and becomes much wider, clearer, and so less and less violent in him. Harmony, balance, begins to replace the tensions of the opposites that existed before. Life then becomes his teacher because the conscious assimilation of impressions on the broader consciousness has replaced the mechanical reactions to them that formerly governed him. He is objective to himself. He can see his mechanical reactions as not him and feel himself as distinct from them—as if they were going on below him. All this brings him closer and closer to his real self, his Real I, which is in the centre of his being and contains no opposites and can hear Higher Centres. So the Work teaches: "Observe yourselves uncritically and become more and more conscious of what is in your being and so become more and more objective to yourselves." As you know already, this will gradually dissolve the Imaginary 'I', the False 'I', the False Personality, that one has hitherto taken as oneself—in my case, Nicoll—and has nothing to do with the true centre of gravity of yourself called Real I. Yet even if this process of inner development through increase of consciousness and seeing together both sides of the pendulum of opposites has brought a man approximately to the category of Number 4 Man, yet he will recur at death and birth. He will return to his part of Time—to his personal Time-line and re-traverse it—but, differently. He will be born again in the same year—for Time is unseen, living Space, a living dimension—but he will *remember* earlier, if he has practised Self-Remembering. So it is said: "If you become conscious now of something about yourself and accept it, you will remember it earlier next time." That is, every moment of realization now, in self-work, not only affects the future but can alter the past, so, re-traversing one's bit of Time, one is warned by oneself last time.

In discussing the idea of recurrence, in connection with the conception of a six-dimensional world, composed first of the three visible dimensions of Space and the (to us) invisible fourth dimension of the world that we experience as Time, Mr. Ouspensky said that the possibility of change begins only with the possibility of remembering yourself *now*. He said: "In this sense the idea of recurrence is not necessary."

At that time, when I heard this, I thought that the idea of the repetition, the recurrence, of everything, would make one's Self-Remembering stronger—and I no longer think it but know it. From daily experience in the daily recurrence in which you all are now, you know that if you repeat a thing it will repeat and master you eventually, so that you cannot change it. Mr. Ouspensky talked at that time about how so many things prove we have lived before—that our lives are results of recurrences. Take the sudden genius exhibited in small children—say, for music. About Number 4 Man he said, in answer to a question as to whether Number 4 Man recurs as Number 4 Man: “No. Only Number 5 Man can recur as Number 5. Number 4 Man has to make himself again, only it will be easier or earlier.” He added: “A Conscious Man need not recur—that is, return to the same place in Time. He may re-incarnate—that is, go back and be born in another part of historical Time where he can prevent things from going as they did.”

*Amwell, 27.11.48*

## COMMENTARY ON SELF-REMEMBERING

### WORK-IDEA

We must remember ourselves. There are different forms of Self-Remembering.

### COMMENTARY

One question asked concerning the main discipline of this Work—namely, that we should *remember ourselves*—is “Which self should I remember?” Now if a man remembers his Observing I, he will observe himself: he will observe he is trying to remember himself—and this will prevent him. It is not the same thing as remembering himself. If he remembers his business self, he will begin to become occupied with his business and perhaps ring up someone. The business self feels it can do, just as the observing self feels it can observe. If he remembers his social self it will be the same thing. It will ride off with him, but take him nowhere. Special exercises, making the mind a blank, and so on, will probably have the same result. So when we are told to remember ourselves and ask: “Which self?” what answer can we expect after a time almost with certainty? We can expect the answer: “The self that knows its own nothingness.” Yes, this would be a full form of Self-Remembering. The result of work is gradually to make us see we cannot do. You say: “Of course I can do.” The Work speaks of “doing” differently from the life-idea of doing. For instance, in the Work-sense, to *change oneself* is to do. Why? Because to “do” in the life-sense is simply to react mechanically, although



people ascribe to themselves this "reacting to life" as conscious doing and cannot see the idea. Mechanical reactions change no one. People excitedly think they are doing. But to change the action of life on you by inner work on impressions is certainly to *begin to do*. If you can begin with daily smallest things you may see what is meant. If we say that one meaning of Self-Remembering is to remember the Work at some moment of life when life would, say, make you negative, then here we have a practical idea of Self-Remembering. But a person who does not even bring the Work into intimate personal existence cannot, of course, connect with it and its power. He imagines always being calm and even lovely, but when he steps on the tack or she loses her mink, they somehow behave as usual and the Work is blown sky-high. Of course, it is not the Work that is blown sky-high, but their miserable little beings. Have you ever noticed a very small marmoset being, dressed in mink?

*Amwell, 4.12.48*

## FURTHER NOTE ON SELF-REMEMBERING

### WORK-IDEA

Man is born to remember himself, but being brought up among sleeping people he forgets himself.

### COMMENTARY

We spoke last time again of Self-Remembering and which self to remember. Sometimes a valuable part of oneself gets lost. One could say it has fallen asleep. On the other hand one might say that it has been neglected and that one has lost contact with it. This can happen when one has not worked for some time or reflected on and remembered the ideas of the Work. It is just at such times that a valuable part of oneself gets lost. One wakes up again later, but does not notice that a self, an 'I', or small group of 'I's, is missing. Every bit of truth one has gained of this Work by hearing it with the mind and experiencing it by the practical application of it to oneself must be kept together, otherwise things will get lost. Time is a dimension—of *psychological* distance. One must keep hold of one's personal work. Truth is, in esoteric symbolism, silver. All the truth you have experienced in this Work must be kept together in the Intellectual and the Emotional Centres and in the distinct and different memories connected with these two centres. You remember the parable about the woman who lost her piece of silver:

"What woman, having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a lamp, and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it?" (Luke xv.8)

Her house is herself, her own being, and the *silver* some truth, something she had understood and then lost. In many ancient writings on esoteric psychology, we are told that things must not be allowed to get quite cold. Transformation of being is a process which cannot be held up too long any more than the hatching out of an egg.

Now to speak again about the *act* of Self-Remembering. It is the most important thing in the Work and the least attempted. If we could receive life on the Work we would begin to awake from the state of sleep that we and all humanity live in, calling it consciousness, or mistaking it for consciousness. If Man became really conscious, everything would change. This Work is about becoming more conscious. Yes—but what does that mean? It means to reach the level of another kind of consciousness, called Self-Remembering, Self-Awareness, and Self-Consciousness. We cannot reflect on this enough, nor be reminded of it enough. To reach this level we must have a lift, an elevator. The Work and the *way it thinks* is the lift. By means of our own thoughts, which are those of sleeping people imagining they are fully conscious, we cannot reach the thoughts that belong to people who stand in the light of Self-Remembering and view the meaning of existence from that level. But this Work, coming from conscious men, belongs to the thought at that high level and this we seek to imitate. This weakens the power of external life over us, because it weakens the mechanical thinking induced by sensual life and its apparent reality. The mind has to be re-fashioned. Now if incoming life, which enters us as impressions *via* the senses, could be made to fall on the Work, its energy would be transformed. This idea is given by the diagram of the First Conscious Shock.

Now, ordinarily, we do not receive life *on* the Work, but direct. First, this is because we have not built up the system of thinking called the Work in ourselves, and so we receive life on our acquired, mechanical psychology, which we mistake for ourselves. Second, it is because we can for a long time see no difference between life and Work, even after years of trying to practise non-identifying. We read the newspapers and feel shocked. The Work says that Man at his present level of consciousness cannot do. We feel shocked and depressed that Man cannot *do*—cannot stop quarrels and wars, etc. If we received life on the Work we would not feel shocked and depressed, and so life would not make us negative. But since we do not remember ourselves and so transform the effects of life, we get negative. In fact, we are driven by life, by what happens, and have nothing internal with which to resist. So we are machines, as the Work teaches, driven by life and its events. In other words, we do not exist—yet we were created to exist—to *be*—to have *being* apart from machinery. This is our task—to create ourselves. Now people—humanity—living in the second so-called waking state of consciousness can never understand one another. This, esoterically, is called the Circle of Babel or Confusion of Tongues. It does not mean merely literal tongues—languages. Only people who

reach the Third State of Consciousness can begin to understand one another. A Number 1 Man cannot even understand another Number 1 Man any more than Number 2 and 3 Men can understand people of their respective types. So the Work says: "Man cannot *do*"—that is, unless he awakens. Imagine what it would mean if all of us realized we were not properly conscious and were like sleeping people trying to reach a common issue—each identified with his own dreams. Now the Conscious Circle of Humanity begins with those who have reached the Third State of Consciousness—through long work on themselves. Here, they get help from Higher Centres—they find another way of understanding their apparently insoluble life-problems. This is an interesting idea. If life could be solved, then this Work could not exist. This Work is to make life possible in the sense that, as it says, you cannot understand life save in terms of something else. This something else is the Work. Therefore if the Work could fall on the Work internally we would awake.

*Amwell, 11.12.48*

## **NOTE ON INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ATTENTION AND PLACING OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

### **WORK-IDEA**

One must practise putting consciousness into different parts of the body.

### **COMMENTARY**

In the struggle that everyone in the Work has to maintain daily with negative emotions, observation of what causes them is useful. I make this understatement purposely, because it is extremely difficult to observe their causes. As you know, we are told at first simply to observe and not to analyse. To try to find causes is to analyse. We are told not to analyse what we observe in ourselves, but to observe, to notice, to be conscious of, to be aware of our inner states. This is based on the teaching that to make a thing conscious begins to change it. As regards the Intellectual Centre, we observe, notice, become conscious and aware of, the kinds of thought going on in that centre and where we are identified with them. In the case of the Emotional Centre, we observe the taste of the emotions and whether we are identified or not. In the case of the Moving Centre, we observe tensions of muscles, strained posture and expressions, frownings, clenchings, hurrying, slap-dashings, slammings, all of which not only waste force but influence other centres. For instance, if a person always scowls, then that may be one cause of his negative states. Its representation in muscular terms induces the corresponding emotion. Every emotion

has a corresponding representation in Moving Centre. You will have observed that the unpleasant emotions—hate, jealousy, suspicion, envy, etc.—are represented by contracted facial muscles and flexed limbs and that they are not becoming. Pleasant emotions relax muscles, joy extends the limbs, and not only so, but all the inner workings of the body, internal secretions, and so on. Negative emotions contract and close: pleasant emotions relax and open. Now usually the emotion causes the expression but the expression can cause the emotion—that is, the Moving Centre can influence the emotional state as well as vice versa. Some people have very bad Moving Centres in this respect. They have, so to speak, superior or bored expressions, or sulky ones, or stiff, awkward postures. The point is that for them to change it is necessary to start with altering their stance, their posture, the awkwardness of their bodies, their habitual facial expressions.

We are taught to practise relaxation. In some situations it is the only thing we can practise—just to relax and not think. Begin with the small muscles of the face. Yes—but to relax the muscles of the face it is necessary to become conscious that they are tightened or contracted. A muscle can tighten without visibly contracting. It can be in a state of heightened tone which is unnecessary and wastes force. When a person is said to be “keyed up” or some similar phrase, if you examine him, you may find all his reflexes over-brisk, which may mean over-tone in the muscles which are being kept on the stretch unnecessarily and so are wasting force. I will not argue about this point.

When Gurdjieff was in England, either at Harley Street, or Warwick Gardens, he shewed briefly on the blackboard—drawing the three centres, Intellectual, Emotional and Moving—that why people remain in the prison of themselves, and so cannot find a different life of self-change, was because of *habits* in all their centres. He indicated that it was difficult to change habits of thought and habits of emotions, but it was easier to change habits of movement—that is, Moving Centre habits. That is why he taught his exercises which give new movements. At the same time, in relation to what he taught Mr. Ouspensky, he also emphasized that the Work itself was to change the mind and feeling of oneself—that is, it was primarily directed to the psychological side of a man or woman—to how they thought and felt, and it was said that unless work on the Intellectual Centre and Emotional Centre accompanied work on the Moving Centre, results could not be expected. In short, a changed *mind* is more powerful than a changed Moving Centre. And as regards the higher degrees of mental and emotional understanding, the Moving Centre cannot teach them. In fact, only *they* could, when awakened, teach the Moving Centre, which ends in perfect realization, from what we can see in the Indian examples.

To return: as we are, directed attention practised, say, for five minutes, by putting consciousness into every part of the body, beginning with the face-muscles, will give definite results at any moment when it is done in order to prevent some difficult period of being identified.

Directing one's attention to the Intellectual or Emotional Centre demands *internal attention*. Internal attention begins with self-observation. Putting consciousness into the muscle-tension of the body is both internal and external attention. Begin by trying, say, to put your consciousness into your right thumb—then shift it to your left.

*Amwell, 18.12.48*

## WHAT IS THIS WORK ABOUT?

Recently someone asked: "What is this Work about?" This person had been in the Work some time and the situation presented itself to his or her mind in that formulation—i.e. why should we work on ourselves? Why should we observe ourselves? Why should we separate from negative emotions, from internal considering, and all the rest of it? This question presents itself at intervals to everyone who is in this Work. Why, any of you older or younger people in the Work, should you work on yourselves? You may or may not be getting on very well in life, you may or may not be happy in life, therefore why should you work on yourselves? This leads to the fundamental question: "What is this Work about?" Why does this Work exist in life and why has it always existed in different forms, in different disguises, religious and otherwise? Why should I try to observe and separate from negative emotions? Why shouldn't I talk scandal? Why shouldn't I tell a person what I really think of him? Why shouldn't I expend my negative emotions all day long on everyone whom I meet? Why should I have to do something else apart from behaving as I naturally would? Why should I have to try to change my behaviour towards life, towards people, towards circumstances and events? Why shouldn't I hate when I feel like hating? Why shouldn't I murder if I feel like murdering? Why shouldn't I always say just what I like and behave as I wish to behave?

Now this Work is about *awakening from sleep*. What is this sleep? When you are in a passion you behave in a certain way. You may in this passion do untold harm by what you say and what you do. I would ask you, if you are in this passion and behave as you feel from this passion, are you awake or are you asleep? Are you hypnotized? You may afterwards realize you said wrong things or did wrong things and wonder why, but while you were under the hypnotism of this passion you thought that everything you said or did was right. When the passion is over you may feel that you may have said too much or done too much. I say, you *may*. This means that in ordinary life you realize to a certain extent that you were under hypnotism—you were asleep. What hypnotizes you and puts you to sleep is the passion. At the same time you at once justify this passion and how you behaved in it and

say it was perfectly right. Yes, self-justifying means putting yourself in the right always. People of coarser psychology don't ever realize that. People of finer psychology feel a twinge of regret. But instantly they justify themselves—put themselves in the right—but very few people realize that they really cannot trust themselves to this moment of passion.

Now Man asleep is a man, a woman, who is always governed by various passions and moods. People say in this Work, when they first hear that we are all hypnotized, that they do not understand that they are hypnotized by their passions to begin with. They say they always know what they are doing. They do not realize that they are not free but governed by different kinds of passions. Playing on life to keep humanity asleep are various passions. As long as the passion works in you, you are asleep and in certain cases can even do murder under the influence of the passions that play on humanity. This is one example of what it means that mankind is kept asleep. This is the great source of propaganda. The whole point of the Work is to be dehypnotized. It is the dehypnotism of life-hypnotism. External life hypnotizes us by its events. War, for example, is a typical event. The study of life-hypnotisms is very interesting, especially when you apply it to yourself and see how you are hypnotized every moment. What one sincerely wishes to do from oneself is usually quite different from what one does from the bravura of life. All these things keep us asleep. But what keeps us asleep most of all are our domestic quarrels, our domestic difficulties, our thinking that others are conscious. As a rule a hypnotized man marries a hypnotized woman and then their married life consists in overcoming their self-hypnotism, usually, if they are not in the Work, with bad results. A man expects a woman to be like that, and a woman expects a man to be like that. The greatest hypnotism in life is that you think you will find your goal in life. Christ was tempted by goals in life:

“The tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: And on their hands they shall bear thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again the devil taketh him into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” (Matt. iv.3-10)

How many of you without knowing it have made power and possessions your goals? That is for the first training in life, when you find that these goals do not furnish you with any internal happiness. Now all this belongs to Man asleep.

If you are in the Work, you ought to begin to understand that your goals are not giving you peace. You have to realize that you won't get peace, you have to realize that what you are striving after is exactly for your Personality, for your first education. The Work is a second education in which you become aware that what you are striving after is not what will give you internal peace. You have got to come down to yourself to find out what kind of person you are. I always think the Temptation of Christ was the overcoming of the first education.

*Amwell, 25.12.48*

### **NOTE AT CHRISTMAS-TIME 1948**

Throughout known history various attempts have been made to awaken Man to the mystery of his existence. So strong, however, is the external man, the man formed by contact with external life *via* the senses—in short, the acquired Personality—that these attempts eventually become useless and must give way to other attempts always with the same aim. Man asleep takes for granted both his own existence and the existence of the Universe. This keeps him in bondage to the external world, to Nature and its laws. Such a man, if he thinks at all, believes that Nature created itself somehow or other, in remote ages—a strange idea if you come to reflect on it. Now as a result of this great power of hypnotism that external life exerts, Man's real essential part cannot develop. Essence, although not developed, and in so many ways childish, is the real man or woman and cannot grow as long as the part of Man turned outwards to life dominates them. As said, people take this mystery of their own existence and the Universe for granted. It is only when one begins to feel and ponder this mystery that it may become possible to awaken from sleep. This capacity is called Magnetic Centre. If a man feels mystery in all things, if he feels that nothing has been explained, if he can see that there are life-influences in the world, such as the Financial Times, and distinct from them other influences, such as the Gospels, then he begins to feed, nourish, cause to grow, his inner essential side—that is, his Essence. Small children, as Essence, wonder. They are soon given answers that stop them. Then the hard coating of Personality forms itself. When a man dies his Personality breaks up and, if hard places are in it, with pain. Essence returns and is re-born. If there has been no growth of Essence, of the inner man, the life will be the same because, as you

know, your being attracts your life. Change Essence, and your life cannot be the same. Remember this: your Personality is not you. What is really you lies behind it. For, behind all the manifestations of the Personality and especially the False Personality, which is what is *least* you, and is the cause of most useless suffering in the pain-factory of this world, there lies something that is really you. This is called Real I. Being born on this planet, we have to win this goal by self-observation, by not identifying. It is not given. By shedding, by taking off, by stripping off the outer coats of yourself that you have taken as yourself, and starting with the False Personality that seeks to keep up nothing but a fiction of yourself, a distortion, often very expensive literally to keep going, and always a great expense psychologically, then you begin to move towards Real I. This inner journey is called the *Work* or the *Way* or simply Esotericism.

*Amwell, 31.12.48*

## **LIFE AS EVENTS AND OUR MECHANICAL REACTIONS BY IDENTIFYING WITH THEM**

### **WORK-IDEA**

A man, a woman, cannot change unless he or she begins to realize his or her mechanicalness. As long as men and women ascribe full consciousness to themselves and their actions, they will remain asleep and suffer from themselves uselessly.

### **COMMENTARY**

Let us suppose that, having begun to realize that we react to events mechanically, we have *then* to begin to realize that we can react to events less mechanically and so more consciously. To a very vain and self-stuffed person this is not easy. Understand clearly that we cannot change the events but only our *way* of taking them. But if we have not practised self-observation, if we have not made a new place in our minds where we can, to a small extent, observe incoming impressions before reacting to them and observe how ordinarily we would react, this will be impossible. That is, we remain machines governed by life, which is a series of changing events that overpower us in a regular rotation. Men and women glued to life cannot distinguish themselves from life. They are life: life as the event is them. Life as a series of changing events comes in to us as impressions and causes us to react mechanically. We take this mechanical reaction as I, as oneself. We identify with every event, *more*, or *less*. The point of the Work is to create a conscious place or bar or customs-house where we can be



conscious of the quality of incoming impressions and so detect a typical *event*, and what would be our mechanical reaction to it *before* we react mechanically to it. Here we can interfere with ourselves—safely. All this, as many of you have heard, belongs to the beginning of understanding and practising what is called the First Conscious Shock, the meaning of which in all its aspects is our profoundest study. Try to see what is meant in these commentaries when it is said that there is no such thing as abstract formless “life” but that life is a coloured thing, coloured and divided by different events. Life is discontinuous because it is *events*. For instance, you lose your money. That is an event. Your *reaction* to this possible event, if it has not happened to you, will not be the same as when you hear that X has lost his money. In such a case X will be under the hypnotic power of the particular event called “losing your money”. You will not feel all that it means until the event in the turn of the wheel of events called life picks on you. Yes, to hear of events happening to others is quite different from the events happening to you. What does it mean “an event happening to you”? It means that you, by a turn of the wheel, suddenly are in the midst of an event—say, a car-crash. That is quite different from reading about such an event. Do you see that here lies something very curious? It is like those twelve people called up to form a jury. “I will never be called up”—one says—and then you are. Can you catch this vision of life? Remember, you might be called up. By what? By authorities? No—by *events*. If you stub your toe on the carpet, there is no authority. It is one possible event, small but painful. For a moment you are caught by it and react mechanically to it. If you have enough money, you may have all your carpets changed and laid properly. Certainly—but then you will be caught by other events—for instance, by worry about your money. So we are caught—by one event after another.

When Man was created as a self-developing organism, all possible events that a man could experience were created also. Why? Well, otherwise he would have had no life—no *events*—nothing to do. Now, losing your luggage is a common thing, but it is an event possible to you. You no doubt think this is not *life*—it is merely a nuisance. No, you are wrong. This is exactly *life*. Just in the same way, if you expect to be well for the party to-morrow and wake up with a temperature, and you think it is a nuisance, but not life, I would say you have got the idea of life wrongly. To be ill is a very common event. Yet people think it *exceptional*—that is, as it were, not life. Well, in that case we imagine that life is not all these *exceptional* events. But this exactly is life. O. once said: “People think war is *exceptional*—but it has always been.”

Now the point of the Work in this respect is how you relate yourself to what is happening to you. What is happening to you is *events*—some particular event which millions of others are under. Do you see? You are sad. Well, something is happening to you—some *event*—and that is how you are taking it, reacting to it. But do you formulate the

*event*? Why are you taking it and reacting to it in that way? You are doing so because *mechanically* you always have done so and you never have tried to see the event and separate from your reaction to it. But also you do not yet see it is an event which millions of people are under at that moment. Events govern the world. The world is a series of events—yes, old, old, recurring events.

Now you cannot change the event—but you can alter *yourself* in regard to how you take it. Have you, after years in the Work—I speak to older people—never noticed how every event hypnotizes you and sucks force from you? Do you not understand what it means to be *passive* to events so that you do not combine with them—whatever they be? Yes, a very difficult thing—but of enormous, incalculable value once you see what the Work is teaching about non-identifying. Now you know, on a billiard-table, how a ball can roll about and then fall into a *pocket*. Every event that comes to us in life is like a pocket into which we fall if we identify and neither observe nor remember ourselves. For example, a good pocket is “I have had a hard life”. We fall into some typical event just as a billiard ball falls into a pocket and then, so to speak, it is off the table of consciousness. Even the smallest event acts as a pocket, such as losing one’s collar stud. We may identify with some trivial event like this so that all day long we are in a temper, a sulky mood, so that all day long we are in a pocket of some kind. We have been, in that case, easily caught by life, which seeks to keep us asleep and have not grasped that the Work is to make us take events consciously and not mechanically. Some events are far more difficult than others to separate from in regard to their hypnotizing power. Yet, if this Work means anything, it is more powerful than life and its events, because otherwise our state would be truly pitiable. Those who have worked or have separated from the hypnotic power of life have preceded us and left behind them memorials of what they did—and also a certain power which, if we practise the Work and build up a new mind from the ideas of the Work, which seek to make us think in a new way, will be transmitted to us, even when faced with the most difficult events. But unless we remember ourselves—which is not to be hypnotized—this power cannot reach us.

## THE WORK-TEACHING ABOUT MAN AS A SELF-DEVELOPING ORGANISM

### WORK-IDEA

The Work says: "Man is created a self-developing organism. He is incomplete by creation, but can complete himself."

### COMMENTARY

If anyone wants to understand in brief what this Work is about, the above quotation from the Work-teaching will answer the question. Man is created incomplete and as an incomplete thing he tries to live his life, but he can complete himself, because he was born a self-developing organism. Before we go on, notice one thing here: "Man was born a *self-developing organism*"—notice the word *self*. You may attend lectures, demonstrations, exercises, and so on, but ultimately the emphasis lies in this word *self*. No other person can develop *you*—only you yourself can do so. Why is it that all sorts of external disciplines and regimentations in life do not develop people internally? A man joins the Army; he is disciplined externally; he obeys rules. Yet the man in his internal side does *not* develop. I may bow down religiously a hundred times a day, but this will not change me inwardly. The Work is not about this kind of thing. Why? Because all that kind of thing usually only increases the power of False Personality. Suppose I can fast longer than any one of you? Will this change *me*? No—I will probably—of course, modestly—mention it to everyone. Now this is to increase the False Personality. A man begins to change only when, through self-observation, he begins to apply to himself what the Work teaches him to do. No one else can do this for him. It is possible to teach a man this Work; it is not possible to make him work on himself. One may go about from one teacher to another all one's life and never have a thought of working on oneself—of applying the Work to oneself. Now once a person begins to work on himself, he begins to meet the Work *internally*. The Work will then teach him internally, although for a long time he will need to be reminded of it externally. The object of this Work is to connect lower centres with Higher Centres. So we have to work on the mass of weeds and mud that lower centres have become covered with, in order to make it possible for them to hear and transmit the messages from Higher Centres. The two Higher Centres are fully developed and are transmitting all the time. But, owing to the state of our lower—that is, ordinary—centres, we are unaware of this, although perhaps at rare moments we realize that "inspiration" or a strange happiness is not an idle term. Any intense emotional state may connect momentarily with Higher Centres. Now we have to get one stark truth into our minds: that we are capable of states lower and

higher than our ordinary states. This gives a firm ground for the understanding. You can give way to drugs, for example, which lead to lower states because then you are buying before you have made the money. You are not only borrowing from to-morrow, but from your whole Time-Body.

Now in this Work, as it was once taught, we learn that before we can have something we must earn the cash to pay for it. If you take drugs to get into certain states—which is possible—you will have to pay afterwards. In this Work we pay beforehand. How? By working on the Three Lines of Work—work on yourself, work in connection with others, and work for the Work itself. What is work on yourself? It is, in my case, work to make Dr. Nicoll passive. What is work with others? It is exactly the magic power of external considering. What is work for the Work itself? It is to see, to understand, what we are trying to do, what direction is being given, what will help the Work itself. Now some serve the Third Line of Work without being able to serve the First Line. Or again, some can serve the Second Line rather than the First and Third Lines. In any case, everyone in the Work can always serve one or the other. For instance, suppose you can serve the First Line—work on yourself privately—and it becomes stale, then think of how you might serve the Second Line—that is, not being hostile and negative to others in the Work.

Now let us take an example of the application of the Work-ideas to yourself. You are told, for instance, to observe and not identify with negative emotions. Such work on oneself belongs to the First Line of Work. But if you never really observe yourself, you are perhaps sure that you are never negative, and *unless you see* that you are negative you cannot begin to work on *yourself*. Remember that if you become negative, say, full of envy, hatred, malice, etc., it is always your fault, not the fault of the person who, say, said something unpleasant. When my wife and I went to the Institute in France we were told: "Remember here Personality has scarcely any right to exist." And the saying put up in the theatre that we built ourselves all through a harsh winter was: "Always remember you are here having already understood the necessity of contending only with yourself. Thank everyone who affords you the opportunity."

## A NOTE ON FALSE PERSONALITY

### WORK-IDEA

As long as you are identified with False Personality,  
no transformation of yourself can take place.

### COMMENTARY

Everyone invents himself or herself. These self-invented people meet and talk and quarrel and marry each other. This invention of oneself is called False Personality. Its effect is to give the person a wrong feeling of I. The Work calls it Imaginary 'I'. For the birth of Real I to take place, Imaginary 'I' must be seen as imaginary. This can only come about by self-knowledge. Self-knowledge, in turn, can only be reached through self-observation. That is why the Work begins with the observation of oneself. The illusions about ourselves can be weakened only by seeing them. Others may see them, but *you* must see them. Now as long as the False Personality dominates us, the illusions and the forms of imagination we have about ourselves will hold us in their power. This will complicate everything in our lives and render us unhappy where it is quite unnecessary to be unhappy. We will see life through the False Personality. You have heard that this Work is tentatively called Psycho-Transformism. This title implies that some transformation is possible for Man. All esoteric psychology has this central idea. In fact, that is why it exists. It is always about how to attain this possible inner change or transformation. In some systems it is called re-birth or regeneration, which is the same thing. In this Work it is called sometimes the attainment of Real I. Now, since we are so much centred in the False Personality, from which we derive an imaginary feeling of I, or Imaginary 'I', it is necessary, in order to begin to move towards Real I, to separate our consciousness from False Personality. This means that you must shift the centre of gravity of consciousness by becoming conscious of what you were not previously conscious of. This can only be done by observing the False Personality in oneself. This leads to a gradual displacement of the previous psychological centre of gravity of I. Remember, your feeling of I meets life. As a result it will not only begin to give you an altered view of yourself, but it will also begin to give you an altered view of life. You must understand that any change in yourself, in your feeling of what I is, will also transform the world for you—to the extent of your own transformation of the feeling of I.

Now let us try to understand this in easier terms. Not one of us, as we are mechanically in life, has his or her centre of gravity in Real I. We have it in False Personality, in Imaginary 'I', in a fiction of ourselves that we have to keep going. So each of us has to do all sorts

of things in order to keep up this imaginary self, the False Self, this self that is not really deeply us, in order that we, as it were, do not lose face—or, in fact, lose all sense of ourselves. Now if all of you here were suddenly taken right out of your pretences—in short, if you suddenly had False Personality made passive, non-active—you would nearly lose all sense of yourselves, or again, you might become pure fiends and beasts, as in war. But to return to the delicate matter of the observation of oneself in regard to the existence of False Personality—try to notice your affectations. Try to observe your insincerity, try to make conscious your artificial ways, your sweet false intonations. Try to notice (if your name is Mr. A), how Mr. A stalks about and pretends he knows everything and everybody and is so charming. And (if your name is Mrs. B or Miss B), try to notice how you have to serve Mrs. B, or Miss B, and buy things for them and talk as *they* wish and not as you wish. Finally, notice your manners. Are they real and simple, or purely insincere? Notice what offends you. Is it really genuine? Or is it a case of saying: “Don’t you know that I am Mr. A—or that I am Mrs. B or Miss B?” Well, I cannot explain further. But let this remark here be made, and think and reflect on it. As long as you are practically nothing but False Personality—however distinguished you are—you have completely failed in regard to all you were created to be—namely, a self-developing organism. The first step is to observe and make passive False Personality.

Now, if you can separate *by observation of it* from False Personality—which means that you can see it consciously and so are distinct from it (since what you are not conscious of in yourself will control you, because you are identified with it)—if you can separate from the False Personality, then you will change internally and the whole world and all life will change for you correspondingly. Why? Because an increase of consciousness has taken place. This Work is about *increasing consciousness*—firstly of *you*—of what you are. If you become more and more conscious of False Personality (that is, if Mr. A sees Mr. A more and more, and Mrs. B and Miss B see themselves and all they say and do, more and more), then the broader and deeper consciousness will release you from a negative and small-minded, egotistical bundle of personal reactions, full of self-fears and hopes, foolish ambitions, daily lying, unnecessary unhappiness, stupid judgments, false pride, imbecile vanity, and all the rest. In short, you will move away from this spurious person you have taken yourself as and served as a slave—that is, False Personality—and begin to approach the great test for Man and Woman as regards their inner sincerity and integrity and so purity in this sense—the test that if passed leads to the Real I that every man, every woman, was born with, but has forgotten, owing to falling asleep on this planet. For, the Work says, the Essence of Man, of Woman, comes down from a high level represented in the Ray of Creation by the Stars. The Work is about regaining the Consciousness that is one’s right—that is, it is about awakening from *Sleep*. You have already

heard that this Work and all real esoteric teaching starts with the idea that Man, born awake, falls asleep, and so the world is as it is—namely a world of sleeping people. Well, I advise you to examine and reflect on your own state of sleep. As long as you believe in your False Personality, you are fast asleep. So begin by trying to see what you take as I in yourself. Do you really think you have any real, permanent I in yourself, as you sit there? But the study of your False Personality is not quite that. You have to see it for yourself.

*Amwell, 22.1.49*

### COMMENTARY ON ATTITUDES

On one occasion I asked Gurdjieff, through an interpreter, whether it was necessary for everything to be overcome in oneself. He said: "No" and seemed then to speak in an indirect way more of the necessity of creating new attitudes to things so that, so to speak, it was comparable to crossing from one side to the other, as when crossing the road. I understood him to mean that if we remain with our present attitudes we are on one side but if we change attitudes we can go to the other side of ourselves. So I gathered that an attitude is always one-sided. He indicated that this was only possible if you took photographs of yourself. I heard at different times later on that taking photographs of oneself was different from merely observing oneself at any particular moment. If your quality of self-observation is sincere and if it is not merely done out of a sense of being told to do it, these observations become linked, collect together, and form gradually a photograph of yourself over a considerable period of time. I think that Ouspensky called this a Time-Photograph or possibly one photograph of your Time-Body. When you have a photograph of yourself in this sense you see yourself as a certain kind of person over many years, perhaps back to childhood, governed by certain attitudes. This increase of consciousness shews the possibility of taking everything in another way, so it could be compared to crossing over to the other side of yourself from that side that has hitherto governed you by means of typical one-sided attitudes. Ouspensky once gave us an example of the following description. He said: "Try to notice what you object to in people, in politics, and so on, and try deliberately to think and talk from the opposite attitude." You must understand that if we have fixed, acquired attitudes we will judge from those attitudes, in a mechanical, even automatic way, everything that happens. One should be able to read the papers without constantly saying "tut-tut" or feeling angry or depressed. Now, as mechanical people we study how to become more conscious. Amongst other things we have to try to become more

conscious of our attitudes which have been laid down in us from early life from imitation of our elders or the romances of the period. Now, the difference between mechanical man and conscious man is that a mechanical man is in the prison of himself, and in this particular case he is imprisoned by his acquired mechanical attitudes, so that he can only see everything from one point of view, and a conscious man is one who is freed from these limiting one-sided attitudes. We understand that a conscious man can see things from different angles and, in fact, he can be conscious in the full swing of the opposites, so that neither one side nor the other side of the opposites governs him exclusively. You all know what it means to meet a man who has very strong and fixed attitudes, who rises to the top of life—that is, a man of limited one-sided being. He is called a strong man. He will judge, he will condemn, he will not forgive, a whole side of life which a conscious man will never think of judging, condemning, of so violently not forgiving. All this arises from a lack of consciousness of oneself. One does not realize that one is much the same as the people one is condemning and judging and not forgiving because one is not conscious that one does the same thing oneself. One has not observed it. So one can say such a man cannot cross the road and do things from the other side.

Now it is very difficult to observe an attitude in oneself by mere momentary self-observation, but, as was said, if these momentary observations are sincere they will unite by themselves into forming a time-photograph of oneself over a certain period, or even over one's whole life. You will then perceive that you have always been a certain kind of person, always judging from this angle, condemning and not forgiving from this angle, and you will then be able to see that it was all mechanical, and you never knew what you were doing, and it was all a part of your acquired psychology which hitherto you have taken as yourself and never challenged by your own power of observation, but took for granted.

I suppose it takes many years before a person begins to understand for himself or herself what the Work is really about. The Work is to free you from the absolutely erroneous ideas that you have about yourself, the absolutely wrong attitudes you have, wrong forms of imagination and all the rest of it, which contribute to form False Personality, which is your real enemy and causes you endless and useless suffering without your knowing anything about it. Some people, of course, of weak Being and weak knowledge, with no Magnetic Centre and who have never thought about life at all, about what they mean and what life means—I say these people cannot awaken from the deep sleep that they are in. They cannot awaken from False Personality in themselves, and if you are so foolish as to try to awaken them from their sleep you will only be hated by them. In the first place they will not even think that they have mechanical attitudes, they will believe in everything they say and they will regard themselves as conscious people living a



conscious life. But people who are close up to the possibility of awakening will be able to hear a little of what the Work is saying to them—i.e. that they are asleep and that they have to study the causes of their being asleep, and this begins, as you know, with observing the things that the Work teaches us to observe *in ourselves*.

To-day we are concentrating on the observation of attitudes which make people take up points of view in a mechanical way and try to live their lives in these points of view, which, if they could look more deeply into themselves, they would be able to see have nothing to do with what they really think. So try to notice when you are speaking from attitude. Impressions of the events happening in life fall, among many other things, on one's attitudes. Ouspensky said: "To change yourself, your attitudes must change." You know how difficult it is to talk sometimes to a man who has very strong, say, political or religious attitudes. Once you touch these attitudes the man or woman will cease, as it were, to be intelligent. You can see that they have never thought about these things which they speak of so readily from attitude and, no doubt, they feel that if they were to abandon these attitudes, they would cease to exist. Yet by having the sense of I, the sense of themselves, in these attitudes, they have a wrong centre of gravity; they are not in their right centre of gravity—i.e. in Real I, in what is real, but have their centre of gravity in what is not really themselves and so in something that is false—that is False Personality. In other words, they have their centre of gravity in something that is not themselves. Real I is not in the opposites but between the opposites. As Gurdjieff said: "Personality is what is not really you, but Essence is what is really you." Life causes us to form Personality and this is necessary as the first step in education. But unless you think, reflect, observe yourself, after a certain time—that is, after you have acquired a good responsible working Personality and so have learnt how to be a Good Householder—you will not be able to go on to the second stage of your own development. All this Work is connected with the second education of which the object is to make you think in a new way about all the things that you have hitherto mechanically taken for granted, including your acquired attitudes which, as I have said, arise chiefly from imitation of other people in early life, actual people, actors, or fiction people. Those who have acquired a certain sensitiveness to themselves through self-observation can distinguish when they are speaking from their own intelligence and when they are speaking from mechanical attitude. Of course, other people can distinguish this much earlier from the tone of voice. Ouspensky taught us a great deal about listening to intonation. When a person is speaking from mechanical attitude and thus leaves his intelligence, his voice becomes different and probably everyone will begin to yawn. Why? Because the person is not speaking from himself any more but from his acquired attitudes of which he is unaware. He is unaware unless he has got a certain sensitiveness to himself through observation.

Now the Work teaches that our attitudes connect us by invisible threads with life. In this way life and its various events affect us. If you have no attitude, say, to politics, you will not be affected. As we are, we have attitudes towards this, that and the other—and do not realize it. So, by means of these threads, we are affected, influenced, made to identify. We have attitudes towards religion, sex, politics, science, society, sport, marriage, divorce, drink, gambling, and so on. But we do not know it. We simply talk “from attitude”—not from understanding. In short, we react blindly when attitude comes in. Yet we imagine we are behaving consciously and talking from our understanding and experience of life.

When a man talks from attitude he is easily offended or violent. This is not the case if he talks from understanding. Attitudes, therefore, can be thought of as preventing a man or a woman from growing in understanding. That is why it is necessary in the Work to observe and so be able to separate from—that is, not identify with—acquired attitudes.

*Amwell, 29.1.49*

## COMMENTARY ON REAL I

The only part of us that can get in touch with Real I is Essence. Real I—Master—is fully developed. Essence is not. By way of allegory we can say that Real I remains always on the level on which it is, whereas Essence descends and eventually becomes surrounded by Personality. The only way to reach Real I is through Essence. You cannot reach Real I through Personality. Let me put it in this way. The possible return journey to Real I is only through development of Essence which can connect with Real I. It is necessary for some of you to understand this more clearly than you do at present. But I am quite aware that it is a very difficult subject to talk about. In any case it is impossible to understand it in a purely formatory way.

We have to understand something like this. We were created *before* we were born on this planet and we were created perfect—that is, with Real I. We were then sent down through descending levels and further descending levels, down to this Earth, and we were born with Essence. At a very early age Essence may be in touch with Real I because, as was said, only through Essence can you get in touch with Real I. G. once said: “Behind Essence lies Real I, and behind Real I lies God.”

Now our problem appears to be, from what the Work teaches, that Essence, through which alone we can get in touch with Real I, is undeveloped. The plan is this: Essence cannot grow unless Personality is formed round it by life on this planet. This is the first and necessary

step, because a man who does not develop up to the level of Good Householder, who never learns anything from life, who, in short, is nothing but a lunatic, or tramp, in the Work-sense, does not understand that he has not made the first step in his real development. In other words, he has not understood, does not see, what is the plot or plan connected with his birth on this Earth.

Let me repeat: Essence, through which we can get in touch with Real I, cannot develop by itself beyond a very small point unless first of all it is surrounded with a side acquired from this planet which is called Personality, which, in turn, if we begin to work against the aspect of it called False Personality, will feed undeveloped Essence. As Essence begins to grow in this strange way, so does the possibility of finding flashes of Real I become more apparent to those undergoing the process of this Work.

Let us put on the board horizontally: False Personality, Personality, Essence, Real I, God. This is what we have to think about. This is the problem of Esotericism, and this is why it is so difficult to understand quite what Esoteric Teaching is saying. You must have understood by now that the Work teaches by implication *that we have forgotten ourselves*. That is why the Work starts with the idea that a man can remember himself. Think for yourself for a moment: if you are told that you must remember yourself, it must imply that you have forgotten yourself, and this must again imply that *once upon a time* you did remember yourself and have now forgotten yourself, and this is why everything is wrong with you and with other people in this life. The great teaching of the Work is that everyone has fallen asleep, everyone has forgotten himself or herself, and that is why everything goes in the only possible way that it can go. That is also why it is said that we have to awaken from sleep and so the Work speaks about the necessity of trying to remember ourselves and not live all our lives asleep, identified with things, persons, events, with every unpleasant situation and all the rest.

You may ask why, if we were created perfect, at a level higher than Earth, it is necessary to be made to descend at all. The answer is that a being created perfect has contributed nothing to its own development. It would be easily tempted. Man by descent and ascent thus becomes stronger "than the angels", as it is said somewhere.

## ANOTHER NOTE ON UNDERSTANDING

### WORK-IDEA

This Work teaches that Understanding is the strongest force that we can create in ourselves.

### COMMENTARY

If a man does good for the sake of a reward, he does not *understand* what he is doing. Again, to the man who was ploughing on the Sabbath Day, it was said that if he *understood* what he was doing, it was all right. Again, if a man takes it for granted that he is fully conscious and knows what he is saying and doing and can easily change himself if he wishes, he will never *understand* himself, or, indeed, anybody else. Now, although we may know a lot, we understand very little. To know and to understand are different things. To begin with, to know is a matter of one centre, but to understand is a matter of at least two centres. The formatory part of the Intellectual Centre can *know* a great deal. But it does not understand anything. If the Intellectual Centre and the Emotional Centre co-operate, then understanding begins. A person may know how to make a bomb and do so and blow up some people. But he has no understanding. How, then, can we get a glimmer of meaning as to what the Work indicates by understanding? Does it mean a seeing together of many things from many points of view and so quite distinct from one-sidedness? Certainly, it must have some such meaning, for is not the whole Work about changing a man or woman from a narrow, one-sided, undeveloped, negative, prejudiced person into a different being through self-study, new knowledge and special kinds of efforts?

Let me take *aim* in connection with understanding. We have to make aim in the Work. We may think we know our aim. But do we understand our aim? That is quite another matter. It is only a finer inner perception that will help us to understand our aim in the long run. But we must begin by simply making an aim and trying to keep it. As we go on, however, we begin to see that our aim is connected with something else and that it would be better to work on this something else and finally on Chief Feature. Now truth is what connects you with something. If our knowledge and our being were equally developed, everything we know would be connected up rightly and so rightly valued, and so our understanding would be maximal. But, as we are, having very small understanding and also living in a world of diminishing understanding, everything is lying about in bits within us, quite unconnected or wrongly placed. As a consequence, we are not integrated into a unity. The Work is to integrate us. If we were integrated, understanding would replace our, at present, so unsatis-

factory and dull, moody, inner life, which is so contradictory. Moments in which this inner work of connection is going on—because it will begin sooner or later in those whom the Work accepts—are full of very deep satisfaction. Notice such moments. When they occur, the ordinary things that one usually attempts to get pseudo-satisfaction out of—such as vanity, which can be triumphant or knocked-out—almost disappear. One is emptied on one side and filled on the other.

To return to the man who does good for the sake of reward—he does not understand what good is based on, he thinks he can do—in this case, do good. Have we not all seen people who interfere with others in order to do good to them? Let us begin with ourselves, before we think we can do good and get a reward. Do good to yourself and you will actually get a reward—but of another kind. What does it mean to do good to oneself? One thing it means is to observe oneself and see what is acting and separate from negative 'I's. Another is not to identify with one's meritorious 'I's, with one's own idea of one's prowess and how much good one has done, and so on, through the whole gamut of the Work-teaching. What, then, will happen? You will *understand* a thousand and one things that you did not *understand* before and cannot explain to those who still act in a life-way and ascribe merit to themselves in everything they do. This *release from* oneself, this release from Imaginary 'I', from the pictures one has had of oneself, from False Personality, is the greatest good one can do to oneself, and it involves the whole of the Work, its ideas, its practical teaching. What, then, is the reward? As I said, the reward is a much deeper understanding of oneself, of life and of other people. What is this due to? It is due to a thousand and one new connections having been made in oneself. Does understanding, then, imply more freedom? Yes, it implies far greater freedom *internally*, for it means that where you moved about in a tiny part of your total psychology, you now move in a greater part and are more at ease. So fear begins to leave you. For, the more understanding, the less foolish fear. Continual anxiety, continual unnecessary fear, is a sign of lack of understanding, and so of lack of inner development.

But unless you connect with a force that can help you, it is difficult in life to change—if not impossible. Those from whom we have got this Work have worked and reached levels above our level. As has been said, they have left behind memorials about freeing ourselves from the hypnotic power acting on humanity—that is, from the hypnotic power of your mechanical side over any attempt to reach a different level of being. But this is only done through *understanding* more. For after a time you will begin to see that where you understood one thing, it now becomes a hundred different things. For understanding acts in this way. It is the result of new inner connections—of seeing things in a new way—of realizing that the small apparatus of what you called "your understanding of life" was a very poor instrument. So *understanding*, in the Work-sense, is seeing more deeply,

and to see more deeply means that you see from far more connections between centres than you did formerly. And so you cannot make bombs and blow people up. Why? Because *understanding* means that you understand the other person, who is the same as you—who is just like you—frightened, terrified, as perhaps you are. So understanding includes others, and not only yourself and your own interests. To understand another person—which is called External Considering—means new connections in yourself. It is standing under your self-will and interests—standing under your False Personality. Yes—but in a real way, in a practical sense, in a Work-sense. He or she is as vulnerable to unhappy things said as you are. So we begin to do the Second Line of Work.

So I will end this Commentary with this idea—the idea of the Second Line of Work—work as regards one another. As this grows into our limited consciousness, so we *include more*. All *understanding* includes more—let us say, more than your own little selves. So some will ask: “Is what the Work means by understanding the same as increase of consciousness?” And the answer is: Of course, yes. But first you must by self-observation get rid of your phantasies and self-appreciation, etc.—which is the First Line of Work—and then begin to try to become conscious of other people’s difficulties—and this is the Second Line of Work. Then, I assure you, the Work may itself begin to act on you internally and bless you by giving you more and even more *understanding*.

*Amwell, 8.2.49*

## THE RAY OF CREATION

The Ray of Creation is based on the idea that everything is a part of something else. For example, the Earth is a part of the Planetary World which in turn is a part of the Solar System. One of the ideas that enters here is that the part is under more laws than the whole. Our Solar System is a part of our Galaxy and our Galaxy is a part of all possible Galaxies. Your little finger is a part of your hand and again part of your arm and eventually part of your body as a whole, but your little finger is under more laws than your whole body. It cannot act by itself, but only in conjunction with your hand and again in conjunction with your arm, and so on.

Now one of the fundamental ideas of esoteric teaching is that Man is (or should be) a small world or Microcosmos that is in some way a representation of the great world or Macrocosmos. We can see without much argument that the visible Macro-cosmos—namely, the visible Universe—is composed of parts within parts within parts and we can comprehend that it may form some vast unity beyond our understand-

ing. From this point of view, it requires only a step in intelligence to realize that the Ray of Creation may represent lower and higher levels. We can realize that the Sun must in some way be at a higher level than the Earth or Moon, and so on. We can therefore grasp that if we take the Ray of Creation as a Scale of Being, the being of the Sun is greater than the being of the Earth or Moon, let us say. We all know that there are people who are greater than ourselves. Some of these people have appeared historically, Christ, Buddha, and many others. These Beings are considered relatively to us. If we are asked the question: "Is Conscious Man on Earth?" we therefore have to say that obviously there have been people more conscious on this Earth who have had an enormous effect on the development of culture. But since Beings at the level of the Sun originated the Side-Octave with the purpose of transmitting force through suffering to beyond the point Fa-Mi where there is a certain discontinuity or gap in vibrations, and where, so to speak, an amplifier is necessary, we can understand that Conscious Humanity does not necessarily live on this Earth physically but that their influences can reach this Earth. There have always been legends in the past of supermen coming down to the Earth and teaching people how to do agriculture and the arts, and so on. So if it is a question whether Conscious Man is on the Earth, I would say: Yes and No. A person may be influenced by the Conscious Circle of Humanity if he develops his being enough. He is then under C influences which as you know are sown on the Earth consciously but turn so quickly into distortions and become B influences.

Then finally in regard to the question: "Why does not Conscious Man help Humanity?" the laws of the game are that Man was made a self-developing organism and cannot be compelled because Essence will never grow by compulsion. The Circle of violent, mechanical Humanity seeks to produce effects by compulsion, police, but this is impossible for the Conscious Circle of Humanity, who keep sowing into the Earth various forms of Literature, Art and so on, to make it possible for Man to develop from his own perception and understanding.

**FURTHER COMMENTARY ON DIFFERENT 'I's  
IN ONESELF**

WORK-IDEA

Man, or Woman, is not one. They are many. They have no Real, Permanent I, but many different, contradictory and shifting 'I's. But they imagine they are *One*.

COMMENTARY

On one occasion Madame Ouspensky, when teaching, said: "It is necessary to observe which 'I' in yourself you are going with." The same idea had been expressed many times before by Mr. Ouspensky. But it so happened—as it does to us all in the Work—that, hearing it from Madame Ouspensky, I suddenly saw that at that moment, listening to her, I was going with the wrong 'I's in myself. There must, of course, have been something impersonal in her intonation—that is, without any quality of finding fault, of retaliation, of criticism—for it to penetrate me. I saw I was in very negative, fault-finding 'I's—ready to pick holes in anything said by her. I had, of course, heard very much about 'I's in oneself, about good and bad 'I's, about negative 'I's, dangerous 'I's, and so on. But I fancy I had never heard before that these 'I's were real persons in me and that I was surrounded by extremely unpleasant 'I's that only wished to say unpleasant things and make difficulties. This extraordinary inner weakness of what we take as ourselves and place such overweening value on, and justify daily, came home to me. I became aware that Real I was not listening to her, but a lot of unpleasant, acquired 'I's were. I do not know how many of you realize yet what I am describing and how one's life is led for one by a lot of acquired 'I's that live like non-paying boarders in the House of our Being and are probably acquired from bad literature and bad thinking and feeling, from sleeping nurses, etc.

Now, to detect one's own artificiality, say, in a row, is interesting. It is to notice one's False Personality, to begin with. People, or rather, the 'I's in people—hurl at each other clichés, such as "How dare you?" or "So that is what you really are?" or "Beast, reptile, brute," etc. Yes, but what they do not see is that they are nothing but machines. What is this spiritual—that is, inner—tragedy? It is simply that they mistake superficial, acquired 'I's in themselves for what they really are. The tragedy is that these 'I's acquired by education, by imitation, by reading, and so on, are not *they themselves*. How many times, in the midst of a life row, does not a person in the Work wonder what on earth he or she is doing and saying, and yet cannot stop doing and saying it? Now any one of you can be surrounded by very bad 'I's,



that are not really you, at any moment. If you are negative, if you are indulging in negative phantasies: "Oh, if only I had this or that, if only life were different for me, etc." then you will soon be in the power of these bad 'I's. Now they are really devils in the sense that their only object is to destroy all peace and happiness in you. This is the interesting point that people see with much difficulty, even after years in the Work. In this connection, I will speak of 'I's that wish this Work and 'I's that hate it from the start, because they know it means their destruction.

Yes—the point is to realize this *you* as imaginary and see what this Work is about. If men or women, in the midst of a typical life row, begin to wonder what on earth they are doing or saying, they are, in terms of the Work-teaching, beginning to *awaken*. Awaken from what? They are awakening from their mechanical reaction to life, awakening to the 'I's that are taking possession of them at the moment—in short, awakening to the idea that it is not they themselves that are doing and speaking, but something else that is not them. To return to this idea that we harbour in ourselves 'I's that can destroy all happiness and peace—this idea is a singularly strange idea to anyone who remains in this Earth-illusion that he is one person, one unvarying individual, one permanent and real I. In this Work, we are told almost at first that we have to break up this Earth-born illusion that we are one and the same person all the time. We have to yield to the vanity and pride destroying us, realizing that there is really no such person as what you call I. No, there is no I, but many contradictory 'I's. A man, a woman, vows to keep vows. Yes, but how is this possible? Which 'I' is it that vows? Now to understand that you all have in yourselves 'I's that wish evil to you is odd. But you can begin to see that this is a fact when you try to do this Work. Then 'I's that know that they can no longer grip you, and maintain their evil hold over you, begin to exert all the power that belongs to the negative part of Emotional Centre—which, so to speak, opens on to a lower world than that on which we live. If you ask me: "What do you mean?" I answer: let the person be gripped by suspicion—what then? Does he descend into a lower world than this one on which we are born? Of course. We can all see what the Work teaches, that, although we are born very low down in the levels of Being represented by Galaxies, Suns, Planets, Earth and Moon, we are all capable of going lower than the level that belongs to us on this planet. That is, we all have an elementary idea that we can be *worse* than we are. And, as I said, suspicion can drag us down lower than the level which belongs to us. Remember that suspicion is not only an easy infection for women but it is also for men. Suspicion can only be corrected by the use of Intellectual Centre. But the grip of suspicious 'I's is terrible. So you see that you have in you deadly 'I's that seek to destroy you. Do you regard this as a strange idea? Well, if you do, you will appear to me as rather a silly child in this Work. Why? Because you have been sitting on the idea that you

are one person all the time and have not seen that you are a Zoological Garden.

Now I open this letter: it begins like this: "I have been in the Work for over a year and I feel that I am making no headway." Here, of course, we are dealing with those negative 'I's that have hitherto controlled this man or this woman. They act nicely. They suggest that you send a letter to the effect: "Am I any good?" Or "Is it any good?" or "I don't think I . . .", etc. Very clever, isn't it? But it is what you have to observe. How many collapse under this simply negative hypnotism—such as: "I don't think I am making any progress."

Now, let me tell you a very small secret. What, then, is your work on yourself? Not to go with these 'I's—not to believe them—not to identify with them—not to listen to them—not to argue with them. Perhaps you will see, some of you, where work on yourself lies in such a minor crisis. Why do these 'I's suggest such subtle things? Simply to keep their power over you. We are most easily discouraged, most easily depressed, all very weak inside. But this Work can give great strength by influx into you. But the 'I's that hate you hate your development. And do you yet understand that you have 'I's in you that wish only to destroy your happiness by making you negative? I say that these 'I's that hate you and your possible inner development are not outside people, but are in you, just as the Kingdom of Heaven is within you.

#### *Additional Note*

Insult is difficult to meet. Notice how, when you are slightly insulted, what a tremendous uproar in your imagination it makes. You keep on imagining, not only what the insult was, but what you will do when you meet the insulter. In such a case, you may be completely horrified by the depth of hatred and desire for retaliation that arises from even a comparatively small insult. What does External Considering mean which can be your rescuer? External Considering means this: instead of thinking how other people are behaving to you, begin to think how you are behaving to other people.

## COMMENTARY ON SCALE

### WORK-IDEA

“Things are on different scales.”

### COMMENTARY

It is necessary to understand that things are on different scales. For instance, our personal grievances are on a different scale from the national difficulties of the country we live in. When war is declared, something happens on a different scale from our personal troubles. We live on the Earth, which is clearly on a different scale in size from our personal stature. If it blows up, we are physically blown up, as in an earthquake, such as that of Messina, where 100,000 human beings were killed in a moment without warning. An earthquake belongs to the scale of the Earth. A personal quarrel belongs to the scale of oneself—that is, the Man-Woman scale. In great matters, as earthquakes or famine, or war and its desolation, the scale of personal grievances as a rule ceases to have much power over us. In a forest-fire, or in a drought, wild animals cease to attack one another. In a hard winter, deer come down from the snows to get food from Man. A great common danger dissolves the scale of personal antagonism. This is interesting, for the world of humanity is full of personal and natural antagonisms. It means that only something bigger, greater, on another scale, can destroy the power that they exert. I said just now that this is interesting. So it follows that if you have no sense of anything higher, anything greater, than yourself, you will not be able to change.

Now the idea of what is called religion was to bring into the consciousness of a man or woman the constant sense of something greater than themselves in daily life—in short, to give a continual sense of greater scale. No doubt God is not interested in different religions, but only in their effect on this *feeling of I*. And, as you know, any religion can easily produce a feeling of merit and superiority which is, of course, the reverse of what it was invented for—for example, “Thank God, I am not as other men . . .” But here we have an idea of very great consequences to our understanding of the Work. The Work says that unless a man can comprehend the idea of *Greater Mind*, he will be faced with endless difficulties in receiving it. It says a man, a woman, must have *Magnetic Centre*, which, briefly, is a sense or intuition of higher influences and of the impossibility of Nature’s creating itself or of life’s being explicable in terms of itself.

Now it is this feeling that the visible world—the minute part of total creation opened to our limited senses—is not the sum total of reality, that makes it possible to do this Work in a spirit of understanding. For those who say that visible nature created itself, it is im-

possible to do this Work. Why? Because they have something upside down in their minds. Such are like people who, having a radio, take it to bits to find out where the music comes from. Are not invisible forces playing on the radio? And is not the radio *made* to receive them? Then how can you attempt to explain the radio in terms of itself? And so it is the same with the brain. Now you can explain the radio in terms of its parts. Also you can remove brains and study them under the microscope. But will you thereby find out why they exist? Can you explain anything in terms of itself? You can take a picture and analyse its paint, canvas, etc. Will this explain the picture? No. The radio instrument can only be explained in terms of the invisible—the wireless waves which are inaudible, invisible, intangible, but become intelligible to us *via* a machine that transforms for us what our very limited senses cannot pick up. And so it is with Higher Centres and our preparation of lower centres to hear what they say to us all the time.

All esotericism begins with the idea that there is something *higher*. Exoteric systems, such as religions, say that this something higher is God, which people of sensory understanding take as something outside them, in the sky, so to speak. Esoteric systems say that this “something higher” is in you—not outside you in the visible world—but within you as a higher possible and existing *level* of yourself, not yet attained, but there already. So Christ said: “The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.” A man, a woman, following the exoteric path, thinks of a thunderstorm, an earthquake, a drought, a famine, as an external god acting unfavourably. But esotericism teaches that if you get negative and delight in all that, you descend in your level of *understanding*, and so move towards hell.

The Ray of Creation can give rise to many thoughts that belong to the development of a new way of thinking. The Work says that it is to make you think in a new way. It also says that if you continue to think as you always did, you cannot change—that is, you cannot undergo that possible change latent in Man by his creation as a self-developing organism and which is his real meaning. All that I have just said requires careful thinking—otherwise it may go in at one ear and out at the other and leave no trace in your mind. There is one thing that can be said for certain—and that is that you have to make mental effort in this system called the Fourth Way. You cannot think in a new way unless you make an effort to do so. Now, amongst many other things, learning to think in terms of scale is to think in a new way. To do so puts the mind in right order. To start with oneself puts the mind in wrong order. For example, if you put the Work first, as something greater, and yourself after, then you will get help. Vice versa, you will get none. Why? Because things are the wrong way round in your mind.

**COMMENTARY ON THE INFLUENCES  
UNDER WHICH WE CAN LIVE**

WORK-IDEA

We can put ourselves under different influences.

COMMENTARY

When, owing to some chance remark, or owing to the way you are being treated, you feel the rise of resentment, a clamour then begins in you. This is an ordinary daily situation. The population of the Earth is about two thousand million—that is, two thousand million people are feeling resentment at the same time as you. Let us try to observe this situation as calmly as possible. What is this clamour, this inner talking, in us? It is different 'I's talking. If you do not yet understand practically that there are different 'I's in you and that we are not one but many, then such an occasion gives a good opportunity to see the connection of what the Work teaches with the nature of our being. It says that our psychological being is characterized by lack of unity. It is not one 'I' but many conflicting 'I's. It is a disconnected many. It is legion. It is not one integrated unity as is our *physical being*. All the different parts of our physical bodies act in unison, as one organism. That is given us. But we have no corresponding unity given us as regards our *psychological being*. And that is what the Work can make. Now if you can hold yourself apart from taking sides with any of the voices that begin to talk when you are in a state of resentment you will be able to observe different 'I's at work. There are some extreme 'I's at work, who perhaps use pictures in place of words and make you have visions of strangling the enemy and burying him or her secretly, and so on. So swift is revenge that you cannot stop it. It rushes through you in a most boring way. But what you can do is not to mix your will with it—that is, not identify with it. Other 'I's are less extreme but more subtle. These 'I's suggest various clever devices to bring about the downfall of the enemy who insulted you. Well, have you observed these scheming 'I's? But reflect, you need not go with them—that is, you need not identify yourself with them, for if you do they have power over you. That is, you are under their influence. This is the whole point. When the Work says we can put ourselves under different influences, it actually means two things. One refers to *A*, *B* and *C* influences: the other refers to the influences of different 'I's in ourselves. You can, for example, put yourselves under the influences of the ideas of this Work, which comes from *C* influences—that is, conscious influences. Or you can put yourselves under life-influences—that is, *A* influences, the influences concerned with money, and position and power. But we speak here of putting ourselves under the

influences of different 'I's in oneself. Now a person who is full of resentment, and believes in it, puts himself or herself under negative 'I's. The Work says that negative emotions have the power to go on and on by themselves. In fact, if you find by self-observation that some resentful feelings and resentful thoughts keep going on and on in you, then you can be sure that you are suffering from a negative emotion—a dangerous illness. This will eat up everything good and healthy in you eventually, like typhus-fever, if you allow it to go on unchecked. It is much the same as a chronic sore, a suppurating abscess, for which, unfortunately, there is no penicillin. However, negative emotions give us a pleasant feeling because they give us a certain wrong sense of power. That is, they make it possible for us to destroy other people's happiness by a single remark—by one sting. Of course, that also destroys our own power of happiness—I mean, any real happiness. The happiness in wounding others is not happiness because it gives no inner peace. Now we all know the power of an unpleasant remark when people are being pleasant and enjoying themselves. One bitter remark smashes everything. And the person who makes it knows it will. All this belongs to the study of the power of negativeness when a person puts himself or herself under the influence of negative 'I's. Have you caught what is meant here? Have you observed how negative emotions can act in only one way—only to destroy—and how for that reason they can be attractive? The Work says Humanity is not governed by sex or by power but by negative emotions. By way of commentary I would say that it is because negative emotions can give such power of evil that people embrace them. But here a lot of individual thinking is necessary to unravel the various aspects of the question. Now, making inner accounts—that is, accumulating sources of bitterness and revenge—cannot possibly lead to anything save towards increasing negative states. But this is not what the Work teaches us to do, so we have to reflect in the light of the Work why it is undesirable, inexpedient, or, let me add, inconvenient, inappropriate, unsuitable, to make daily inner accounts of what people owe us. For this piles up the fuel for resentment and no one can reach a higher level of himself by such behaviour. If you hate others, you are not and cannot be in the light of the Work. That is, you cannot be under the influence of this Work. Why? Because you are under the influence of negative 'I's, of the negative part of the Emotional Centre, from which no growth is possible except a growth of more and more evil and negative emotions. So, studying, as objectively as possible, a state of resentfulness in oneself, one can learn a great deal about different 'I's and their influences.

Now there is, amongst several others, a remedy. *Externally consider*—that is, put yourself in the position of the woman, the man, who treated you in such a way as to make you feel resentful. That is, try to see yourself as they see you. You, of course, are perfect. They apparently don't think so. If you do this, you may be surprised why they

did not say more than they did. Above all, remember that two thousand million people are, at this moment, feeling resentment. This thought may rob you of any private deliciousness in the enjoyment of feeling negative and revengeful and feeling indeed a certain importance as a bearer of harmful and stinging remarks—and indeed it may make you feel that you are nothing but a very ordinary man or woman and so of no value in the Work.

*Amwell, 19.3.49*

### **WHAT IT MEANS TO WORK ON ONESELF**

When a person is criticized by another person, it gives him a great shock. Of course, if the person criticized has observed what he is criticized about, which is the same thing as saying that he is conscious of the thing in himself already, it will not give him such a shock. I was speaking recently at a group here about how difficult it was for me when I was practising psychological medicine to criticize a patient. The patient, of course, would talk to me as a doctor from the point of view that no one understood him properly, that his wife did not treat him properly, that he had never had a right chance in life, and all the rest of it. This is the state of every man and every woman in life. Now when as a doctor I had to gather myself together inside and begin to say to the patient that it was quite possible that *he* was rather difficult and that it might not always be his wife's fault and so on, I was always quite clear that I had reached a point where it was extremely difficult to avoid touching the patient's self-esteem. It was difficult because the whole atmosphere changed at once. I was no longer a kind of sympathetic father or mother (usually mother) as I now became critical of the patient, so I became, perhaps, in his time-body, a critical father or schoolmaster or Sergeant-Major. The atmosphere changed because I was no longer going to agree with this purely unconscious estimate of himself as being more or less a perfect and misunderstood person. I was, indeed, fast becoming a kind of enemy—a person who did not take him at his own self-evaluation, a person who indeed even told him that I had doubts about him.

Now you know in life we have to be very careful in the ordinary intercourse of life never to say what we really think about another person. All this means that we are all very sensitive to any kind of criticism, and means that we estimate ourselves quite wrongly, and all carry some fiction of ourselves. The Work calls this fiction of oneself Imaginary 'I'. The person who is simply governed by Imaginary 'I' cannot stand any kind of criticism that offends this imagination of himself or herself. The object of this Work is to deepen ourselves,

because all that is valuable lies deep beneath our imagination of ourselves. If you cannot stand any kind of criticism—and who of you can stand this, I should like to ask you—then it means that you have no self-knowledge, that you have never applied the Work to yourself and that you have not begun to work on yourself, that you have never observed yourself sincerely and therefore that you are a person who is still fast asleep in life. Such a person does not yet understand what the Work is about. The object of self-observation is to make you more conscious of what you really are, of what you have in yourself and do not realize. But it is a remarkable fact that even after many years no one really observes himself. Self-observation is turning the other way round from life. It is not the ordinary external attention that we pay to outer things, when we look out through our five senses, but it is the employment of a new sense, an inner sense, called Observing I, which looks inwards at the kind of person one is. For example, if you are accused of anything, you will tend to justify yourself. You will not look inside—and this is exactly why one of the things that the Work teaches us is observation of self-justifying and not identifying with it. But suppose you have been in the Work in a real sense (and here you must remember that from my point of view you may have been in the Work for years and yet are not in the Work) you will know through your own consciousness of yourself, your own self-knowledge, that these accusations may be quite right—that is, these things are in you. You will then react quite differently from a mechanical man under criticism from others. You will know that the truth was spoken. Then the truth that you know about yourself will correspond with the truth that someone has spoken to you and the two will not cause you too much pain, because you will find something congruous between outer and inner.

Now I receive letters in which people for the first time have begun to observe something in themselves. Usually they are very astonished and think they are faced with a major task in self-development. I would say it means that for the first time they have begun to see what they have to work on in themselves. They have brought home to themselves by observation what probably everyone else knew about them and criticized perhaps to their face and which only had the result of infuriating or depressing them.

We have to see what makes us negative and we have to accept the fact that we are made negative by certain things. From the work point of view, we now have to work just *on this being negative*, and not seek an outer cause. The fault is our own because, broadly speaking, if you are negative, it is your own fault. I know this is difficult, yet it is what the Work says. Someone said recently at a meeting, in trying to describe this enormous teaching and field of self-observation, that if he is served with a not properly cooked breakfast all his feeling of happiness vanishes. But that is not nearly enough. The Work is bigger, wider, than such a small thing. That is better than nothing in the way



of observation, but it is very, very slight. This person must now try to observe how he or she is negative under such circumstances, because observing such a reaction is due to some attitude, to some picture, to something they expect and take for granted. As long as the situation remains, such people will be capable of not much development of being. They will be impeded by their small being, their small attitudes, their forms of expectancy, of what is due to them, and so will be very difficult kinds of people, probably exacting, without knowing that all the trouble lies in themselves for having such a small outlook on life and such over-exaggerated self-love. Just think how easily upset people are—I am not talking here about being criticized, which is a much more difficult thing. Are most people upset easily? They break a shoe-lace in the morning and instantly curse someone, their breakfast is not according to their taste, and they lose their temper, and the paper does not arrive in time and they get angry and go off and sit in trains fuming. Is not all this very small and absurd? Is it the Work and its size? Do you not think that this Work is about something bigger than all this? I remember saying once by way of commentary that if you want to know to what extent you have being, notice where you lose your temper or get negative, because that means that you have come to the end of your being. This is why Esotericism emphasizes *patience* so much, because the capacity for patiently enduring things and especially the capacity for enduring one another's unpleasant manifestations is a sign of the quality and development of being. The less you can stand, the smaller the being.

Now to return to this question of being criticized—I will agree with everyone here that being criticized is extremely difficult to meet. The slightest negative criticism, especially from your nearest and dearest, will spoil your day. This means that we simply hate to be put in the wrong and simply hate to think that there is anything wrong with us. Now a man who has enlarged his consciousness through self-observation will not be so sensitive of criticism because he will already know practically that he is not perfect—a great step. You will have all heard that this Work teaches that the world is *as it is* because humanity is not properly conscious. In other words, men and women everywhere on this strange planet are in a strange state of sleep. The object of this Work is to try to waken us up and that means that we should become far more conscious, first of ourselves and then of other people, but first of all we must enlarge our consciousness of ourselves through self-observation.

You lie, you behave badly, you say things that are poisonous, but you do not admit it to yourselves, although you are very critical of other people in this respect, but if you enlarge your consciousness through sincere self-observation, you will become less and less critical of others and, as the consciousness increases, less and less vulnerable to criticism. You will see that you lie too. But if you have never observed yourself rightly, you do not yet know what this Work is about

and although in the actual practice of life you lie, you distort, you twist, you pretend, you talk malice, and all the rest, and do harm to others, yet such is this curious state of sleep that we live under in this world, you will not admit it into your consciousness and so if you are criticized about the same things you will justify yourself and swear that you would never do such things. This is the odd thing. On the other hand, if you observe yourself sincerely, you will become aware that: "Thou art the man", and from that moment *your whole life* will begin to change and you will be under the influences of the Work. You will already be moving towards becoming a conscious man instead of a man asleep who, from the standpoint of this work, is nothing but a failure in regard to any self-development. Try not to come under the influences of life, which are not for your benefit but which use you. You can serve nature or this Work. You must serve *something*. The only way to serve the Work is to *do* it. If you do the Work, you come under the influences of the Work and these only can change you.

*Amwell, Easter, 26.3.49*

### **SELF-REMEMBERING AND SELF-OBSERVATION**

When a man remembers himself he seeks not to be identified with his Personality. He seeks another feeling and sense of himself. He seeks to *not* know himself, as it were—to empty himself of himself. He makes himself passive. He wishes to receive something that has hitherto not been granted him. He seeks to lift himself above himself—above the noise of himself—above the inner clamour of negative emotions, grievances, fears, suspicious feelings, anxious thoughts, worries, money, professional and business excitements, above odd vanities and conceits, and false self-valuation and, I might add, false valuations of others. He seeks to distinguish something in himself that is not any of these things nor a thousand other similar things created by life in him. They are similar because they have all the same taste if you observe them over many years. Yes, things created by life have the same taste, as in a restaurant or on board ship the food tastes the same to the senses. They belong to the hypnotic machinery of life, which keeps us so easily fast asleep in fictions of ourselves—that is, in a state of not Self-Remembering—that one can only laugh at oneself, being, as one is, still under it. Yes, in spite of knowing we are asleep and even feeling it a little, we are caught and hypnotized right away in everything.

When born, we are in Essence. As we pass under the influences of life our centre of gravity passes into the Personality. Now at this season I ask you, what does the Personality wish for, especially the False Personality in yourself? It wants to be supreme, to be made most of,

to be flattered. A good example of this is found in the temptations attributed to Christ. He was tempted about *power*. Notice, not about sex, but about *power*. What are you or could you be tempted by? Someone comes to you and says you can be a King or Queen of the World. Is this far more tempting than that you can have money or sex as you desire? *This part has to die*. The symbolic figure Christ dies (as such). Notice in what he was tempted and had to die to first of all. In the legend, which is psychological, he was taken by the devil to a high place and shewn all the Kingdoms of the World and told that if he worshipped the devil he would have power over them all. A curious temptation, you might say. If you do say that, then you have never observed False Personality and what it always wants. Take yourself—you may think you do not want power. But you become, say, jealous. Why? Ask yourself sincerely. The answer is because *you* have not full power.

So, in Self-Remembering, one has to go through many stages of self-revelation induced by self-observation and the slow realization that one wants what one cannot have, *if* one wishes to reach a higher level of being and consciousness. That is the reason why the Work starts with self-observation. So try to understand, in the esoteric story about Christ, why he was tempted about power. Remember, he had to go through everything that you in this Work have to go through. Take it as legend or a wonderfully acted esoteric teaching, in literal, physical terms, of what you and I have to do to reach a new and possible level of ourselves, it makes little difference. Think how difficult it is to overcome False Personality, which makes pleasant relations impossible. Someone had to act the stages of inner psychological development. The Work simply says: "Personality must become passive for Essence to grow." And it is not the privilege of this Work to attribute the idea to itself. It would repudiate such an interpretation. It is a teaching that has always in the past existed. So when you try to remember yourselves, it may help not to identify with power—to separate from it. But who of you can possibly know, who have not observed yourselves, where your power-craving lies, that leads to all your unpleasant manifestations?

Also I would like to ask you what do you think, from your own experience in self-observation of yourselves, is meant in this allegory by the "Devil"? Have you seen in yourselves this thing "Devil"? Has it nothing to do with your vanity, which craves for power over wife, husband, to begin with, and over office, relations and finally over the world, whether the financial world or the political world or the social world, or let me add, the religious world? So the esoteric symbolic figure of *yourself*—called Christ—has first to die to what? This is exactly what we have to understand.

## A NOTE ON INTEREST AND TIME

As a rule we always say we have no time. People say: "Yes, I will read that when I have time." What do people mean when they say they have no time? They say, for example, that they will think about this or that when they have time. You give people something to read and ask them to think about it. You meet them weeks later and they say that they are very sorry but they have had no time to read it. They may say that, what with one thing and another, they really have no time for anything. Of course, if you give them a list of all the horses that are going to run in the forthcoming flat-racing season, you will find that some of them at least have plenty of time to read the list carefully. From this we can say that time and interest are connected. I mean that, when people say they have no time, as often as not they mean that they have no interest. If you are really profoundly interested in something, you may find plenty of time for it. So time and interest are connected.

In speaking about *A* influences—that is, influences created in life—on one occasion Mr. Ouspensky said: "What are people really interested in, in general?" He said: "Look carefully at what people do and then you will get an answer. Take, for example, the interest in sports, in football, in racing, and so on. An enormous number of people go to any length in order to see sporting events. They seem to have plenty of time for this. How? Because their interest lies there. They are only interested in such things." And he added: "How then can you expect people to listen to a teaching of this kind which comes from *C* influences, which lie outside life?"

Mr. Ouspensky, in talking about how humanity serves something lower than itself, represented in the Ray of Creation by the Moon, and of how people waste energies that belong to awakening, said that people prefer to be hypnotized by mass-collective forces. He pointed out that, taking a typical crowd of people at a bull-fight, who are screaming and shouting with excitement, or again a crowd at a cup-tie, or at a political demonstration, they are in such a state of collective excitement that each person is robbed of the force of consciousness that could contribute to Self-Remembering. He said: "It is something like this. Can you imagine masses of people gathered together into squares, like large fields such as you see from an aeroplane, each square inhabited by thousands and thousands of human beings packed closely together? Every one of those beings is fast asleep, perhaps shouting in some state of mass-excitement or staring at some horrible scene in a state of fascination, without being conscious really of what he is doing. From such large plaques, or masses of people, the Moon—that is, a state of existence beneath the Earth—receives great quantities of force. This force is being drained off from the human beings because

they do not wish to use it, although it could enable them to become individuals. In such vast crowds no one is conscious of himself, except perhaps a few people. It is the same with cinemas, and so on. They all serve to keep Man asleep and drain force from him for all purposes that are not useful for Man himself, but useful for something else." In this connection he quoted the strange phrase in the Gospels: "For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath" (Mark iv.25).

Now the quantity of energy that we have daily that can contribute to produce a state of relative Self-Remembering in ourselves is limited, and if we give it to mass-excitement certainly we have no chance of doing this Work or even of understanding what it means. For this reason the Work teaches that a man who wishes to develop himself, and wishes to undertake the inner journey towards the attainment of Real I, will not fall under collective or mass movements which are always taking place in different forms all the world over in order to prevent humanity as a whole from developing. So a man (or woman) who wishes to work, and who has already got a little understanding in himself of what this Work is about, must begin to prevent himself (or herself) from losing force towards typical events. This has been spoken of in many different ways for many years but we always have to be reminded of what we are doing and what work on ourselves means. Remember, you are the subject of this Work. You need not go to a football match to lose conscious force. You can lose force at the breakfast-table quite easily by identifying with some typical situation although, as I said recently, this typical situation coming from life is really a mass situation which millions of others are experiencing at that moment. At every moment life with its comparatively few typical events, in new and skilful combinations, will give you a certain "deal", to which it is very easy to succumb. Let us say someone rings up on the telephone and says something unpleasant. You come back to the breakfast-table frowning, upset, a changed person. Now what has happened to *you*? *You* have lost force to a typical life-event. And so it goes on all day. You lose force towards every typical event by identifying and at the end of the day you are robbed of all that conscious force which the Work says we must try to save and keep in ourselves by the two main practices of the Work—namely, by non-identifying and by Self-Remembering, which are so closely linked and are yet distinct.

Now there are some typical events that are extraordinarily difficult to prevent yourself from losing force to, unless after a time you see that these events are causing you to lose force, and relate to certain wrong things in yourself. The whole of our receptive apparatus for impressions with its network of associations prevents us for many many years from saving force in certain directions through non-identifying. I mean, there are some channels in everyone which, if stimulated by some outer event, drain force from you right away. These bad associative places in us must be stopped just as you stop a movement. This is to make

*inner stop* in yourself. This phrase *inner stop* is a Work phrase of great density of meaning. Let us take an example. You have had a lot of negative associations with a certain person and before you came into this Work it may never have occurred to you that it was these negative associations with this person that caused you to lose force. I mean, the cause was in yourself. These associations may go very far into your past, so much so that you cannot alter them. It is exactly in connection with such vulnerable places in oneself that one must make what is called *inner stop*. Let us suppose that *X* is the person concerned about whom you have long-standing unchecked negative emotions, so much so that whenever *X*'s name is mentioned you become negative. I advise you not to try to alter these associations because you cannot. But you can do one thing and that is to make *inner stop* about them so that when *X*'s name is mentioned you stop inside yourself the fire that is going to ignite the train of associations. We must lose illusions about being able to manage things and dispose of reactions according to our conceit of ourselves. Only a blind fool thinks he can control himself under all circumstances. Therefore the practice of complete inner stop, which means also the ensuing practice of inner silence, is very useful. Remember, a single word can make a person explode with fury. Why? Because there is here a mechanical channel of associations that leads direct to a terrible discharge of negative emotions. Doing this Work is like fencing, or avoiding blows by skilful counter-movements. That is one meaning of *sty*. Doing this Work is knowing about where you are weak and trying to avoid the impact of life on these weak places as far as you can. Now a person who is not conscious of himself, and who is still a child in the millstream of life, is not a man who has begun to work on his life. This Work is to make one more and more conscious, and this involves getting out of this millstream by not reacting mechanically to every event of life. Otherwise life draws forth from you a violent reaction and so extracts from you exactly all that rare force that can go into Self-Remembering, which nourishes a growth of Essence.

Work on yourself will eventually—according to your inner attitude to the Work—begin to make you have force and so time for things for which you could not have force or time before. The more force you save from combining with typical life-events by pure mechanical reactions, the less you serve nature, and the more time you will have to do and to think and to understand what you hitherto have been prevented from doing and thinking and understanding, because of the mill-race. In other words, as the Work teaches, we have to separate ourselves from life and its events so that we are not eaten at every moment by life. At what moment to-day did you lose force by identifying with something utterly trivial or useless? If you tell me that you have not time for this Work I know that you are not working on yourself. Do you understand that if you remember yourself even to the small degree that is possible for everyone, your daily life will become

utterly different? Remember, you do not have to practise identifying. That is your natural state, because you identify with everything, even with every thought that comes into your mind. This Work is about practising non-identifying. A person who does not understand anything of this will mistake the Work and not understand also that many things in this Work are done for purposes of seeing whether you will identify or not.

*Amwell, 9.4.49*

## COMMENTARY ON NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

We speak to-day about *different* kinds of negative emotions. It has been said several times that the object of the Work is to awaken the Emotional Centre. It has also been said that because the Emotional Centre does not work properly it does not give real emotions. It has been overlaid by the imitation of negative emotions in others and by those arising from False Personality. Mr. Ouspensky said some years ago: "We do not know real emotions. Our Emotional Centre is fed with paper money, by novels, films, and so on." It is especially due to the Work that O. did in connection with the teaching received from G. that the negative part of the Emotional Centre has been so much emphasized to us. In other words, through his particular work on this part of the system, the study of negative emotions has been brought into the foreground. Now G. taught that the human machine is capable of very great experiences, far beyond those that we ordinarily know. If all centres were awake and doing their right work, we certainly would not know ourselves. As we are, we lead a thin and rather meaningless life from day to day, because our apparatus for living is in such a poor state. O. emphasized that one reason for this is that our Emotional Centre is in such a bad state. It is swamped by various kinds of negative emotions. For this reason it is interesting to pick out from ancient esoteric literature some of the things which were written about negative emotions and see what particular negative emotions were especially mentioned as requiring to be worked against, so that the Emotional Centre could become purified. You must understand first of all that the purifying of the Emotional Centre has to do with these negative emotions. One must not mix the idea of the purity of the Emotional Centre with purity as it is understood in a moral sense. People think that impure emotions always refer to sexual thoughts and that pure emotions consist in never having these thoughts. Now just before I quote some paragraphs from O., I will say that one of the most impure emotions is *envy*. We will return to this shortly.

Mr. Ouspensky says (in *Tertium Organum*): "There is a division of

emotion into *pure* and *impure*. We all know this, we all use these words, but understand little of what they mean. Truly, what does 'pure' or 'impure' mean with reference to feeling? . . . Only an analysis of emotions from the standpoint of knowledge can give the key to this. . . . Impure emotion gives obscure, not pure knowledge, just as impure glass gives a confused image. Pure emotion gives a clear, pure image of that for the knowledge of which it is intended. This is the only possible decision of the question. The arrival at this conclusion saves us from the common mistake of moralists who divide arbitrarily all emotion into 'moral' and 'immoral'. But if we try for a moment to separate emotions from their usual moral frames, then we see that matters are considerably simpler, that there are no *in their nature* pure emotions, nor impure *in their nature*, but that each emotion will be pure or impure according to whether or not there are admixtures of other emotions in it. There can be a pure sensuality, the sensuality of the Song of Songs, which initiates into the sensation of cosmic life and gives the power to hear the beating pulse of nature. And there can be an impure sensuality mixed with other emotions good or bad from a moral standpoint but equally making muddy the fundamental feeling. There can be pure sympathy, and there can be sympathy mixed with calculation to receive something for one's sympathy. There can be pure love of knowledge, a thirst for knowledge for its own sake, and there can be an inclination to knowledge wherein considerations of utility or profit assume the chief importance." (p. 201. American Edit.)

All negative emotions are impure in the Work-sense. They distort. All of us should know by now what it means to become negative. One knows by inner taste. You suddenly feel quite different. Why do you suddenly feel quite different? I refer of course to those who have some internal self-observation. Such people know that something has happened to them inside. What has happened to them? They have become negative quite suddenly. We were speaking about this recently, I think in the last paper, about a man rising from the breakfast-table, having received a telephone message and coming back to the table quite changed. The point is that even an unpleasant thought that you allow to have power over you can cause you in the pleasantest circumstances suddenly to turn negative if you identify with it. Everything, as it were, drops in you. Now if you are so unguarded within by the defences of the Work, if you are so much a function of life, if all your inner life depends on outer events and on how outside people treat you, then indeed you have no individuality. You have nothing in yourself that can maintain itself apart from external life and how it behaves towards you—nothing in you with which to resist life.

Now of course if you had Real I in you—that is, if you became conscious, and Real I became Master in you—what happened in external life would very little affect you, because your centre of gravity would be in yourself.

We know that when we are negative we see everything in a certain



way, from a certain angle, as, say, from suspicion. We know how spell-binding it is, how we cannot believe what we vaguely remember we believed a short time ago, how everything has been turned suddenly the other way round. This witchcraft, this spell-binding power that belongs to negative emotions, cannot be checked right away. Begin with the slight negative emotions and begin to separate from them—not go with them. Since we have no real centre of gravity in ourselves and since our so-called conscious life is a manifestation of different shifting 'I's, we must realize how awake we must keep in order to work on the Emotional Centre, especially as there is a certain pleasure in being negative. If you were to take away all negative emotions from most people, they would not have any source of happiness left. The Work says we have to give up useless suffering—that is, our negative emotions. And have you given up any trace of them? Negative emotion causes us to suffer and yet we enjoy it.

Now it helps us to notice negative emotions if we make a list of them. This you must do. I will mention only a few. I mentioned *Envy*. It is interesting to try to define what Envy is. Xenophon, speaking of Socrates, says that “considering what Envy was, he decided it to be a certain uneasiness, not such as arises however at the ill success of friends, nor such as is felt at the good success of enemies, but those only he said were envious who were annoyed at the good success of their friends.” You will remember that recently we quoted Pindar’s opinion of Envy, *phthónos*, as “the worst of all the basenesses that disfigure Man”, the desire to depreciate excellence being the meanest part of his nature. Bacon in his *Natural History* says: “Envy emitteth some malign and poisonous spirit which taketh hold of the spirit of another, and is likewise of greater force when the cast of the eye is oblique”, which agrees with the saying in Ecclesiasticus: “The envious man hath a wicked eye” (xiv.8-10). (It is interesting to note that the Latin origin of the word, “invidia”, literally meant “a glance of ill-will”.) Paul speaks of other negative emotions, such as enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, etc., but his final adjuration to the Galatians is: “Let us not be vainglorious, provoking one another, *envying* one another” (v.26). Likewise in the Old Testament, in Proverbs, the greatest power is attributed to envy: “Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous, but who is able to stand before *envy*?” (xxvii.4).

## LAW OF ACCIDENT AND LAW OF FATE

One reason for the feeling of dislike for a person, which is perhaps our commonest feeling, is due to his mechanicalness. This especially applies to people who are in the Work. One feels that they are not working properly on themselves. But, quite apart from people in the Work, we dislike other people, for one reason, because they behave mechanically—that is, always saying the same things, behaving in the same way—and we do not realize that they dislike us for the same reason. That is to say, they also dislike us for our mechanicalness. Now the Work says we must realize our own mechanicalness and gradually not react *mechanically* to the *mechanicalness* of others. At the same time, as the Work teaches, we *do not* realize mechanicalness either in ourselves or in other people. We certainly imagine we could easily behave differently. We expect other people to behave differently and they also expect us to behave differently. But we do not realize that we or they cannot speak or act much differently. All this wrong attitude is based on the illusion that we ourselves and others are *conscious* people. That is, we regard other people, not as machines that cannot help what they say and do, but as people who can quite easily change their being and behave in a quite new way when expected to do so, and so do we regard our little selves. In short, we do not realize that we and all the rest of the world are machines driven from outside by life and that the whole world is asleep. To not be driven by life requires a special *inner* development.

To-day we speak briefly of the Law of Accident and the Law of Fate in this connection. When we are under the Law of Accident, as it is called in the Work, we are driven by meanings derived from external life such as rivalry, ambition, etc. We have no ideas about other, or inner, meanings possible to a person who begins to work on himself or herself. As long as you have no other meanings apart from the meanings that life provides you with at the moment, such as getting a better job, making more money, getting a rise in office, or more medals, and so on, you are being driven by that set of meanings derived from life. Now such a person is under the Law of Accident. For example, he can suddenly shoot himself if his life-derived meanings are violently cut off, say, if he loses all his money, or fails to get the job he was so desirous of. On what does such a person depend for his *feeling of himself*? Ask yourself how much the meaning of your existence depends on outer things, on position, merit, reputation, wealth—on meanings from life. All this is so important in regard to self-observation and the inner seeing of what you are that I will give you further examples. The question is: from what do you derive your meanings for your existence? From your club, from your connections? Here is an ambitious man who hopes to climb the ladder of social success. He

made an unfortunate speech yesterday which is unfavourably criticized in the papers. What will be the result? He will be in despair. Or again, a woman spends all her money momentarily on a lovely dress and hopes to produce a sensation, and everyone ignores her. She feels at least depressed. Why? Because in both cases the two people derive their sense of themselves, the meaning of their existence, from what is outside themselves—i.e. from life. Just imagine if any one of you were put in prison for using red petrol. Of course you would come out and try to bluff the whole thing off, but will you feel a loss of meaning? You will feel that your sense of merit, reputation, has been damaged and it may become evident that from henceforth you will not appear to be the same kind of person to your dear respectable friends who probably only wish to see you in trouble.

Now all this is to shew you, and many other examples can be given from your own self-observation from the view-point of the Work, from what you derive the meaning of yourself without your seeing it. And this is of course closely related to your ordinary feeling of I—i.e. Imaginary 'I'. Now let me repeat that as long as you derive your feeling of yourself from Imaginary 'I', which derives its force from external meaning of this kind, you will be *under the Law of Accident*. That means that anything can happen to you. Just when you are going to get that important job you might step on a landmine. What is this Work teaching us as regards meaning for our existences? This Work is teaching you about getting *meaning from yourself*. Once you enter this Work willingly—that is, once you begin to *will* this teaching—you begin to derive another order of meaning, inner and secret, and then you begin to pass under the Law of your Fate. Some of you will remember that Personality is under, say, 48 orders of laws, and the more internal part of you, the more real part, is under only 24 orders of laws. Of course, this is a general formulation, a brief description of something that is far more difficult and involved than simply these figures. We will therefore talk about these other sources of meaning which one does not derive from ordinary life. And this will mean that we will have to speak about inner development, with which esoteric teaching concerns itself.

Supposing that you have attained a certain power of self-observation in terms of the teaching of the Work and its ideas, and at a certain moment in space and time you realize that you are negative and also understand that by being negative there is something wrong in yourself quite apart from yourself. You then have another source of meaning. You begin to be responsible to yourself apart from the state of yourself and will not, say, go in such a state to make love. And immediately this stage is reached you *begin* to cease to be a machine driven by external life and become a person passing out of the Law of Accident into the Law of Fate.

If you begin to work on yourself quite apart from trying to work in regard to life, you will begin to make in yourself another self, another

source of meaning. If you will follow these meanings, not only will your relationship to life become much improved but your relationship to yourself and this complicated thing, that hitherto you have taken as yourself and not thought about, will change. You will then come under what really belongs to you, rather than what does not belong to you. You will then have another source of meaning, so much so that after a time if you lose this source of meaning you will feel utterly lost, whatever you attain in life.

*Amwell, 30.4.49*

## TRANSFORMATION OF BEING

We speak again about transformation of being. This is the central idea of all esoteric teaching. Esoteric teaching is about transformation. It refers to an inner transformation that is possible in a human being who tries to awaken. The first thing to grasp is that no one can begin this process of transformation unless he undergoes *change of mind*. This means that unless people begin to think *in a new way*, they cannot change themselves. With their old attitudes, their old ways of thinking, their old psychology, they cannot change. They cannot undergo any transformation. There are two sides to change of mind. This Work has two sides to it, the cosmological and the psychological teaching. The cosmological side of this teaching refers to the world we live in: the psychological side refers to our inner world. When I say that the Work has two sides to it, cosmological and psychological, I mean, that unless two sides operate on a person's mind together, that person will not be able to change. Unless you can transform the meaning of life on this Earth as well as your idea of yourself, you will not be able to change. Most people think that it does not matter what they think about the world, the Universe, and that therefore they need not bother about this side, but can, through self-observation and doing only the psychological side of the Work, such as not identifying, change themselves. Certainly, they may go so far. Yet they will come up against a *barrier*. A barrier, in the Work-sense, is something that you come up against and cannot get beyond, in all probability not knowing what is wrong. You are checked.

There are different kinds of barriers. On one occasion, Mr. Ouspensky said to me: "So and so has become a barrier to you." I began to see what he meant, after a time. My antipathy to this person was so great that it prevented me from getting any further in my understanding and practice of the Work. But to-day I am talking about barriers in a much bigger sense. If you do not understand anything about the cosmological diagrams of the teaching, this lack of compre-

hension will begin to become a barrier to your further inner psychological progress in the Work. You cannot work only for yourself. Your thinking will be, as it were, half-sided. I mean you will be thinking only of the psychological teaching of the Work, which is half the Work. You will be thinking about observing yourself, about remembering yourself, about trying to separate from negative states. But this is only half the Work. The other half belongs to the cosmological side and the great diagrams connected with it in the Work. All the ideas of the Work, whether referring to the cosmological side or to the nature of yourself, can give force. At times they give very great force. Take the Ray of Creation, and the Side-Octave from the Sun which makes it possible to change. This great diagram of Scale, this lowly-placed Earth that we live in, so low-down in Scale, and this Side-Ladder which ascends to the Sun, are ideas which if you meditate on them will give you great strength and force and a new understanding of why we are here. One can begin to understand why it is necessary to work on oneself. One may understand why the psychological work on oneself has another meaning connected with the scheme of the Universe. We can see why this life is a pain-factory. Take the idea of the Ray of Creation and the formation of Organic Life as a transmitting agent between the notes Fa and Mi in the Ray. This transmitting apparatus called Organic Life is a pain-factory. Yes, and remember that you are taught that there is a Side-Ladder to climb so that you can come under fewer laws and no longer be a person simply serving Nature—that is, Organic Life, which surrounds the Earth as a sensitive film.

Many other similar ideas are contained in the cosmological teaching of the Work that can give you force at moments when, by merely trying to work on yourself you discover that you are without force. So it is necessary to grasp that *change of mind* has two sides to it, cosmological and psychological. They are both necessary to change the mind and so for inner transformation. Try to grasp that we were born self-developing organisms as distinct from animals who have no self-observation. We were given force more than is necessary for the mere serving of Nature on Earth. We were created to undergo transformation, possible and quite definite. Once you come within sight of the meaning of the Work with this insight, you will never look back. Unfortunately, people try to do this Work with their ordinary view of life, of the world and the Universe in which they live. Many, for example, think they live in a dying Universe, or a meaningless Universe. Or they regard life with all its senseless accidents as the only *reality* and say that there is no meaning in it. They think life as seen by the senses is reality. As long as they are fixed in this mental viewpoint, the mind cannot change properly. They cannot undergo that change of mind which, as was said, is always spoken about in all esotericism. It is called in the Gospels *metanoia* which means change of mind. "Unless", said Mr. Ouspensky, on one occasion, "we can change our minds and

think in a new way, we cannot undergo inner transformation. And," he added, "this Work is to make you think in a new way." Now on the psychological side we have to think in a new way as regards ourselves—namely, that we are not one person always the same but many different people, many different 'I's. We are told that our level of being is characterized by multiplicity of 'I's and lack of Real I. We are also told many other things which we are studying at these meetings. But to think in this way is not enough. We have also to think as to where we come in the gigantic scale of the Universe. We have to think of our position in the Ray of Creation and this can give right emotions that can conquer self-infatuation.

If you can gradually connect your inner work on yourself with the cosmological teaching, you will find that you will get a new source of force. So we can understand that for *change of mind* to take place, without which transformation of being is impossible, both the cosmological and the psychological ideas of the Work are necessary.

*Amwell, 14.5.49*

## **ON MAKING FORCE IN THE WORK FOR YOURSELF**

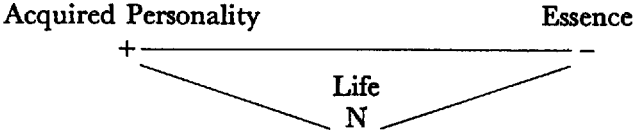
It is necessary in this Work to be constantly reminded about its meaning. If you fall asleep in life, you will wonder what the Work is about. For that reason, these meetings, these conversations, this making of reports, and all the contacts that the Work can and should make possible, are necessary. For a person who falls asleep, which means that he or she is temporarily identified with every event of life, must be awakened to his own level of understanding the Work. Quite often it happens that a man, a woman, meeting the teaching of the Work, awakens a little. That is because the force given them awakens them a little. Then they fall asleep. Why? Because they do not make their own force by working on themselves. They are like those people mentioned in the Gospels who were given talents. It refers, of course, to a school of esoteric teaching. Some were given, say, five talents, and made out of that ten talents, and so on. One was given one talent, and he buried it in the Earth. Let me quote this parable:

"It is as when a man, going into another country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his several ability; and he went on his journey. Straightway he that received the five talents went and traded with them, and made other five talents. In like manner he also that received the two gained other two. But he that received the one went away and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. Now after a time

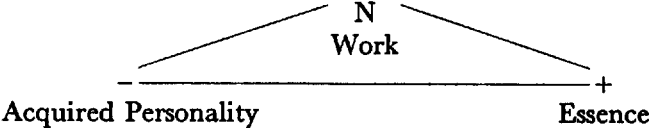
the lord of those servants cometh, and maketh a reckoning with them. And he that received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: lo, I have gained other five talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. And he also that received the two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: lo, I have gained other two talents. His lord said into him, Well done, good and faithful servant, thou has been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. And he also that had received one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter: and I was afraid, and went away and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, thou hast thine own. But his lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I did not scatter; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the bankers and at my coming I should have received back mine own with interest. Take ye away therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath the ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away. And cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. xxv.14-30).

Can you understand, without negative prejudice, that the whole symbolic fairy-story or parable means that if you are given force you have to increase it yourselves? The Work is a seed. It can grow in you. This is a subject well worth discussing among yourselves—namely, what have you made of the seed of the Work *yourself*? And I would add that the word "talents", which refers literally to physical money, is appropriate. I mean—what talent or ability have you shewn as regards making your own force, through the Work, for yourself, and so for others? The Work, its ideas, its teaching, its directions as to what to avoid and so on, can begin to create force in you if you work. In that case, you do not need only the force that the Work gives you, but you begin to find a source of force in yourselves. This means, the seed is growing. Yet, you will have constantly to be reminded of the Work and what it is about. Otherwise you fall asleep. As I said, to fall asleep is to be identified with everything that happens to you—that is, with every event, for life is a succession of events. Yes—but does not that mean you have lost *something in yourself* and are taking the events of life as your guiding principle? What have you lost? You have lost all power of remembering yourself. We are born on Earth with this power—but we have lost it, owing to being brought up among sleeping people. So we lose this essential thing given to Man as distinct from

animals—namely, the Third State of Consciousness. Because if you could remember yourself you would never identify. Why would you not identify? You would not identify because you would be always aware of this strange sense of yourself—called Self-Remembering—which is distinct from that side that identifies with every event of life. We have dropped to the second level of consciousness called the so-called waking state. In this state we are driven by life. So you are then a person driven by outer events, and nothing real, essential, can grow. The Work formulates this by the diagram:



But if you begin to serve the Work in your understanding, then Life is gradually replaced by Work. And so the diagram of the connection is:



About all this we have constantly to be reminded. Now, go on as you are, identify with everything, say “tut-tut” all day long. Get upset every moment because she said that or he did that and all the rest. Now try to remember the Work and so remember yourself. Then you will begin to understand Psycho-Transformism—that is, transformation of yourself. But only a new Third Force distinct from Life can make all this possible. Life cannot transform you and the more you press into Life, the less will your being change. In order to oppose the terrific hypnotic power of Life, many have died. The result is that we have, on this Earth, in this lunatic asylum, forces, influences, that can master the influences of Life and change our level of being.

**APPENDIX**

Added Note on the Language of Higher Emotional Centre—  
the Language of Parable and Dream, which is universal.

Now let me try to make all this more plain, more concrete, as it is called. You dream you are standing by the seaside. You notice that all the time there are events, called in this case “waves”, coming in towards you. But do you not know these waves mean events? Sometimes they are small waves, sometimes big. Life is something like that. Now suppose you have a small vessel and launch it when great waves are coming in, you will be swamped—or perhaps you know just how to



prevent your small vessel from being overwhelmed. It is something like that. Perhaps, later on, you learn how to meet all waves and ride them—or not put to sea in stormy weather. Or perhaps you begin to learn to walk on the sea. Or again, to change the imagery, whose source is Higher Emotional Centre, which always speaks to you in physical imagery, of which the meaning is not literal, but symbolical, you enter a room and are wearing the wrong clothes. You feel awkward (in the dream). What does it mean? Your mind is clothed with the wrong attitudes and with the wrong truth. You are taken to a higher level than you are at, and shewn that what you are certain of—namely, that you know what is right, what is wrong—is the wrong clothing of the mind—the wrong views, the wrong attitudes, and so the wrong mind.

*Amwell, 21.5.49*

### LEVEL OF BEING

Your Being is not your body. Your Knowledge is not your body. Your understanding is not your body. A man may have attained a high level of Being, despite the fact that his body is weak. So in what follows concerning raising or lowering one's level of being in the Scale of Being, the principle of which is represented by the Ray of Creation, do not think your body goes up and down.

\* \* \*

According to your level of being you are either under more or under less laws. We exist in our Ray of Creation and can descend or ascend in it according to whether we work on our level of being or not. If we do not work on ourselves at all, then we tend to descend in the Scale of Being represented externally by our Ray of Creation.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| One law                         | (1) Absolute (unknown to us)           |
| Three laws                      | (3) All galaxies taken as one whole    |
| $3 + 3 = 6$                     | (6) Our Galaxy or Milky Way            |
| $3 + 3 + 6 = 12$                | (12) Our Sun as one star in our Galaxy |
| $3 + 3 + 6 + 12 = 24$           | (24) All our planets taken as one      |
| $3 + 3 + 6 + 12 + 24 = 48$      | (48) Our Planet, the Earth             |
| $3 + 3 + 6 + 12 + 24 + 48 = 96$ | (96) Our Moon                          |

Men or women who like their negative emotions, who transform nothing in themselves, who take every event mechanically, will pass eventually under 96 laws. But if they work on themselves and do not take the ordinary ever-recurring typical events of life mechanically, but try to transform such evil ways of taking life into taking these

events more and more consciously, they will pass under fewer laws. Evil means mechanicalness. To understand about Good means you must study this Work-idea of transforming events by work on yourself. You can either work on yourself or simply be a mechanical puppet. If you are just a mechanical puppet, then you are asleep, driven here and there by every event. You are then driven by life, which is a series of typical events occurring to millions of others.

Now suppose you have learnt not to identify so much, through self-observation and Work-memory, then in this Scale of Laws called the Ray, you will begin possibly to move upwards. What is the result? You can see for yourselves. Your level of being can only change by work on yourself—on your attitudes, your negative emotions, your constant criticism of others instead of criticizing yourself—and above all by remembering yourself in difficult moments. The thing which you have to change is the thing you take for granted and call ‘I’ or ‘yourself’. The Work, as you may have noticed, begins with observing this thing you take for granted and call ‘I’ or ‘yourself’. So a man, a woman, must begin to see and know themselves, otherwise no change in being is possible. Certainly in many respects it is a painful way to have to follow. But the results are out of all proportion to the efforts necessary. I mean simply that something begins to help you from within as when, for instance, you realize that you did not really say that but said something quite different. This sincerity with oneself is the entry to the Work, the entry to change of your level of being. No doubt you may feel you “lose face”, and so on. But, as I said, the wonder of letting your pride and imagination of what you are become more passive allows forces to reach you from higher levels to act on you. And, let me add, it is only these forces coming down to us, from Beings at higher levels in the Ray, that can transform us. No person could transform himself, that is, change his or her being, unless there were forces that could effect this change. And we can see that this is the case if we reflect for ourselves—that means, from our own inner thought—on this meaning of the Ray and all it implies. (Here I will branch off.)

How few of you ever think inwardly about the meaning of the Work. You just wait to hear the next talk. This is not work on yourself in the first line of work. Why? Because the Work teaches that it is to make you *think in a new way*. And if you do not reflect, you do not let it into your own minds and then it merely rests in your external faulty memory. What good then can it do you? Ask yourselves sincerely whether if you are shewn how to do something and what to do and never do it, it is any use.

Now the esoteric key to change of being is that you—yes, you—have to begin to think in a new way, because otherwise you cannot work. From your ordinary contact with life, for example, you never for a moment conceived you were under cosmic laws or could pass under more laws or could reach a state of being in which you were under fewer laws. The ideas of the Work can make you think differ-

ently both about yourself and life, and this can begin to change you. The Work speaks of lower and higher. The Ray of Creation teaches the same idea—the idea that people can be on different levels of being in the Total Scale of Being exemplified in the Ray. Do not think that a rich man or an eminent man or a peer means *necessarily* what the Work means by *higher level* of being. Figures in life do not *necessarily* represent higher or lower being in the Work-sense. To be identified with one or another aspect of life is not to have real being. It is not a sign of it. So often it means crystallization has taken place. No change is possible in that case. The face becomes harsh, the intonation is harsh, the sense of power is evident, and nothing is possible. Now all development, which means rising in the Scale of Creation or the Scale of Being, is only possible by taking off overcoats, uniforms, and so on. But this is difficult.

G. once said: “I have good leather to sell—but you must make your own shoes.” Now recently we spoke of having to make your own force, by hearing and doing the Work. We quoted the remarkable School-parable about the talents and how, given so many talents, you have to make more talents by your own work. To do so will change your level of being. But if, instead of endeavouring to become men and women, we remain machines driven by nature, then we add nothing. The first thing is to observe. A machine cannot observe itself, but a *man* can—in fact, if a man cannot he is not a MAN but a machine.

NOTE. Self-Remembering, non-identifying, and non-considering, are the things that can change our being. But self-observation is first of all necessary, because otherwise you will not be able to practise these three great things.

*Amwell, 28.5.49*

## **THE WORK-CONCEPTION OF MAN AS A SELF-DEVELOPING ORGANISM**

The Work teaches that Man is an unfinished house. The Work also teaches that Man is a self-developing organism. If a man develops himself aright, he completes the unfinished house of himself. Let us continue with the imagery of the house in the Work. First of all, the Work compares Man with a house of many rooms and three storeys. About this the Work says that Man lives in the basement of his house as a rule. This is comparable with a similar idea in the Work that Man lives in sex, movement, eating and drinking. Let us again find a similitude concerning the symbol “House”. The Work says that a man has his house in disorder. It compares Man with a house in which there is no Master and only one telephone which all the servants use

in the name of the Master. In this connection it says that Observing I must establish itself and collect round it all those 'I's that wish to work. This stage is called Deputy-Steward. At the same time, the Work teaches a great deal about practical work on oneself in regard to separating from negative emotion, and to non-identifying and Self-Remembering.

The whole conception of Esotericism, its whole meaning, is concerning this development of a New Man in oneself. This experiment has been going on as far back as known history. You must remember that known history goes back only a few thousand years and is incommensurable with unknown history. Yet in known history we meet with traces of Esotericism which is always speaking about one thing, the creation of a New Man. If we go back beyond known history, we find the existence of complete mythologies, rituals, ceremonies, which all contain the same idea.

Now I want to ask you all: what do you think this development that Esotericism is always talking about means? I will answer you. It means overcoming the violent man, the man of violence in you. One might call this, in terms of another modern teaching, overcoming the prehistoric man who is covered in an animal skin. As you must all know by now, negative emotions can easily lead to violence, so you will understand that this creation of another person in himself, which is possible from the definition of Man as a self-developing organism, has a great deal to do with separating oneself from all the infinite forms of negative emotion which will eventually always lead down to violence. If we could really overcome violence in all its manifestations, which means at the same time overcoming all forms of negative emotion, out of this violent man covered with skins and bearing a club there will arise a different person who can ascend towards the Conscious Circle of Humanity. But if anyone says: "What are we working for? What is the idea of the Work?" we can say that the supreme idea of the Work and of all esoteric teaching in the past has been this new Being that can arise out of our old being, our former being. To me it seems interesting to feel that one is connected with this supreme idea of the evolution of Man by conscious development. It gives an entirely new meaning to one's existence, yet at the same time I have said nothing new to you, because the teaching about Man being an incomplete house and yet at the same time being a self-developing organism gives you this idea that I am making a little more plain to your consciousness. None of you need be lost in life. None of you need be overshadowed by life if you hold this central idea in your mind, remember it and continue to work on yourself.

Now on one occasion I said to Mr. Ouspensky: "Why were we not created perfect—just like that?" He said to me earnestly that that was not the idea, the plan, of the Universe. To be created perfect would mean that we had no work to do on ourselves at all. To be created as a self-developing organism is a quite different matter. When we

understand the Universe as an experiment in self-development, the conception of the Universe changes into something adventurous. He said to me: "If you were given full consciousness, then you would know everything. But we have to struggle for it. There is no mechanical evolution: there is only conscious evolution," and he indicated that you could not increase consciousness by any mechanical means. "You have", he said, "to become more conscious of yourself, to develop an increasing consciousness of yourself. Mechanical evolution no doubt exists, over long periods of time, but this does not concern us. But a man can evolve through certain kinds of efforts and if he makes these efforts sincerely through his own understanding, his level of being will change."

Now this vision of life has great force behind it. People, as you know, all tend to complain about their lives. They all think that external circumstances should be much better, and so on. But the Work does not teach this. It says that the circumstances in which you were born are the best for you to work upon. The particular form of Second Force—i.e. force of resistance—to your wishes, is appropriate to you, and if you will work on it, once you have received some understanding of the Work, it will give you some results. It is no good your saying: "If only I had been born in better circumstances, with more money." Everyone, whether rich or poor, is placed where he or she should be able to begin to develop themselves. So many people say: "If I had only met this Work earlier." They are quite wrong. If you receive this Work into your hands and especially into your hearts, then you will find that the circumstances in which you were born are the very things that give you force if you work upon them and against them. As you know, the Work says we have to work against life. Perhaps some of you have seen what this means and others perhaps still identify with life and life-circumstances, and therefore do not see what is meant here. So many people say: "If only." But what is the use of saying: "If only", once you begin to understand that you were born a self-developing organism and that you cannot develop except by conscious efforts against your life-circumstances?

And let me remind you again what is the whole idea. The whole idea of the Work and the whole idea of esoteric teaching as far back as known history goes, is about your being a self-developing organism and consciously working against the circumstances of your life so that nothing can drag you into negative emotions.

## ON CHANGING ONE'S LEVEL OF BEING

We speak once more about self-observation and non-identifying. The Work has two sides, psychological and cosmological. The Ray of Creation is in you psychologically and outside you as visible Nature. This must be clearly and deeply grasped. For example, you can sink to a lower level of the Ray *in yourself*—that is, to the level of the Moon represented externally as the visible Moon, but internally by a state of your being. Say you become a victim of cocaine, it is not that your body is in the visible Moon, but your psychology has sunk to that level outwardly signified by the visible Moon which is below the Earth. Again, if by supreme efforts and a new growth of understanding with all its inexhaustible, delicate and new perceptions of truth, you rise in the Scale of Being, represented visibly by the external Universe—by Moon, Earth, Planets, Sun and Stars—then you may reach even to the level of the Sun. But it does not mean you go and live in the external Sun, even in the sky. The intelligence of Sun-people is, for us, divine. The intelligence of Moon-people is, for us, insanity. The visible Sun and Moon *represent* such states of a man or a woman. When you become violently negative and refuse to hear your conscience, then you sink in the Scale of Being *in yourself* to the lunar level. But you sink psychologically, not literally. A literal mind, glued to the senses, imagines that the visible Moon is the actual place in space to which you go. But this is mixing literal sense with psychological sense. There is in you a psychological Moon and a psychological Sun. The visible representation of Moon, Earth, Planets, Sun and Galaxy is a visible symbol of what is in us psychologically. We have in us a Micro-cosmos based on the Macro-cosmos. But how many times have I reflected that people get this ancient idea, so often quoted in esoteric literature, quite wrongly. If you say the Great Universe or Big Cosmos—that is, the Macro-Cosmos—the heavenly bodies that you see—is in us, it is necessary to grasp that it represents something *in us* that it is possible to experience *psychologically* by the observation of our different states, but that is not the external visible representation or symbol of the pale, cold, one-sided Moon or the prodigious Sun with its inconceivable temperature and its vast output of energy.

Now a man must ascend in his being by his own efforts before he can attract the influences that come down from a higher level in the Ray of Creation. Let me remind you again that the Ray of Creation is represented externally by the visible Universe but internally by different degrees of experience. In this sense a low-degree man is one who always enjoys his negative emotions, his hatreds, envies and his venom, but if he works on himself he will become a man of a higher class, who receives the different influences which are new to him. Even as you are, you can be on a better level of being or a worse level. And if you

wish to shift your own level to the small extent that is possible for everyone you must apply this Work practically. And this is only possible through self-observation and non-identifying and valuation of the Work. Let me speak to you more deeply about self-observation. *If you don't observe yourself, you can never change.* For example, if your usual daily state is one of different forms of negative emotion, as is so often the case, if you do not observe, you can never change yourself. Self-observation means separating yourself from yourself. It means noticing how you behave externally towards others and how you behave internally towards them. If you can be conscious of something, it can be changed.

Let us quote the Work once more: "Self-observation lets a ray of light into our inner darkness. Unless you let this ray of light into your inner darkness, you cannot change. But if you let this ray of light in, it will gradually change you." Now what is this ray of light? Light in esoteric teaching, and therefore in this system means consciousness. What we are not conscious of is dark. When you become conscious of something that you constantly say or feel or think, do you not see that you become aware, become conscious, of something that you did not know before about yourself, and it begins to be 'not I'. What is the result? The result is that you rise a little in your level of being through the incommensurable power of the light of consciousness. Understand that most people are completely unconscious of themselves. They behave just as they do mechanically and are not conscious of how they behave. In any case, such people belong to the mechanical circle of humanity and are driven by external events and their mechanical, never-altered reactions to them. Most of you have heard it said already that this Fourth Way that we are studying is based on *increase of consciousness*. Many attempts in the past have been made to lift Man from his state of mechanical sleep. For example, in the Gospels, great emphasis is laid on "love": "LOVE ONE ANOTHER." But, as G. once said: "To raise humanity to a higher level of being, many different teachings, yet all about the same thing, have been tried. For example," he indicated, "you have some teaching based on *faith* belonging to a certain period of history, or you have some teaching based on *hope*, or again, you have a teaching based on *love*." He said: "This teaching is based on *increase of consciousness*, and therefore starts with self-observation. The difficulty about self-observation is that people do not observe themselves, although they think they do." Now people nearly all think they are quite aware of themselves in every respect, both inner and outer. In short, they take themselves as fully conscious. At the same time, the Work teaches in its strange and clear way that this so-called level of consciousness is not consciousness at all. It is called the second level of consciousness, termed in the Work the so-called waking consciousness in which people hate, kill, and injure one another in every possible way. And, as you know, our aim is to get to the Third State of Consciousness called the State of Self-Remembering, Self-

**Consciousness and Self-Awareness.** Only this state can nourish the essential part of you which can only grow by truth. The final state is Objective Consciousness or the Fourth State of Consciousness in which we see things as they really are. That means, we know what we are like and we see what other people are like, just to mention only two things that belong to the Fourth State of Objective Consciousness. But the way to this state is long. It can be artificially induced momentarily but whatever is seen is forgotten. As G. taught, the Third State of Consciousness must be attained first to make a foundation for Objective Consciousness.

Now remember that we talk about change of level of being *internally*, represented *externally* by the construction of the visible Universe. We have in us these different levels that correspond to possible psychological experiences. If you work on yourself long enough with increasing understanding, you will reach a higher level, however small, in yourself, and you will know at once that the Work is true. The door into this possibility is self-observation—that is, becoming more conscious of yourself—from what you are taught. One can begin to become more conscious of other people, and not only that, but one's conception of the world in which one lives begins to change at the same time. The second line of work is extremely useful with regard to attaining more consciousness of ourselves through self-observation. As I said, men and women think they observe themselves already.

So, if you find a friend in the work, you should ask this friend to criticize you. This belongs to the Second Line. The result may be quite surprising. If you do not get negative, then you will begin to have more consciousness of what you are like. Some illusions of yourself may even be destroyed. But it is strong medicine.

*Amwell, 11.6.49*

### **FURTHER NOTE ON EFFORT**

The efforts we make ordinarily are efforts we cannot help making. We have to go to our job. This is mechanical effort. In the Work mechanical effort and conscious effort are different. There is no exact dividing line. For instance, you can make conscious effort within mechanical effort, as, say, for instance, you can get to know more about your job or do it with more intelligence and willingness. But in a general sense conscious effort has to do with making efforts in directions that, mechanically, are of no evident use. Every living thing on Earth has to make mechanical efforts. It is not merely the birds, the bees, but the smallest microbe. What we have to realize is that nothing escapes the laws governing this planet.

Now although all Organic Life has to make mechanical effort,



there is only one small part of it that can make conscious effort. This part is Man. Man can make conscious effort. But he need not do so and practically never does. He merely makes mechanical effort. It is then said of him that he serves Nature. As long as he serves Nature, he will attract war. But if Man were to make conscious effort, his being, which is based on violence, would change, and he would cease to attract war. Now this Work and all the practical side of it has to do with conscious effort. It is not necessary for life. People can get on without making conscious effort, only they will have to make mechanical effort. In this Work, we have to make conscious efforts.

Now where do we have to make effort? Some people think that if they were only in a School, an Institute, they would know what it means to make conscious effort. But you would find that if you were in a School or Institute the kinds of effort that you had to make would be the same as when you take life as your teacher. When life becomes your teacher, you begin to see that life is a series of events and that one moment you are in one event and the next moment you are in another event. It is exactly towards these different events that you have to make effort in the sense of taking them more consciously and not identifying with them. Otherwise you are a slave of life. Life governs you with its different events if you have made no effort to transcend these events. You must understand that when you are in a problem you are in an event. The only way to overcome problems in life is to transcend them by not identifying with them. You cannot solve your life-problems because life is insoluble, you and it being so full of contradictions. But you can transcend them by not identifying with them. After a time, they transform themselves. But if you identify with a problem—and life is a series of problems—you will become negative and this leads to violence.

Now, take conscious effort as regards the small things of daily life. Whether you go to an Institute or not, you will find it is all the same—not identifying with small things. G. used these at his Institute in France, where my wife and I were. I mean, he used identifying with small things. He did not really arrange things very much, but he knew that if a number of people, not speaking each other's languages, were together for a short time, there would be plenty of sources of becoming identified and negative. For example, I would say to someone: where is that broom I left here yesterday? The answer would be obscure and I would become angry and say that I had left the broom there on purpose and now it was gone. Then at that moment Mr. G. would pass, saying by his look: "So you have got identified again, have you?" and one would get angry again. Such is our state of being. How easily violence is aroused which in this teaching is what we must all separate from. All negative emotions lead to violence, to the prehistoric man, to the violent man or woman.

Now I recently had a question: "What does inner development mean ultimately?" It means overcoming violence in yourself and for

that to happen a great expansion of consciousness must take place. For example, you must first of all become more conscious of yourself so that you see for yourself what leads you to become violent. You then become conscious of the fact that you cannot lift your level of being as long as this primitive violence reigns. Here lies one of the secrets of esoteric teaching. A fully conscious man cannot be violent. His symbol is the lion with the paws cut off. Negative emotions, even the slightest, begin to bend down towards violence, finally. If you get negative, having spilt your coffee on your dress, the octave of negative emotions will go on in you and will lead down to violence, whether you are a man or a woman. So we have to become hermetically sealed towards negative emotions, towards the ordinary events of life—a very difficult idea, but one that will give you more internal happiness if you will follow the Work-teaching internally than anything that can be described in words. Now you cannot do all that unless you understand that you are not born from your parents and not born of the Earth, that you came down from a very high place, from the Sun-Octave, and you were not meant to identify with life on this planet, but to take life on this planet as a means to an end and not an end in itself.

Now notice when you become negative. It is a quite definite state of yourself that you can observe after some time in the Work. What does it mean? It means that you are not hermetically sealed. Hermes was an actual teacher who taught this Work. He taught sealing yourself from the effects of life on yourself. In one of the teachings of Hermes, it is said that before you get up in the morning, you should seal every centre from being negative, your thoughts, your emotions and your movements, for a man can only attain his individuality by sealing himself off from the effect of the events of life upon him. Do you know that a person may wake up in the morning feeling fairly all right, and, listening to his thoughts, he may become negative before he gets up? He remembers an unpleasant letter, etc. Then he arises and goes into life negative and is described in this Work as going into life insane. In a short time he will quarrel with everyone and possibly become physically violent. Now when Observing I is established with the Work one knows intuitively when one should not talk to people and that in such states one should never drink. We can adjust things in ourselves by working on ourselves quite quietly without anyone's knowing anything about it, and burn up our refuse and approach life in a decent way, but this can only happen when you can observe your centres and what is going on in each centre. Begin with your thoughts. Notice your thoughts and do not identify with your thoughts. Understand that you need not go with an unpleasant thought: you can observe it. But a man without any self-observation cannot do this. He is his thought, if he has not developed inner discrimination which only Observing I can give him. A negative person is an insane person from the Work point of view. Everything is distorted and the next step is violence.

So here you see roughly outlined what we have to do in the Work and how so much emphasis is laid on negative emotions which always lead eventually to violence.

*Amwell, 18.6.49*

## **THE EXTERNAL WORLD AND THE INTERNAL WORLD**

People all think the world is outside them. But the world is inside you. The world is how you take it. Up to your present age, how have you taken the world? People cannot distinguish between the external world and the internal world. You have two worlds that you experience—one is the external world given by your senses, and the other is the internal world which is how you take this external world. In philosophy the external world is called the phenomenal world, the world of phenomena—that is, of appearances. The phenomenal world is what the senses manifest to you, but the way you take the phenomenal world of appearances belongs to your internal world. Now all this Work is about how you take this external phenomenal world internally in your own world. Take a trivial example. The other day in the papers it was said that three large crabs escaped from an oyster bar in the neighbourhood of Curzon Street. They rushed into the road, and one was run over by a motor car, one went down a drain, and the third was captured by the proprietor who got his finger bitten. Suppose you are very identified with the phenomenal world: “How terrible”, you will say, “that this poor, dear crab was crushed to death by a motor car.” Say you burst into tears, thinking of the poor crab. If you did you are really a silly ass. Why? Because you are identified with the world of appearances. I remember O. once speaking in his early days about some people who were climbing Mont Blanc and they all fell down and were killed. Several people asked him why this happened. He said: “I didn’t know them and I do not see why you should waste so much energy in a negative form about these unknown people.” He added: “At this moment I believe there are millions of Chinese dying from plague and famine.”

Now suppose you are going to identify with everything that happens in your small phenomenal or external world and are getting depressed by it at every moment—are you then being driven by external life, by the phenomenal world, the world of events as it appears through your senses? In that case, you have no development of the internal world. You are a function of life, of the phenomenal, external world. So you have not developed your inner world. Now what does this development of the inner world mean? It means the First Conscious Shock. Do you understand that I have been feeling very ill recently thinking about that

poor crab in Curzon Street that was squashed? Now in that case am I merely a function of external impressions? Is my machine run by the phenomenal, external world or have I a world developed inside not dependent entirely on the external phenomenal world? All this is indicated by the reception of impressions of the external world and the way you receive them. Do you understand that I need not feel so upset about this unknown crab in Curzon Street? Has it anything to do with me? Or am I going to identify myself with this unfortunate mollusc and feel depressed because of its fate? Now if your machine be driven by the external, phenomenal world you are mechanical, but when you begin to select your impressions and only respond to a few of them your internal world begins to grow and you begin to become an individual distinct from life and its events. This is what is meant by psycho-transformism. But if you are driven by life, by everything that happens in life, depressed by reading the papers, depressed or angry with everything that happens externally in the phenomenal world, you are a machine.

Now the Work says that you can take external impressions coming from the external phenomenal world mechanically or consciously. It also says that unless you begin to take them consciously, you remain a machine driven by life. Every time a typical event comes along to you from the external world you are identified with it and become subject to it, a slave to it. Once you begin to separate from an external impression, if it is unpleasant, you begin to grow in your internal world. This is the first idea of psycho-transformism.

When the events of life are taken mechanically, then there arise in you what are called "problems"—that is, the usual ones. But this happens to all men and women at every moment. If you take in life more consciously you will not have so many "problems". This can only be possible if you do not take life and its tricks mechanically. What you have to do with a "problem" is to discard it, not identify with it. Then you have a different inner world from the external world.

But you have to learn not to take the phenomenal world, the world coming in from the senses, in the way you mechanically take it. You have to catch it before it gets you down—i.e. before you identify. Life will give you nothing, save uneasiness and disappointment. The Work, coming between you and life, can give you everything. The first idea of Self-Remembering is to bring the Work and what it teaches in between life and your mechanical reactions to it. Put the Work between yourself and life. Then you will take impressions quite differently. Just as we live in a pain-factory, so do we have pain-psychologies. That is why we have to practise psycho-transformism.

## **SOME NOTES ON PRACTICAL WORK**

One of the first things we have to understand in working on ourselves is that we have three centres—Intellectual, Emotional and Physical. These three centres are not in harmony. Observe for yourself that you can think one thing, feel another thing and do another thing. What you do is through Moving Centre. Unless you can understand that this apparent contradiction belongs to your composition, you will always be in a muddle. The next thing to understand about yourself is that you are not one person but many different 'I's that inhabit different centres. You have 'I's in Intellectual Centre, 'I's in Emotional Centre, 'I's in Moving Centre and 'I's in Instinctive Centre.

Now I want to talk to you again about different 'I's in you. Some of you have 'I's that are very dangerous to you if you allow them to take charge. For example, some of you have 'I's in you that can make you quite ill if you identify with them as they come round in the turning wheel of your inner life and have not observed them and have no power of separating from them. These 'I's usually live in the negative parts of centres, especially in the negative part of Emotional Centre. They can make you ill, weak, tearful, full of self-pity. A person rather governed by such 'I's, who makes no effort to separate from them, will tend to be rather a pathetic person. But that kind of pathos you can separate from—not identify with.

The next thing I am speaking about is expressing unpleasant emotions, nasty emotions, in the sense of rather venomous remarks. These 'I's are very dangerous to you in the Work. You should all learn to know about them and beware of them. Sometimes they are far away from you and sometimes they draw near to you and, as it were, stand round you and seek to take blood from you—i.e. they take force from you. If you give way to such 'I's internally you will probably be always ill. A great deal of illness and even worse is due to your going with wrong 'I's in yourself. Here you must be strong, more conscious and more intelligent. Remember we have 'I's in us that may destroy our lives. The difficulty is that nearly everyone takes himself as one unvarying person and cannot through self-observation see that this one unvarying person that we take ourselves as is a pure fiction and it is called Imaginary 'I'. If you cannot break yourself up first of all into three centres and then into many different 'I's through self-observation, you cannot do this Work. Now why is it so difficult? First, because we think that we are always one person—which is Imaginary 'I—and secondly because our vanity, which belongs to False Personality, is always working in such a way as to keep us in the sense that we are one and the same person at all times. Do you understand that saying, realizing, observing and acknowledging through self-observation that one is not one person but many people is

one of the great steps in the Work that can lead to the establishment in us of an entirely new development of ourselves? We blame ourselves in a dreary way for not having acted rightly or spoken rightly but we do not see that this is because different 'I's were using us at all times. So we come back to this ancient parable about Man being like a house in disorder because the Master is absent, and any of the servants in the house can use the telephone in his name. If you identify your feeling of I with all these different ever-changing 'I's you will have to justify yourself a lot to maintain this fiction of your being one permanent and unchanging I. Say you talked wrongly yesterday, you blame yourself. Yes, this is quite right in a sense, but have you observed this 'I' that talks wrongly as being separate from what you take as I? Can you begin to see it as an 'I' in you that takes charge at a certain moment and is not really you—otherwise you have to justify yourself in order to keep up this Imaginary 'I'. There is such a thing as Real I, but as long as you take all these 'I's as yourself and cannot separate from them, you are like a man in the street who takes everyone he sees as himself. Real I is only attained by separating from all these 'I's that say I in you, which are not really you, but have been acquired from imitation.

So the Work teaches first of all separation from negative 'I's because they are not you—they are the result of imitating other people, what you have read, what you have been taught, and what you have imagined about yourself. All this gives rise to many 'I's in you which are not really you. So the Work says: "This is not I." When you are in a rage, when you are in a negative state, when you are full of self-pity, you have to create the feeling and power of saying: "This is not I." You have to be able to realize and acknowledge that your rage is not you, that your depression is not you, that your jealousy, your negative state, is not you. Here lies the core of the Work, for all of us at our present stage. Sometimes I act it to you all by saying: "Where is my rage?" Someone says: "It has gone to the laundry." So I say: "Where is my deep pity of myself?" and the answer is: "We have six but they are all at the laundry." Now, you know, to define the level we are at, we are told that our being is characterized by multiplicity—i.e. that we have no real being at all. We only have many 'I's in us and we have no real unity. We can only create unity in ourselves by separating from these different 'I's and through seeing that they are not us. The Work lays special emphasis on what kind of 'I's to separate from and especially it speaks of negative emotion and all its subtle forms, such as depression, hopelessness, feeling you are no good. Do you understand that such negative emotions are really 'I's that wish to drag you down? We have therefore from this point of view Heaven and Hell within us. Everything that is to do with negative emotions is to do with Hell. But all the 'I's that wish to work in us have to do with Heaven—i.e. another state of ourselves which will lead us to meet the Master or Real I. People are eaten by negative emotions

all day long, whether they are by themselves or in the company of other people. It is as if you had a boat and there were an island not so distant, but all the time you are saying: "I do not understand how to sail a boat, I always get seasick, the sea looks rough, I cannot see the island properly," and then, so to speak, you burst into tears because no one seems to shew you how to sail to this island. If you get from this Work sailing directions as to how to manage your ship, which is the Work-teaching, then you will find that you may be able to get to this island. So try to transcend your problems, try to transcend your negative emotions—try, above all, to remember yourself.

Finally, let us remark that every act of "not being identified" saves energy and insulates you from the effects of life.

*Amwell, 2.7.49*

**THIS WORK IS ABOUT CHANGE OF YOURSELF  
—NOT CHANGE OF YOUR LIFE**

In trying to do this Work, you have to understand that this Work is about yourself and the kind of person you are. It has nothing to do with how to furnish your rooms better or what to wear or how to make more money or what are the best restaurants to go to or the best place to choose for your holidays. As I said, this Work is about yourself and the kind of person you are. In this Work it is said that the kind of person you are attracts your life. The actual phrase is that your level of being attracts your life. Your level of being has to do with the kind of person you are. Suppose you suddenly win a football pool and receive £20,000 you will probably think at once that your life will be quite different because of this accession of money. You will be quite mistaken. Your life will be the same as it was, only possibly worse. Why is this so? It is so because the kind of person you are remains the same and you will take everything in the same way as you always did. To change your life you must change your being—that is, yourself. So therefore the Work starts from this idea—that it is not about things outside you but it is about yourself. As long as you remain as you are in yourself, you will attract the same problems, the same difficulties, the same situations. People in general think that if only external circumstances changed they would become different. This is a quite mistaken idea. The person you are, the kind of person you are, the being that you have at this moment, attracts the same situations, the same conundrums, the same insoluble problems. So the teaching of this Work is about changing yourself, and if you change yourself, your life will change. What does this mean? It means that if you do this Work on yourself, you are changing your level of being and as a result

you will find that your external life changes in accordance with how you change yourself. Here is a man, for example, who has suddenly acquired a lot of money. He packs his trunks and goes abroad and imagines that everything is going to be different. But everything will be just the same after a time. He will be as suspicious as before, as quarrelsome as before, as negative and upset as before. And this is because he himself has not changed. So he will attract the same kind of events, the same kind of situations.

So the Work says that we do not know ourselves. It says that we do not know our being, the kind of people we are. So therefore the Work begins with self-observation. Self-observation means many things, but its general direction is to begin to see what kind of person you are in yourself. Of course, most people are quite sure that they know themselves very well. In fact, they never think or believe that what happens to them has something to do with the kind of people they are. They see outside difficulties, but they have no idea that many of these outside difficulties are due to the kind of people they are in themselves. In short, they leave themselves out in their experience of life. Or, put in another way, they take themselves for granted as being good, nice, well-meaning people. They never see that anything is their fault. On the contrary, they blame what happens to them on other people, not themselves. This is one of the basic things that this Work begins to attack through the method of self-observation. You are not the simple, sweet person that you think, the kind and just man. All this is imagination and belongs to what the Work calls Imaginary 'I'. It is just this Imaginary 'I', this imagination that we have about ourselves, that this Work begins to attack through the method of self-observation. You must attack yourself, not others. Through self-observation conducted on the lines of what is taught in this Work one begins gradually to have a quite new feeling of oneself. One is no longer the sweet little boy, the dear little girl, who has been so badly treated by everyone. Through internal self-observation one begins to realize that all this is Imaginary 'I', imagination of what one has hitherto always taken oneself as. And so, as I said, the feeling of oneself begins to change and this instantly means a change in your level of being. When this begins, when this inner transformation begins, then you will find that many things that used to make you furious or bitter or depressed have no longer any power over you. Life no longer has the same power over you as it formerly had. Things that you used to identify with, get upset about, and so on, no longer have the same power over you. Why? Because you have begun to change yourself. And so your reaction to the daily, ever-recurring events of life begins to change. You may lead the same life externally and live in the same house, but you have begun to change in yourself.

Remember, the whole secret is, in this teaching, not to try to change external circumstances, because if you do not change yourself and the way you take the repeating events of life, everything will recur in the



same way. You will get mad, distracted, upset, bitter, angry, just in the same way as you always have to every recurring event of life. You will react to them all in the same way because you are what you are. Now the Work says you are the same machine as you are. The point in the Work is to change this machinery that is you. Of course, no one thinks that he or she is a machine. Yet it requires only a year or two of self-observation to see that you are or were a machine. The Work says you are a machine driven by life. What does this mean? Life is a turning wheel of events and according to your reaction to these mechanical events so you are a machine. So the Work says we are machines driven by life without knowing it. We imagine we act consciously in every situation. The Work says that we do not act consciously. It says that we act mechanically, in the only way that we can act. This Work says that we act mechanically in every situation—but we are not aware of it. So, one of the first starting-points of the Work is through self-observation, the aim of which first of all is to realize that you are not a properly conscious man or woman but a mechanical man or woman reacting mechanically to life. But you do not see that this is so. Then the Work says that when we begin to realize that we are machines we lose something of the imagination of ourselves that keeps us going and as a result this machinery that we have taken as ourselves becomes more evident to us as not being our real selves. That is, one becomes aware to a certain extent that one is a machine and one need not react to the external events of life, such as having lost all one's collar-studs, or dropped one's india-rubber, or lost one's train, or discovered that the roof is leaking. This means that already you have tasted yourself and to a small extent realized that your mechanical way of taking life hitherto is not you. You imagined you were taking life quite consciously. You realize the conception was incorrect. This is the beginning of an increase of consciousness. Of what? Of yourself. It is a wonderful thing to begin to realize that you need not react to the ordinary common domestic events of life in the way that you do mechanically. If you never attain to this expansion of consciousness, you live and die a machine. So the Work begins with self-observation—that is, beginning to see what kind of a person you are and how you take things mechanically. The Work is about increasing consciousness. The Work says if only we were all more conscious of ourselves and of others, war might cease. The Work begins by saying that an increase of consciousness is possible through self-observation, by becoming more conscious of the kind of person you are. It says that instead of taking yourself for granted, say, as a harmless good and lovely man or woman, you should observe yourself and notice what you are like. So the Work invites you to observe this thing called yourself and become more conscious in this direction. This is the first step in the Work and it takes some time and eventually all your life, because you have to observe yourself at different ages. The first result is that you cease to blame life and other people and the second result

is that you deeply wish to become another person, a new man, or a new woman. But, as we are, fastened to our imagination of ourselves, we find for a long time difficulty in seeing what this Work is about. We find it very difficult to realize that we are the chief malefactor—and this is because we do not know ourselves and live unconscious of ourselves and so never think that most of our own life-problems, which we blame on others, are due to our level of being—that is, the kind of person we are, which, as was said, we leave out of every situation. We do not include ourselves in the equation of life. We leave out  $X$ —that is, oneself—and  $X$  remains an unknown quantity. And it is as if all the hosts of heaven were waiting in breathless silence to see whether any man or woman will begin to study this unknown thing, called  $X$ , and so start on the path of the inner evolution of a new meaning that alone explains our existence on this insignificant planet. Now this factor  $X$ , missing from our equation of life, can become increasingly active and balancing only through direct self-observation. So begin to observe what you are like, how you behave, and so on.

*Amwell, 9-7-49*

## **TWO WAYS OF MEETING EVENTS**

This Work teaches that if we do not identify, we save energy. It also teaches that all mankind—i.e. the sleeping world of humanity—identifies with every event and loses energy to that event. So we lose energy by identifying with each event. The point of this Work is to save energy and not to be eaten by identifying. Unless we save energy we cannot awaken, because life and its turning events take our energy at every moment. As you have heard many times, some of you, this means that you are a machine driven by life and its external events. You identify with this, you identify with that, you identify with everything said to you, you identify with the weather, you identify with the newspapers. As long as you are like this you are not doing anything, but everything is being done to you and you are simply being used by life. None of the things that happen on the Earth, due to tyrants, etc., is comparable with the way in which we are used by life whose object is to keep us fast asleep. So it is said we are all in prison. But we do not see this. We feel it is someone's fault. Here we err deeply.

You remember the parable which compares us with sheep used by farmers? All they want is our wool and meat. In order to get this result they teach us hymns and warn us not to stray away because dreadful wolves will eat us. And this is quite true, because unless we have reached the level of Good Householder and, still further, unless we have Magnetic Centre, if we try to rebel against life we shall suffer

more than before. We become martyrs suffering from martyrdom. That is why the Work starts with people who are at the level of Good Householder to begin with. We have to rebel against ourselves, not life. Of course, lots of people who come into this Work imagine that they will be transformed into new beings in a few weeks' time. They are taught not to identify but of course they do not understand what it means, because they continue to take every event of life as a fact, as something very serious, and not as an event. And certainly it takes a very long time before a man or a woman begins to see what this Work is about. You may be told many times that you are under 48 orders of laws. But you do not see what it means.

Now there is one thing that I want to talk about to-night, in connection with the power of events over you at every moment. There are two ways of dealing with events, once you become conscious of their mechanical action on you. One is to try to separate from their power by not identifying—for you are under the power of what you identify with. The other way is to will them. In the early days when I was in this Work one of my tasks was to overcome fear. I was told to observe fear in myself—and fear is a very good thing to observe in yourself. I noticed that I was afraid of the new double-decked buses which used to swing round corners at full speed. I had driven cars for a long time and so probably was more sensitive for that reason. On one wet day I got on to the top of one of these early buses and as it swung round a corner at full speed I willed it to fall over and the extraordinary thing was that my fear left me. It had vanished. From that I learnt that a great amount of fear comes from hoping something won't happen. Now try to will what you have to do. Often Mr. O. gave examples of this kind which some of you have heard. The general idea was that if some event is inevitable you can do two things, either try to separate by non-identifying, or will it, and go with it. When I was at the Institute in France I used to be told at about six o'clock in the morning when I was on a certain job that I had to go to a different job. I used to think how unfair this was. I did not understand that the concentrated work on being that the Institute was carrying out was partly about this becoming negative when you cannot do what you wish to do. Of course, this is very difficult work on oneself because it seems unreasonable, as in the case of the novice who was told to plant cabbages and tended them with the greatest care and went out one morning and found that they had all been ploughed up on purpose because he was so identified. Apart from this it is a good thing to will what you find yourself having to do because it frees you inside. "Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Ecclesiastes ix. 10). I would add a commentary on this and would say: "Whatsoever you find you have to do, do it with all your might." And that means will it, as far as we have will. Once I said there was a good way to observe yourself from another angle—i.e. observe what you object to during the day and try to will what you are objecting to and not merely accept it. One

has to say to oneself something like this: "Come, let's go to it." And I assure you it is a very good way of getting through quite a lot of things that you have to do during the daytime. Why? One reason is that you get negative so easily when you want to do something else or you do not see why you should have to do this other thing. You say to yourself: "This is unfair." But everything in life is unfair. Nothing is fair or just on this Earth, and you should read Ouspensky's wonderful chapter on Experimental Mysticism to realize that what he saw through inner perception from a higher plane of understanding was that our idea of justice on this Earth is illusion. On this level, all sleeping humanity belongs to a tiny planet which is a kind of lunatic asylum. There is no justice, no fairness. Only if everyone on this Earth became conscious, then the whole story would become quite different. Just notice what is happening here in the world to-day. So instead of referring everything to the idea of fairness and justice it is far better to will what you have to do in everything and try to awaken from your negative emotions. That will give you freedom and inner peace. Kicking against the pricks will make you more negative and therefore less and less free.

This paper is about two ways of taking the events of life. One is that you do not identify with them; the other is to will them. Sometimes we have to use one method, but sometimes to use the other, or both. I will also tell you a secret. We have to will one another: this is the beginning of conscious love.

*Amwell, 16.7.49*

### **SELF-OBSERVATION**

We speak again about self-observation. This is one of the central practices of the Work. Unless you practise self-observation the Work is useless to you. You may have diagrams in different colours and all the rest of it, but unless you begin to observe yourself it is all useless. Now you have all heard of self-observation. Yes, that is quite true, but it is merely in your external memory—i.e. in Formatory Centre. You can hear the Work many times and begin to think it is nothing but constant repetition of the same thing. To the Formatory Centre and its memory this is quite true. It is the same thing said in so many words, over and over again. If you are superficial you may imagine that you understand the Work simply because you remember, for example, that self-observation is necessary and is, in fact, the starting point of the Fourth Way teaching. But have you begun to practise self-observation in regard to yourself? If not, you will never understand why the Work begins with self-observation. Your external memory—i.e. the memory belonging to the purely formatory part of the Intellectual Centre—will

not change you. It is only when you apply the knowledge of the Work to yourself that the Work can change you. First of all, you have to receive the Work in the external memory, but if you leave it there nothing will happen. The Work has to become emotional. It has to affect the emotional part, otherwise, as I said, it simply remains in the formatory part—but it has to begin with the formatory part. This means that you have to know the Work in the external memory or formatory part of yourself, but understanding depends on the work of at least two centres. The formatory part is merely a recorder of what you have heard. It has the teaching of the Work. But this teaching of the Work on the blackboard might be compared with water. Our task is to turn this water into wine. Now if you begin actually to practise self-observation you are beginning to turn water into wine. But in order to do this we have to realize that the knowledge of the Work formatorily is not nearly enough. All the ideas of the Work can become living—if you practise them, if you apply them to yourself. As usual, I will ask you the same question: have you observed yourself to-day?

You must understand that mechanical Man does not observe himself and you may have a mechanical man who even knows the Work formatorily and regards himself as rather a professor of the whole subject and yet he has never *practised* a single iota of it. He has never thought of actually observing himself—that is, it has never occurred to him that the ideas he has received in his formatory part have to be applied practically to himself. In short, it has never occurred to him to observe himself. For example, let us take an imaginary person who is full of envy. Of course, as a mechanical man he will deny that he is ever envious, although perhaps other people are quite aware of it. Suppose people say to this hypothetical person that he or she is very envious, what would be the result? The result would be a flare-up and a denial. So the Work says that it is only through realizing these things from self-observation that a man can begin to change. He has to see for himself that he is envious. But if he observes that he is envious, do you see what happens to him? He has begun to become aware of himself. He has begun to see *for himself* without any compulsion that he is full of envy and that his whole life perhaps has been governed by this unpleasant narrowing negative emotion. But no force on earth coming from without will make him realize that this is the chief block to his inner development. Now the Work says that self-observation is to let a ray of light into our inner darkness. What is this inner darkness? All that we take for granted that we are, all our pictures of ourselves, all the rôles we play automatically in life, all the self-justifying that prevents us from seeing what we are really like—this is our inner darkness, the person that we don't see and never suspect ourselves of being. Remember that you are not what you imagine you are. What you imagine you are is called in the Work Imaginary 'I'. Remember that all esoteric teaching says that we do not know ourselves. The Work says that in place of self-knowledge we have Imaginary 'I'—i.e.

imagination about ourselves that does not correspond with what we are or how we really behave. Now what is this ray of light that is let into our inner darkness through practising self-observation? This ray of light is consciousness. If an envious man through self-observation becomes conscious that he is envious, his consciousness has increased, but if he takes himself for granted and justifies himself, his consciousness remains at a mechanical level which means practically that he remains asleep towards himself.

The object of self-observation is to increase consciousness, because if it is emotional the man becomes conscious of the fact that he is envious and his position is infinitely better than it was before. Why? Because his consciousness has increased. He has become conscious of himself as envious. And this instantly means that he can begin to work on his envy and perceive it acting whereas before he was unconscious of this factor in himself. The Work says that without self-observation no one can shift from where he is. Everyone is at a certain level and to shift from that level a man must become more conscious of himself through self-observation. Of course, a man of small being cannot observe himself because he will not be able to stand it. But the Good Householder who has Magnetic Centre will be able to do so. Tramps, lunatics, self-satisfied people, self-complacent people, people who have no sense of anything greater than themselves, will not be able to observe themselves. The possession of Magnetic Centre means that a man, a woman, who are Good Householders, are aware even before they have met this Work that there is something greater than themselves. But a very small, envious man will not be able to admit that there is anything greater than his own self-emotions, self-liking, self-love. Now a man who begins to observe something in himself begins to separate from it. Taking yourself for granted as being quite all right means that you are completely identified with yourself. Of course, you are not selfish, of course you do not always want your own way, and so on. But once you begin to observe yourself rightly, you become divided into two. Observing I observes you and feels itself different from you. This is the starting point of this Work. I can, for example, observe myself as being envious without knowing it. I took myself envying as *myself* without realizing for a moment that it was envy. But now I can see myself envying as distinct from my Observing I—in short, I have established something in myself that is not my ordinary self. In that case, I can make room for other people in the sense that, seeing and knowing my own envy, I am not criticizing them as I would if I only found fault with them for being envious and judged them without seeing my own envy.

Now when you can observe yourself up to a certain point, you attract the influence of the Work, which has a great power to change you. This power of the Work begins to act on Observing I—if you have noticed the diagram—not on Nicoll in my case, but on Observing I. This builds up Deputy-Steward and finally attracts Real I or

Master. You must understand, in speaking to people in life who have never observed themselves, one finds after a time certain difficulties because they do not understand what one is talking about. In short, they take themselves for granted and justify everything they do, never observing themselves. They are full of criticism of others, as all people in life are. That is one of the difficulties that face us all in the Work. Now the more you have observed in yourself the less do you judge others, the less you find fault with your neighbour. And this is the beginning of "love thy neighbour as thyself"—not in any sentimental sense, but in a real way.

*Amwell, 23.7.49*

### **BALANCED MAN**

The tendency which is apparent in the present state of the world is to take all people on the same level. That is, the world is moving into that opposite called sameness. The opposite of sameness is differences. As you know, historically, there were forms of society based on differences. But of course this means that a time will come in which society is based on sameness. This is because everything swings between the opposites according to the Law of the Pendulum. The Work teaches that differences are necessary and refers you to the body and its different cells.

Now the Work teaches that people are different. It does not teach this in any social or political sense. People fundamentally are different and although they may have the same form of sameness they must be able to perceive their differences from one another. One very interesting viewpoint that the Work gives us about Man is that, esoterically speaking, there are different categories of Man. For that reason, the Work speaks of Number 1, Number 2, Number 3, Number 4, Number 5, Number 6, Number 7 Man. Now the category applicable to Man Number 1, Number 2, Number 3, refers to mechanical mankind and the reason why they are divided into three is because of the development respectively of their centres. For example, a Number 1 Man has his centre of gravity in either Moving or Instinctive Centres or both. On the other hand, Number 2 Man has his centre of gravity in Emotional Centre. And again, Number 3 Man has his centre of gravity in Intellectual Centre. The Work teaches that all these three types are mechanical men and women and as such are undeveloped. In short, they are one-sided and so are not balanced.

To-night we speak of Number 4 Man, which is Balanced Man. The attainment of the level of Number 4 Man is one of the central ideas of this teaching. So in making an aim, and I mean here a real,

practical aim, you should observe what centres are undeveloped in you. If you cannot read intelligently any book, you should develop this undeveloped function. If you are a Number 1 Man and bound about on horseback or on tennis lawns and so on, you have developed your Moving Centre, but your Emotional and Intellectual Centres probably remain undeveloped functions. On the contrary, if you are always reading and studying intellectually, your Moving Centre will remain undeveloped—or again, if you are always feeling everything very emotionally, you are always taking life from the Emotional Centre—that is, you are disliking or liking everything in a purely mechanical way—and of course this will make it very difficult for you to get on with other people.

Now the conception of Balanced Man is very deep and involves a very real study of yourself as being unbalanced in the Work-sense. Since the aim of the Work is to lead us to the realization of Balanced or Number 4 Man or Woman, we have to study ourselves from this side also. You may be able to hit a bowler for 6 and receive the plaudits of the audience and swell with pride, and yet you are not a man from the Work point of view. You are a Number 1 Man and usually boring. Can you appreciate art, poetry, architecture or this Work? Can you think and read intelligently ideas contained in books? If you cannot, you are simply a Number 1 Man who mechanically remains under the formidable laws that mechanical man is under. But at the same time, a man who simply develops his Intellectual Centre is in the same position. In each case you are one-sided and your functions or centres are not balanced. So one of the aims of the Work is to develop your undeveloped functions. I once said to O.: “You mean that a man should be an all-round man?” He looked at me for a long time and said: “That is exactly what I don’t mean.” I heard afterwards that I was using a phrase which, translated into Russian, means a man who is no good at anything. Now try to notice in yourselves where you are lacking in something in which you could be more educated. In his later years O. took up the study of art. He sent for replicas of all great paintings and began to feel them and to develop an artistic sense. What was he trying to do? He was trying to develop an emotional appreciation of art. You remember that Socrates wrote poems in prison, when he was condemned to death, because in a dream he had been advised to “practise music” and he felt he must not leave the world before he had discharged his conscience by “making some poems in obedience to the dream.”

Now, since the Fourth Way has to do with the development of every side, you will understand what I mean when I say that the intellectual professor coming into the Work must learn cooking and he must learn to drive a nail home. So when people come down here to Great Amwell, they should try to think what they have to learn either in the carpenter’s shop or the kitchen or the studio and take up something they do not know about or are not trained in yet. And here



one person can help another and teach him something and perhaps vice versa. This was the conception behind the Institute in France, where, for example, I learnt how to build and many other things that I had never taken seriously.

Now Number 4 Man or Balanced Man really ought to know something about everything. Notice yourself, how you are always avoiding certain things you cannot do because you do not know about them. When we start later on a further development of our place here at Great Amwell, there will be not exactly classes but people will be put on to jobs through which they can learn something that they did not know before. When I was at the French Institute, I was not allowed to be a doctor at all, because that side was in a relative sense developed. Nor was I allowed when I was with G. to go on reading esoteric literature. Do you see why? Because he wanted me to learn other things such as carpentry, building, washing the kitchen floor, washing up for a hundred people, and doing complicated exercises late at night when I was completely tired. Do you see the idea of developing what was not developed in me? So try to think what centres are completely undeveloped in you because if you reflect you begin to see what the idea means that we should aim at being Number 4 Man for whom all centres are to a certain extent developed. What are you totally ignorant of? Well, reflect on it and begin to see that you must know something that you are totally ignorant of if you want to reach this state called Balanced Man.

*Amwell, 30.7.49*

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INTERNAL WORLD**

In saying bad things you must remember that you are making internal accounts. I should say, after many years in the Work, that to say bad things is to invite unhappiness. However, people do not see that what they say or think affects their lives. Suppose all day long you have been taking in impressions negatively, you may be surprised that you feel unhappy or depressed. This simply means that you do not observe that you have been taking impressions in negatively all day long and that that produces a bad effect on yourself. Is it not extraordinary that people think they can say, think and behave and feel as they like on the internal side when they already know that they cannot do that in outer life because, for example, they may be arrested by the police for slander? The external world and what happens to it has to do with our first teaching. You cannot go and shoot a man whom you dislike, because the police will arrest you. This Work is our second teaching. Now in the Work you cannot murder a person in

your heart without suffering the consequences. The Work is about developing the internal side of you so that it is so governed by the power of the Work that you cannot behave badly to anyone in your mind, heart, and soul without feeling a loss of force. We stand between two realities, one given by the senses and the other given by our relationship to Higher Centres. One is external and the other is internal and, I would add, eternal. It has often been said that this Work is to prepare the lower centres for the reception of Higher Centres. Your lower centres turn you towards life, in their mechanical parts, so that you learn how to catch buses, how to speak, how to read, and, in short, how to relate yourself to external visible life. All this Work is about relating yourself to the internal world, which is represented in the diagram by the two Higher Centres. Here we begin to have a great paradox. You cannot relate yourself to the internal world, which Plato called Truth, Goodness and Beauty, and which the Work calls the two Higher Centres, unless you have made a good relationship to the external world. This is referred to in the Work by the term that you must be a Good Householder towards the external world before you can begin to make a relationship to the internal world. Therefore it is said in the Work that unless you are a Good Householder, which means at least a fairly good relationship to the outer world, you cannot do this Work. Suppose you are nothing but a tramp or a lunatic towards the external world, suppose you have never learnt anything seriously, never done a job, and do not know how to earn your own living, then I am afraid that you have not done what is necessary on the side of Good Householder, and, in that case, if you enter this Work, you will tend of course to use the Work as an escape. About these people I have not much to say until they accept this and realize it. One has to pay to life by life-effort before one can expect to get anything else more blessed.

Now I speak to those who have been through life to a certain extent and who are now connected with the Work. They are not necessarily in it. If they say bad things, that will increase their inner accounts. I want you to get this distinction very clearly. If you are simply a man, a woman, governed by life and its external events—i.e. your mechanical reactions to them—you can behave as you like, you can say what you like, you can feel and think as you like. But the Work begins in a man or a woman who is beginning to understand that he or she cannot with impunity think or feel mechanically. Higher Centres are near or far according to the inner state of yourself. If your inner state of yourself is one of envy, malice, hatred, bitterness, judgment, your psychological body—that is, your inner state—is wet, a sodden mess, and will never conduct the higher vibrations of intelligence and meaning that come from Higher Centres. That is why the Work starts with self-observation, observation of what is going on, observation of what your state is in regard to what is going on in you. This forms a psychological body. The Work is about developing this inner relationship to events—i.e.

how you take events. If you cannot see that we are simply governed by events, you cannot see that you are driven by life—that is, a machine. You must understand that if you are identified with every event of life, you are in life and not distinct from it. You are in all the feelings that life gives, you are in all its anxieties, etc. You are far away from giving to yourself the shock of transformation of impressions coming in from life. So you must observe how you take in the impressions of life, and transform them through your understanding of the Work. Then you begin to *hear* Higher Centres.

*Amwell, 17.9.49*

### **WORK ON FALSE PERSONALITY**

A question was asked at one of the sub-groups: “Do we follow the path mapped out for us?” In answering a question like this, one must begin with *what is meant by “us”*. Most of you have heard that we are not one but many different people and also that we have in us two distinct things, one called Essence, one called Personality; also you have heard that Essence is under the Law of Fate and Personality under the Law of Accident. As long as Personality overpowers Essence—that is, as long as Personality is active and Essence is passive—we do not follow the Law of our Fate. In that case, we cannot talk about a path mapped out for us. If we were conscious in Essence, then one might say we would be following a path mapped out for us essentially, but since Essence becomes surrounded by Personality, to which is attached False Personality, we cannot say that we follow any path. Now a person who is in False Personality is far away from his Fate. One of the greatest experiences of this Work, after you have been in it for a long time and held on to it internally, is that you find yourself shifted from what you thought you were and literally told not to be that kind of person. It would be no good at all to try to change yourself if there were not something waiting ready for you to change into. False Personality is composed of pictures of yourself, amongst many other things. False Personality, in short, gives you an entirely wrong feeling of ‘I’ of yourself—and causes you to put yourself into situations that do not belong to you and have nothing to do with what you are fundamentally. False Personality is a kind of painted up thing or a picture. So the Work begins with self-observation whose object is to free you from this wrong thing that you imagine yourself to be and which, as often as not, tortures you all your life.

Now, getting free from oneself begins with making False Personality more and more passive—that means, not identifying with it. Your Personality may be all right—i.e. you may be a very good shoemaker.

Remember that Personality is what you have acquired from life—Essence is what you are born with. As I said, you may be a very good shoemaker, and this is not anything to be got rid of, but suddenly you begin to think yourself the best shoemaker in the world. That is, you begin to have a picture of yourself as being the best shoemaker in the world, and whether you are or not it makes no difference, you will be tortured by the pictures of yourself being the best shoemaker. To speak more deeply, you usually find that your False Personality centres on what you are not really good at, what you want to be good at. The study of False Personality is always extremely interesting and most people do not see quite what it means. For example, you may be a good shoemaker, but you want to pretend you are a political orator, so you go to Hyde Park on Sundays, and you might be involved in a row and get shot in Hyde Park, which would not belong to the Law of your Fate. It would not belong to your real development and certainly it would not lead to any growth of Essence. If everyone lived more or less within the orbit of Essence and real Personality as distinct from False Personality, they would probably find their lives quite different from the lives of those who follow False Personality.

To speak practically, this Work begins with self-observation and that means that you have to observe yourselves, each one of you. You have got gradually to observe how you speak, how you behave, and so on. If you are sincere, you will begin to be very surprised after some years that you could have said that or behaved like that. You have become more and more free from what does not belong to you and what you have acquired from False Personality. You cannot estimate the feeling of liberation that results.

Now the Work teaches that we have to relax. First of all, we understand by relaxing, relaxing the body and the muscles, especially the small muscles of the face. But the supreme feeling of relaxation is to relax from the picture of yourself—in short, from your False Personality, which means all the façade of pretence that you are always living by which conducts to you absolutely wrong experiences and makes you get involved in things that do not belong to the path of your essential life.

Ask yourselves: “Why am I behaving like this? Why am I in such a furious temper?” This leads to relaxation of your mind, relaxation of wrong ideas of yourself, and gives you inner peace. The trouble with life is that everyone is being something that he is not. A little sincerity, a little real observation, begins to make you think: “What am I doing? Why am I behaving in this way? What is the matter with me?” Because, if you have sincere Observing I, it will ask you: “What are you pretending that you are? What are you playing up to?” That will give you a movement towards Essence, through which what you really are like will become more evident to you.

In connection with this paper an extract from volume II was read from *Commentary on Memory* (pages 584-5).

## ON DEVALUATION IN THE WORK

On one occasion Mr. Ouspensky said that we have too many overcoats on. He said we have to strip these overcoats off ourselves before we can get any further in our being than we are at present. Many people speculated on what these overcoats meant. We understood that by these overcoats was meant that we are clad in the wrong psychological garments and so therefore it was meant that we are not really ourselves. We have been speaking recently about False Personality and it has been emphasized that False Personality gives you wrong ideas, wrong valuation of yourself. One is, so to speak, covered with pretences and overvaluation of oneself and so is a fraudulent person. Now the Work is to *devalue* oneself. Christ said: "Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. xviii.3). This is differently expressed in John, where Christ said: "Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii.3). So if we wear many overcoats we cannot expect to become little children because we are all dressed up, layer by layer, with what is not ourselves but which we keep up the pretence of being. Notice in yourselves some of these pretences and you will become not weaker but much stronger. An enormous amount of energy goes into keeping up these pretences, these overcoats, and we feel that if we lost even one we would lose face. If you read the Sermon on the Mount psychologically and not religiously you will see that it is all about taking off overcoats—i.e. getting rid successively of these many overcoats.

You remember when we act here coming up to the Bar of Heaven, how you tend to bang the counter and say: "Don't you know who I am?" when no notice is taken of you to begin with. Why is this so? It is so because you come up dressed in these overcoats which are not anything to do with you really, and you expect with all these false overcoats and false coverings, false valuations of yourselves, to pass into a world of a reality much greater, much more profound, than the reality that we now meet with, called life. In life, False Personality, many overcoats, may be extremely useful in getting you a job, but it is all insincere, it is not really you at all. In short, it is false, false valuation, False Personality. So it is necessary to devalue ourselves in this respect. Are you really the person you think you are, so good at everything, or is it possible that this valuation of yourself is really false and that all your life you have been acting from this false valuation? Only through prolonged and very sincere observation in the light of the Work can you begin to lose these overcoats. As a result you become much simpler, and you begin to understand what inner peace means. Because you are always dressed up in garments that are not you, you are worried, discontented, anxious, careworn, insulted and angry. So

the Work has to do with devaluation of oneself. This is only done by gradually observing that you are not the person that you always have imagined yourself to be, for self-observation gives you another sense of yourself. One can detect False Personality in other people if one is sensitive and can see that they are speaking in false intonations with false gestures and false expressions. A person full of False Personality becomes a nuisance to others but it is very difficult to see the same thing in oneself. The reason why we have to separate from False Personality—namely, pictures of ourselves, imaginary ideas of ourselves, imaginary requirements, phantasies of ourselves—that is, to take off overcoats—is because otherwise we cannot move towards anything more real in ourselves, we cannot move towards the goal in this Work, which is Real I. Now by observation, Self-Remembering, inner separation, non-identifying, not internally considering, making ourselves more conscious of ourselves, constantly perceiving our negative emotions and evading them, and by external considering—in fact, by doing all the Work on its practical side—we move towards this inner thing called Real I, or, in terms of the Gospels, the Kingdom of Heaven, or, in terms of the Work, the Conscious Circle of Humanity, where people are different from people on Earth and can understand one another and so not hate. You cannot hate when you understand. Therefore it is said in the Work that the most powerful force we can *create* in ourselves is understanding.

*Amwell, 1.10.49*

### **OBSERVATION OF CERTAIN 'P's**

Every aspect of the Work-teaching is linked with another aspect. The whole of your psychological make-up is linked together in a very complicated way, just as in your physical body every organ in normal health is linked up with another organ. For example, your liver, your stomach, your heart, your kidneys, are all linked up. You could not possibly take the heart out of the sphere of your body and study it separately by itself. One thing depends on another. On another scale, the Earth depends on the Sun and the Sun is a small member of the Galaxy. So when you try to alter something in yourself you will always find it linked up with something else. There are in us very deep connections that go right back in our Time-bodies to almost the beginning of our lives. One cannot therefore say arbitrarily: "I am going to change this or that in myself." You may find that in trying to change this or that in yourself you must also change something else. So what can we change in ourselves? Are we simply associative mechanical machinery—i.e. are we predetermined or is there any possibility of

changing or at least modifying something in such a way as to make ourselves a little different from what we used to be?

Now the Work teaches that certain 'I's in ourselves are useless to us. For example, the Work says, in so many words, that you can change the 'I's belonging to False Personality without any harm to yourselves. People try to change their diet, their physical habits, and so on, but without result. The supreme formulation in this case from the Work point of view is that you can transform incoming impressions. This is called the First Conscious Shock to the machine. You can take impressions differently and, the Work adds, if you begin to work here, if you take in impressions consciously, instead of mechanically, you will not do any harm to yourself. As you know, this Work begins on the psychological side. A man can say: "I will from henceforth starve myself." He is beginning at the wrong end. Why? Because his psychology will not change. There is no reason in imposing almost asceticism. As you know, aim in the Work must be intelligent and directed on to something that has been observed and separated from.

In illustration of what has been said, let us once more return to the doctrine of 'I's in the Work. When you meet a man you cannot stand, it is almost always because you are the same as he is, only you have not become conscious of it. This absolutely imaginary feeling of 'I' that we rest in is not the feeling of 'I' that we shall have after several years in the Work. Why? Because this Imaginary 'I' will have become broken up into many different 'I's. Unless you can bring your 'I's into consciousness, they remain semi-conscious or even unconscious and can act on you so as to make it impossible for you to trust yourself at all.

Now, as I said, in trying to see 'I's in yourself, notice where you criticize anyone else very strongly. You may be certain that this person whom you see with your external senses represents an 'I' in yourself of which you are not yet conscious. I once said, as a kind of analogy or parable, that if we passed into the spiritual world—whatever that means—we should probably see a man whom we simply could not tolerate. An angel might say: "Do you know who this man is?" And the answer would be: "It is yourself, whom you have never seen and never tried to see while you were on Earth." Sometimes in dreams we meet a person whom we cannot stand and with whom we quarrel. As a rule, that is an 'I' in oneself that one has not observed. The task therefore for us is to try to make more conscious these dark parts of ourselves—namely, these semi-conscious or unconscious sides of ourselves. We must become much more aware of ourselves instead of taking ourselves for granted. We have to realize practically, by direct experience, that we are not one but many and that this Imaginary 'I' that we imagine ourselves to be does not really exist at all.

Now I may wish to be a different person from what I am. This would be an excellent aim, would it not, but do I know what I am? As I said, everything is linked together in us. Why cannot I be happy, I ask? Why does it always seem that when I am in a charming mood,

other people don't like me or that I get no response? Now suppose after many years in this Work I become far more aware of the very unattractive 'I's, the fault-finding 'I's, the mean 'I's, the jealous 'I's, envious 'I's—suppose I begin to become more and more aware of such 'I's in myself, do you think I have a little more chance of being less unhappy? Certainly. Why? Because I no longer have the same feeling of I as I had before. In fact, I begin to know that I have everything in myself that I criticize in other people. Is it not curious to think of the Imaginary 'I' that vaunts itself, overvalues itself, and is it not equally extraordinary to think how people are going about with this sort of bloom over themselves and trying to get into relationship with one another?

Now the transformation of impressions, which is the First Conscious Shock and which the Work-teaching says is something we can do without hurting the machine, has amongst many other things the idea behind it that we do not take what happens to us in life in our usual mechanical way. Between the reception of the impressions and the reaction that would mechanically arise, consciousness begins to interfere and this is the whole secret. Have you studied how many incoming impressions—namely, what people say to you, how they look at you, how they behave towards you—fall on False Personality and therefore on the negative part of Emotional Centre? Have you tried to prevent this from happening? Now you cannot do it unless you have observed yourself and seen that you also speak and behave in the way that you criticize others for behaving in. Just to try to remember yourself—i.e. to transform impressions—without a lot of previous work on observing different 'I's in you will be purely theoretical. You have to be able to bring up the same thing in yourself as you criticize in another person. That for us, at our level, is the supreme form of giving the First Conscious Shock. The magical side of self-observation is to give yourself a little time before you react to the incoming impressions.

*Amwell, 8.10.49*

## **ON OBSERVING INTERNAL CONSIDERING**

If people say that they do not know what to observe in themselves, they should study what the Work teaches in this respect. For example, the Work says we must observe Internal Considering, one side of which is making accounts against other people. Making accounts against other people means feeling that they owe you something for their bad behaviour towards you. Some people make themselves very weak by this form of Internal Considering, feeling they are owed by others and believing that if others treated them better their own lives would be



different. Now who of you has observed this form of making inner accounts? It is useless to tell me that you do not know what to observe if you have not begun to observe this in yourself. If you have been making these internal accounts against everyone all day long, you will be in a most unhappy position and probably become sleepless, bitter, ill and all the rest of it.

On one occasion we were told to observe our self-pity. It is very easy to observe self-pity in other people. For example, one sees a person who touches a hot kettle and starts back as if something horrible had been done to him or her. Or this person cannot find something and feels apparently very badly treated even though he or she has mislaid it. This exaggerated self-pitying response to everything in life is of course a form of making inner accounts—i.e. a form of Internal Considering. These people are weak in being. But they do not observe why.

Some people can so easily make internal accounts and are so full of self-pity that if it rains when they propose to go for a walk they will feel hurt by the Universe and feel that something is hostile to them. This points to a weak level of being. It is as if a person were to say: "May all Second Force be removed from me so that I can always have my own way." An over-sensitive reaction to the ordinary events of life can charge us up with negative emotions which come through this self-pitying view of life that we take. Its origin is that we think that life should treat us better, we think that people should treat us better, and so, being weak inside ourselves, we accumulate a lot of internal accounts every day and build up a dragging past, a sick past. In that case, something stronger must grow in us, and this can only happen through observing that we do shrink too much, feeling too tenderly about ourselves in our relationship to what happens in external life to us personally. All this is a very good way to observe oneself practically because it can lead to a much stronger level of being, by making it *conscious*. But if we do not observe this, our being will be weak because of this constant *unconscious* way of taking everything, which can become so exaggerated that everything, all day long, upsets us and makes us feel miserable, and also is a nuisance to others.

Now people who are very insensitive to themselves and how they react, but over-sensitive to outer life, will perhaps say that they cannot see what they have to observe in this respect. Well, in that case, I advise them to observe where they get suddenly hurt, as when they touch a kettle which is rather hot and almost weep because life has been so cruel. I remember at the French Institute I learnt a great deal about that side of myself because things were not arranged in that place entirely to suit us. On a cold and frosty morning one had to get up at 5.30 and it was no good weeping about it. In other words, one had to will what one had to do and not make too many requirements. Now if you make a lot of internal accounts and do not observe what is happening, you will tend to become rather an invalid—at least, that

is one thing that can happen—or else you become bitter, negative, brooding over the injustices of life and the lack of appreciation which surrounds you. This is rather idiotic—I mean, you have not met life with some inner strength. The Work, rightly understood, can give you inner strength. It is stronger than life.

Now let us turn to another thing that we can and must observe—namely, the absence of Self-Remembering in oneself. Do you try to take life from the Work point of view or do you take it from your mechanical reactions to life? If you bring the Work in *between* what happens in life and how you react to life, you will already be beginning to remember yourself. For example, something unpleasant has happened to you. Logically, you have every right to be upset. But if you are negative it is your fault. So if the Work and all its teaching intervenes between you and your reaction, you will be able to develop your being through the power of the intervening Work, by not reacting mechanically. The Work can transform you. As long as you react mechanically at every moment your level of being will remain as it is. There will be no self-transformation. Ideally speaking, external life would have no power over you, if you remembered yourself, but this is far from us all. Realize how far—and it will come nearer. But if a man could really remember himself, it would lead to this result eventually. Again, when people say to me that they do not know what to observe in themselves, one answer is: “Can you observe your negative states? Can you observe that you are negative?” Remember, as I said, if you are negative it is always *your* fault. Self-justifying has such sway over us however that it takes us years before we can realize what this means. Remember, if I am negative it is *my* fault. I have allowed something to turn sour which I should never allow to turn sour. But to observe all the negative states in oneself belongs to a great inner sincerity and therefore a great belief in what the Work teaches. Why should I not be negative? a person might ask. The answer is that this is one of the essential teachings of the Work. If you are negative you will conduct wrong influences and you will never get in touch with the influences from Higher Centres which have such a gentle and curative value and can change your level of being imperceptibly. There are many other things that I can say as regards what people have to observe in themselves but these are sufficient, so do not ask me what it is that you have to observe in yourselves. Do not keep on writing to me, asking what it is you have to observe in yourselves. I might answer that you seem not to have yet any idea of work on yourselves. I will add one final thing: it is a very good thing for you all to cut down unnecessary emotions, and live more simply and sincerely in yourselves.

## FURTHER NOTE ON OBSERVING INTERNAL CONSIDERING

Last time a short paper was read about what it is we have to observe in ourselves if we want to practise this Work. As was said, this paper was due to a question asked about what we have to observe. Last time we spoke about observing internal considering from the aspect of making accounts against other people. If you remember, it was said that making internal accounts against other people has to do with always thinking that other people are happier or better placed than we are, that they do not understand our difficulties, and, as a consequence we are always feeling that we are owed something. In a discussion here it was explained that if your Time-body is full of these internal accountings it is in a bad state. It is full of negative emotions based on the idea that other people have never behaved rightly to you, have never understood you and your difficulties. As was said at this meeting, such a Time-body is a bad kind of Time-body to have. It was also added that when two people marry they do not only marry their physical bodies but they marry their Time-bodies. A person may look wonderful but has a negative Time-body and as a result marriage will not be so beautiful as romance paints it. Now to transform the Time-body, if it is negative, you must work on yourself now and stop *now* this facile mechanical way of taking everything that happens to you. The idea of the Work is that if you work on yourself now and take things more consciously and prevent yourself from mechanically feeling bitter about how people treat you, you are not only transforming the future but your *conscious* effort about yourself will also transform the past. That is to say, by working on yourself more consciously *now* through observing when you take situations in life negatively, you can alter not only the future but the past. As I said in this paper: have you noticed to-day what you have taken negatively from the standpoint of internal considering—namely, from the standpoint of thinking that the person did not behave rightly to you or that it started raining just when you wanted to have a picnic? You can alter your Time-body both in the future and the past by noticing and not agreeing with how you mechanically take events now. Of course, if you take things negatively, you have got to observe and acknowledge that you do so. Now all observation of oneself is to put oneself a little away from oneself. It is to observe how this thing that you call yourself behaves. As long as you take this thing “yourself” as one, you have no self-observation and cannot change your being. To observe “yourself” you must observe it sincerely. Self-observation must necessarily have a certain detachment from oneself and this is the beginning of change of being. It is the gateway into this Work. If you take for granted everything you do, everything you feel, everything you think, you are not observing

yourself. That is called being a mechanical man or woman; and you suffer uselessly all your life, not understanding what you have to do in life.

Now the Work says we must observe ourselves *sincerely*. Do you happen to know what sincerity means as regards self-observation? Literally it means *sine-caries*—without decay. Now do you know what a carious tooth is? A carious tooth means a tooth that has gone rotten. In dreams the teeth sometimes mean how you take life. Sincerity in its original meaning was “without rottenness”. So a person who observes himself sincerely observes himself without rottenness. But if a person observing himself justifies himself and lies all the time, as we all do, his self-observation has the rottenness of self-justifying. He has poor teeth. He does not really see what he is like, or what he said, or what he did, and admits nothing and so does not digest his impressions. To observe that one has, say, been a nuisance to other people, to catch a real God-given glimpse of it, is to begin to observe oneself sincerely and such a form of consciousness can change both the future and the past. It is the light of consciousness: and only this light can cure us.

Now next time I will speak about one of the many other things that we have to work on and observe in this Work—i.e. Self-Remembering or the lack of it. I will say at present that to remember yourself, apart from only observing yourself at the moment in which you are experiencing a difficulty in a situation that would make you negative ordinarily unless you had the Work behind you, is to act from the Work and all its teaching. If you can remember the Work in a difficult state you are beginning to understand one form of what remembering yourself means but you have to see that unless you already have the power to observe how you are taking other people or a life-situation or life-events, you cannot remember yourself. For example, people who have never observed that they are negative will not be able to apply the Work to themselves. They are asleep in their imagination of themselves and not yet awakened to making their own efforts to observe how they take things. Such people will not be able to apply the Work to themselves and therefore such people will not be able to remember themselves in the sense that I have given—namely, that if you take what happens to you from the Work point of view you will begin to remember yourself.

## SELF-REMEMBERING

The Work says we must create ourselves. A similar idea exists in other teachings but the difference lies in the fact that creating oneself in the sense of the Work means to grow into something that is already awaiting us. In other words, if there were nothing greater than ourselves, nothing potential, nothing as yet unfulfilled but possible of fulfilment, it would be useless for Man to try to create himself. Consider for a moment his given body: could a man create his body?

Now last time we spoke about how, amongst the things we have to observe, one point that the Work mentions is that we must observe that *we do not remember ourselves*. For that reason everything goes wrong in this world. Yet we are taught that man was made to remember himself, and, being brought up amongst sleeping people, he forgot himself and absorbed the psychology of sleeping people. Therefore we have to rediscover ourselves. We have forgotten ourselves. What we take as ourselves is, in fact, the growth of False Personality, which is acquired from the influence of life and so causes us to be far from what we really are. And yet there is, overhead, so to speak, Real I—that is, what we really are and have forgotten. The return to this feeling of I is one of the great objects of this teaching. Only by stripping ourselves slowly, layer by layer, coat by coat, of what is not ourselves, can we begin to feel the vibrations of Real I. Now no one can begin to remember himself unless he realizes, each in his own way, that at every moment of the day he forgets himself and so does not remember himself. Speaking from one side, about this great and many-sided subject of Self-Remembering, one might say here that a man, a woman, who do not remember themselves, identify with everything that is happening to them. They are at the mercy of every changing event, every changing thought and feeling. Such a man, such a woman, resembles a colander full of holes. They leak. Their receptive apparatus is really almost useless. They lose everything; even if for a moment they have had a short experience of a more conscious state, they lose it by becoming identified next moment with small facts, such as that they have lost a collar-stud or their bag, etc. Do you see what all this means? Such people have nothing to protect them from the influences of life and life always enters them and so controls them, and they are machines driven by life, by *A* influences. If a man, a woman, were in a state of Self-Remembering they would be no longer under the influences *A*, the influences of life, but would resist life. And many strange things would happen to them. A man who remembers himself or a woman who remembers herself is a person who is very different in every sense from mechanical woman and mechanical man. But it is very difficult to remember oneself for more than a few seconds, or, say, minutes, or perhaps, later on, a little longer—

or perhaps eventually nearly always, provided one has paid the price.

Now I will try to give you these ideas of Self-Remembering that I am speaking from. As you all are at present life crowds in on you from every side and there is nothing in you to resist life. It is necessary to make something in yourself that can, at least for a short time, not be swamped by your mechanical thoughts and feelings arising from them. You can make something to *surround* you so that after a time few things or even nothing can attack you. You make this through a certain form of Self-Remembering which you must all discover for yourselves because in each case it is different. If you do not have this in yourself you will lose force over every event. In ancient days it was called Hermetic Sealing. It was said in one ancient book that the disciples sealed themselves every morning. And that, of course, must mean that they must have remembered themselves all day long. But we get up anyhow, psychologically speaking, and get negative at once.

As most of us do not know much about all this at present we have to start observing how we leak force owing to this lack of establishing an inner place in ourselves which resists the outer plane of life so that nothing can enter without the consent of the inner plane. We are taught that we must *resist* life. Yes, but how? First, we have to observe how we react mechanically to life. We must resist the effects that life has on us at different moments and realize that if in the way we take life there is nothing in us that can gradually resist, how can we expect to grow internally and eventually form a Second Body, as it is called? To remember oneself has to take the place of identifying. Not to identify begins to make possible another psychology—another Body—a new man—a new woman.

Now you must put up on the board the Four States of Consciousness and recall the fact that influences that can help you coming from Higher Centres—that is, the Conscious Circle of Humanity—only reach as far as the Third State of Consciousness—namely, Self-Remembering. One must distinguish oneself from life. Say: “I am not life.” But if you are glued to life and its changing kaleidoscope—that is, if you are governed by *A* influences—you are in the Second State of Consciousness, which in this Work is called Sleep. You do not distinguish yourself from life. The real aim of this Work is to awaken, and only through self-observation and Self-Remembering can a person really awaken from life. But unless a man, a woman, can distinguish themselves from their habitual, mechanical reactions to life—that is, what they imagine they are—there is no possibility of awakening *out* of life—that is, out of what is accepted in Western Psychology as Consciousness, the Second, life-controlled, so-called State of Consciousness. Actually, it is a state of sleep. Your daily life is sleep. Try, as regards self-observation, to notice where you are identified, how you do not remember yourselves, and when, as far as is given you at present, you do remember yourselves. Most people have experienced moments of Self-Remembering once or twice. But now we have to work for them. And one thing to notice,

in order to get in touch with Higher Centres or contact Higher Man, is that negative emotions must be separated from, and many other things that the Work teaches practically. By *doing* this Work and not merely hearing it you will begin to move towards what is called "creating yourself", which means beginning to get in touch with what is *already there* but with which we have lost touch owing to the hypnosis of external life. If there were nothing already there, there would be no work, no esoteric teaching—in fact, just nothing. Imagine a bulb planted in the earth. If there were nothing *there* for it to become, then what? So, esoterically, we are called *seeds*. This idea is fundamental in the Work.

*Amwell, 29.10.49*

### **FURTHER IDEAS ABOUT SELF-REMEMBERING**

When a man is very excited he does not remember himself. He is completely under the suggestibility of the moment. While he was with us, O. once said that hypnotism and suggestibility are two different things. He said that hypnotism is a special state induced in a person hypnotized by another person, and in this connection he also added that G. had said that Western people do not know the secrets of real hypnotism. In my early career I practised hypnotism for about a year and came to the conclusion that it was a special state which one could induce in patients as, for example, one could tell the patients that they would not be afraid of this or that. For a certain time it appeared to work, but I always found that the fear or phobia returned in greater force later on. Real hypnotism as induced in Eastern schools requires long training, the hypnotized person, for example, being repeatedly told over and over again, time after time, that by repeating certain words to himself he could lie on a bed of sharp nails. This is creating in the patient the power of self-hypnotism and, as I said, it requires a long time to bring about this result and leads nowhere in regard to the personal development.

Now in ordinary life we do not have to overcome this special condition of hypnotism: we have to overcome suggestibility. It does not require much self-observation to notice how one is extraordinarily suggestible all day long to what one hears or reads and sees or is told. You listen to a speech that you think very powerful and then you listen to an opposite speech and you think that is very powerful. All advertising, propaganda, etc., are based on the suggestibility of Man or Woman. This suggestibility in ourselves is one of our greatest weaknesses and leads to imitation. Now if a man could remember himself he would not be so suggestible in this mechanical way. He would

notice what was coming in as suggestion through every sense and hold himself away from it. Just think how a single word dropped in your ear can change your relationship to your friend. This of course happens only if you have not begun to have a conscious relationship with your friend. But when you have begun to get away from the mechanical action of impressions on you, you begin to see how in others suggestibility plays havoc with their lives. A man who is in a state of Self-Remembering, even a partial state, can resist the influences of life with their suggestibility. He does not yield himself very easily to the excitement of the passing moment. In other words, he begins to have something in him that is distinct from life. He begins to lead life more consciously. You know that it is said that mechanical man is on the edge of a precipice, esoterically speaking, and that there is very little hope for him unless he looks up. If he looks up he will see a rope above his head. To catch this rope he must jump. It is just this jumping to catch this rope that the word payment or paying the price refers to. Some people think that it is a sudden thing that happens only once, or does not happen. This is quite wrong. It is happening all the time, every day, when, swamped with your mechanical reactions to life, you have to jump, to lift yourself to get above your machine.

That is to say, you must remember yourself, you must be able to distinguish yourself from life. You must be able to distinguish yourself from the uproar produced in you by mechanically reacting to your external situation. You must go against life and its action on you and not imitate through suggestibility. If you have never observed what the action of life is on you, you cannot do this—in fact, you have not the slightest idea what this means and the Work will remain sheer Greek to you, even although you have been attending meetings for years.

Now this jumping up, this lifting up in yourself, this catching of the rope, is Self-Remembering. The natural man, the mechanical man, the literal man, the mass-controlled man, the sense-based man, can never make this inner movement in himself. But a man who has Magnetic Centre—that is, a man who believes in something else apart from life as we experience it sensually—such a man entering the Work and with the help of the cosmic diagrams and, in fact, all the teaching of the Work—may be able momentarily to attain this higher level of consciousness called the state of Self-Remembering, Self-Consciousness or Self-Awareness—and later actually dwell at a level above his ordinary self.

A man who has confirmed the truth of the Work in himself over years, by applying it to himself over years, by realizing what it means in his internal side over years, will not be able to be easily shaken by suggestibility. One reason is that he has ceased to imitate others. He will of course be tested from this point of view, and as long as his relationship to the Work is superficial and merely a question of his external memory, he will be easily shaken and will lose contact with it,



but he will not see it is being done on purpose. He will be among those mentioned in the ancient parable who run about wondering where the Kingdom of Heaven is, lo, here, lo, there; but if a man has been born into the understanding of the Work and has seen both its goodness and its truth, he cannot be shaken. Not only that, but he will be fed interiorly from Higher Centres, from the Work, and begin to grow in himself, in his understanding of the Work. Having heard that there is a new prophet who has arisen and is teaching at the North Pole, he will not instantly fly to the North Pole in an aeroplane because if he does he will be told that the teacher has gone to the South Pole. Why seek for the Work outside yourselves, some of you, instead of seeking for it in your own development of understanding? Why not observe yourselves from the Work-teaching and see for yourselves and taste for yourselves its strength, its goodness, its truth?

*Notes for the Reader* (or read them slowly)

(1) Unless a man believes that there is something higher than himself he can never remember himself rightly. For example, the Work teaches that we have something in ourselves much higher than we are at present, on our level—i.e. Real I.

(2) The Ray of Creation teaches us that there are much higher levels of being than exist on Earth. We are under 48 orders of laws, the Sun is under 12 orders of laws, and so on. Our being compared with the Being of the Sun is very small.

(3) The Work teaches that we have far higher centres in ourselves that we do not use called Higher Centres. They are always awake, but we are asleep to them.

(4) The Work teaches that mechanical Man is capable of becoming Conscious Man—i.e. of being much higher than he is at present in being. But if he takes pride in his present being, he cannot develop.

(5) When a man tries to obey the Work apart from his self-love and self-emotions, he is raising his level of being, and if he can listen to the Work in his heart and mind, he will be shewn how to work on himself and change his being. This of course applies to women in the same way.

(6) But if a man believes that the Universe or Nature created itself and has no meaning, then he can never remember himself, because he (or she) believes there is nothing higher than himself.

(7) Recall that a man or woman with good Magnetic Centre can distinguish between the influences created in life called *A* influences and those sown into life by the Conscious Circle of Humanity which are called *B* influences. Such a man, such a woman, has the possibility of development. Such can be *selected* by the Work and such can begin to remember themselves.

## **PICTURES OF ONESELF**

The average state of Man is that he thinks he is what he is not and he thinks he is not what he is. That is to say, a man, a woman, think that they are not what they are. A man has a picture of himself being good and nice and helpful but he is not what he thinks in this respect. The picture prevents him from seeing what does not correspond to his picture. Pictures are formed by imagination and they are composed of imagination. What is the result? The result is that this man, this woman, are imaginary people, and it is only perhaps in some terrible crisis like war that they are stripped of these pictures and become real and simple people.

Now the idea of this Work is that we can get in touch with a much higher level of being than we have at present and that this is attainable by long self-observation and separating from imaginary pictures. Only in this way can we draw closer to the powerful influences of Higher Centres and receive an inner food from their continual messages. Pictures of ourselves of course belong to the general conception of False Personality, and False Personality is totally incapable of approaching Higher Centres. It would, so to speak, be blasted by them. So it is sometimes said that this Work is the preparation of lower centres for the reception of Higher Centres. To-night I will speak a little about this idea.

In every trouble in life you can be helped if your trouble is not due to False Personality, such as an uproar of false things in yourself, false 'I's, false pictures, false imagination, false pity, false pride, and so on, which arises when we are faced with ordinary difficulties so that our lives are infinitely more complicated than they need be. Have you ever observed your touchy sides or where you take offence or believe that you have been deeply hurt and so on, because if you have not, if you are ignorant of yourself, if you cannot see through yourself, you will have an unnecessarily unhappy existence. You know that negative emotions are always based on lies. You know that strong mechanical pictures lead you into constant turmoil which is quite unnecessary. You know the kind of person who if you say anything the least bit critical, to him or her, will get furious, slam doors, vow never to come back. If you do not know such a person then study yourself. Notice how you behave in slightly unfavourable circumstances. What can you take and what do you find that you cannot take? Because if you study this, you will begin to see where your being ends. I mean, you will begin to see when you can no longer control yourself and simply blow up.

Now pictures of oneself form a strong influence that prevents one's being from developing. As I said, only in very difficult and even terrible circumstances do these pictures vanish and we begin to behave

towards one another in the right fashion. Many pictures, through the last war, were rendered inactive and people became more friendly, more ordinary, to one another. But when the war ceased, these pictures began to form themselves anew. One experiences in great illness a dissolution of one's pictures but yet when one recovers one finds that pictures are re-forming themselves. Supposing that one could prevent these pictures from re-forming themselves, a bad, unhappy patch in one's life would be very useful. If one remembers afterwards what one sees internally about the quality of one's being and does not afterwards forget it when everything is going well again, one will develop consciousness, which is necessary for the development of being. Remaining unconscious of oneself cannot raise being. You remember the proverb: "The Devil was sick, the Devil a saint would be." When the Devil recovered he forgot his vows of sanctity and that he was a devil. Now practically it is very difficult to observe anything belonging to the imagination which so much controls us. You cannot observe imagination directly because when you try to do so, it stops. For that reason, it is difficult really to observe pictures except in retrospect. For example, if I were to ask each one of you in turn what picture of yourself governs you most, you would not be able to tell me. A picture manifests itself in movement, in intonation, in what one says, in what attitude one takes up and in one's self-feeling. A picture is blind to everything that is not included in the picture. A picture prevents us from realizing what we are really like. It is not so difficult to see pictures in other people but very difficult to see pictures in oneself. A picture is an artificial thing that we take as ourselves and yet it is not ourselves but only a picture that we have of ourselves and these pictures are very difficult to break. Each picture is connected with a typical line of phantasy about oneself. A threatened picture will probably make us burst into tears. If you are so foolish as to try to point out to another person that he or she has a picture, you will then run the risk of being considered brutal and beastly. Yet at the same time if you have a picture of yourself that you can break pictures in others, then certainly you have a picture of yourself. We are all leading imaginary lives through False Personality and its numerous ingredients such as pictures of oneself. For a long time I had a powerful picture of myself that I was being good, helpful and self-sacrificing. But after a time in the Work, through the special memories arising from self-observation, and through a succession of "Time-body photographs" I realized that this picture was false. Then of course one feels as if the bottom of oneself has been knocked out. Then you begin to change and the influences of the Work coming from Higher Centres that are always trying to change you can be heard and even actually perceived working on you internally. What is the reason? The reason is that you have lost your ordinary feeling of I which is centred, quite wrongly, in False Personality. You may, and certainly do, feel lost. But you may be sure that this experience will not be allowed to happen to you until you have

already got something in you from the Work that you can hold on to during the difficult time. Remember, this Work is about change of being. Change of being is impossible unless you change. You cannot go on in this Work surrounded by masses of pictures about yourself and expect to undergo a change of being. I cannot remain the same and change. Change means change. Remember finally that most of our negative emotions come from False Personality and pictures.

*Amwell, 12.11.49*

## THE WORK-IDEA OF SIN

To-night we speak about this word "sin" which is so difficult to understand. What is sin? If we take the idea of sin from the standpoint of the Work we may be able to get clearer ideas as to what it means. But before I go into the larger issues of this question I must call attention to scrupulosity. There are many people who have an entirely false conscience who make scruples or sins about the smallest things. Scrupulous 'I's can torture us very much. They find fault with you, accuse you, and a weak psychology can so easily fall under their power. Remember that the devil is called in the Gospels the Accuser—that is, Accusing 'I's.

I remember once that O. told me that I must not drink anything alcoholic for a year. I promised. About a week before the year was up I went abroad. I wrote to ask him if I possibly could be let off my promise, when I was abroad. He did not reply. When I told him about it later he said that he had no idea that he had told me not to drink. That was all that was said. Of course, all this was doing something that I was told in a scrupulous fashion. Of course, if I had made a vow to myself and from myself that I would fulfil this promise it would have been a different matter. One of the worst things is to become over-scrupulous about small matters. I can understand the psychology of scrupulosity. It means that you make a part far more important than the whole. That means that you follow the smallest 'I's. The smallest 'I's will take charge of you in a situation that demands the use of larger 'I's in dealing with it. You will know perhaps by now the power of small 'I's. Now small, scrupulous 'I's flourish in everyone who has not got a wider outlook and does not see the wood for the trees or the larger aim of the Work.

To pass to the larger aim that we have to make effort towards. Now you know that, taking the seven categories of men, we belong to the first three categories: 1, 2 and 3 men, and that we all, from this formulation, must strive to become Number 4 Man, which is Balanced Man. This is the larger aim—to become Number 4 Man—a balanced and not a one-sided man or woman.

Of course, a man, a woman, who dwells in small 'I's can never reach this understanding of what they have to do and why they are born. Balanced Man means a man in whom all centres and all parts of centres work rightly in regard to every kind of situation. Now on one occasion when O. asked G. what sin was, G. said that it was going too far in one direction. The human machine does not consist in one thing, but in many things. It does not consist in one centre but in many centres each of which has its own function and importance. Now suppose we take an extreme example. Here is a man who spends his whole time in drinking absinthe. Everyone knows that there is something wrong with him. In what sense is he committing sin? He is giving too much force to drinking absinthe. What is the result? His other functions are not used and eventually he may go mad. On the other hand, here again is another man who is a miser. Whenever he has a little spare time he rushes to his gold and counts it carefully. Has either of these cases got anything to do with Balanced Man? Surely each is a case of a man who has gone too far in one direction or another. Now here is a banker or here is a politician who wants to get to the top, or here, let us say, is yourself. You want something at the expense of everything else. The Balanced Man should be able to do everything that his centres make it possible for him to do. Say there is a politician who finds himself out of power. He may start to paint. That means to develop another centre. Such a man has an idea of what it means to be balanced. Remember that each centre has its own mind and its own bearing on life. A purely intellectual man will distort life, continually giving rational explanations. That means that he does not develop the Emotional Centre, he does not feel other people at all. A woman may feel other people too much and not have a proper Intellectual Centre and so cannot reason at all. Now if we understand that the general aim of us Number 1, 2 and 3 people is to become Number 4 people, sin will mean going too far on one side—as, say, constantly playing golf—and that means we are missing the mark or aim. So in the Gospels the word for sin is missing the mark—*ἁμαρτία*. What is your missing function? Or rather, what are your undeveloped functions? I mean, what centres in you are undeveloped? You may be very good at one thing but are you any good at other things that belong to life? From all this one can begin to discern what sin means and understand the second inscription on the Delphic Temple which says: "Nothing too much." Since the aim of the Work is to develop all centres rather than one, you can see that to be one-sided is not to be balanced and therefore is "missing the mark". So you can see that G.'s answer about what sin is and the Gospel's definition of sin as missing the mark fall into a common meaning.

## PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE WORK-IDEAS TO YOUR LIFE NOW

One of the strangest things that one realizes when one has been in this Work for some time is that we so seldom apply it in any actual unpleasant situation. Of course it requires great strength to withdraw ourselves from a situation. At the same time, we can begin to build up this strength by trying not to identify with the small aspects of life. A man, a woman, in his or her natural state—i.e. the natural man, the natural woman, who cannot separate from life and therefore are called machines—are people who scatter themselves through identifying. A moment of Self-Remembering, the whole idea of Self-Remembering, is to draw into oneself all these scattered elements that have been glued to events. When the Work says a man must remember himself, it means that he must withdraw himself from all that he has distributed himself amongst, group things that are not really himself. One definition of Self-Remembering was given in ancient days that runs as follows: "I come out of everything else into myself." Now as regards applying this, let us recall the Work-Octave: *Do* = Evaluation of the Ideas of the Work. The next note of development in the Work—i.e. *Re*—is Application of the Ideas of the Work to oneself. Here, for example, is a person who is suffering. Yet at the same time, if the suffering is induced by an external combination of things, it is, perhaps, useless suffering. One cannot see, for example, that one is in a typical event that belongs to life and is being shared at that moment by at least millions who are engulfed in the same event—namely, identifying with that event. Ideally speaking, however terrible the event that life can create for you, you should be able not to identify, not to put yourself under the power of it. But this is very strong medicine. Yet that is the idea behind the teaching of the Work. It was said in the early teaching that every event that happens to you is your own and you have to deal with it yourself. Again, you must understand that every event is attracted by your being and this is phrased as: "Your being attracts your life." That means that your being attracts events that happen to you because life is simply events of different kinds and on different scales. If you try to deal from the Work with life—namely, if you try to apply the ideas of the Work to the events of your own life, you begin to see what the Work teaches. It is up to you to deal with this excerpt from Total Life called your own life, and one of the magical instruments you can wield is to learn how not to identify with these events that constitute your life. Now the natural or mechanical man cannot do this because he is his life. He is the event. He cannot observe how he takes events. Why can he not observe how he takes events? Why, simply because he does not observe how he takes them. He *is* them. He does not realize he can react to them in a different way. But once

he begins to see this, he is no longer a natural, mechanical man. He begins to see that he can take life, events, in a new way, if he will work *on himself*. But first of all he has to observe that he takes the daily events of his life in the same way. Once he realizes he does this, he enters on an entirely new development of himself about which the Work is constantly speaking.

What we do not understand is that life is a drama and that all the events that happen, cruel or otherwise, in life, are material for work and must be taken as such. Some people are well supported by life, others badly, but it makes no difference. One is down here to *separate from life*, which is both pleasant and unpleasant and sometimes far more than unpleasant, even ghastly. No man, no woman, can change life itself on this earth. Horrible things happen in life. But this is not the point. The point is that we are down here to learn a lesson, and to learn everything the Work teaches—that is, to learn how to take life rightly by the application of the Work-Ideas. Once you begin to weaken and get under the power of self-pity because of the tragedies that happen in life, you have lost something valuable. You are taking life from the standpoint that it should be different. You start from life, not yourself. Anything can happen in life and you cannot change it. You must not think you can *do* in regard to life, the vast process of life. But you can change the way you take life. You can prevent it from affecting you so profoundly. Man in relation to the Total Cosmos is a mere fragment, a mere cell in the Body, but Man in himself is a whole and he can build this whole up by having right attitude to external events. We are down here to learn something and not to change life. We are down here to learn how to change our reaction, how to take life. And if you have wrong ideas about life that it should be just, you start from the wrong attitude and you will very soon be beaten down and will suffer in a useless way. That is why the Work says we must insulate ourselves from life, we must become hermetically sealed towards the events of life. Otherwise the shifts and changes of life will plunge us into unhappiness. And so you must understand that we have to make something very strong in ourselves by the help of the Work little by little so that we can withstand the shifting scene, moments of happiness followed by moments of depression, moments of hope followed by moments of despair, in order that we may have a centre of gravity within ourselves so that we are not shaken because now we feel happy and the next moment we feel unhappy. After a time you will come to the point when you do not mind whether you are happy or not because you want to keep in yourself a certain point of consciousness that is invulnerable. This is the beginning of the birth of Real I in you which is not influenced by outer circumstances. One then works the other way round—that is, the machine formerly driven by outer events is now worked from within—from what is higher than life.

Now have you been identified to-day? And with what event? Can

you observe events with which you always identify? What events made you negative to-day? All this means, where have you put yourselves under the power of outer life? Where have you been used by life and, on the contrary, where have you remembered yourselves? Where has the paradox of suffering attacked you to-day as, for example, the cook has left, the stepmother has come home and has to be nursed, you have lost your bag, and you do not feel too well yourself? Remember, whatever the circumstances, if you can take them as *work* you will come out without being broken.

*Amwell, 3.12.49*

### ON SEEING PEOPLE LESS PERSONALLY

In this Work it is necessary to look at people less personally. People become very identified with each other, especially negatively, by taking one another as physical objects. A person whom you see visually through the senses is not necessarily—in fact, never—the person that you think. In a sense there is no such thing as a physical person, a physical object. When two physical objects get into a rage with each other, they do it because they take each other as physical objects given by the five senses. This can be called a supremely external way of taking one another. A person that you can see physically as an object is a much more complicated creature than you imagine from your five senses. He or she has difficulties that are not necessarily apparent in the physical appearance of the person. You must understand that when you see a person physically through the five senses all dressed up, smiling, waltzing, eating, you don't know the person at all. You may, for example, have no idea that this person, so well-dressed, so smiling, is suffering just in the same way as you are suffering. One of the great illusions of life is, I often think, a ballroom in which everyone is well-dressed, smiling and bowing. A mere tyro at life may instantly imagine that these people are so happy whereas he is so miserable. Tyro (from Latin *tiro*—a new recruit) means a beginner at life, in the sense of a new recruit to life. Of course, he does not understand what is going on amongst these well-dressed people and so we can say that such a mere tyro is not really educated in what life really is. He thinks that everyone is happy and he (or she) is not. So we have to grow up from being tyros and realize that life is an illusion that people follow as it were by hypnotism.

Now as one grows up in the education of this Work one realizes gradually that a person as a physical object, well-dressed or otherwise, is not the real person. We have to become aware that this person is just like us with all our doubts, all our troubles, all our sense of frustra-



tion, all our weaknesses, all our vices. Of course, this is impossible unless we do this Work on ourselves and realize quite clearly that our False Personality which we present to life is not really ourselves. Two people in the Work should never take each other externally, as it were, as two physical objects. If people have worked on themselves and have admitted into consciousness their various inadequacies, lacks, doubts, weaknesses, fears, they can really meet one another in the Work sense, but they meet one another on a quite different level. Why? Because of being more conscious of themselves through self-observation, they will find that other people are much the same as they are themselves. Some people say: "What does an increase of consciousness mean?" As you know, the Work teaches that it has not to do, primarily, with love, faith or hope. The object of this Work is to become more conscious. If you become more conscious of yourself and stand *behind* the façade of your False Personality and can acknowledge that it is a put-up job of your own invention, if you can get behind False Personality, you will be able to get into contact with people in a way that is impossible otherwise. So the first step in increase of consciousness is to see through yourself and acknowledge what you see. What is the result? Instantly other people who are keeping up their façade of False Personality will feel more at ease with you.

*Anwell, 10.12.49*

## **WORK ON MECHANICAL ASSOCIATIONS**

We none of us work nearly enough on ourselves. I suppose that any of you in charge of an aeroplane would be constantly seeing whether its mechanism was all right. Some people are more asleep and some people less asleep than others. Few of us know what it means to fly in the Work-sense. It is something like this. You suddenly identify, come down to earth, often with a bad crash, and yet some of you do not notice that you have come down crash and that life has caught you. How does life catch you? Often through your typical negative 'I's. Now work on yourself means a more or less constant attention to your flying-machine of the Work. And yet people who have been a long time in the Work do not apply it to themselves, and take everything on the earth, flatly and heavily, so that they are kept down by the small events of the day. The ideas of the Work vanish. I have had many experiences of what it is like. I cannot give you these experiences in words but they always mean the same thing—namely, you are not working on yourself, you have not been working on yourself for days, you have been taking life mechanically through mechanical associations, and not only that but you have taken one another mechanically through

liking and disliking, and all the rest of it. The enormous delicacy of the Emotional Centre in our approach to one another is entirely lost or, let us say, unknown, in our ordinary relationships to one another. We take one another visibly, we try to be kind to one another, but really we know nothing about one another. We can easily see that the subtle inner octaves of the Emotional Centre, if we even touch them momentarily, do not really belong to relationships on the earth, and must therefore belong to some other forms of life not known on this earth. Many of us know what the Work means to a certain extent and yet at the same time we do not apply it to the immediate contact with external life, with these incoming events. That is, we do not apply it to ourselves and to how we are taking things at this moment, to-day. In the New Testament the term *sea* is used—walking on the sea. Nowadays the symbolism has been changed in dreams and it is usually aeroplanes. Let us suppose that an aeroplane is so identified with the earth that it cannot take off. Can you catch the meaning of this air symbol? Here is a person who all day long has completely identified with some form of jealousy, hatred, nervousness or fear or internal considering. Such a person may be thinking about the Work at the same time but making no connection between his present state and application of the Work to himself. For a long time he sees no contradiction but I can assure you all, whatever time-age you are—that is, if you are older or younger in the Work, which has nothing to do with your time-age—you will find that you begin to see a contradiction. This is the Work at work in you. What is the solution? To begin to work more on yourself now at this present moment. For that, of course, it is necessary to be able to observe oneself more and more in the present moment and also a little later—post-observation. Yet one neglects so much this constant conscious uncritical work that has to be done on one's mechanical self, not seeing quite what it means—simply not transferring the Work from the blackboard into one's spirit of understanding.

In a conversation that I had recently with some Work-people I said that our mechanical psychology—i.e. our acquired Personality—had formed nothing but mechanical associations. Mechanically we have been taught, say, that such and such people are the only right people. So many of our unpleasant relationships to one another are, of course, due to mechanical associations laid down in the great associative centres called the frontal lobes. So often these associations are quite wrong. One of the modern methods is to cut off the frontal lobes. This is called Leucotomy or Lobectomy. This makes a total stop in the development of the person. The person becomes a sort of robot. Now the Work is about making new connections, new associations, not cutting the brain. It teaches *metanoia*, or change of mind, which of course must mean change of associations. Through work, through the reception of the ideas of the Work, and their gradual acceptance by you, you change associations that physically are laid down in your frontal lobes. *Metanoia*, translated so wrongly as repentance, as you all know

already, means a change of your associations laid down to form your acquired Personality. Now say you notice that if the name of Smith is mentioned you get angry: observe it and try not to react mechanically to that name. This is to begin to make a new association. Now observe yourself from this angle. Say you adored your aunt. Everything said against her makes you mad. Yes—but why? Are you not a slave to this aunt in your psychology? To be a slave to your Personality—that is, your acquired, laid down associations—means that you cannot develop. *You can* lay down quite new associations in your receptive machinery—i.e. physically, in your frontal lobes—but only if the mind is behind.

Now if the mind were the same as your associations in your physical brain, you could not change anything, but mind is above physical structure. Otherwise we should have no chance of changing. The mind can see a thing one way or another and might see both sides of a question, but physical associations can see a thing only one way. So you will have to begin to work on yourself very practically about these mechanical associations, the upshot of which is that you make Personality represented by these mechanical associations less and less powerful, so more and more passive—in fact, if you begin to get free in the Work you no longer have to go with your acquired mechanical associations. You need not mechanically think about that person. Your brain-stuff will make you think so, but your mind can change that association. I sometimes wonder why some of you do not see this already—namely, where the centre of gravity of the meaning of Personality and its being rendered passive lies.

*Amwell, 18.12.49*

## **ON PRACTICAL WORK**

Recently we spoke about how we learn the ideas of the Work. We hear them every week, but we do not apply them to ourselves. Mr. Ouspensky once said: “All of you here are working in imagination. You are imagining that you work on yourselves but actually when anything happens to you in life which makes you identify you completely forget that this is what you have to work on.” Now I received recently the following letter bearing on this subject:

“On reading the papers of the past few weeks it has been brought home to me very vividly how I just think about the Work rather vaguely, but I do not apply all the Work teaching to the little troubles of everyday life. I used to think it was quite a good thing that I now did think of the Work most days, until I suddenly

realized that it was not helping me very much. At least, I thought it was, but I found that *I* wasn't changing. I still got involved in the everyday identifying, troubled relationships, etc. Now I realize that I must bring the ideas of the Work to incoming impressions *at the moment*, to try to change my mechanical reaction to events."

Now let us take one of the things that the Work teaches that we always forget and can never apply to ourselves in the right way. Many of us have heard it over and over again but I am quite sure from my own experience of myself that we do not yet see its meaning and apply it to ourselves. I speak once more about the fact that the Work teaches that we are not one but many. You are not, as the illusion of life might make you think, one person, one I. You are many different 'I's. And unless you assimilate deeply this idea, your life will be full of paradoxes, oppositions and contradictions. As you know, this illusion that we are one is called Imaginary 'I', and, as most of you have heard, the whole trend and purpose and aim of this Work is to get free from this illusion in order that one can approach Real I and find one's centre of gravity in Real I rather than in Imaginary 'I'.

Now I interrupt the theme of this paper at this moment in order to say that all religion, all esoteric teaching, is about the fact that we are born as self-developing organisms in this somewhat evil life on earth which the Work calls a pain-factory, in order, by a certain kind of work on ourselves, to reach something inherent in us (as a new being is inherent in an egg) which is called Real I. Were this not so, there would be no possible reason for studying this Work or any other form of esoteric or religious teaching. In this form of religion that we know, or that is accessible to us, roughly and often very badly indicated, the object is to have what is called 'Christ' born in us. You must not think of the historical Christ but of the fact of what was said in that form of esoteric teaching, that the Kingdom of Heaven lies within you and that means the realization of Real I. If you are only mechanically good or good externally for the sake of your reputation, you can never get to this secret goal which is inherent from birth in us. So the Work says we are born as self-developing organisms and in connection with further teaching of the Work it says that we have to reach Real I, which is a potentiality in any one of us. Now to do this we must leave Imaginary 'I'.

This Work starts as it were on the outskirts of this idea. Lots of people may think they have undergone the transformation of themselves from False Personality and Imaginary 'I' into Real I when all they are doing is to keep up their self-merit and self-evaluation towards the world and indeed not doing a stroke of work. Now the application of the Work to yourself is all about making it possible to go on a journey, spiritual or psychological, towards what is really you, Real I in you. For that reason the Work is continually talking about everything that prevents you from attaining this object. Therefore the application of

the ideas of the Work to yourself begins from one angle from seeing your False Personality, what you imagine you are, and absolutely cancelling this fictitious idea that you have of yourself. Now this fictitious idea in which we rest so comfortably and which makes us so ill because it gives us no harmony in ourselves, is exactly what we have to separate from if we want to do the Work apart from hearing it. You may say that in that case the Work is very harsh to us all because we all live in imagination, we are all full of self-merit, and yet at the same time I say to you that until you can begin to see your False Personality and your Imaginary 'I' and realize that you are not one but many contradictory people, you will never shift from where you are and you will live and die, however mechanically good, as a person asleep. We know that the Work teaches that Humanity is asleep and is kept so, but that a person must try to awaken. This Work is based on the idea of increase of consciousness. We must become far more conscious of ourselves through self-observation. You must see this fictitious 'I' that dominates you. The realization that we are not one but many is an increase of consciousness. Now increase of consciousness must bring together into yourself things that ordinarily, conventionally, you would tend to keep out. As we are, in the Second State of Consciousness, we have little insight. We are limited by our imagination of ourselves, by our False Personality that we take as ourselves. Unless, the Work says, you can divide yourself into two—i.e. into Observing I and the observed side—you cannot shift from where you are. This means as long as you take yourself for granted and think you are all right, you cannot shift your level of being. How many times have people said to me that I am quite wrong in saying that as regards them, because they know quite well that they do not feel such good people as I tell them they feel. Of all the forms of self-justifying this is one of the most subtle. The point is that they remain just the same as before. Why? Because they do not observe themselves as they should. If we *really* feel we are all wrong, we begin to change.

*Amwell, 24.12.49*

## **ON GOODWILL**

At this time of the year the idea of Goodwill is mentioned on Christmas Cards, in religious services, in hymns, and so on. In the Gospels the message from the Angels at the Birth of Christ is said to be: "Peace on earth and goodwill towards men." A strange message if you think. I mean, that apparently goodwill can only come from something higher than we are. Many sides are possible for the instrument of self-observation to make one more conscious of one's ordinary

state. You may have knowledge and even a certain understanding of the knowledge of this Work. Unless you work on being, from which originates the Will—the Good Will—you may be trying to know and understand this Work on the basis of a level of being which is usually full of ill-will towards other people—that is, jealousy, covetousness, etc. Will belongs to the side of being but intake of this Work belongs to the side of knowledge. As you know, it is said that unless level of being and level of knowledge develop equally, a man, a woman, will not have real *understanding*. In fact, the Work says that understanding is the result of a certain ratio between growth of knowledge and growth of being. Here you have, for example a man, a woman, whose being is characterized by open or latent ill-will. I mean, a man of bad being. He or she, however, likes to know about this Work, and to make endless notes. He (or she) is intellectually curious about this Work but yet, if his (or her) being is characterized on the whole by ill-will, he will not *understand* the Work. The Will part, which belongs mostly to Emotional Centre, where the seat of Buried Conscience lies, which goes against self-will and hatred, must accept the truth of the Work and try to do it. Self-will is useless here, but the intellectual part, which belongs more to acquiring knowledge, such as the acquisition of knowledge of this Work, and a certain curiosity about it, is a necessity at the first stage. Can you imagine that a man of great intellect perhaps has rotten being? Unless the knowledge of the Work begins to influence your will, there is a divorce in you between knowledge and being. If you ask me what is a simple definition of being, I would say that one definition is the quality of the will of the person concerned. If the quality of this will is ill-will towards certain people, the level of being is low. You can know the Work, but you have to will to do it, and if you do not will to do the Work, the Work will not enter into your life and change it. I suppose we are all in this situation, those who have inner sincerity with themselves and see that, although they know the Work, they won't will it, and it is just here that the great battleground lies in which the conflict probably lasts all one's life. Even so, it is much better to be aware of the fact that you know better than you do than not to know this. There is no royal road to this Work. St. Paul said: "What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I" (Rom. vii.15). To know this, to apprehend this, to perceive that this is the situation in yourself and so to destroy your False Personality, means that you are on a much higher level than mechanical Man who is asleep. Once one sees one's False Personality—well, once you have seen this, then I will take you into the Work.

Now this message of Goodwill you notice is connected with the idea of higher beings and also with inner peace. This means that inner peace has to do with Goodwill. How can we have Goodwill towards one another? I think that one thing is quite plain to most of us, namely, that you cannot have Goodwill by trying to love people. Lots of people pretend they have Goodwill towards other people, and yet, if they

observe themselves, they are perhaps full of hissing serpents within themselves and are simply carrying out the idea of Goodwill externally and not from anything inward. And here I think the Work helps all of us so much because it does not teach us to love one another—since that is impossible. What does the Work teach in respect of change of will? Well, this is only a short paper and I cannot go into the whole of the Work dealing with this side. One thing stands out always in my practical work on myself—i.e. the idea of trying to find out in yourself what you criticize in another person. This belongs of course to external considering, which is sometimes defined as putting yourself in the place of the other person. But this is not really enough until you understand what it means, so I say that it means finding in yourself what you dislike in the other person, and this again means enlarging your consciousness of yourself and realizing that you are not the person you imagine yourself to be. Of course, if we could really remember ourselves, we could have Goodwill to everyone for, in a state of Self-Remembering, it is not that you like everyone or dislike them but that everyone fits in in some way. Although this may only be seen for a moment, you remember it afterwards. Perhaps some of you know what I say here: I know that I saw something and I cannot get back to it now, because I am quite aware that I am identified again, yet I saw it and have the secret knowledge that it will be possible to return to that state again. So therefore you must understand that Goodwill is probably given to us once we perceive our evil will.

NOTE: *Christmas 1951.* When this paper was re-read, Dr. Nicoll pointed out that the message of the Angels really meant in the Greek: "Peace on earth to men of Goodwill."

*Amwell, 31.12.49*

## **SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-OBSERVATION**

A question was asked recently: Is there a difference between Self-Awareness and Self-Observation? As you have heard, Self-Awareness is a term connected with the Third State of Consciousness which we all lack when we are immersed in the ordinary affairs of life and hypnotized by the daily recurrence of usual events. The Third State of Consciousness is called the State of Self-Remembering, the State of Self-Consciousness, the State of Self-Awareness. All these words apply in their own way to the quality and the attainment of the Third State of Consciousness which, although we are born in possession of it, as our right, we drop away from by reason of the fact that we grow up among people who are asleep—i.e. people who do not remember

themselves and actually enjoy being in lower states as those of negative emotions, self-pity, identification, and worry. As a result, the attainment of the Third State of Consciousness—i.e. the State of Self-Remembering, Self-Consciousness, Self-Awareness—is at a level above us, to which we can only attain by certain kinds of efforts. All Work-efforts are directed towards the regaining of this level of Consciousness called the Third State of Consciousness. If mankind were in this State of Consciousness, all wars would cease at once. Man and Woman, as they are, have fallen to the Second State of Consciousness in which they imagine they are awake, self-conscious, and so on, but actually, from the Work point of view, they are all fast asleep. For that reason Man does not get help from within himself. Yet this help exists in him, if he could listen.

There are in us centres of a much higher order than we ordinarily know. But the point is that they only communicate with the Third State of Consciousness and cannot reach the Second State of Consciousness in which we live our ordinary lives and which is characterized by the illusion that as we are we are fully awake and always act and talk consciously and always know exactly what we are doing. This illusion we must awaken from by self-observation. We have, over long years, to observe that we are not conscious of what we do or say, that we are always in a continual state of being identified with everything, that we have no permanent inner feeling of ourselves and react to the effects of the events of life mechanically produced in us. We re-act. We do not act. We are mechanical, not conscious. The Work, as well as all other esoteric teaching, says emphatically: "Man is asleep and he must try to awaken from this state of sleep. If he does not, he is of no importance. A man who lives and dies in a state of sleep has completely failed to realize what is the most important thing in him to strive for."

If by means of Self-Observation one begins to realize that one is asleep and not awake, in trying to ascend to a higher level of Consciousness one learns a great deal about the general idea of levels that permeates this teaching that we are studying here. We seek another level of ourselves. We seek a more conscious behaviour by means of Self-Observation. We can, for example, begin to realize that our ordinary state is not characterized by anything that has to do with the Third State of Consciousness but on the other hand is characterized by always being identified, worried, upset, and in the general sense always having negative emotions. Now through this Self-Observation one begins to become aware that this is the ordinary state of oneself. If I observe myself, I am observing something called "myself" that hitherto I have taken for granted, but if I practise Self-Awareness, I am not observing myself primarily, but I am trying to feel a sense of I apart from my reactions to life. I can, for instance, practise purely Self-Awareness, Self-Consciousness and Self-Remembering, without necessarily observing myself, by sitting on my haunches, etc. Some people try to practise Self-Observation by itself without attempting to remem-



ber themselves. This is wrong. At the same time, people who try to practise Self-Remembering without observing themselves will get into difficulties. In fact, it is dangerous by some process of meditation, posture, or some other device to try simply to remember oneself. This Work, which is called the Fourth Way, insists on Self-Observation because otherwise you do not know what you are like and if you hope to be able to find a method of remembering yourself without having found out what and how to change in your being, you may get a flash of high-voltage lightning from Higher Centres that will crystallize you into what you are. For this reason the Work says that our lower centres, Intellectual, Emotional, Sexual, Moving and Instinctive, must be cleansed from False Personality before any contact is made, when these deeper lying and powerful forces called Higher Centres can help us in the right way. If this is not done, wrong crystallization can take place. On one occasion it was said: "From one point of view this Work is first of all about preparing lower centres for the reception of the influences of Higher Centres. You must understand that it is only through the help of the influences of Higher Centres that you will really be changed in Essence." Now, according to O., it is especially the Emotional Centre that has to be prepared for reception of Higher Emotional Centre and for this reason the Work lays such strong and constant emphasis on the necessity of not identifying with negative emotions, because, if the high voltage coming from Higher Centres were to come down on the present state of our ordinary Emotional Centre it would crystallize everything—that is, it would make our negative emotions first of all more intense than before and then fixed. So you begin to see the necessity for Self-Observation. You cannot alter your negative emotions without seeing them by observing and you cannot change them save by not identifying with them. If you practise non-identifying with negative emotions, not going with them, not enjoying them, although they are still there, something in you has become gradually separated from them, which can receive big influences from Higher Centres. This separated thing in you is pure—i.e. nothing to do with False Personality. Then Emotional Centre will begin to be changed in you owing to this separating, and it will be touched with a finer inner taste before which earthly negative emotions retreat completely and a new set of emotions appears in you far more excellent and lovely than the easy emotions of negative states with which most people satisfy themselves all day long, a fact that makes them belong to the world of sleeping and mechanical humanity. So you realize that all this Work is about becoming more conscious. Men and women who are not trying to be conscious are mechanical. We see on all sides the results. But a man who becomes conscious of the woman, and a woman who becomes conscious of the man, begin to belong to another destiny. In order to do so they must both begin to understand what Self-Remembering means.

## **THE IDEA OF VIOLENCE IN THE WORK**

On many occasions we have spoken about violence. In this connection many things have been said in the past few years concerning the fact that negative emotions lead down to violence. Men and women who fall a prey to negative states begin, say, with self-pity that eventually reacts in a violent way to the events of life. So we have to understand that at the bottom of negative emotions lies violence. And since the Work talks so much about the importance of observing and not identifying with negative states you can understand that what it is really saying is that we have to overcome the violent man, the violent woman, in ourselves.

Let us try to get this as clear as possible. Every one of you, whether man or woman, has a violent person deeper down. The approach to this person is through becoming a bit negative. You begin to feel yourself unfairly treated—and who does not? And from that moment you are on a road in your psychological country that leads down to the slums of violence. That is why we have to be so careful, if we are really trying to practise this Work, to prevent even the small remarks of a negative nature from being uttered. But the question is deeper than this. You may be very polite and well-mannered, careful and well-spoken, apparently nice to other people, and yet in your inner world you dislike, you loathe, you hate, you cannot bear. I was speaking recently down here about this, and I said that we may refrain from being violent externally in the sight of other people simply because we are afraid of losing our reputation or of being involved with the police, but a person who is like that is not really doing this Work—he is a mechanical man, he behaves civilly externally. Why does he behave civilly externally? There are a hundred and one things that prevent a man from really expressing what he thinks. I mention fear of loss of reputation, fear of police—you can add the rest, such as fear of being turned out of your club, fear of being ill-spoken of. Now all these things are external bonds which prevent underlying violence from manifesting itself openly. And yet all the time within us in the internal man, in the world of our private thoughts and feelings, we behave as violent, prehistoric people, hating and loathing.

Now on what does the Work lay emphasis as regards ourselves? It lays emphasis on this inner man which is connected with the development of the essential man. It is at present comparable with a jungle full of wild beasts, and it is exactly this jungle full of wild beasts that has to be put in order, as Orpheus brought harmony into a similar jungle, so that any person in our thoughts can pass through without being clawed, stung, or murdered. When a person in this Work begins to observe himself (or herself), it is necessary for such a person to observe how he (or she) behaves outwardly when, so to speak, no one

sees him (or her). When you are alone a person becomes a thought because when you are alone you are with your inner world of thoughts and feelings. The question is how you treat people in this inner world where you think no one is looking at you, where you feel free to indulge in every private hatred and dislike and bitterness and revenge. But Higher Centres see only this inner world of yourself and judge you by its state and they will not help you at all—in fact, they cannot, until you begin to purify this inner world that you believe no one can see. As I said, it is a very remarkable level of being to reach at which your inner world is such that a person, even if you dislike him, can pass through it without being wounded or murdered. This is the real, inner or esoteric meaning of the Commandment: “Thou shalt not kill”, and I can assure you that a great deal of work has to be done on this inner world in which one imagines one is free from observation. So I repeat that you have to reach a stage in which when you are alone everyone you know, whether you dislike them or otherwise, can pass through without being sniped or butchered.

And once more it must be said that all this Work starts with self-observation. You cannot do this Work if you have never observed yourself and do not know what it means. For example, if you have never observed that you are polite externally and hate internally, you cannot do this Work. You do not see the contradiction. Most people who are polite are conscious of being polite, but they are not conscious properly that their politeness is a mask to their freely hating other people. Only through self-observation can they perceive this deeper layer of themselves, which is so contradictory to their outer behaviour. You know that this Work is sometimes called esoteric Christianity and for that reason it is often useful to read the Gospels in the light of the teaching of this Work. I do not say read them religiously but read them as psychological documents with which this Work is connected straightway. I should like some of you to find passages in the Four Gospels in which attention is called to the importance of self-observation. I will give one example:

“Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?” (Matt. vii.3).

Now you will admit that this is a pretty good example of what the Work says about observing yourself instead of finding fault with everyone else. In this brief parable, it is implied that you should really begin to observe yourself uncritically before you criticize other people. All this will lead to less violence in yourself, in your inner man, in the side of you that you do not really accept in your present consciousness but tend to project on to other people. Here we have a very good exercise in conscious work on ourselves which in life is quite unnecessary, but in the Work is taught so continuously to remind us to wake up. For a man must have some inner, spiritual insight into himself and this is to be awake—otherwise he is asleep or even dead.

## **ON APPLYING THE WORK TO ONESELF**

It takes a very long time to realize that one must work on oneself. Although this has been said many times and we have this phrase in our memory we do not apply it to ourselves. What is meant here is that one has the idea in one's memory that one must work on oneself but does not apply it to how one lives. This Work must lie first in the external formatory memory. You may then be good at talking about the ideas of the Work from this memory but the Work must end in willing it. Knowledge of the Work is not enough. You may know all about the diagrams, etc., and from that be able in a certain sense to hand on the Work to other people. This simply means that you have a good formatory knowledge of the Work. But the Work says that knowledge is not understanding and although we know the Work we do not necessarily understand it. You may know all that is said about negative emotions, self-observation, identifying, Self-Remembering, internal considering, and all the rest of it and be able to hand on these instructions to other people but even so, if you have never practised it, your teaching will be empty. You will teach parrot-fashion. You have not applied the Work to yourself to gain the richness of understanding it. And if you have not yet got to that point at which you work on yourself—that is, apply the Work to your Being—you cannot expect the Work to grow in you.

Now you cannot work on yourself unless you have observed yourself and realized for yourself where you need to work on yourself. Through observation from the Work standpoint you begin to realize where some things are wrong in you from the angle of the Work—i.e. you see where you need to work on yourself. If you have not, by means of observation from the angle of the Work over a long time, seen where you need to work on yourself, you will never actually be working on yourself. If your aim is not based on self-observation it will go wrong. It will not be based on what you need to try to alter in yourself from the angle of the Work. In short, you will not know what it means to work on yourself in the Work-sense. You will not recognize how necessary it is, for example, to give yourself conscious shocks in ordinary life where you need them in order to keep your head above water. Your work, such as you call it, will not correspond to the needs of your being or what the Work is after. You will not be able to perceive internally where you are lacking—i.e. you will not perceive your state of being from the angle of the Work. Your knowledge of the Work will be one thing and your ignorance of your being will be another thing and there will be no connection between them and no understanding. There will be no new flashes of meaning in your life.

If you really begin to observe yourself, you will notice, for instance, that there are certain times in your daily life when you begin to identify,

to get negative, to consider, but unless you observe this, these moments will habitually recur day by day and so you will not see where you have to work. These times of day are different for each person and the events that daily occur and make you negative are again different for each person. Now in order to work on yourself these moments should be observed and foreseen and at these moments you should apply the Work to your behaviour and to your inner state. You should call on the Work at these moments to save you from descending wholly into mechanical sleep and being drained by the Moon. And I can assure you that one call on the Work at such moments is worth far more than a whole day of vague imaginary work on yourself. In other words, you have to see what you have to work on in yourself.

Now, as was said, there are two sides of the Work, as we are taught. One is working on the knowledge of the Work, and the second is applying the knowledge to your being and seeing where you stand in the light of the Work, according to your being. You cannot work on your being without first of all having the knowledge of the Work and then applying it to your particular kind of being. If you do this, instead of having more formatory knowledge of the Work, you are beginning to get understanding of the Work. No longer does the knowledge of the Work remain in your memory but it becomes part of you. It unites with you. In other words, you begin to live the Work by applying the knowledge of the Work to the observation of your being. Then you are following two lines of the Work called Knowledge and Being, which give Understanding.

How many times have I heard people saying: "I know quite well that I must not be negative"? and even when they are saying that I can see that they are negative. Until you realize when you go to see someone that you are negative, until you have sufficient self-observation, for instance, to notice that you are unmistakably negative in everything you say to me and that I cannot really say anything to you of any use simply because you have not observed that everything you say is negative—until you can see this in yourself, I cannot help you. But once you realize while talking to me that you are talking negatively, your whole conversation will change. As I have told you, on many occasions feeling furious with Mr. Ouspensky, I used to go to see him, but in those days his effect was so great on me that when I saw him I could not remember what I wanted to say.

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So you understand that the gist of this paper is the application of the Work to your own being. Only then will you begin to understand what the Work teaches on the side of knowledge and its application to your being. The only person you have to work on is yourself. The knowledge of the Work can change the thing called yourself that is your being, if you apply it to yourself through self-observation. Otherwise the Work will be merely formatory, a mere matter of diagrams.

So find out what you have to work on in yourself, in your daily life, as, for example, where you identify most, what makes you negative, and so on. This will change your being. This will lead to a new growth of Essence, which belongs to the development of your internal Man.

*Amwell, 21.1.50*

### **THREE FORCES**

Let us talk about Three Forces. The Work teaches that in every manifestation three forces are at work. These three forces are called Active, Passive and Neutralizing. At any place in Space-Time where these three forces meet together a manifestation, or an event, appears. "Every manifestation that exists on this earth is due to the meeting of three forces together", as G. said. Of course, this is an extremely difficult thing to understand. As O. said, "One force cannot create a manifestation, two forces cannot create a manifestation, but three forces meeting together will create a manifestation." I asked him once: "What do you mean by a manifestation?" He said: "Something that is, something that takes place." As you know, this in modern science is called an event in Space-Time—not in Time or Space, but in the four-dimensional world called Space-Time. Now, for example, if a child is born, it is the result of three forces meeting. You may want to have a child; that is only one force—i.e. you want something. But this will not produce a child. I mean, it will not create a child. First of all, for the creation of the child, two forces must unite called Man and Woman, but something is lacking, or, you can say, without my going further into this question, that one force cannot create, two forces cannot create, but only when two forces, Active and Passive, unite through a Neutralizing Force that connects the two is creation possible. It is rather interesting to reflect on this Man/Woman arrangement in life and think about what Neutralizing Force is between them.

Now I will return for a moment to what I was talking about recently, the triad according to the Hindoo teaching. You have heard in this Work that God is difficult to understand because first He is One, then He is Three, and then He is Seven. You know that the Christian religion is based on the Trinity of Three Forces and this was nothing new as regards ancient teachings. Most people think that if there is anything called God, He is entirely creative, always willing to create, but in the Hindoo triad, God is Three Forces, one creative, one preservative, and one destructive. You must all find out for yourselves how these three forces are named as different gods. Suppose God were purely creative, the whole sea and land would be packed with fish and animals that God had created. Do you all see—as far as we can under-

stand—that there must also be a side of God that destroys so as to keep down the quantity of God as a creator? Creation of birds, say, of fish, of animals, is going on all the time. Do you agree? Can you see that it is so? And do you also see that in the natural world many must die? A herring gives birth to a million herrings on the creation side, but unless other bigger fish ate them, the ocean would be solid with herrings in a few years. And take war, famine, disease, and so on, all of which illustrate the aspect of destruction that has to keep down the number of things created. Then of course you can easily see that if God creates, there must be something that preserves His creation. Take for example the fruits of the earth—how beautifully packed they are. Take the nesting birds—they have to go in for a lot of preservative packing in the nest, making it possible for the creative force to be preserved. Take a baby to be born. Notice how beautifully Nature will arrange it, and the Mother is ready to preserve it. I think that you can all catch a glimpse of what is meant by the three aspects of God.

I was talking recently about this triad represented in yourself quite apart from physical creation, the number of babies born, etc. There has got to be an opposite, of course. Take a person who thinks himself very good. He has got to meet second force sooner or later, as Job did. Now as regards God, O. used to say that you cannot understand the three forces unless you begin to study them psychologically. He said: "Science knows about creation and destruction but not yet about the third force that brings the opposites into relationship." He said: "You must study first force, then second force in yourself before you can even see what third force means." That is why so much emphasis is laid in the Work on seeing second force in yourself. Psychologically, taking this triad in yourself, you begin to have a different relationship to yourself, because most people think that they can just do what they want or that they cannot do what they want. Now the more you want a thing, the more you get second or opposite force up against you. So many people think their lives are ruined because what they wanted has never been fulfilled. Now if you study in yourself these three forces, creative, preservative, and destructive, you will find first of all that whenever you are negative you are destructive. When you are negative, you cannot see good in anyone. Suppose someone writes a poem, that will be creative on our level. Instantly a host of locusts, aunts and uncles, say: "If that boy goes in for creative work, it must be destroyed. We must stop this nonsense." If that boy has a good aunt who realizes that he has done something beyond what his family has ordinarily done, this aunt is a preserver. All this is very well illustrated in *The Forsyte Saga* where an architect actually wore a soft felt hat, which none of the Forsytes wore, and from the moment they saw in the hall that strange hat (that none of the Forsytes wore) they wanted to destroy the wearer.

Now to talk more seriously—most of you are destroyers and you must all remember that when you are in this Work people will get up

against you: "What are you doing? Why cannot you tell me?" they will say. A man must take exception to someone different from himself and so become destructive to him, but he must see that this man whom he would like to destroy by his criticism is probably himself. Therefore he begins to see in himself the same thing that he criticises in the other person. He begins to move into the middle or third force between the opposites and there he finds a Way and no longer is he defeated by whatever happens in life. Remember it was once said: "I am you and you are me." This is being conscious in Third Force.

*Amwell, 28.1.50*

## **ON CHANGING YOUR FEELING OF I**

Younger people in the Work must develop their Personality in such a way that they can meet with life and not be tramps or lunatics. A person in this Work who has never done anything in life is useless. Now the centre you naturally use most is the place of the development of your Personality which gives you a relationship to external life. For example, a Number 3 man whose centre of gravity is in Intellectual Centre will tend to develop his intellect and this will be connected with his development of Personality, so he may become a professor. Or again, a Number 1 man whose centre of gravity is in Instinct-Moving Centre will develop his practical or, say, business side or his sporting or soldier side and so relate himself to life. In other words, the development of the life-personality will depend on the centre of gravity of the man, whether he be 1, 2 or 3 man. In that case he will become eventually one-sided. This means that he will have developed his easiest function or centre to meet with life. This I call the first education, given by life itself. It must be gone through, but it is incomplete because it leads to a one-sided development.

The second education is the development of the comparatively unused functions so that they can compensate for the over-development of the easiest function or centre. As said above, the centre of gravity of the Personality will be according to whether a man is Number 1, 2 or 3 man. Understand that it is not that this development is wrong. It is necessary and in a man who has no Magnetic Centre and never feels anything lacking in himself it will enable him to meet with life. But if he has Magnetic Centre he will in some way know that the direction in which he is going mechanically, although he may be very successful in it, does not give him what he is looking for interiorly. Take, for example, a man who has no feelings but is a very good business man, and let us suppose that this man has Magnetic Centre. Magnetic Centre means that he has an idea that there is something



else for him to do apart from what he has attained. At the same time, he pursues this development of Personality—i.e. of one part of himself, of one centre—and finds that this does not give him what he is wanting interiorly. As I said, if he has no Magnetic Centre he will never feel this. The Personality is therefore something that is developed according to the centre of gravity of the man—i.e. whether he is Number 1, 2 or 3 man. Let us suppose he is a 123 man. As Number 1 man he is very good in business, and in dealing with external things, but what about this second function of himself called Number 2—i.e. his Emotional Centre? He will feel uncomfortable if he has Magnetic Centre, because this inferior function, his undeveloped Number 2 side, supplies him with little meaning. He may start reading, say, poetry in a vague way, because he feels that something is missing.

Now you must work out for yourselves all that this means. In this connection I will say one thing—that emotion is not compassion. Compassion belongs to a developed Emotional Centre.

So we have in this paper the idea that the Personality which is a function of relationship to life, that you have *acquired*, will be placed on your most natural or easy function or centre and you must understand that after a time this Personality, developed according to your centre of gravity, will mislead and not give you the force and meaning that you are seeking for. It will not give enough eternal meaning for your life. When it is said that you have to make Personality passive it does not mean that you have to forego all you have learnt from your contact with life through your developed function, but that it has to be modified by bringing in subsidiary or lesser functions to make you more complete or whole instead of being one-sided. You may be a very scientific man and your Personality in that case will be based on Intellectual Centre—that is, you are a Number 3 man—but after a time you will possibly find that science becomes meaningless to you. All your research has become stale to you. Why? When anything becomes stale it is always because you are going beyond what you should from the development of yourself through one centre—beyond the blossom. You may even have to learn how to be jolly and eat and drink and be affable and perhaps you will turn away from such crudeness in horror. Or perhaps you will begin to see that nature is very beautiful apart from its microscopical study, and begin to paint it, which means that you can begin to develop another centre, so first of all try to see on what your Personality is based—i.e. whether you are Number 1, 2 or 3 man, whatever your type—and do not think you have to dismiss it as nonsense because through that you have got your first life-development or your first life-education. Once you realize this, you will see that your second education depends on developing your next centre closest to you, and that will make Personality passive in the right way.

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Now, suppose that we were called upon in some strange mysterious way to push off from the shore, from the solid ground of ourselves—from our habitual selves. If we want to reach a higher level of being, we cannot retain the present being that we have. This raises the question of what I shall take with me on this strange journey outside myself, beyond my Personality and beyond my False Personality—i.e. Nicoll. I can only say to you that many dreams deal with this subject and they are practically always of the same kind—namely, where you identify and say 'I'. Their general meaning is about what is valuable for me to take with me of what I have learned from life and what is useless. What is useless is False Personality—i.e. Nicoll. This is a stage that everyone must go through slowly and eventually in the Work—i.e. discarding the useless and keeping hold of what is good in your experience of life—and I am afraid here that everything to do with False Personality is practically eliminated as being quite useless. All this Work is about taking this journey away from the shores and the solid ground of your Personality, which hitherto you have always thought is quite right in every respect. So I ask you: what have you got which is purely fictitious and useless? And suddenly it may possibly come to you to realize that when you get far enough in this Work you can take nothing with you for this strange voyage in the usual sense of I, of identifying with your virtues, etc. We often act the Bar of Heaven here at Amwell. Do some of you know what it means? It means something like this: that people will cling to something that they ascribe to themselves, their efficiency, their suffering, and I am so afraid that eventually when you come to the stage of which I am speaking you will find that all these things have to go completely. What is it that has to go? Your wrong feeling of I, because only in this way can you begin to feel the traces of Real I shuddering through your wrong feeling of I on which you have built yourself up.

Now, speaking very practically, what you have to do is to replace the acquired values you have got from your chief development of a centre and begin to see that its values are not the same as the values of the Work. If you begin to see this, you pass out of life as Neutralizing Force into the Work as Neutralizing Force. Life as Neutralizing Force will not change you, especially if you are successful in life, but if you have undergone *metanoia*—i.e. change of mind—you will come under the Third Force of the Work which will seek instead to change your one-sidedness and develop your other centres. So therefore it was said recently: try to see in the light of the Work where you need something, where you are lacking as regards the three centres.

## **A, B AND C INFLUENCES**

All this Work is in us only we have all forgotten it. The Work taught externally is to make us remember what we have forgotten. One ancient philosopher said: "All knowledge is remembering what we once knew." All such ideas are based on the view that Man has fallen to a level lower than that into which he was born. What is it into which we fall? We fall into Personality, especially False Personality which makes us ascribe all knowledge to ourselves and in this way we get reversed—the wrong way round—and regard Nature as seen through the senses as having created itself, and even imagine we have created ourselves.

Now a person who begins to understand and to try to will the Work in himself or herself starts upon a path, a journey, which belongs to himself or herself. First he or she is taught from outside about observation, non-identifying, not considering, not being negative, and remembering oneself. But after a time the questions that they may ask about what the Work is concerned with become answered internally rather than from outside. This means that such a person is beginning to make contact with the Work internally. As some of you have heard many times, this Work leads to contact with Higher Centres with which we have lost contact owing to having fallen under the hypnotism of external life and the power of the five senses. At first this external life of the senses satisfies us but after a time it does not, because we realize, if we have Magnetic Centre, that we have no centre of gravity in life and any turn of events can rob us of what we imagine we value most. A man loses all his money and commits suicide. This means that his centre of gravity was in his money and not in himself. Now if we were not born self-creating, unfinished organisms, there would be no possible centre of gravity to reach other than that given by outer life. In short, there would be nothing else but outer life. But all through the ages it has been taught that there is something else apart from money and possessions, fame and beauty. At the same time it is very difficult for any of us to realize this deeply. The hypnotism of external life is terrific. So let us talk to-day about *A*, *B* and *C* influences.

The Work teaches that we are all under different influences. *A* influences are the influences of external life. They are created by life. What are these influences? Well, take all the influences that keep life going, that are created within life. There is the race for money and financial power, there are football interests, there is the political world, the entertainment world, interest in crime, interest in fashions, in knowing the right people, and all the rest of it. These are *A* influences and they bind us to the power of life. The Work says we are connected with these influences by our attitudes. It says we are connected with these influences by attitudes as by threads that hold us, invisible to us

and very powerful. Watch a football match. Everyone is completely identified. The fifty thousand or so people are connected by invisible, very powerful threads with what is going on before their eyes and ears. No one remembers himself. This mass of people ceases to have any individual existence. Have you ever in the middle of a dramatic film suddenly tried to remember yourself and escape from the hypnotism of the drama? If you do, a very strange thing may happen to you. I will not explain it, because you must find out for yourself. If you do, you will understand the difference between being identified and remembering yourself. And not only this, but you will realize how nothing can be changed in life as long as people are asleep in this way, as long as they lend themselves to being identified with all the *A* influences that life has created in itself in order to keep people fast asleep. Now to escape from the influences of life one must begin to surrender oneself gradually to the influences of the Work. The Work-influences are called *C* influences and they are not created in life but come from a higher range of Humanity called the Conscious Circle of Humanity. This higher Circle of Humanity is constantly sowing on to the earth influences that can awaken Humanity on earth in order to change them by awakening them so that they can resist little by little the power of *A* influences or life-influences. Unfortunately, Conscious Man cannot talk to mechanical man because they use different languages. A dream, a parable, for example, may be cast in the terms of the language of Conscious Man, but to a man asleep, a mechanical man, the language is incomprehensible. As a result, all the attempts of the Conscious Circle of Humanity, which we must understand is not necessarily in visible form on this earth save rarely, are misrepresented and not comprehended, but are changed into the language of mechanical man and then become what are called *B* influences. One example, of course, is the Gospels which come from the Higher Circle of Humanity but have been changed inevitably in a certain way so that they become a mixture of *A* and *C*—i.e. *B* influences. The Gospels are not *C* influences but *B* influences, but the inspirational forces behind them were originally *C* influences coming down from the Conscious Circle of Humanity. In ourselves the Conscious Circle of Humanity is represented by the Higher Centres, but our ordinary centres which are governed by *A* influences cannot comprehend them although they are working all the time on us. Therefore it is said in the Work sometimes that the necessary task is to prepare lower centres for the reception of Higher Centres.

When we view the teaching of the Work in the light of these ideas we see that all we are taught to practise is really not a moral question in the ordinary sense of the word, but a practical question—i.e. to prepare our lower centres to hear, to understand, to receive, the continual communications coming from Higher Centres to which we are deaf and blind. So the Work says we can receive help, but in order to receive it we must put ourselves under other influences. A man, a woman, can only change by putting themselves under new influences,

and for this to happen we have, through self-observation, to realize that we are under influences all the time and that none of us is free, as we imagine.

Now suppose a man, hearing this Work and beginning to observe himself in its light, sees that he is very much identified with some *A* influence and begins to struggle against it from the standpoint of what he understands of the teaching of the Work, he then has a definite aim gained through self-observation. As has often been said, it is no good to make an aim that is not based on observation of what you need to work on in yourself in the light of the general teaching of the Work. He then has a definite aim and begins to struggle with identifying in this very form that he has noticed keeps him asleep. In such a case, he is trying to prepare his ordinary life-turned centres to receive influences not coming from life but coming in eventually from his Higher Centres. Once he comes under the influences of his own Higher Centres, once he has come as far as this in his own internal development, he begins to journey towards Higher Centres and everything will gradually be revealed to him in terms of what he is and the way he is to go, to shew him how to get on to the next stage of his own development which is freeing himself from what mechanically held him and coming under the other influences that can help him. Then if he reads *B* influences of any kind, Christian, Hermetic, Greek or Alchemical writings, he finds landmarks which point him the way and he can catch what they are trying to say, whereas formerly he would have thought they were all nonsense. In other words, a vast horizon begins to open to him. The result of all this will be that his mind will be put into the right order and he sees that he lives in a created world as a self-developing organism. Then he begins to undergo this reversal of which all esoteric literature speaks, and instead of being governed from below he begins to be governed from above.

*Amwell, 11.2.50*

## **THE INFECTION OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS**

On one occasion one of my teachers said to me: "Try to express your unpleasant emotions in the most pleasant way that you can so as not to hurt." Of course, at that time I did not understand even that I had unpleasant emotions or that I talked bitterly, and so on. When I began to understand how important self-observation was I began to realize that I had unpleasant or, as we call them in this Work, negative emotions, and that hitherto I had never realized this, nor had I made the slightest attempt to express them as pleasantly as possible. Now a person who is really negative is more dangerous than a virus or a

bacterial infection. A really negative person can infect twenty, thirty, or even a hundred people with negative emotions, and if speaking in public many more. So understand that the dangerous things we suffer from are first of all things called bacteria, which can be seen under the microscope, and then viruses which are so small that they cannot be seen under any ordinary microscope and are even more infectious; and finally there is a person who is thoroughly negative and can infect people in a much more dangerous fashion than bacteria or viruses. For that reason in the Work we can bear one another's bacterial infections and we have to put up with them as best we can, but if there is in the Work a really negative person, a person fast asleep, a person full of envy, bad moods, and evil will, I say that such a person is much more dangerous from the Work point of view than any physical infection. Physical illness often opens things, but negative states shut things. Do you understand that a person in the Work who is struggling with the development of himself or herself may have an infection, or whatever it may be, and this will not necessarily destroy their attempts to form in themselves a new psychological body of thought and feeling which depends on a new view of everything, including themselves, gained from the ideas of this Work? But if such a person who struggles in the Work to change his mind and live in another way internally meets someone in the Work who is full of bad states, who is always negative, and all the rest of it, this person may infect not only him, but a lot of other people, as the poison is far more dangerous than bacteria or viruses. These people are generally on the borderline of the Work and think they have not been treated rightly. So we see that infective poison starts in the bodily realm but goes up to the psychological or spiritual realms.

Now what kind of infection in the psychological or spiritual realms do we have to protect ourselves against? What is the subtlest infection in the psychological realms as distinct from the ailments to which our physical body is exposed? What, if we want to make a psychological body, must we guard against? What can destroy the beginning of the formation of the psychological body as distinct from the physical body? Everything that the Work says will teach you about its high prophylactic power. It is an anti-toxin. What is one of the answers? I mean, what is the most infective psychological thing that we have to resist and deal with at all costs? I repeat, it is negative emotion. And I repeat again, that it is your fault if you are negative. You cannot grow in your internal side, or your internal Man, you cannot build up something that will resist life in your psychological side, if you have an open cesspool of negative emotions always. That will destroy everything in the delicate formation of a new understanding and a new body within the physical body. O. compared it with an explosion in a laboratory. Now what do negative emotions do as regards your internal psychology which is at present in complete chaos in every ordinary man and ordinary woman, for which reason people feel so wretched

and unhappy and cannot make conscious relationship with one another? Negative emotions twist everything, they make wrong connections in your psychological side. When you are negative you are filled with lies. What is a lie? A lie is wrong connections internally. What is Truth? Truth is right connections internally. When you begin to see how negative emotions lie, when you begin to distinguish what they say to you, then you are beginning to make it possible to have a basis for the second organized body within you that I will call for the moment a psychological body as distinct from the physical body. So therefore consider, observe what happens when you are negative. Notice how everything is wrongly connected in you, as regards seeing the other person, and notice how when you are not negative towards this person everything is differently connected. Begin to see this for yourself and then you will begin to see that the Work is Truth and something perfectly real that you have to do and not listen to only. How can you expect to make right relationship to one another if you are all governed by negative emotions, and how can you expect to advance in this Work and get in touch with Higher Centres if you will never face your own negative emotions with the strength that will give you a new mind and a new understanding of life?

*Amwell, 18.2.50*

### **OBSERVATION OF ONE'S PHANTASIES**

The Work, among many things that it teaches, says that we must struggle with *imagination*. In this respect, it says roughly without going into too many details that directed imagination is quite different from mechanical imagination. In other words, it says that imagination is not wrong but necessary if it is controlled and directed towards a certain object. For example, if you are going to build a bridge over the Zambezi you have a directed plan and you use your imagination in a directed way as to where you should build it, with what materials you should make the spans, etc. This is where the imagination will serve you. What then in such cases is the imagination? It is the power of conceiving one thing, then conceiving another, until you find with the aid of your directed imagination the best way of building the bridge. And the same applies to everything, because a person with no imagination will not be able to build a bridge or a house or anything else except along stereotyped lines. But when the Work says we must work against imagination it does not mean that we must work against this directed imagination but against the passive imagination which works by itself without direction. This imagination we can call phantasies. In this passive imagination, there is no second force. Take a dear little person,

all teeth and smiles, who has won the Beauty Competition for the district and has been kissed by the Mayor. She finds in a short time that all this is forgotten, yet at the same time her phantasy will work at the point where she appeared in the papers and she will become embittered in a way towards life because she does not pass straight into Hollywood as she probably imagines she should. So she will satisfy herself with phantasy and this will take quite a quantity of energy from her relationship to life or to her husband or to her children or her job. This will eat her. What will eat her? The phantasy that was stimulated by her moment of publicity. Now the same applies to men as to women, in this respect. Here is a man or a woman who spends a lot of his time in day-dreaming or in phantasies, conceiving how wonderful he or she could have been. If you marry anyone with strange phantasies of this kind, whether man or woman, you will always notice something that you cannot make out in them. Suddenly their eyes become unfocussed. It is always interesting to me to see what direction the eyes follow. Slightly upwards, I think. For the moment the person indulging in such phantasies is not there and cannot hear what you say, and then in a moment he or she is brought back to reality, as it were.

Now it is this form of imagination that the Work is talking about when it says that you must overcome imagination. This sad look, these unfocussed eyes, always mean that you are being eaten by a phantasy, that you are giving way to it, that you pass into the world of your own private phantasy. I remember a phantasy of mine, when I first joined the Work, that after a few months with Mr. G. I would become a magician in a black cloak with a large felt hat and glittering eyes, to whom everyone would bow down. However, when I really met the Work, I found it was nothing of the kind. When you are sad in this way, do you see what is happening to you? What is eating you? The Moon is eating you. Are you negative or not? Yes, you are negative. You are withdrawn from what you have to do in life. So much poetry is about this sad phantasy and this is why so much poetry is negative in character. And again, how many romances are about this phantasy and how eagerly they are read by people whom life has not satisfied and who drain themselves through imagination of what it would be to be an adored person, a world-famous person in the papers every day. You must understand that this phantasy of which I am speaking can very powerfully operate on the majority of people and only renders them unhappy.

Now, as I said, these day-dreams, these phantasies, have no second force in them, but a little self-observation which is sincere and direct may begin to destroy them. A little honest realization of what one is like may begin to destroy them more than anything else does. You begin to realize you are not much good as regards this world-success about which you make a phantasy about yourself. You have got the wrong starting-point. Self-observation in the Work-sense is to make us



start rightly from what we are, but phantasy or passive imagination makes our starting-point all wrong. Now most people regard dreams in the same category as phantasies, but a dream can smash a phantasy completely. A dream brings in second force always and second force will smash completely these phantasies that have no second force in them. For that reason I want to tell you a story in which you will see what I mean. Self-observation can destroy phantasies and also a dream coming from Higher Centres views your life-situation and yourself in a different way from your dream-states. Do you not see that self-observation brings second force in your life into your dreams and makes you see that you are not like that but just an ordinary person? In other words, self-observation destroys your phantasies. In the same way, a certain class of dream also makes you aware of second force just as though your dream is compensatory to your day-dream. A night-dream and a day-dream are two entirely different things. A night-dream will make your day-phantasy such that you realize second force, the force against what you want to be according to your day-phantasy. It points out, for instance, that you cannot fulfil it because, say, you are ugly, or you have no talent for acting, or you are very uneducated, so you have to accept your present life without these day-dreams. All this is exemplified very well in the following story in which a night-dream smashes a day-dream completely and cures a man because it brings in second force.

The story tells how a man relates to a stranger the dream that he has had while having a tooth out under gas. He dreamed that he was a famous singer travelling in a luxurious car with his manager, accompanist and chauffeur-valet, to fulfil a concert engagement. In the dream he was conscious of a feeling of great inferiority to his accompanist, a trained musician and a man of European culture, who silently hated and despised him because of his ignorance and lack of education. He felt inferior also to his valet who was continually boasting to him of his success with women and who flaunted his affairs under his master's very eyes. On arrival at the concert hall his manager brought him fraudulent accounts to sign, according to his custom, and his unavailing protests were cut short by unavoidable interruptions. As he was about to begin his performance he woke up. I will quote in full the words of the dreamer in which he contrasts the dream with the reality to which he awoke. "I am a clerk in the City," he explained gently, "I have a wife, a son, and two daughters. I am loved. When I was young I had a fairish voice. Still have, I suppose. All my life I have day-dreamed that one day I would be rightfully acclaimed a famous singer—with the power of money, the admiration of many women, and the technique of a master. I have not always been too easy to live with in consequence. Arrogant with the conceit of a life that never happened: contemptuous of the life I lived. But now I have seen misery in high places. Now the real dream has shattered my day-dream. Even if I wished I could not get back to it. My mind knows too much. And, well, curiously, I have

woken up to the delight of being *me*.” (From “Personal Re-appearance” short story by Paul Feakes. *Evening News*, 13.2.50.)

Now do you see how this man had a phantasy as regards singing all his life which of course would make him unhappy? You all know that if you have such a phantasy it eats you, it makes you discontented, it prevents all relationship if you always think according to your phantasy “if only . . . then things would be different.” Now that is the force of imagination which we have to work against—not the directed imagination, which is linked up to the directed mind. And also you must finally understand that loose, undirected phantasy can find very easily the negative part of Emotional Centre. Remember, your phantasy belongs to the side of Vanity. It has been said, I forget by whom, that Man is nothing but a machine run by Vanity and everything is done on the basis of the False Personality. The Work says that one is run by one’s False Personality which is completely imaginary. All the great dreams that people in the Work begin to have are against this force of imagination. It is useless to say that dreams are nothing but imagination, and this remark has always interested me because imagination is one of the most powerful things. There is such a thing as rightly directed imagination and such a thing as loose imagination which is what keeps negative states going. That is why it is said that when you are negative it is such a struggle with imagination, trying to get things right, because imagination will suggest all sorts of things that never really happened.

*Amwell, 25.2.50*

### **CHIEF FEATURE**

In the early days of the Work in London great emphasis was laid on Chief Feature. G. defined Chief Feature as the axle round which everything turns. He said: “A man must work against Chief Feature in order to change himself.” When we heard this, a lot of us began to think we knew what our Chief Feature was. Understand that if you take this idea into your minds it seems a most interesting and valuable acquisition of knowledge. It means that all you have to do is to discover your Chief Feature and your present psychology will give way to an entirely new development. We understand that in order to change Personality and False Personality—that is, that part of one that has been acquired from life—there can be no change of being as long as the central axle remains the same. He taught that the quickest way to make the Personality passive in order to make Essence grow was to discover your Chief Feature and make it your central aim to work against it. This dazzling idea affected us and endless questions were

asked about what is one's Chief Feature. When O. was teaching this part of the Work, he was naturally asked many questions about it. We expected him to tell us what our Chief Feature was and he always answered in the same way. He always said: "If you were told your Chief Feature, you would never believe it," and further he added: "If you were told your Chief Feature by someone it would prevent you from ever realizing it for yourself by internal observation." So you can well believe that for a long time endless questions were asked about Chief Feature, Chief Feature, Chief Feature. Now if you are told something from outside that you have not yet reached the stage of seeing the truth of from inside, it will handicap you and, in fact, hinder you in this gradual process of the Work which brings you little by little to see what you are really like, where your Chief Feature really lies.

Now you do not come to your Chief Feature by momentary self-observation. I mean, you cannot see your Chief Feature by suddenly trying to observe yourself. You must understand, as I said above, that unless you see your Chief Feature for yourself you cannot work against it and if anyone tries to point out your Chief Feature it will make it more difficult for you to realize it yourself. Now self-observation practised at least two or three times a day gradually gives a long background of slightly more conscious moments in regard to yourself than you would otherwise have if you simply remained asleep day after day and identified with every event. In other words, the practice of self-observation is not immediately curative but becomes capable of curing you by its extension in time. Let me say that if you have done something, whatever it may be, again and again, and never observed yourself, you won't be able to change this particular thing in yourself. But if you have observed it, even while you do it, over a long time you get a Work memory laid down in you that by a kind of accumulation will make you less and less willing to do the thing that you have always done. This will make a curative force which results from self-observation. Do you understand that there are two memories—the ordinary memory of a person asleep that is almost always based on internal accounting and negative states, and another memory which the Work begins to form in you which is based on self-observation. This more conscious memory spread over many years is the memory that can cure you. Remember, the light can cure you. Light means consciousness. In the ordinary way, we live our lives without a ray of light entering at all. In other words, we are not conscious of what we do, we simply do it over and over again. Remember the definition of self-observation. The Work says self-observation is to let a ray of light into your inner darkness. What is your inner darkness? It is just always behaving as you do without observing how you behave, and if you are like that you are Man asleep, Woman asleep, or mechanical Man, mechanical Woman, governed by 48 orders of laws working on the inhabitants of this earth. In other words, you are driven, and again, in other words,

you do not exist, and again, in other words, you are a machine driven by external events. Now to be in a state like that is extremely unsatisfactory according to all esoteric teaching, including the teaching of this Work. Of course, many people cannot see that they are machines. Every event makes them negative. They blame life and not themselves. They never think of taking these events that make them react as they do as things to work on. They never try to separate themselves from the ordinary effects of the events of life on them.

Now, as I said, momentary self-observation will not change you, but if you try sincerely to observe yourself two or three times a day, although you cannot alter yourself, you can at least become conscious of how you are behaving. This daily work on yourself builds up new memory which can begin to change you. It will begin to weaken your immediate reaction to the situation. How? Because this new and more conscious memory which is the result of light let in a little into you will make it very difficult for you to behave always in the same way. You are beginning to feel it is rather stale, rather tedious. I was always very interested in this side of the Work. People do the same thing day after day, in sleep, so it always seems fresh to them, new to them. But if you have this Work-memory built up in you you will not want to do it very much. I said I was interested in this side of the Work. Do you understand that a thing becomes stale if you know you have done it before, and it loses its attraction?

Now it is only by developing this consciousness in Time-body that you can begin to see your Chief Feature. You will begin, as G. once said, to take photographs of your life, not snapshots, but time-photographs, and you will begin to see that all through your life you have behaved like this or like that. This will make you begin to see that you have always been a nuisance to other people, always been difficult or dishonest. Of course, your picture of yourself is quite contrary to such an idea. There is of course nothing much wrong with you. Now a time-photograph will come only when the exercise of daily self-observation begins to shew you things in yourself that have been controlling you the whole of your life. So you will come nearer to being about to see what your Chief Feature is. And what is this due to? Increase of consciousness. Remember that the Work says that only an increase of consciousness can change you. So you cannot be changed by what someone says to you. You cannot be changed by anything outside you, but only by what you begin to see internally about yourself.

## ON THINKING FOR ONESELF

Most people react to their fathers or their mothers. You have, for example, a man who reacts to his father and who then is in opposites. What are the opposites in this case? On one side is what Papa taught and on the other side is what the son thinks. Of course, this applies to women also. In the case of the man, if he is really reacting to his father, he hates everything that Papa taught him. For example, if his father was very religious, he tends to hate religion. On the other hand, he may be passive to his father and accept everything that Papa said. In the spiritual, psychological development of man and woman this conflict is fundamental in the sense that it begins their psychological development. I have recently had a letter which said: "My mother seems to bring out the worst in me." At the same time, this may apply to a man who when he goes to see his mother feels irritated and handicapped. You must understand that the psychology that we acquire from either Papa or Mamma may be very good for us in the first two, or perhaps three, octaves of life, but if we merely follow it passively we cannot grow up. Christ said: "If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters . . . he cannot be my disciple" (Luke xiv.26). And also He added somewhere else: "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes shall be those of his own household" (Matt. x.34-36).

Now this new form of thinking, this *metanoia* or change of mind which the ideas of the Work can effect in you, will always go against the acquired psychology derived from your upbringing. What idea underlies this? You notice that this Work constantly says that you have to think for yourself and that the object of this Work is to make you think for yourself. Now if you think always from Papa and Mamma, you cannot think for yourself, for if you do, you will always think from opposites, such as "Papa never told me that", or "Mamma would not like that". Therefore in such a case you are thinking from opposites just in the same way as if you oppose your father's thoughts again you are thinking from opposites. Only your own private thinking will reconcile the opposites if you are thinking from the Work, and, of course, in order to do this, you must know what the Work is about. If you think for yourself you will no longer find yourself in opposition to either of your parents although of course they may think quite differently. The ideas of the Work gradually change your thinking—namely, produce *metanoia* or change of mind in you—and as a result many apparent opposites become harmonized. You must try to find examples for yourself but the main point of the Work is that unless you are born

into individual thinking for yourself about the problems of life you will not develop and you will remain simply a function of reaction to your parents or of acceptance of them. Have any of you ever had a thought of your own quite independently of what your acquired psychology tends to make you think? If you notice where a new thought comes from, it is never from either one side or the other of the opposites. It comes in between as the reconciling force. I remember O. talking about this once and saying that we are brought up by our parents to think that all Germans are awful or that all Frenchmen are awful or all Russians are awful, and vice versa. He said: "You have to say to yourself, if you observe this: 'which German?'"

So first of all we have to acquire the opposites in ourselves, from our training. Afterwards the history is quite different as regards the second education of a man or a woman. It is necessary gradually to bring these opposites together, into the Third Force that lies between the opposites so that if you hate the Germans or Russians, you say "which Russian?" or "which German?" I cannot tell you what a difference this makes. Therefore it is necessary for us to have the opposites in us before we can think for ourselves and with individual thinking through the power of the Work something comes that unites the opposites gradually so that ultimately we have no terrific opposites but are in between them. This means first the development of the formatory part of the Intellectual Centre which tends to think in terms of *either-or* and then we have to reconcile the opposites produced by the formatory centre into *Yes and No*. This gives a great deal of force and a great deal of freedom at once. So much of our psychology is held up by being based on implacable opposites.

Now all reconciliation of the opposites depends on individual thinking from yourself. Let us say that my Papa says to me: "Never shake hands with a person who does not believe in God." Suppose I remain under the psychological orientation of what Papa told me, I would always tend not to shake hands with a man who does not believe in God. On the other hand, I may tend *only* to shake hands with those who do not believe in God. But do you not see that it is the same thing? It is still the opposites because I have not begun to think for myself about the whole question. Suppose suddenly that after a certain time I have a moment of illumination and I say: "What am I doing? What does it mean, a person who believes in God or who does not?" This is the beginning of the Work acting on me. And this makes a difference in your relationship to other people. You cannot get an expansion of consciousness as long as you are in the acquired opposites. A person is neither good nor bad, nor am I. Once you can see this in yourself, then in your relationship to other people, you begin to find a Third Force, a way of taking people and yourself as not being wholly evil or wholly good. This is the beginning of mercy in you and it is what mercy means. Mercy is not violence and as long as you are in opposites you are always violent. Someone says: "What, he does that

kind of thing! I won't have anything more to do with that person." And someone in the Work says: "But don't *you* do it?" And after a lot of humming and hawing I think: "Well, I am perhaps like that myself." So try always to think what mercy means, because it lies between the opposites. Think very much about what external considering means, one aspect of which is seeing others in yourself or seeing your own faults in the other person—always an irritating thing.

\* \* \*

Among the sayings of Christ not included in the Gospels are the following:

"When the Lord was asked by a certain man, when should his kingdom come, he saith unto him: When two shall be one, and the without as the within, and the male with the female, neither male nor female"—i.e. active and passive are replaced by Third Force.

And again:

"If ye make not the below into the above and the above into the below, the right into the left and the left into the right, the before into the behind (and the behind into the before) ye shall not enter the kingdom of God."

*Amwell, 11.3.50*

### **PSYCHO-TRANSFORMISM**

This Work has been called Psycho-transformism. I never liked this phrase myself but several people thought it was a good phrase. However this may be, the point is that it refers to impressions coming in as Hydrogen 48 and being transformed. There is something a little difficult to understand here and therefore you must have patience and try to listen to what the Work is saying to you. Most of you have heard that life as a Neutralizing Force keeps Personality active and Essence passive. If life comes in to you as Hydrogen 48 and is not transformed you will be under impressions that you get from your five senses—that is, from life—and this keeps you asleep. This means that you will be kept asleep because you see life as you *see* it. Now the Work says that it is necessary to transform impressions coming in as Hydrogen 48 and turn them into Hydrogen 24 by means of the Work itself. Now the Work itself contains ideas that are not derived from our sensory contact with life. The Work contains ideas that you could not possibly derive from your sensory experience of external life and it is only when you begin to relate your external situation to Work ideas that any psycho-transformism can take place.

Let us take the ordinary idea taught in religion that Man lives after death and is judged according to his life on earth. Is there any corroboration of this through the five senses? Certainly not. We see the dead man put into the earth and that is all and so we think that death is the completion of life. With such a sensory view we might very well think, as many do, that we can do what we like on this earth because death is the end of everything and there is no hereafter, no second life, no recurrence. But suppose a man becomes imbued with the idea that he is somewhat responsible for what he does, because there is something awaiting him when his physical body is dead and his psychological or spiritual body remains, he will begin to behave differently. This is an example of psycho-transformism—due to an idea not derived from sense. He sees all this money lying about on the floor—to take another example—and he does not steal it because he has the feeling that to do so would be a sin in view of his psychological life. Do you not see that in such a case he undergoes some psycho-transformism of his sensory impressions? He sees the gold lying about. This is Hydrogen 48—I mean, there is the gold. Ordinarily he would take it, but he has the idea that it is not his and that he will be judged afterwards by his life on earth, so he transforms impressions by means of a higher idea for which the senses do not give any evidence. Some call this faith. In any case, he transforms impressions according to the light of his understanding. He is then in a sense a more reliable man than a man who simply took the gold because he saw it there. Now I am quite aware that this and the other example are not very good ones from the Work point of view. The transforming ideas of the Work, although naturally they will contain also the ideas given above, are much more interesting and subtle. For example, take one Work-idea, and by that I mean an idea that conducts a Neutralizing Force that is not derived from life but from the Conscious Circle of Humanity. Take the idea that Man is not one but many and apply it when you are quarrelling with one another. Is it a transforming idea? Is it an example of turning 48 into 24? You must understand that turning 48 into 24 means a development of consciousness, a finer sensitivity, a finer grasp of yourself and other people—in short, as I say, it is a definite development of consciousness, which is the aim of this Work, through its ideas. According to the senses—that is, according to Hydrogen 48, which designates our impressions coming in from outside—according to this level of thinking, a person is one, packed up in a solid body. Therefore extraordinary complications take place in which people accuse each other, murder each other, are unhappy about each other. Do you see that your senses are wrong? Now it is an axiom of the Work that we must not remain unconscious of our own *psychology* but must begin to realize in this case that we are not one but many. Within us are hosts of, so to speak, angels and devils—that is, many, many 'I's. When you fall foul of someone, as we all do at times, you must not think: "I am falling foul of her or she of me," but "Some 'I's



in her fall foul of some 'I's in me." From this we gradually come to understand through a development of consciousness that there is no such thing as I in us, as we are, that can make judgment and find fault, but only a machine that makes judgment. A man may like a woman with some 'I's, but with other 'I's he does not, and vice versa. To pack the whole business into one whole bundle called 'I' is to invite disaster in all human relationships and especially in Man/Woman relationship.

People all have unpleasant or even truly devilish 'I's but they must be awake to them and not identify with them, not think that this is their I. One must say: "This is not really me." The Work teaches that we have Real I in us, which is far from most of us, and yet the Work says we all have a trace of it. How many of you have had the ever-recurring experience of losing what you call your temper with someone that you care for and then feeling that you ought to seek forgiveness? This kind of forgiveness is not much good. What you have to do is to see that certain 'I's emerged and you gave way to them on the stage of your limited consciousness. You put the feeling of I into these 'I's which are always bitter and negative, waiting in the wings to emerge on the stage. The idea that we are not one but many 'I's can begin to transform your relationships to one another. Instead of becoming pointed, so to speak, you become broad. Instead of being bound up in an artificial packet you will distribute your feeling of yourself over a wider area and therefore you will become gentler—first to yourself and then to other people. Be gentle to yourself consciously first of all. So this transforming idea which is only one among many that could be mentioned as psycho-transforming is very important. It dissolves away some of your wrong self-valuation. It softens you, it relaxes you. Remember that from the senses you would not guess this idea of Man or Woman not being one. I mean, that life as Neutralizing Force that exhibits us to one another as single fat or thin bodies does not give you this power which comes from the Work-ideas as Neutralizing Force, which make you think differently, conceive differently, and have new attitudes to one another. So perhaps you will begin to see that psycho-transformism means calling the ideas of the Work into your daily duties and reactions and seeing the Work point of view instead of the life point of view. A man is not his body: a woman is not her body. But *via* the senses it looks so.

## REVERSAL

On several occasions O. used to talk to us about what a new growth of Essence means. At a recent meeting I was talking about the same thing from the standpoint of the most external part of you being False Personality and the internal part of you being Essence, and I added that Essence can only grow through what is true. You must all have understood by now that False Personality, which leads the way by means of two giants, Pride and Vanity, is always behaving in such a way that there is no truth in what you do. The more you go with False Personality, with your imagination of yourself, governed by Pride and Vanity, the more will you get distant from the internal part of yourself called Essence which can only grow through what is true and what is good. Now when you see you are in the wrong—that is, when you get a little behind False Personality with all its Vanities and Prides—you take force backwards or interiorly into yourself and these moments of confession or separation from what is false will cause Essence to grow because you give it energy that would otherwise have gone into self-justifying. You know a man or woman who is always expostulating and saying: “I did not mean that—in fact, I never said it.” In such a case there is no internal perception of the truth. The False Personality is served by lawyers of a low class who always say that you are right and the other person is wrong. But if you have an interior self-observation and that is sincere, you know that you are wrong and the whole thing is your fault. Now False Personality would never admit this, owing to its low-class lawyers that we employ which are really self-justifiers, self-twisters. And that means a host of nasty little ‘I’s in you. Now if we have good, honest lawyers in us, ‘I’s that can form Deputy-Steward, they will say to you: “You were in the wrong and you have not got a case and we will not take it up even if you pretend you have one.” Now this inner confession, this giving way, this surrender of something that has always been a nuisance, this giving up of what you have always known to be a liar in you, is one of the most blessed experiences that you can have in this Work.

Another thing that I was shewn by O. in a conversation with someone was that many aspects of oneself complicate life, and that all I have to do is to surrender my own authority and give up this noise and uproar and feeling I am not properly treated. I have to make myself passive and surrender and admit. Now such a state means that you are moving towards the internal part of you which leads to Essence and Real I. I wonder how many people take up a lawsuit knowing that they are quite wrong but they will not surrender or admit. Now most of you think that you know best and that what you think is right. As long as you are in this attitude towards yourself and towards life, you will be feeding your False Personality without

knowing it and the more you feed False Personality the less you feed Essence.

Consider how wonderful the Work is in the simple ideas that we are taught such as that one must give up self-justifying, also consider how many of you have done it yet, and also again consider how useless it is to keep up this self-justifying side which prevents you from any development of Essence, just because you always are in favour of False Personality and its judgments and views and opinions.

I remember once when G. came to London and the idea was that he was going to find a house to start his Institute, some of us took him up to the top of Hampstead Heath. My wife and I took him through a large house near the White Stone Pond which was for sale. He walked through it saying nothing and came to a small room on the ground floor. He said something which was translated to us as: "Room for confession." I got rather a shock thinking that the Work had something to do with confession in the ordinary sense. However his eyes were so inscrutable that I did not quite make out what he meant. Later I discovered that there is no little tiny room in the Work but you have to confess to yourself that you are wrong. The externalizing of the internal has never attracted me very much. Just imagine my having you up one by one here just to confess. I really think I would give you so much claret that you would not be able to confess at all. But confess to yourself that you are wrong. To confess externally like that is useless. As you know, no one will really tell the truth about what he has done. You have to see for yourself, by means of the Work-memory built up by self-observation, that you were in the wrong. In other words, you must confess to yourself, to the higher 'I's or beings in yourself, that you are wrong. It is all internal. All self-development is internal. Now They, and by They I mean the Conscious Circle of Humanity, which operates through Higher Centres, will forgive you, and often, curiously enough, not in the way that you thought. There are two feelings of guilt in you, the guilt from the acquired conscience and guilt from the internal conscience which as you know is called buried conscience. And perhaps some of you have heard that one of the aims of the Work is to bring up buried conscience which is the same in all of us and is not merely a question of your upbringing or religion. Now when you have begun to have real conscience in you, you will not be able to justify yourself so easily through, as it were, external habit. You will be more open to things or more surrendering of yourself to things, instead of always trying to alter everything. In other words, your Personality will become more passive and if your Personality becomes more passive the energy that used to go into keeping it going will pass into a development of Essence. Most of you have heard about the reversal that is necessary in us which I will remind you of again.

The Work says that we have four possible bodies. You start with the external body driven by life. The most internal body is really associated with a development of Essence. Therefore the machine can work that way or this way.

## THE FOUR BODIES OF MAN

|                    |   |   |   |   |                |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| <i>Personality</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | <i>Essence</i> |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|

Now do you see why we are told not to justify ourselves? To justify keeps the wrong end of the machine going whether you call it Personality or False Personality, and when real conscience begins to develop in you, then you get this reversal that all Esotericism teaches and which in the Gospels is called Re-birth. I think myself from much experience in the Work that all this is quite worth trying to get hold of, the whole thing beginning with having some sincere self-observation. In this case do you observe when you are justifying yourself? Because if you don't you are not applying one of the great ideas of the Work which can lead to the development of Essence. Is it not difficult to say we are wrong? Is it not easy to think you are always right?

*Amwell, 25.3.50*

### THE SECOND EDUCATION

When a man is in great danger he may feel that everything round him is unreal. He ceases to identify through his senses with external phenomena. The same thing may happen when a man is very ill. His spirit is withdrawn from participation in the evidence of the inflow of the senses. In other words, he feels that he is different, momentarily, from the external world and all the hypnotic powers of the continually changing events that have hitherto taken all his force. All this shews us that there is something different from ordinary relationship to people, to things, to events. Unfortunately—or perhaps fortunately—these special states of consciousness pass and we find ourselves once more in the clang and clatter of life, rushing about, quarrelling, being offended, and being miserable. I was looking through some notes the other day of one of the sub-groups in which the teacher of the sub-group took the Work-idea that Man has to undergo two educations. The Work says that Man must first be educated in life and make a reasonable adaptation to life so that he can reasonably meet the difficulties that exist on this planet. This is called the formation of a good, and, if possible, rich Personality, and if people do not form this they are always weak and rather a nuisance to the Work. Of course, one can learn a lot of things in the Work as regards dealing with life, apart from what one has learnt before, so one gets a better Personality. That means that the Personality which we acquire through the contact with external phenomena can be built up through contact with this Work. One can learn to cook, one can learn to paint, and so on. Then the

Work speaks about the second education. Since Man is born a self-developing organism according to this teaching that we are studying, he requires another education to develop this possibility latent in him and so if you ask what is this education that a man should have to become a more finished house, a complete Man, I will answer you in one word: the nature of the second education is living and practising in yourself the Work-teaching, beginning with Self-Remembering and with the idea that you must observe yourself, that you must stop identifying, you must stop negative emotions, and all the rest of it. *This is the second education.* If I had known in my early days that negative emotions were useless I should have known a great deal that might have helped me. The trouble is that people must have the teaching of this Work constantly shewn to them, be constantly reminded of it, to see what they have got to do in this second education that we are studying. But it is no good hearing about the teaching of this Work—that is, the second education—unless you have fulfilled up to a reasonable point your first education, and, as was said, your first education is to be able to make a reasonable adaptation to existing circumstances so that you can make a living or something like that. Your Personality is that which adapts you to life. If you have a very badly developed Personality, which you acquired from contact with life or life-teachers, you will always be a weak man or a weak woman. Why? Simply because you cannot do anything. You try to boil an egg in cold water without turning on the gas or you try to fry an egg without putting any fat in the pan—doesn't this mean a very poor adaptation to external phenomena?

Now through observation of oneself one sees these gaps and stupidities that exist in our Personalities that are acquired from education in life. That is why I say that it is necessary to have as rich a Personality as possible for this Work. O. said in so many words: "It is necessary to have as many impressions as possible laid down in rolls in different centres. The more that is laid down in these rolls, the richer your Personality." Now, as you know, or perhaps you have observed, some people live in very tiny little Personality. They have perhaps read one book in their lives or perhaps two, and those not particularly interesting, and they look at a paper and cannot understand very much, and the strip cartoons are the most interesting to them. This simply means that they have very few rolls in centres that have received impressions. A man, a woman, approaching this Work should have a lot of impressions in many different rolls in different centres. Otherwise the material is too weak, too small, too limited. Now, to return to what I was saying, in the second education Man has to move in the full direction belonging to his creation and *that is to do this Work*. He must study this Work, he must think about what it teaches, and he must try to practise it. For example, at every moment, whether you are in the Work or out of it, you will meet with difficult situations, situations that, so to speak, catch fire. In this Work, if you are in this

Work, you must put out the flames that might spread. How? By doing this Work, whatever the situation may be. You must first of all remember yourself, because if you identify with an unpleasant situation you will be negative, and negative emotion is like petrol thrown over an event. I mean, everything blazes up. Once you begin to see that you are responsible for not letting things catch fire, you will begin to understand something of what the second education means. You will begin to realize that it has to do with the creation of another reality within you that is stronger than external reality.

*Amwell, 1.4.50*

### THE SELECTION OF THOUGHTS

There have been various remarks made recently concerning the idea: *Can we stop thinking?* We were taught from the beginning of this Work to try to stop our thoughts. Many people with a superficial understanding began to think that they could actually stop their thoughts. On the other hand, many of us found we couldn't, and eventually we were told that it was merely an exercise whose object was to make us realize that we could not stop our thoughts, as we are at present. We were then told some time later that although we could not stop our thoughts, we could select which thoughts we go with and which we separate from. Then came in the idea that we have, in connection with certain trains of thought, to make "stop exercise" within us. Put stop! This opened up my mind to the idea of what control we have over thoughts—namely, that we cannot stop trains of thought, because instantly another train of thought starts, but that we can make *inner stop*. Suppose I am walking in the internal city of myself and I begin to have a thought which I have already observed always leads me into the slums of my inner city—i.e. into direful negative states. If I know something about this internal psychological city of myself I can stop going down that train of thought, that evil slum. Understand, you cannot get rid of that evil thought in the slum of your internal city, but just as in the natural physical world you can avoid going down low and dangerous streets, so you can learn to stop yourself from going down such psychological streets. I began to understand this when I found that if I began to think of a person in the older Work, whom I disliked very much mechanically, if I followed the train of associations in regard to her, I always found myself in a very bad place in myself. It was no good expecting that she would change. It was myself who had to change and not follow unpleasant associations that I had unfortunately allowed to grow up unchecked by any inner observation, with the result that the very mention of her name made me become negative.

Therefore please understand that you cannot stop your thoughts, and here I will give an example, one of many in which I was trying to stop my thoughts completely—i.e. I was stopping my thoughts and sitting in an uncomfortable position with some pain attached and the next moment I found myself thinking: “You are trying to stop your thoughts and you are sitting in an uncomfortable position in order to help you.” Therefore you see in stopping thoughts I think other thoughts about myself stopping my thoughts. It was about this time that I realized that this exercise called stopping your thoughts was given us in order to make us understand that we could not stop our thoughts.

Eventually, then, I realized that although we cannot stop our thoughts, we can select our thoughts. I mean, we can select which thoughts we go with and dislike thoughts that we know quite well by observation always lead to the worst slums in our own psychology. Although we have very little will and therefore ‘cannot do’ in the ordinary sense, we always have some power of selection in our interior world. If we always select evil and false thoughts we have not a very good greenhouse. I mean, we grow nasty little things in our greenhouse, such as cacti! In short, we are not very good gardeners. Shakespeare speaks of our wills as gardeners, to the effect that “If we will plant nettles or sow lettuces . . . supply it [the garden] with one gender of herbs or distract it with many; either to have it sterile with idleness or manured with industry, why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills.”\* And, as is often mentioned in the Gospels, we have to throw away the weeds and select the best plants and water them and manure them. So you will understand that, as regards the whole question of one’s thoughts and what one should do with them, one has the power of growing nettles or discarding them like a good gardener. We can select our thoughts. We know what they are only through long observation, and we know where they lead us in the internal psychological city that is ourselves.

Now one way of getting out of a bad thought is by putting your attention into something. If you simply leave your life to the automatic work of associations you are not in charge of your life. If you notice, if you can by self-observation notice, that you are coming to a wrong place in your inner city of yourself, you can come out of it by attention. Now if you have some understanding of the Work behind you and some evaluation of it, this may prevent you from going down the slums of yourself, but as regards that you must have an aim of some kind and you must get into that aim and it will save you from going to Soho or Whitechapel or Limehouse in yourself. You must not think that the Work becomes easier as you grow older. Quite the contrary. But you must find by that time that you are holding on to something that you want to do and give your attention to it. And in this connection never think that death ends life.

\* *Othello* I.iii.324 . . . .

## ON THE FORMATION OF A PSYCHOLOGICAL BODY

I have seen several mis-statements during the past few months about the Four Bodies of Man. Figures mean nothing, diagrams mean nothing, unless you understand the principle. I might as well say there are eight bodies called 1, 2, 3, etc. That will help no one. Before the Four Bodies are even formulated we have to begin with the principle which is as follows. Man is given by the Universe an organized physical body which works, but not a psychological body. The physical body that Science and Medicine try to study is ordered. When a child is born it has this organized body that works in a marvellous way. The child is born with its heart beating, its blood circulating, with a digestive tube all ready to work, and so on. This really is a marvel. Now a child grows up and becomes surrounded by Personality. It begins to have a psychology. So we all grow but our psychology is not organized into a body. In fact, psychologically we are a kind of chaos as opposed to order. We have no psychological body organized or in any way comparable with that of the physical body. I mean, the physical body is ordered but the psychological body is not. From one explanation of the further bodies we start from the idea that a man is many 'I's entirely contradictory when he should have one I which controls them. This I would call a first glimpse of what second body might mean. I am talking of many 'I's as a man's ordinary psychological state which is not that of an organized body. Life will not give us an organized psychological body. It is a luxury. Only through esoteric teaching and work on oneself does the formation of an organized psychological body become possible as distinct from the physical body.

Understand then the principle of another body. It is a possible development. As we are mechanically we have no psychological body. We are unfinished, incomplete. If you understand the principle behind the idea of the formation of a psychological body, I will go on to quote what Mr. Ouspensky, quoting G., says about the subject: "These four bodies are defined in different teachings in various ways. The first is the physical body, in Christian teaching the 'carnal' body; the second in Christian terminology, is the 'natural' body; the third is the 'spiritual' body; and the fourth, in the terminology of *esoteric Christianity*, is the 'divine' body. In theosophical terminology the first is the 'physical' body, the second is the 'astral' body, the third is the 'mental' and the fourth the 'causal'. In the terminology of certain Eastern teachings the first body is the 'carriage' (body), the second body is the 'horse' (feelings, desires), the third the 'driver' (mind), and the fourth the 'Master' (I, Consciousness, Will).

"Ordinary man does not possess these bodies or their corresponding functions . . . The chief difference between the functions of a man possessing the physical body only and the functions of the *four bodies* is



that, in the first case, the functions of the *physical* body govern all the other functions—in other words, everything is governed by the body which, in its turn, is governed by external influences. In the second case, the command or control emanates from the higher body . . . In the first case, that is, in relation to the functions of the man of physical body only, the automaton depends upon external influences and the next three functions depend upon the physical body and the external influences it receives. Desires or aversions—‘I want’, ‘I don’t want’, ‘I don’t like’—that is, functions occupying the place of the second body, depend upon accidental shock and influences. Thinking, which corresponds to the functions of the third body, is an entirely mechanical process. ‘Will’ is absent in ordinary mechanical man, he has desires only; and a greater or lesser *permanence* of desires and wishes is called a strong or weak will. In the second case, the automatism of the physical body depends upon the influences of the other bodies. Instead of the discordant and often contradictory activity of different desires, there is *individuality*, dominating the physical body and its desires, and able to overcome both its reluctance and its resistance. Instead of the mechanical process of thinking there is *consciousness*. And there is *will*, that is, a power, not merely composed of various often contradictory desires belonging to different ‘I’s but issuing from consciousness and governed by individuality or a single I, a single and permanent I. Only such a will can be called ‘free’, for it is independent of accident and cannot be altered from without.” (*In Search of the Miraculous.*)

Finally, at this Season of the year, I will quote St. Paul’s words about the Resurrection:

“But some will say, how are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die: and that which thou sowest it may chance of wheat or some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the Sun, and another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness: it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance, etc.” (I Cor. xv.35-44).

## THE RAY OF CREATION

Recently there has been talk about God. Some people say: "Why do we not talk about God in a direct fashion?" The Ray of Creation illustrates God. It is a diagram of God. In the Ray of Creation all proceeds from the Absolute, which means the unconditioned. The Ray says that everything starts from this Unknowable called the Absolute, which divides into Three Forces and then into the Law of Seven. That is why it is said that God is hard to understand because He is first One and then Three and then Seven. I do not understand why some say that the acceptance of the Ray of Creation is nothing to do with reason but must be an act of faith. The Ray of Creation says that we are all part of something else. Taking it quite literally—that is, sensorily, or naturally—is it not quite true that our Sun or Solar System is part of our Galaxy and is composed also of planets of which we take one called the Earth with its child the Moon? I do not see that the Ray of Creation is unreasonable to the logical senses and has to be accepted as an act of faith.

Someone asks: "What does Divine Intelligence mean? Is it not the Intelligence of God Himself?" No—not of the Absolute. Now we pass from the literal meaning of the Ray, as it is shewn to the senses. We must understand that our external visible Sun is really part of the external visible Galaxy called the Milky Way and designated in the Ray as the note La, our own Sun being designated appropriately as Sol. But the Sun is also in us. As I said, we must pass now from the physical meaning of the Ray to the psychological meaning. Taking the Ray of Creation psychologically, it represents levels of being rather than external physical objects. A person who is on the level of being called Sol would have divine intelligence in comparison with our own, but in comparison with the intelligence of our Galaxy the intelligence of the Sun is not divine. And the intelligence of all the Galaxies united must be very close to the Intelligence of the Absolute, which embraces All. In speaking of this, Mr. Ouspensky said on one occasion that to a dog we have divine intelligence. We can make things, we can open doors, we can cook food, which to the dog is absolutely marvellous—namely, divine to the dog. So the dog sees divinity in his master—that is, divine intelligence in comparison with his own. But for us to imagine that we, as we are, could get directly in touch with the Intelligence of the Absolute would be foolish. Is it not said in Scripture that Man's intelligence is foolishness to God? Notice that we are taking the Ray of Creation not only as an external thing visible to the senses, but as an internal thing existing in ourselves as levels of understanding, comprehension, and intelligence. So we have the task of ascending ourselves. The Ray of Creation is within you—up to a point.

One person says: "God is all power for Good." But the Creator of

the Universe, the Absolute, may have quite different ideas from yours as to what is good for His immeasurable creation. Once you use the word God too familiarly, I fancy you really mean what *you want*. Remember that the Absolute in manifestation becomes Three Forces, two opposing forces and a neutralizing force. I have already called attention several times recently to these three aspects of the Absolute, one creative, one preservative, and one destructive. If in creation there were no destructive force, there would be no meaning in it at all. In fact, it would be impossible. The sea would become solid with fish in a year or two. However, we are allowed to catch fish and eat them, and other aspects of the destructive side kill us too. From the point of view of the Supreme Intelligence, all this is necessary, it is all good to keep the machinery running. Do you think this is a very difficult thought? If you do, reflect on it, because the Work says that everything eats everything else and it adds: "We should try to be eaten by the right people"—namely, Archangels, rather than devils. But of course if you are sentimental, and in consequence not able to think very clearly, you will think it horrible that a cat kills a mouse. Yes, the Work says we must try to be eaten by the right influence. If we serve life only, however successfully, we shall be eaten by influences which are wrong for us, because we were hiddenly constructed to come under a different neutralizing force from life. Life does not develop us. Do you not think a farmer who sees weeds growing amongst the wheat and feels sentimental about them will be a very bad farmer unless he does something about them? And we are told not to let negative emotions have too strong a growth in the mental field of ourselves. What are you going to select in this mental field? What influence? What God? You have got to check many things in yourselves and you have got to do it, as you will see for yourselves. You have got to make inner stop about thoughts that lead you down to the slums of yourselves. You do not have to save the weeds, but eschew them, that something else can grow up in the psychological country, the field of your mind, a little better than what was there formerly. So therefore God is selective and if we want to understand on our level what God is, reflected down the Ray through increasingly mechanical laws, we must understand (we can only understand through esoteric teaching) what it is we have to do to obey God—that is, follow certain influences.

The Divine Intelligence of the Sun is, as I said, God for us, and I suspect that this Intelligence throws out every form of negative emotion. This is clearly not like our Intelligence which so easily harbours negative emotion of every kind. But after a time in the Work you will find that behind all you are trying to do there is another Intelligence in you, an Onlooker, which is Real I in yourself. I suppose I have never been more conscious in myself of this other Intelligence which stands behind and looks on at what I am trying to do with Nicoll and all his devils. Yet I cannot get in direct touch with this Real Intelligence, but I am aware of it. It is entirely uncritical and yet when I feel the presence

of this Intelligence I know that I am wrong in myself. I realize that all this time I have mistaken who I am. Now this feeling of another Intelligence behind any intelligence that I have is the beginning of the feeling of Real I, and, as G. once said: "Behind Real I lies God." But G. added that not all the Ray is represented in us.

As you know, the Work says we are covered with many overcoats or, as Ibsen says, Man is like an onion with many skins which can be peeled off, and G. used that image. Christ said: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you", and therefore God is not outside you but within you, and the pathway of the Work is to reach the Real I, behind which lies God. If you have anything real in you, if there is a kernel in the onion, this thing I mean that questions life without being bitter, by peeling off these coats or onion skins, you come closer and closer to what is really yourself. I do not say that this God that stands behind Real I is the Absolute. It is for us *relatively* God—i.e. Divine Intelligence compared with our own. Would you like to meet the Absolute who is controlling the whole of Creation, who is conscious of every movement in every Galaxy, every Moon, and every atom, and who keeps the whole thing going? Would you care to meet an Intelligence on that scale? Don't you see it would blast you? For us, if we could rise to the Intelligence of the Sun, which is a small body among celestial Beings, it would be far and away enough for us.

Now every expansion of consciousness leads to a development of intelligence, leading to more consciousness of ourselves and of other people connected with us. This is a development, a growth of intelligence, and if we practise this long enough and undergo all the temptations, all the attacks of 'I's in us that do not wish the Work and hate it, if we defend the Truth of the Work and are passive to attacks on it, then after a time we will become aware of this Intelligence that I spoke of that is behind everything that you do and is at present an Onlooker, quite uncritical, quite impersonal. This, as I said, means that you are approaching Real I, behind which God lies—i.e. the God that belongs to our level of Being and is Divine in comparison with our own level. Each higher note in the Octave of the Ray of Creation, when we try to ascend it as by a ladder, is divine to us as we are and therefore God to us. If you will handle the Ray of Creation intelligently in yourselves psychologically, you will see what I mean. Speaking in terms of the Ray, we have below us the note Re, represented externally by the Moon, and above us the note Fa. Fa therefore represents a relatively divine intelligence compared with the note Mi. And again Sol represents a much higher Intelligence through the development of inner understanding, and I fancy that most of us would be marvellously content if we could sometimes touch the Intelligence represented by Sol internally and the Sun externally. But try to conceive for a moment what preparation would be necessary. If our Higher Centres came through we would go mad. So, the Work says, we must work on lower centres and prepare them for the possible reception of Higher Centres.

Higher Centres are God to us—but notice they could destroy you if wrongly approached.

*Amwell, 22.4.50*

## ON WILLING WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

People often say: “What is this Work about? What should I do?” The general answer is: “You should give yourself the First Conscious Shock.” Then people say: “What is the First Conscious Shock, which I understand is Self-Remembering?” And then they quite naturally go on to say: What is this Self-Remembering? The First Conscious Shock in terms of the diagram means that you have to bring in Carbon 12 to transform incoming impressions. I have often told you that this Carbon 12 which should intervene between impressions and how you mechanically take them is really the Work itself. As has been said, if you could see incoming impressions before they act upon you mechanically, and put the Work itself between your reception of them and your mechanical reaction, you would begin to know what Self-Remembering means, which really is Psycho-transformism.

To-day I will speak to you about one method of Self-Remembering in terms of the following Work-phrase: “Try to will what you have to do.” I once said by way of commentary that when the telephone rings you must not let it take you to it but go to it. By this I mean, will it. To will what happens to you has a most marvellous issue in your own relationship to Second Force. Of course, if you are going to the telephone sighing and groaning and saying: “Why should I have to do this?” do you not see that you are making life full of Second Force? On the other hand, if you will what you have to do, for instance, scrubbing the scullery, as I had to do at the Institute, peeling the potatoes, lighting the fire at dawn, and all the rest of it—if, I say, you will it, there is no Second Force there. So if, therefore, I will what I have to do, I will reduce Second Force, but if I hate what I have to do I will increase Second Force possibly so much that I will become a nervous wreck.

When I was a pupil of Dr. Jung in Zürich, he said one day: “I have to go and address Zürich University in Psychiatry (he was a professor there) on the idea of psychological factors in insanity.” (This was the beginning of what was then called Psycho-Analysis.) After we had been talking for a long time in his villa, he stood up and said: “Come, Nicoll, I have to give a lecture to-night at the University. Of course, it will be hopeless. No one will believe what I say. But come, Nicoll, *let's go to it.*” Now, I ask you all, was that willing what he had to do? How many of us when we have a job of any kind really say to it: “Now,

we have to do a job; let's go to it." This is one form of Self-Remembering, to take your life from the standpoint of always being up against Second Force in which case you can do it quite easily and you do not suffer afterwards.

Now this is all I have to say about this aspect of Self-Remembering—namely, taking in impressions more consciously—in fact, transforming them by willing what happens. As regards myself, I find I have to will that I am getting older—that is, I have to will that I cannot lift, build, dig, etc., and instead of feeling up against it all, I have to will the fact that I cannot do these things.

I was talking to some people about this idea of willing what happens to you and one person said: "Don't you think it applies to the smallest things, willing to wash the dishes, to do the stove?" For example, if you have children, you have to will their existence. Suppose you have practically no money, you have to will the fact that you are a poor man. As another example, I will give you this. Say you are sneezing—try to will yourself to sneeze. This is for discussion. Some experiments were made about the power of yawning as imitation of Moving Centre. People were told they must try to yawn in imitation of the first yawners and no one yawned. If you make a thing more conscious it is less liable to upset you. So we are told in this Work that we must bring a more conscious attitude to the whole of our lives—to will what is inevitable.

\* \* \*

This Work is called Psycho-transformism. What does Psycho-transformism mean? It means psychological transformation. What does psychological mean? It means how you behave psychologically. Yes—but what does "psychology" mean? Say you hate a man, a woman: that is psychological. Say you like a man or a woman: that belongs to the psychological side of yourselves. Is this clear? Can you now distinguish between your physical body and your psychological body? Now, if your psychological body is based on hell—that is to say, envy, hatred, malice, etc.—then that is where you are, wherever your physical body may be.

Now understand that you can transform incoming impressions. Your formerly dear friend, woman or man, is an impression. How you react to that incoming impression is up to you.

## WHAT WE HAVE TO OBSERVE IN OURSELVES

We were talking last time of the many different meanings of the First Conscious Shock that enables a man no longer to have a mechanical reaction to life but a more conscious reaction to what happens to him. We spoke about willing what you have to do. Now we will talk about what we have to observe and separate from. Someone said to me recently: "I understand we have to observe ourselves, but why?" The object of self-observation is to observe yourself *from what the Work teaches* that you must observe yourself from. People always imagine that they observe themselves already. Most of you have heard this many times. But in the selective self-observation laid down in the Work there are definite things that the Work teaches you must observe in yourself; so, in answer to all questions about self-observation, we must once more come back to this thing endlessly taught, endlessly not understood: we must observe ourselves *along the lines that the Work teaches*. People forget this and so make self-observation useless.

Now we are taught that we have to observe certain things in ourselves for the reason that if we do not see and separate from them, we will not get in touch with inner development or with Real I or with Higher Centres, which is the object of the Work. This Work teaches you to become aware of, to become conscious of, and so to separate from exactly what blocks you, hinders you, from getting in touch with what you really are essentially created to be—that is, what essentially you were created for in this developing Universe. A person says to me: "Why should I have to go on observing myself?" I might say to him: "Yes, but what are you observing?" He might say to me: "Oh, I am just observing that, for example, I left the gas on, I forgot something, I gave twopence to a beggar, I missed the bus, I did not like the report in the *Daily Mail* of that play, and so on." May I tell you that all this has nothing to do with self-observation in the Work-sense. What we have to observe from the Work point of view is that we are asleep and mechanical and in that connection through this shrewd self-observation the realization that we do not remember ourselves slowly comes in. Of course, people can fight against this, and even go out of the Work when they are told that they are machines and do not remember themselves. Yet the first line of conscious selective self-observation laid down by the Work is to realize gradually that we are asleep, that we have no centre of gravity, that we are controlled by outside events, and that we swing between hating and loving, liking and disliking, yes and no, in everything. However, this is difficult for us to realize. It is a supreme realization and may mark a turning point that has to do with reversal. But it is gradual—a long process not attained by any short cut.

So let us pass to an easier thing that the Work teaches as regards

the necessity of observing oneself according to what is taught in the Work. The Work says, for example, that we are always identified with everything. No sooner does one thing happen, such as a rise in your investments, and you feel rather good, than the next moment a bull or bear, or whatever it is, comes along, and you feel depressed. Does not this mean that to this extent we are a function of what happens in external life and eventually that external life controls us? Yes, it means simply that we have nothing internal yet that can resist the ups and downs and swings of the pendulum of external life. We have no moon *in ourselves*. In brief, it means that we are identified with life and not distinct from it. Yet we deny this owing to False Personality. This is a very happy field in which to observe yourself and will give you many results if you observe yourself, but always in the name of the Work, for this gives a trace of Self-Remembering. Then we have another great field in regard to which we are told to observe ourselves, and this is the vast field of being negative. We are, for example, told, in regard to the practice of self-observation from the Work point of view, that we must observe our negative states and really see, really observe, that we are negative for quite a considerable part of our daily life. And it is said in the Work that unless we separate from negative emotions we cannot get any help from Higher Centres and that means from Higher Intelligences above us in the Scale of Being indicated by the Ray of Creation. Yet we refuse to understand this. Then again we are told to observe ourselves from the point of view of not always self-justifying. I suppose that none of us has really perceived deeply enough through internal self-observation that whenever we are accused of anything at all, rather than see the truth of the accusation, we always want to justify ourselves. Is there anything more tedious than to listen to a person who is always justifying himself about something that everyone knows he did wrongly? So we have all these wonderful things, for example, like the Sermon on the Mount, that has to do with the poor in spirit. Can you imagine a man rich in spirit who always justifies himself ever seeing he is in the wrong? Then again comes in the tremendous factor of observing yourself when you are internally considering. Consciously to observe yourself internally considering is one of the most interesting things you can follow. You must remember that all internal considering is based on thinking that other people have treated you badly and you have treated them extremely well and this is a great source of blocking our passage, our way, to inner development, that we all feel we are lacking, without understanding what it is that is lacking.

And then comes in the observation of when you are lying. Of course, self-justifying is lying, internal considering is lying, and really almost everything we say is lying in a way—such as saying ‘I’. Now intelligent self-observation means that you become conscious of what you were not conscious of before, so the Work when followed and practised will supplant what we have in us already, the acquired con-



science, and make us see this deep Buried Conscience that we all have inherent in us because we all have the materials of the Work in us but we have forgotten. We have fallen asleep. Once we knew them and then we fell asleep and now we have to wake up and get them all back again.

I will only add this, if you are unaware of a thing, if you are not conscious of a thing, how can you change it? You cannot, because you *are* it. So the exercise and discipline of what the Work teaches is to make something awaken, so that we can practise inner separation, and here I specially mention once more separation from negative emotions, so that we can come in touch with what we once were and touch that. All the things mentioned are what shuts the mind internally to light from Higher Centres.

*Amwell, 6.5.50*

## ENTROPY

### INTRODUCTION

I will talk to you first of all about the idea of entropy in Physics. The older physicists thought that the Universe was necessarily dying because the Sun was giving out heat and the planets were warming up gradually so that the time would come when there was no interchange of energy in the form of heat between the Sun and the planets. Now the Work taught at the beginning of this century that the Sun was getting hotter and everything was growing, not dying. It is clear that if the Sun were getting colder and the Earth getting hotter, after a time they would be at equal temperatures and no exchange of energy would take place. This condition is called maximal entropy. It means that there is no interchange of energy between two things. The older physicists taught a continual increase of entropy until a maximum was reached when nothing could happen—for, in order that anything can happen, a flow of energy from one thing to another is necessary. This is a brief note to introduce a short paper about decreasing entropy by work on oneself.

### THE IDEA OF ENTROPY TAKEN PSYCHOLOGICALLY

We speak once more after a long time about entropy. We have already noticed how occasionally modern scientific ideas and conceptions correspond in a way with the esoteric ideas of this system—as, for example, the idea of a growing Universe, increasing in energy and size, which is common to both. Now if you have a kettle full of hot water close to a kettle full of cold water in an enclosed space, the hot kettle will give its heat to the cold kettle and after a time they will reach a

similar temperature. That means that no exchange of energy will then take place between them. Such a condition as was mentioned is called "maximal entropy". No one can define what entropy means, but we can see that minimal entropy will initially be present when you have something at a very high energy-level, so force will flow from one to the other. When no further interchange of energy takes place between the two things you have maximal entropy and therefore, so to speak, death. Yes—and psychologically speaking, I mean psychological death.

Now supposing that we try to translate this into psychological language. Here is a man who no longer takes in impressions. He is uninterested. He is bored and hates everything. What is the state of his psychological entropy? It is nearly maximal. I mean, he does not exchange anything with either the outer world or his inner world of thoughts and feelings. If you call the outer world the hot kettle and the inner world the cold kettle, then as long as he is bored he will not take in impressions or force from the hot kettle. After a time the outer hot kettle and the inner receptive kettle no longer have interchange. Once they are brought into equilibrium there is no interchange between outer and inner so his entropy is maximal, and so he is psychologically dead, which means that there is no interchange between outer and inner. This can easily happen even in middle age. On the other hand, you can find a person who is getting old and who is still interested in rare stamps, ceramics, pictures, etc. His entropy thereby is lessened. In other words, one should keep up interest, however old one is, in something or other, or one's outer and inner kettles get to the same temperature and no interchange of force between them is possible.

Now supposing the Work is taken in by a person. He can find a new source of energy. He begins to observe himself, he begins to apply the Work-ideas to himself, he begins to exchange energy with the Work. He ceases to be, say, so self-complacent. He feels more empty, more in need. He begins to see that life is not what he has taken it as. Why does this man begin then to grow again? Because he has reduced his entropy now. He no longer has the entropy coming from False Personality and imagination about himself. He begins to see that he is not the person he thought. Instantly energy begins to flow between outer life and inner life into him. A person who is full of self-complacency and filled with his own self-admiration will soon get to a psychological state of entropy which is maximal. As long as he is like that, he will begin to die psychologically. But if he ceases to be so full of self-admiration and makes a place in himself where new ideas can enter, the interchange will no longer be the same, because there is a quite different state of himself and he will get interchange of energy, which means, not death, but life. You know a boring person who is quite content with himself. As long as he has no relationship between the outer kettle and the inner kettle, there is no exchange of energy passing. Once such people begin to see that they have to *change*

*themselves*—undergo *metanoia*—no longer regard their inner kettle as they did, they will be beginning to give up an internal psychology which has prevented them hitherto from taking in any new impressions. I remember Mr. Ouspensky once saying to someone: “He is so full of self-admiration that he cannot take in anything which might go against his self-admiration,” and I think that some of you can realize that state. But if you begin to observe yourself sincerely, from the Work point of view, and realize that you are not a good, virtuous woman, or man, you will find that you will decrease your entropy and you will find that you are not a good virtuous woman, or man. You will make yourself more passive and so energy will flow in from the other sources and give you new energy. All this Work is to reduce entropy in yourself. Thinking that you are always right, for example, will increase your entropy, and so approach spiritual death. The Sermon on the Mount is to reduce entropy. Study it carefully. The more you see you are not what you think you are, the more is entropy decreased psychologically in internal life. Every time you see you are wrong you make it possible for new energy to flow into you. There was a long time ago a School called Kenotics. Kenosis means to empty yourself, to let something in. This Work also teaches this idea. And the practice of it leads to the *Reversal* spoken of in some of the diagrams. So begin by trying not to be so full of your delightful and charming self. Become passive through self-observation and you will reduce entropy in yourself.

*Amwell, 20.5.50*

### **NOTE ON SELF-OBSERVATION**

One object of self-observation is to make us feel distinctly our own existences. We are carried along on the tide of life in a state of sleep. We scarcely feel our own existences any more than does a machine. But although we have become asleep and like machines, there is one great difference. The machine cannot become conscious of itself but we can. Now unless we observe ourselves we will keep on doing the same thing over and over again without knowing that we are doing so. Only a special memory can shew us our mechanicalness. Some people still think that by self-observation they can at once arrest or change what they observe. I assure you it is impossible. But continual self-observation will make you gradually more and more aware that you always do this or always do that, or always react like this or like that. A special memory is formed. This is why the Work says that self-observation should be uncritical. It is, as the Work teaches, letting a ray of consciousness—namely, light—into yourself. It gradually

reveals, not criticizes. But it will take a long time before this ray of light let in by self-observation will lead to any inner change in yourself. You must not think that simply because you observe for a moment that you are negative *that* will make it impossible for you to be negative again. Amongst many ideas that I have had, connected with self-observation, one stands out in my memory. I once said to Ouspensky something as follows: "Do you not think that the realization that we are always repeating our behaviour, our emotions, our thoughts, which we take as conscious, becomes distasteful only when we realize that we are machines? Everyone thinks he acts consciously at every moment, but when he realizes it is the machine, not him, that causes him to act as he does, he dislikes the idea." I then said to him: "So Man has a fundamental hatred of feeling he is a machine?" He said, in so many words: "That is exactly the point. A human being who takes himself as conscious in everything he does or thinks or feels is greatly shocked when he realizes that he is nothing but a machine that always behaves automatically in the same way."

The Work teaches us that Man is not born a machine but he becomes one without knowing it. If he realizes that everything he does, says, thinks and feels is the work of a machine in him, he will hate being a machine and wish to be something different. This gives him force. But only self-observation over a long time begins to shew us that we do behave mechanically—as machines—and that we have been doing this for years and years. It is then that change is possible in a deep sense because the self-love weakens and so force is set free and not bound up in the self-love.

Now observe your centres. Observe how you behave mechanically *in each centre*. Again, observe your most mechanical 'I's: they dwell in the most mechanical parts of centres. Notice them and keep on noticing them. Gradually something will alter.

Self-observation is the knife that begins to separate, to remove, what you take as *you*, from what is real. Everything real leads to Real I: everything false leads to False Personality. But it is the dislike of being mechanical that gives the force to separate from the false. The illusion that we are conscious cleverly prevents this and keeps us asleep. The self-love will not permit us to realize that we are not conscious. So we justify all our behaviour.

## COMMENTS ON A REVIEW OF "IN SEARCH OF THE MIRACULOUS"

This is the season of Whitsuntide which commemorates that point in the early Christian Church when the disciples received the gift of understanding. It is said that when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit they were able to speak to every man in his own language. Now we must understand that this was after the Death and Resurrection of Christ. Is it difficult to see the psychological meaning of this? The death of yourself as you are and the resurrection of yourself in this Work will make it possible for you to understand one another. What prevents us from understanding one another as we are mechanically? This Work says it is impossible to understand one another unless we have a common language which we learn in this Work. The difficulty of course lies in the fact that we will not learn the language of this Work which makes it possible for us to get into some communication and so not to quarrel but begin to make relationship to one another. But a certain death must take place first in order to enable this to become practical even on the smallest level. So the Work says that one of its objects is to enable us to learn a common language from which we can begin to understand one another, and to do so we must die by successive stages to Personality. Of course none of us has gone through the spiritual experience of the complete death of himself and resurrection to a new individual. It can only be a gradual process.

Now I was thinking about what I should write a paper. As I understand the Work more I find it difficult to know what to write about. There are so many sides and parts of the Work. I was saying to someone to-day that it is like knowing something about France. What shall I write about concerning France? Shall I write about the wines or about the different places that I have visited, or about what they eat in France or what their customs are? Should I speak about Northern France or Southern France or about the casinos or the cathedrals? And so, on opening the last number of *The Times Literary Supplement*, I came across a review of Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous* and I read it with some interest, and thought: "Let us talk about 'France' as it were from this angle." This man who has reviewed Ouspensky's book was careful. Let us see where he is as it were right, or possibly wrong, in this review of the System as written about by Ouspensky. First I must tell you all that when Ouspensky was sent by Gurdjieff to England to start teaching he gave Ouspensky the task of putting Gurdjieff's teaching in writing, and in the earlier chapters of the book, which belong to the earlier days of the Work in England, Ouspensky gave a very good portrayal of Gurdjieff and how he met him and what he was taught by him. He wrote these chapters which it was then our task to vet, so to speak, chapter by chapter, as regards his

language. That was in the earliest days of the Work in this country.

Now let us consider the review of *The Times Literary Supplement*. I will quote the opening paragraph: "No doubt some future student of the spiritual situation following upon two world wars will tell us why the second of those periods threw up so few new 'teachers', whereas in the early twenties the European scene was crowded with them. True it is that M. Sartre with his somewhat sterile doctrine is always with us. But who is there with whom he could share the burden of prophecy? After the First World War we could feast on the Teutonic gloom of Herr Spengler or on Keyserling's extravaganzas; follow in the esoteric footsteps of Rudolf Steiner and Krishnamurti; from Russia emerged Nicolas Berdyaev, a formidable intellectual personality; and last, but not least, there appeared, also from the Slavonic depths, George Gurdjieff and P. D. Ouspensky." Now I will just make a little comment here myself—namely, that Ouspensky was Slavonic, but Gurdjieff was Caucasian, a Georgian, and he did not know Russian properly.

The reviewer goes on to speak about the people who followed these teachers, in a manner not exactly critical, but rather condescending. He notes apparently with surprise that Ouspensky's book will add to the number of his disciples. Although *In Search of the Miraculous* purports to be an account of its author's collaboration with Gurdjieff, the reviewer finds that "there is quite as much of the author himself in it, and this seems one of the rare cases where the commentator proves almost more important than the subject of his observations." He says: "*In Search of the Miraculous* is undoubtedly a *tour de force*. To put an entirely new and very complex cosmology and 'psychology' into fewer than four hundred pages, and to do this with a simplicity and vividness that makes the book accessible to any educated reader, is in itself something of an achievement."

The reviewer goes on to explain that "the basis of the Gurdjieff-Ouspensky doctrine is the 'Ray of Creation' and the division of the universe into seven cosmoses, each of a three-dimensional nature". Further he speaks of the idea that the moon feeds on the organic life of the planet earth, and the idea that at some distant future our earth will become a sun. So you understand that this falls in very well with modern Physics which says that the Sun is getting hotter. To quote further, he says: "However startling such contentions may be, they form a logical, even inevitable part both of Ouspensky's cosmology and 'psychology', for the laws that govern his macrocosm are identical with those to which every microcosm is subject. Thus he attributes to every entity, organic or inorganic, however large or small, its individual intelligence. His fundamental law of life is the 'law of octaves'. Man is for Ouspensky an unconscious automaton with no power of independent thought or action. Though in his 'normal' state a mere machine, he can become 'conscious', provided he can make himself realize that he is 'asleep'. Only then can he make the effort to break

out from his prison of sleep. Self-remembering and self-observation can gradually enable him to displace his sleep-personality by his true 'essence' . . . What Ouspensky aims at is a transformation of man sufficiently complete to bring him into a close and conscious relationship with the universe at large. It is impossible either to accept or to dismiss Ouspensky's book on purely religious or on purely scientific grounds. While he employs the logic demanded by science, only those who can reach out beyond the limitations of science, and throw off the blinkers with which materialism inevitably narrows our field of vision, will be able to accept him. On those who hate having their conventional conceptions disturbed, the book will act with the force of dynamite. But whether we accept Ouspensky's system or dismiss it, at a time of so much spiritual weariness and intellectual stagnation, we should be ill-advised to neglect it." You will notice that by the end of the review "the Gurdjieff-Ouspensky doctrine" has become in the reviewer's mind "Ouspensky's system".

It is interesting to see what this reviewer says about Ouspensky's book on Gurdjieff's teaching. You can all see that he is inclined to take the point of view that it is important *both* for scientists and religious people. I am not going to add any comments because I think all of you in the Work should be aware that these ideas expressed in Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous* are beginning to make a certain link between what is called science and what is called religion, which are at present at variance.

*Amwell, 3.6.50*

## **ON TRYING TO SEE WITHOUT NEGATIVE ASSOCIATIONS**

We have heard on many occasions that if we could see without mechanical associations laid down in us we would really see what things or people are like. Unfortunately impressions fall on a network of associations and prevent us after a certain age from seeing the essential meaning of things. We see life, as it were, through a thick network, a spiderweb, of associations, and in consequence we never really *see* anything or anyone. Most of these associations lead down to negative parts of centres. When we have a moment of love we may be exalted above the negative power of Emotional Centre and anything we see falls on centres themselves and not on the network of associations overlaid on the centres. I remember such a moment in which even the buses, the uproar, the rain, the traffic, and the grim faces of the people, did not touch associatively any part of negative Emotional Centre. I was free momentarily. That is why this Work says that we must work on negative associations because so many impressions stimu-

late this negative part of us, which, if it is not separated from, shuts all Higher Centres and their influences off from us. Now one cannot, save rather artificially, look at anything *without* associations. And if this could be done, we would lose ourselves completely. But we can gradually see things without so many negative associations. On the occasion when I experienced this momentary state I mentioned I perceived nothing negatively and so knew at once that I was in a special state which would very soon fade but which was quite wonderful while it lasted because it gave a sense of freedom. At the same time I did not see *everything* without associations, because that would have been very startling and frightening. I once had a patient who had undergone some war-strain and wounds, who sitting, say, by his fireside with his hands on his knees, would look at his hands and not know what they were and look at his wife and not know who she was. This terrible experience usually ended in some sort of fit. Now I am not going on with this conversation about associations. I will only add that to make an aim not to see what you see always through negative associations is a very good aim for all your life and gives you a feeling of living more consciously, the feeling of being more conscious of what you are doing and thinking.

In this connection I want to speak now about *attitudes*. The Work teaches that we have to put something in between the reception of external life as sense-impressions and the way we take these impressions. This is fundamental in the practical side of this Work and has to be repeated again and again until we begin to see what practical work on oneself means—i.e. the transformation of impressions. If no *consciousness* intervenes between the reception of impressions and the effect that they have on us we are technically asleep. Yes, we can live, talk, argue, quarrel, eat, move about, but all the time we are nothing but machines worked by sense-impressions coming in and our unchallenged mechanical reactions to them. I think from my experience that after many years one suddenly begins to see what it means to work—that is, to give oneself the First Conscious Shock.

Now attitudes prevent us from working. We are full of attitudes acquired through upbringing and the influences acting on us in our earliest youth. The Work, amongst other definitions, defines an attitude as something that makes you react without thinking. A man who puts his elbows on the dining table may be a wonderful musician or poet but all that you can take in about him is that he puts his elbows on the table and therefore an acquired attitude causes you to judge him in an inadequate way. The attitude works without thought. But in this Work we should *think*.

I will quote once more what Ouspensky said. He said: "*Attitudes never think.*" They originate in the Intellectual Centre and work by themselves. They work automatically. For example, a person's Intellectual Centre, such as it is, is usually nothing but fixed attitudes, and almost always negative attitudes, so that the Intellectual Centre



cannot be used for individual thinking. Attitudes work automatically. When a person is speaking from attitudes you should know at once. You become bored, you begin to yawn, you feel you must make some excuse to get away. Why is this? It is because he is not thinking from himself. If you see a person full of attitudes and nothing else, you will know at once that it is impossible to speak to this person. In short, you will know that you cannot free his or her thinking from these acquired attitudes that have blocked the Intellectual Centre and made it impotent.

Now, to close this paper, we can understand that to free ourselves from negative associations, we must try to observe our attitudes, as they are usually negative.

*Amwell, 17.6.50*

### **ON "KNOWING" AND OBSERVING HOW WE BEHAVE MECHANICALLY**

Recently someone commented on the great difference between knowing and observing. We can say: "I know what I said and I am perfectly certain I never said that," but suppose that what you know you said is reported in detail you will find out that there is a tremendous gap between what you know you said and what you actually said. The next thing is that it does not particularly matter that you did not observe yourself at a certain moment, unless you assume that you *did* observe yourself. For example, a person will know that he was cross but through lack of real self-observation he may have no idea what he actually said and will of course be naturally very surprised when he is told what he actually said, which he did not observe. In other words, he did not know what he said from the Intellectual Centre but he observed dimly that he was angry emotionally. Observing what you say from a certain negative emotion is quite different from merely knowing that you were cross. It is observing from two centres instead of one. The simultaneous observation of all centres is of course beyond us at our present level, but we should try to observe our Emotional Centre and our Intellectual Centre together. If all of you could only observe what you said in a certain emotional state, when it recurs, you would have that strange feeling that consciousness gives—namely, that you have said all this before. This will begin to take the force out of the negative state. In other words, you will begin to disbelieve in your mechanical self. Every negative state, every negative emotion, connects up at once with certain gramophone records in the lowest part of the Intellectual Centre so that you say over and over again the same typical things that belong to this particular negative state. And you

do not observe it, until you suddenly one day say to yourself: "Have I not said this before many times?" This means an increase of consciousness. This Work says that we are what we are because we are not conscious and yet attribute consciousness to ourselves. When, for example, I become conscious that I have said all this before, I receive a shock, because we are all born with an inner dislike of being purely mechanical people, and we hate to think that we are saying something that we have said over and over again. So the gist of this paper is that we should observe not only vaguely our emotional state but the words or gestures or expressions that accompany this state—and this means to observe two centres.

*Amwell, 24.6.50*

## KNOWLEDGE AND BEING

Someone said recently at a group that the Work-teaching that knowledge and being are different is very difficult to understand. Now the Work teaches that *understanding* is the most powerful force we can create in ourselves. Also it says that we *can* understand more if we are willing to make the effort to do so. To *know* and to *be* are different. To understand what you know will begin to link your knowledge to your being. But merely to know will not change your being. To change your being it is necessary to receive new knowledge—such as being told that you are asleep and cannot do because you are not one enduring permanent I, but many shifting 'I's, which all have their own will at the time and make you act according to their own temporary will. So you say and do all sorts of silly things because these 'I's with their own will have got charge of you for the moment. Yet at the time you *think* you have a Real I and a Real Will. This is your illusion of being always conscious in everything you do or say. You think that I does, whereas IT does—namely, this machinery of 'I's that you take as yourself. All these illusions must be destroyed, however much your False Personality suffers, because the Work is to overcome illusions about yourself—such as "I am very kind-hearted", "I only wish well to everybody", and especially the idea that you are a good man or a good woman.

The beginning of overcoming illusions about yourself is by seeing that you think you are good, always wishing well, without observing that you probably also hate and wish evil even towards the same person. You may be perfectly certain that if you are identified with your False Personality you think you are kind and generous. That is, you have a picture. So to overcome this illusion you have to see that *in practice* you are nothing like this. Your illusion of being always conscious

must be destroyed, however much your False Personality suffers. This, indeed, is useful suffering—and leads you to inner change. But all useless suffering, such as standing on your head or slimming, or eating coal—leads to nothing but an increase of False Personality, which feeds on merit and self-praise—that is, it supports Imaginary ‘I’. The gradual attack that the Work, once received, makes on this Imaginary ‘I’—that is, the illusion that you are a person with a real, permanent I—is deeply interesting to watch in yourself. It takes years—yes, all your life—to observe the slow switch-over from Imaginary ‘I’ to the beginning of Real I, and you certainly have to undergo shocks and painful moments in the process to attain an unalterable stability. So much has to be stripped off—so many skins, so many coats. G. used the onion, and O. the many overcoats, as a symbol, or rather, illustration, here. Some of these skins or coats belong to one centre, others to another, but they are all subservient to the “Cruel Lord”, as it is called in the Old Testament (Isaiah xix)—namely, False Personality—that makes your life miserable and unhappy because it is not *you*, and causes you to feel hurt and is so full of sharp thorns.

To return to the original statement—namely, that it is difficult to see the difference between knowledge and being—let me ask you this question: “Do you *be* what you *know*?” Suppose we are speaking in ordinary life-language and have been lucky enough to have received some good education. Let us also suppose that we are at the level of Good Householder—that we are relatively responsible people, and realize that we have to take some share in life and play a part in it, instead of thinking we should be helped over every stile and commiserated with upon every little setback. Now if we are not the “tramps” or “lunatics” that the Work speaks of when it refers to people who are not at the level of Good Householder, then we have some slight knowledge that we must not do certain things that will hurt or at least incommode other people. We realize that to cosh your grandmamma is not quite right, and so on. Also we realize that to lift a few silk or satin underclothes off the counter is again not quite right. So we have a certain *life-knowledge* acquired from patient parents and teachers. Yes, but can we *be* this knowledge? In a way, yes, but if life-standards vanished, would we? Possibly we might. But in this case your being is a life-being and not a Work-being.

Now, to come to the knowledge of the Work and change of one’s life-being. Knowledge of this Work, such as that we are negative and must struggle to the end of our lives not to fall into the open hell-mouth of negative emotions—I say, knowledge of this Work is clearly one thing and life does not teach this special knowledge. But your being will not change as long as the knowledge of the Work lies simply in your memory. This knowledge must be *understood*, before we can *be* what we know. For example, no one can ever remember himself unless he understands, through self-observation, that he *is* asleep. To try to self-remember without understanding that one is asleep is useless.

It is only by applying the Work to oneself in one's own particular case that one can realize what Self-Remembering is. If you do not know what it is to observe you are asleep, how can you remember yourself? In this connection I will add something. Try to observe what particular person you go most asleep about, the person with whom you are most negatively identified. Once you have acknowledged this—that you are identified, that you even do hate—try to make this particular occasion of being asleep an occasion of Self-Remembering. You cannot just remember yourself in *general* about nothing, so to speak, for there is nothing to work *on*. You cannot just go about looking down your nose and thinking you are remembering yourself. This is most important—you cannot remember yourself unless *you know through sincere observation that you are asleep* in some specific sense. Then you must awaken in this part of yourself and try to *be* what you *know*. It is necessary to *be* what you *know* by working on yourself. All this brings us to the 'Octave' of the Work, one note of which is the application of the Work to your being. This leads to new being and its refreshment. The subject of the Work, each one of you, is yourself. So, unless you observe yourself, there is nothing to work on. The link between the Work taught on the blackboard and your being is self-observation, without which you can never join the knowledge of the Work to your being and *be* it. Negative emotions are the greatest curse of life in yourself and others. Humanity is governed by them. Observation and separation are necessary all your life. Yes, but can you **BE** the Work? In short, can you *live* the Work, not merely remember it? If you try to live it, it will feed you all your life.

*Amwell, 1.7.50*

### **THE MIDDLE COMPARTMENT IN THE THREE-STOREY FACTORY**

Let us take to-day, in studying the everlasting subject of negative emotions, which as you all know lead down to violence eventually, the idea of Man as a three-storey factory. Man takes in ordinary food, air and impressions. Now let us trace the fate of the transformation of ordinary food into higher hydrogens. Food comes in at the number 768, which is derived from a level in the Ray of Creation, or rather from the three Octaves of Radiation which are nothing but a brief, contracted résumé of the Ray itself. Ordinary food comes in as a passive Do into the body, meets the transforming forces in the stomach and is digested—that is, transformed—from, say, a beefsteak into much subtler molecules which can enter the bloodstream. (I am speaking very roughly.) It comes in as a passive substance and is acted

upon by an active substance called carbon, the result being that it passes from the state of matter 768 to the state of matter designated by the number 384 by being acted upon by Carbon 192.

Now let me remind you all that no transformation is possible except with a passive substance which is called in the Work an "oxygen". If, for example, a man starts from the idea that he can do, no psychotransformism is possible. Now let us continue. This substance designated 384 is acted upon further and becomes 192, and then again is acted upon further and becomes a substance alchemically designated as 96. Now this is placed in the middle compartment of the three-storey factory. It is called Fa 96. We are speaking of the transformation of literal food into hydrogens in the three chemical laboratories—namely, the lowest compartment, the middle compartment and the upper compartment. Now supposing the middle compartment is negative. If you are negative—that is, if your middle compartment is negative—it is comparable to a laboratory that is, as it were, drenched with water, or even poison. Therefore Fa 96 will not be made properly and you will lose vitality. But suppose that Fa 96 becomes Sol 48 in the upper compartment, this means that the beefsteak has become a substance that can be used as thought. Then, mysteriously enough, it has to come down again to the middle compartment as La 24. Now, if it comes down like that into the middle laboratory and if you are very violently negative in the middle compartment, it is comparable to an explosion in the laboratory, so the substance called La 24 is broken up and cannot go down to its real destiny, which is to develop itself fully to Si 12. Therefore, with this brief note about alchemical hydrogens in the body, you can see how very dangerous it is if the middle compartment of the three-storey factory is governed by negative emotions. It will interfere with the uprising octave and interfere with the down-going octave which goes into the lowest compartment as a highly developed substance called Si 12. From this we can see without much meditation that being negative will on one side decrease your resistance to illness and on the other side weaken your sex. It is most important to keep this second compartment pure. As G. said, most illnesses are due to psychological causes. So we can understand that indulging in and enjoying our negative emotions will interfere with our physical health and sex energy.

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MECHANICAL AND CONSCIOUS EFFORT

We understand that the general idea in this Work is that Man is asleep, but that he can awaken if he makes the right efforts. Let me ask you what you understand about effort? Supposing you come to a difficult passage in something you are reading, you have to make an effort to understand it; otherwise you will simply pass it over and go on to the next paragraph which is perhaps more easily understood. Effort, therefore, means concentration of some kind. How often do I cast aside an article on the Cosmos from the scientific point of view, promising myself that I will study it later. And how many times do you think that I do study it later? I can say quite truthfully practically never, but occasionally.

Now consciousness does not grow from mechanicalness. Increased consciousness, which is the object of this Work, can only grow through effort. You may think that you all make efforts such as getting up in the morning, cooking eggs or making meals, catching trains, but these are not efforts, although you might connect them with efforts; they are mechanical efforts. Do you see that from the standpoint of the Work a mechanical effort is not an effort in the Work sense? It is your mechanicalness that makes you do these things. If you don't catch that bus you will lose your job at the office, and so on. So you can see that you are not making the effort, but *IT* is making the effort. Now for heaven's sake don't think that to make conscious effort is not to catch a bus to the office, not to cook eggs, etc. This is quite a silly idea of effort such as many people used to have, standing up in empty buses, or eating coke, or some such absurdity.

We have got to study in this Work what the Work means by effort as distinct from mechanical effort. O. once said that the whole of nature has to make effort. The hard-working birds have to lay eggs, rush about all day finding food, feed their young, and then as often as not fly to Africa and many of them will die. But this is mechanical effort and therefore not effort in the Work sense. It is nature driving them. It is laws. It is a necessity in the same way as our lives on this imperfect planet demand necessary effort in order to exist. We have to do what we have to do, and if we do what we have to do, we may get to the level of what is called in the Work—Good Householder. But the Work starts from another level in its definition of what efforts we have to make. Suppose you are running for a bus to your office and you are cursing and swearing, then, do you understand from what you know of the Work already, that you are negative? Now, where then does the Work effort come in? We must make *extra* effort to do such things without being negative and without being identified. Life does not demand this extra effort—this other kind of effort.

Now to-day I want to talk to you about identifying, which is so closely related to being negative. We do not realize how much we are identified and so under the power of things. What is the opposite, or let me say, antagonistic state to being identified? The beginning of the power to remember yourself. Now all Work-efforts lie beyond mechanical necessity. They are extra. They are not necessary for the living of ordinary life. They belong to another level of ideas. Work-efforts are connected with what the Work teaches, and we must gradually distinguish between needful mechanical effort and these extra efforts which the Work teaches us to make and life does not. Life wishes to keep us asleep. So try to distinguish in your mind between necessary mechanicalness, and the extra efforts which are needed to change the level of being, that is, awaken from the sleep in which we are caught in the vast machinery of mechanical life called Nature. We can serve Nature or not. To serve Nature is not to work.

I will add one thing, namely, that if you *will* consciously what you have to do out of necessity, you will be in a different state right away, and will be working on yourself. But I leave it to all people who are teaching this Work to explain what the conscious efforts are that we have to make, and of which I have talked so many times. To repeat them all once more would mean I should have to repeat the whole Work.

O. said the only emotion we really know is the emotion of being identified, and that we have no real emotions because we are always identified and worried, anxious, negative, about everything that happens to us. To have pure emotions would mean not being identified. How marvellous! To *will* and to be identified are different. So try *willing* what you have to do out of necessity, and working on necessity. For instance, you can *will* to catch that bus. Mechanical effort out of necessity is not conscious effort, but the *willing* of it will make it conscious. To *will* what happens to you will lift you above mechanicalness. To *will* a thing is not to complain. To complain about your life is not to work. I do not mean only externally, in speech, but to think in your spirit. To argue from the senses is, again, not to work. Physical sight may be the clumsiest way of understanding things. Esoterically, sight means insight—that is, understanding. Taking things as you see them will make for complaining, and complaining is not understanding.

## THE IDEA OF BALANCED MAN IN THE WORK

Let us talk to-day about that strange figure that the Work speaks about called *Number 4 Man* or *Balanced Man*. In order to do so it is necessary to refer to the first three categories of Man: Number 1, Number 2 and Number 3 Man. The Work says that the centres in the lowest compartment—i.e. the Sex Centre, Moving Centre and Instinctive Centre—are the basis of mechanical life, and I would add, from my observation, especially Number 1 Man, whose centre of gravity lies chiefly in Moving Centre.

Consider how many people in this world are occupied only in moving matter from one place to another—lorry-drivers, coal miners, and builders, and so on. This all belongs to the functions of Moving Centre. I remember when I was at Bart's we had an excellent physician called Garrod who said once to us: "Is it not extraordinary how so many of these patients are simply engaged in moving something from somewhere to somewhere else?" Then of-course you get a Number 1 Man who bats balls (which is again removing matter from one place to another). Golfers and footballers and hockey-players and tennis-players all move the ball about and cricketers endeavour to hit it as far away as possible.

In Number 2 Man the centre of gravity of his being is in Emotional Centre. This may mean artistic creation if he is developed and if not it will mean liking or disliking, swinging to and fro. Let us consider Number 3 Man equally briefly. Such a man approaches everything through an intellectual theory. He feels that logic and reason govern life or should do so.

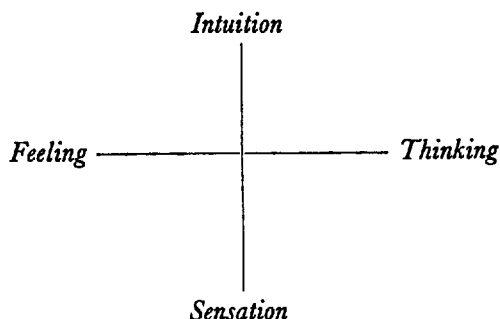
Now all these types can be said to be one-sided but Number 4 Man, this strange figure called Number 4 Man, Balanced Man, can use all his centres for their appropriate functions. If he has to clean out a pig-sty he does not use Emotional Centre. He simply sees a mass of filth and sees that he has to remove it and realizes that reacting to it emotionally is not advisable. However, when he has washed and dressed, he may enjoy a conversation about the Work. But the average farmer is a Number 1 Man and he will be too tired to develop his other centres. He may be thinking of that corn or that pig, etc. You cannot imagine a ploughman behind a single horse trying to think of a good, dramatic play, because he would be in the wrong centre for his job, and his furrow would be crooked. The idea, then, of Number 4 Man is that he can use each centre for its particular job.

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Now there are several teachings, apart from ancient ones, about this idea of Balanced Man. My first teacher, Dr. Jung, teaches that Man has four functions: Intuition, Sensation, Thinking, and Feeling,



and that a developed man must be able to employ all these four functions.



Now this is also what the Work is talking about, although it does not refer to Dr. Jung's four functions, but tends to speak of three functions—intellectual, emotional and physical. This Work says that your undeveloped functions, whatever they may be—namely, your undeveloped centres—must be made to grow before you can approach the state of being called Number 4 Man. That is why the Work teaches you to consider whether you are sure that you are approaching a situation with the right centre. So if you have to pick up a match off the floor you have to use Moving Centre. Suppose you think someone else ought to do it you are using Emotional Centre and you will not pick up the match or you might drop it, especially if it is not a match but a tea-cup or plate. And then of course you will utter the usual modern complaint: "Why should I?" The grip of Personality wrongly formed by mechanical associations is really a terrible thing once you begin to see it for yourself. As long as you are under the power of False Personality you are worked from outside life but suppose you begin to see that whatever your job is you have to do it yourself and not pretend to be what you are obviously not, then you can begin to understand the Path or Way to become Balanced Man. I said the other day that a man of great being is a man who never complains and therefore a man or woman who is always complaining has small being. What is small being from the Work point of view? It means that you do nothing from yourself by seeing the necessity of it from yourself. Once you get to this way of dealing with life from yourself you begin to move towards Number 4 Man or Balanced Man. I would add from my own experience with myself that this is the beginning of trying to live more consciously. If you have not your own conscious motive you are a mechanical figure governed by the changing circumstances of external life. Once you take a grip of yourself you realize that whatever the circumstances you have to do your job, you have to do what you have to do, and you will do it much better if you thus will it. Therefore we were talking recently about willing what happens. Now such an attitude will begin to develop your other functions. So I say to you:

“Will what you have to do in daily life. Will the necessity and that is the extra effort that will make you Balanced Man eventually. In other words, I mean, left to yourself in a situation that demands the use of another centre that you do not usually use, try to use it and then it will develop. Otherwise you may always call on someone else to do anything.”

Now, to conclude this short paper on this mysterious figure called Balanced Man which can only be reached by constant effort in everything we do, let us take all three types of mechanical man as follows:

123, 132, 231, 213, 312, 321.

All these types have to develop to move towards Balanced Man. 123 has to develop 2 and then finally his most undeveloped function 3, and so on.

*Amwell, 22.7.50*

## **THE POSITION OF MAN IN THE RAY OF CREATION**

As long as the Work lies only in your memory it will not have any effect on you. For that reason it is necessary to think for yourself about the ideas of the Work which lie in your memory. To think about the Work means that your inner self thinks about what lies in the external memory. Then what happens is that your inner spirit, which is the part that really thinks for itself, begins to connect with the ideas of the Work. In other words, it is necessary to reflect on the ideas and make them your own, as far as you can, in your inner thinking.

You have, for example, the idea that Man is asleep and possibly that you are also. As long as you have this down only on the black-board of your memory you will never see what the idea means—i.e. it will never make your inner man think—I mean, the essential Man—the spirit of your thought. Having lost contact with Higher Centres long ago, we have to be taught the ideas of esotericism through the senses. And if you make what you are taught through the senses combine with your own inmost thinking, that will begin to change you and re-establish connection with what you have lost. So you will realize that one of the things that we have to do practically is to think deeply internally about the teaching of the Work.

One of the things that the Work teaches is that we are part of Organic Life. Organic Life is like a sensitive film of living substance spread over the Earth and its object is to form a link between Fa and Mi in our little Ray of Creation. Let us think about what it means to come between Fa and Mi in the Octave. As you know, it is said that there is always a gap between Fa and Mi in a descending Octave or,

if you like, between Mi and Fa in an ascending Octave. Organic Life is a pain-factory that transmits the force between Fa, the planetary world as a whole, to Mi—that is to say, Organic Life as a pain-factory is deliberately created to be a connecting link between the upper part of the Octave and the lower. For that reason, Organic Life is called a Nitrogen or Neutralizing Force between the upper and the lower parts of the Octave. Sometimes it has been said in the past that Man is the Broken Rung in Jacob's Ladder or, if you prefer, in the Ladder of Increasing Being. We must understand that this Jacob's Ladder is not a straightforward ladder. At a certain point of it a volte-face is necessary. This can be seen very clearly in the Table of Elements. Put as simply as possible, it seems to say that Man is both Heaven and Earth and when he reaches a certain point in his development in life which is called Good Householder, which we might represent as being at the level of Mi, he cannot grow unless he turns his face the other way and begins to take in the spiritual meaning of this Work. Yet at the same time, owing to this possibility, he must hold both Earth which is below him and Heaven which is above.

But it is now necessary to add that Man does not really appear in the vast Ray of Creation save through the influence of what is called the Sun which sends down a little Side-Octave starting with Do at the level of the Sun and sounding Si at the level of the planets and on the Earth-level sounding three notes La Sol Fa. Now that strange thing called La Sol Fa is what is called Organic Life on this Earth, this sensitive film of suffering and pain, which enables the force to pass from the upper part to the lower part of the Octave. The Work mentions this strange idea that the Level of Being designated by the Sun would not have created this sensitive connecting machine so as to enable the force to pass from Fa to Mi, unless it got something for itself—namely, Man's development up to its level. For that reason, that Level of Being represented externally by the Sun made Man a self-developing organism so as to save him from the groaning creation of Organic Life. As St. Paul says: "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God," and "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together" (Rom. viii.19, 22). It is possible to think that this means that the putting down of Man from the Level of Being called the Sun was not done unless there was a way of escaping from the pressure of this groaning creation. For that reason Esotericism was sown into the Earth from Conscious Influences and Man was made capable of receiving these esoteric influences and thereby was not bound to suffer the general fate of fishes, birds, insects and animals that belong to the pain-factory itself. So if you reflect on this you will see that Man need not suffer uselessly if he once learns how to suffer consciously by following the ideas of this Work in his inner understanding and not purely externally.

Now you cannot receive this teaching unless it belongs to you. We know very well that Good Householder is simply Good Householder

but if he has Magnetic Centre he is above simply being Good Householder. That means, his level of being is higher than is necessary simply to be a mere Good Householder of which there are millions. Who is looking for something? Who has felt from his earliest age that something is wrong and life does not explain itself? Such a man has Magnetic Centre. Such a man may by force of circumstances (or perhaps not really that) be led into this Work without knowing that he has the possibility of Magnetic Centre, but once he has met this Work and considered it and reflected on its teaching he will develop his Magnetic Centre.

All I have said is to make you reflect on the peculiar position of Man on this Earth—namely, that he is between two things.

*Amwell, 29.7.50*

### **POSITIVE EMOTIONS**

The Work says we do not know *positive emotions*. We are taught that the ordinary emotions that we have, such as feeling rather happy, can easily change into their opposites: whereas positive emotions cannot change into any opposite because they come from Higher Centres which include the opposites. Just in the same way, Higher Mental Centre does not think from Yes or No, but from Yes and No together, so emotions that come from Higher Emotional Centre have no opposites in them. We are also taught that positive emotions come as rewards. We cannot induce them. But if we have worked at non-identifying, against negative emotions, and so on, and also tried to remember ourselves at rather critical moments when everything is going wrong, then we may have, sooner or later, a flash of this reward called a positive emotion which is utterly unlike any of the ordinary emotions that we experience in life. We are told that this Work has to do with the preparation of lower centres for the reception of the influences that are coming from Higher Centres all the time, to which we are not tuned properly so as to receive them. As I have often said, our lower centres are really receptive machines and they should hear the continual messages or influences that come from Higher Centres, but there is something wrong with them, they are wrongly connected, they are filled with wrong attitudes, wrong ways of thinking, wrong responses to external stimuli, and so on. And it is especially the Emotional Centre that is all wrong. It is said of the Emotional Centre that it is rather as if you put your radio machine under water and expected it to transmit aright. For this reason I have sometimes said that we have to squeeze out this wetness from the Emotional Centre by a kind of pressure on ourselves by a to and fro movement, sometimes going in one direction,

sometimes in another, until it becomes dried—i.e. until the water is wrung out of it. What is this water? To continue the analogy, this water is being identified with your negative states all day long. Take complaining, for example. I prepare something carefully and someone else lights the fire with what I have carefully prepared. I become furious. Do you not see that I am caught? Do you not see that the state of my Emotional Centre is based really on violence?—because we understand from the teaching of this Work that negative emotions simply lead down to violence. For that reason the Work says that Man will never have peace on this Earth as long as he is based on violence, no matter what external modifications in the circumstances of his life are invented. In other words, the Work teaches that unless a man changes internally he cannot expect to escape from the prison-house of this life. In short, he cannot come under fewer laws but must remain under from 48 to 96 orders of laws, and if he is very negative you may be sure he is under 96 orders of laws. So we must understand that although we have great possibilities afforded us, we have not got the technical apparatus to realize them and the Work indicates the general direction in which a man or woman must go in order to get this disordered state rightly connected up so that these possibilities can be realized.

This is one way of thinking about the Work and it is extremely useful to use this way of thinking what the Work is about when you consider such sayings of the Work as “Man is asleep”, “Man cannot do, and in consequence everything happens in the only way it can happen.”

People say: “Why does not everyone wake up so that we can have a new world?” Now can you all see the answer? Do you find it easy to stop being identified with the tasks of daily life? Do you find it easy to stop self-justifying? Do you find it easy to stop internal considering—in fact, to flee from it? Do you find it easy to externally consider, to put yourself in the position of other people with their difficulties? No, of course you do not, so what is the good of saying: “Why does not everyone wake up?” if you find it so difficult to apply the technique of the Work to yourself? So it is necessary to connect yourself with something that will always remind you what this Work is about and if you reflect with the inner spirit of your thought upon the meaning of the Work and give it time and space in your mental life and also try to practise it both in your internal life and your external life and your relation to other people, you may get, quite in a haphazard way, a flash of positive emotion, and then you will know that the Work is true and then indeed you will have a point in the Work which nothing can move. As G. once said: “I want a man to reach a stage of understanding this Work so that he can be bent, twisted and turned and yet he will always point in the same direction.”

I will add only one thing: You must not let this Work grow cold in you. The alchemical teaching of the Work said you must not be more than eight hours absent—otherwise the Work gets cold. Only

now can we work, and if you say: "I am going to work to-morrow," you will not be able to do it, but unfortunately we have so many misleading 'I's that are always saying things to us, such as: "You are so tired," and the trouble is that we believe in these 'I's and so fall asleep again even from the tiny level of awakening that we have reached. It is necessary to observe 'I's that want to mislead you all the time in this Work, because they hate the Work, since they know they will eventually die.

*Amwell, 5.8.50*

## A NEW WAY OF THINKING

One way of understanding the present situation of the world, especially in Western Europe, is that people want new associations. The old associations by which we used to think no longer mean anything. What used to have some value now no longer has the same value. In other words, everyone wants something different from what was. I must first of all draw attention to the fact that we all think from our acquired associations, due to what we are taught in early life. Once upon a time these associations that govern our words and thoughts were "truth". As many philosophers have said, truths last only for a certain time and ultimately become worn out. One of the teachings of this Work is to get new associations, new truth. I find myself at my stage of the Work very dead when I think with my old acquired associative thoughts. No doubt this was one reason why I was to find new truth and therefore new associations and therefore new ways of thinking. However, you will all understand that a person over a certain age hates anything new—that is, new associations in his mind. In such cases it is no good to try to change anything. In regard to the fact that we all think through our laid down associations, which may be very effective at the time, it gives us a glimpse into what mechanical Man means—i.e. Man who thinks from his old associations always. It is the greatest mistake to believe that an ordinary man can think apart from his mechanical associations. And I fancy that here lies a great deal that we do not understand about other people whether older or younger than we are. Each age has its own associations, whereby everyone thinks, and yet none of us sees it. The problem therefore is to change these associations in order to develop our own thought and our own understanding, and, as you know, the Work is about *metanoia*, or change of mind, which means thinking from quite new associations. And I will add that so many people do not see that this is the case—in short, that the meaning of the Work is to change the way you think, and to change the way you think is to change the usual associations whereby

you have hitherto thought. So if we try to look at the whole world in a visionary way we see that all nations probably are feeling the desire to think differently and not according to the old paths of their associations in which they were brought up.

Why does Communism, for example, have such strength? Simply because it gives new paths of association. Or again, for example, Surrealism means the seeking of new associations accompanied by hatred of old associations, so the Surrealists put an eye in one corner, and a leg in another corner, in an attempt to break the old associative paths. Behind this blind impulse we must understand there is the attempt to find new associations everywhere. In short, Surrealism is an attempt to find new associations and to get away from the old ones which are now worn out, and so it belongs to this universal impulse to get away from old thoughts.

I read the other day a definition of Surrealism which seemed to be fairly clear. It goes as follows: "The idea of Surrealism is based upon belief in the superior reality of certain forms of association previously neglected, in the supreme power of dreams, and the disinterested power of the mind." This is rather interesting, if you can hear it with your mind. There actually *are* higher associations. It means, in so many words, the search for new associations so that one thinks differently. Again I remind you of the fact that one of the great objects in the idea of Psycho-transformism is that we must and can acquire new associations whereby to think. This means that your old associative mentality will be no good for you if you want to undergo Psycho-transformism—that is, to transform your way of thinking. So once again we come to this question of *metanoia*, which means thinking in a new way. Now this teaching about *metanoia* is very ancient but it has this peculiar quality in it—namely, that it is based upon a new way of thinking that is quite different from madness and not haphazard. Haphazard or mad ways of trying to get new associations, from the standpoint of this Work, are useless. But people go mad to get out of associations. You can, for example, wear your boots on the top of your head or put your suit on the wrong way round or put an eye in one corner and a leg in the other corner of your picture. Yet at the same time one can comprehend that this is a blind attempt to get new associations, but it is an attempt without any goal behind it and so is meaningless.

The new way of thinking which belongs to the New Man in this Work is a definite discipline leading to a goal which is contact with Higher Centres which think quite differently from our lower centres. For example, to realize that one is asleep and has no Real I gives rise to entirely new associations about oneself and about life. In short, this is right Surrealism. Try to think for yourselves of new associations that the Work teaches us and see for yourselves what Psycho-transformism means in the Work-sense.

We are coming into a new aeon, a new age. An aeon lasts about

two thousand years and then its truth wears out. Then it is necessary to find new truth whereby to live, with new meaning, because the old meanings no longer conduct any force, but esotericism has always known this, and has always taught new meanings. And so we have amidst us the beginning of a new formulation of the ancient teaching to give us new meaning for life. Consider for a moment what the Work says—that you have no Real I and you are nothing but a mass of mechanical reactions to life. I say, think about this, and *think about it deeply*, and you will begin to see what the Work is about, but of course if your ordinary associative paths of thought are never challenged by yourselves you cannot progress. Do not think that this new teaching can be based on your old associative thinking. This Work is about an entirely new way of thinking, both about others, about yourself, and about life. Once you begin to see that, the Work will become a source of strength and meaning within you.

*Amwell, 12.8.50*

### CERTAIN SAYINGS OF THE WORK

Serious conversations in my experience do not seem to be much good. A person says to me: "I want to have a really serious conversation with you." The trouble is that so many values attach to this word "serious". What do you mean by this word "serious"? And again, what do you mean—to have a serious conversation with someone else in the Work, or with me? At one time I used to go down to West Kensington to have a really serious conversation with Mr. Ouspensky and found myself drinking a bottle of Montrachet with him, while he looked really beautiful and said: "How, Nicoll? What do you want to say? Have another glass of Montrachet?" And of course by that time I really had had something lifted from me because he had put me into another state in which all these dark and evil thoughts that belong to the general idea of being serious were gone. In this connection, what we do not understand is that we have certain states a little higher and certain states a little lower, states a little more conscious and states a little less conscious, and we do not understand ourselves because we take the present state or mood as representative of ourselves. In other words, we say 'I' to the state we are in. We give it *le sentiment de moi* (the feeling of I). But practically all our states are different forms of illusion which really base themselves on internal considering. A man to be free, a woman to be free, must not go with internal considering—i.e. with making accounts against someone else.

Now I am going to give you some of the Sayings that were put up on the walls of the theatre that we built at Fontainebleau and decorated



interiorly with coloured-glass windows, and all the rest of it. G. had these Sayings put up (in English, I think). The first one that I will quote is based on the idea that if a man gives up internal considering for external considering he begins to be free. Now before I quote this Saying of G. I would like to say to you: how much is all your life stuffed full of indigestible material such as thinking you have not been properly appreciated?

*THE CHIEF IMPLEMENT FOR LIVING FELICITOUSLY IN LIFE IS TO HAVE THE ABILITY TO CONSIDER EXTERNALLY ALWAYS, INTERNALLY NEVER.*

Now let us suppose that a man or a woman in this Work always wants to be properly treated according to his or her *illusion de moi*, their idea of themselves, they will collect, at every moment, negative impressions. Why? Because the whole object of the School at Fontainebleau was to destroy this internal considering which gives rise to so much jealousy, and so on. Of course, you must all understand that unless you begin to give this up you cannot do the Second Line of Work, externally considering other people and not always being negative about the way they treat you, or the Third Line of Work, which is getting quite beyond your private grievances and helping the general idea of the Work, and helping me. I still fancy that many of you do not study yourselves from the standpoint of internal considering or making accounts against other people for not having treated you quite rightly. In such a case it is absolutely necessary that a further step in the Work be taken, to give this up.

Now I consider the above translation of G.'s Saying a bad one, and I would suggest the following interpretation to make it clear because I hate the words "implement" and "felicitously": "Try to observe when you are making internal accounts through thinking that someone else has not treated you rightly and begin to think of the other person and of his or her difficulties. Begin to cease to make internal accounts which are endless and get on to a new level of thinking about how other people exist and about their difficulties and how you might help them by giving up your internal accounting—otherwise everyone will be your enemy."

Now let us take the first Saying on the list: *WORK HERE IS NOT FOR WORK'S SAKE, BUT AS A MEANS*. I would like to ask you all: do you not think it is meant that you must not take things externally but see what effect they have on you so that you can work on yourselves? *WORK HERE IS NOT FOR WORK'S SAKE, BUT AS A MEANS*. And so you must understand that coming down here where you get hit by me or by someone else has to do with this first Saying. If you get negative, you will not see what it is all about.

## ON TAKING IN IMPRESSIONS

Impressions are food—not physical food, but psychological food. We can understand that, in eating physical food, we can reject things that taste unpleasant and select things that are more agreeable. Unfortunately, we all, when immersed in life and worked by it, feed on negative impressions freely, and if we do not seek to escape a negative psychology, we will tend to listen with pleasure to unpleasant things. If you are always going to pick out something rather disagreeable that you have heard and communicate it to other people, you will do yourself serious injury, just as if you always picked out rotten food for your physical stomach. The mind is a stomach. What are you going to feed your mind with? Are you going to feed it with nasty stuff? Now a discriminating gourmet will put aside olives that do not taste right, caviare that is rather smelly, and so on, and he will select what he thinks is good food, but as regards the psychological food of impressions, do we apply the same elementary and obvious rules for the selection of what we are taking in from what we hear and see?

Some of you are talking badly amongst yourselves. I notice that some of you are full of scandals about this and that. Well, if you go on doing that, you will have a very bad stomach in your mind. One has to select impressions that one will accept just as one selects food and rejects bad food. You must learn to pick out reasonable things from what you see and hear and reject the dubious, unpleasant things. You are not a man or a woman in the Work unless you can do this and select what you will accept from all that you hear through your senses and have power of discrimination as regards your food of impressions.

As regards taking in negative impressions about a person whom you do not particularly like, notice if you are always eager to hear bad talk about this person. Now if you just accept this bad talk in an excited way, you will be furnishing your mind with bad food. That means that your mind cannot grow. Unpleasant thoughts, unpleasant hearsay, make a very bad food for you to grow with in this Work. Strangely enough, so many of you who are more or less new to the Work simply cannot see what is meant here. That is, you do not see that you have to filter everything given you by your five senses and select and discard. What is more easy in life than to whisper? What travels more rapidly than even light itself? Scandal. Now if you do not understand that a person is many-sided and has many likeable sides, you will not be able to discriminate about this person. In the same way, unless you see that you have a lot of unpleasant 'I's and also better 'I's in yourself, you will not be able to discriminate between what you hear about this person and what perhaps you think about this person. But as long as you take yourself as one person, you give

torture to everyone else, regarding everyone as one person, which is the greatest foolishness, as you will admit.

You are many different 'I's and the other person is many different 'I's. Certain scandals that you may hear about this person may apply to certain 'I's, but you will not judge this person if you know that you yourself are many different 'I's, some good, and some bad, and such thinking, such understanding, gives you the power of mercy—that is, of understanding. You may be able to say after a time: "Yes, I know that he or she is like that on one side, but from my view of the person, knowing that I have the same troubles with myself, I will not judge the person, knowing that I am the same." You cannot judge another person unless you have seen and judged yourself. You cannot be conscious of another person unless you are conscious of yourself. I said recently that there is no growth of being without an increase of consciousness. Mechanical being should not judge mechanical being. Otherwise it leads to hatred. More conscious being does not lead to hatred. But what is the starting-point of more conscious being? It is being aware that you are not one person, one permanent person, called I, but you are an Imaginary 'I'. The trouble in life is that one Imaginary 'I' judges another Imaginary 'I'. Can multiplicity judge multiplicity? Are you always right? Can Imaginary 'I' judge another Imaginary 'I'? In social life everyone is talking about everyone and in the end it comes to the fact that they are always right and the other person always wrong. Now as long as you all take yourselves as having Real I or Permanent I, you will think any other people whom you judge also have Real, Permanent I. So you will not forgive anyone. Where is your mistake? You are taking the other person as a fully developed, conscious man or woman who knows exactly what he is saying or doing. You judge them on this basis. This is the cruellest torture that can happen. What is the remedy? Self-observation—seeing that you have not got this permanent I that you imagine you have, which in the Work is called Real I. Once you begin to see from self-observation that you are full of contradictory 'I's and there is no such thing called I in your psychology, you will be much more merciful to other people and you will not pick out scandal as your favourite psychological food. The whole point is to pray for the neutralizing force of the Work, which comes only through self-observation, and then you can forgive others and be more at peace.

## **A B AND C INFLUENCES THAT ACT ON MAN ON THIS PLANET**

If you think only from the senses you have a certain type of mind which is not the same mind that the Work teaches you to create in yourself. Thinking that the Sun obviously goes round the Earth and all the starry hosts accompany it is thinking based on the evidence of the senses. This gives you a mechanical or natural mind. That is, you have the evidence of the senses as the ultimate criterion. But this mechanical or natural, external mind based on the evidence of the senses is not the mind that this Work seeks to make in you. Everything that the Work teaches, if you come to reflect on it, has little or nothing to do with the external senses or with that form of mind which is built up in us all from this source. You know that the Sun does not go round the Earth every day although the evidence of the senses makes it look like that. "This life's five windows of the soul distort the Heavens from pole to pole," as Blake said. The kind of mind that the Work seeks to create in you is a mind withdrawn from the evidence of the five windows of the senses. A man in this Work who has begun to observe himself no longer has the same feeling about the meaning of life. Why? Because the development of the inner senses through self-observation will make him see that there is another life not based on the evidence of the senses. So we must distinguish between what for the moment I will call a sense-based mind and a mind based on the Work. The Work teaches, for example, that if you are evil in motive there is something wrong with you quite apart from whether what you are doing brings more money. The external mind thinks: "This is a good thing, let us get on to it and make some more money." But, if you have begun to develop an internal mind, you see that you are doing a lot of harm to others possibly. In short, you are telling lies which work very well in life, but these lies that seem so easy, especially if you are a clever business man, will not lead to your internal development and you will not be fulfilling the central point of the teaching—i.e. that we were created as self-developing organisms—and of course you all understand by now that self-development is an inner process and that you have to separate lies and truth interiorly. I often think that this is one of the most important things to understand but although it has been emphasized for a long time I agree with you that it is very difficult to see the difference between what the external or natural or sense-based mind thinks and what we are supposed to do in this Work—i.e. to observe that we are lying and to try to alter our inner psychology which I call the psychological mind. The swamping, overpowering rush of life prevents us from being able to do this Work by self-observation. In this respect, let us take *A* influences. The Work teaches that there are three kinds of influences that play on us. One kind comes from the

Conscious Circle of Humanity, called the Kingdom of Heaven, which sows in material that can develop us internally and make Essence grow in the right way. The misfortune is that ideas coming from the Conscious Circle of Humanity, composed of Number 7 Man, in passing into life are bound to be changed into what are called *B* influences. As you know, in the Gospels you meet traces of *C* influences, but they are turned into *B* influences, which can be very misleading. O. once said something like this, that it is as if some servants who are serving at your table and hear thoughts, ideas, coming from conscious people, who are, so to speak, dining together (which means eating the same psychological food of truth and goodness) can only carry it away in distorted fashion. Owing to their level of understanding they miss a good deal of what is said and distort it. This, O. said, is how *C* influences are received by Man who is not in touch with Higher Centres.

Now let us come to *A* influences. The Work says that *A* influences are created in life itself and have no connection with *B* influences and therefore none with *C* influences. "What are these *A* influences that keep people fast asleep?" O. used to ask us sarcastically. "Look round at what attracts people very much," he said. "Why do people swarm in thousands to football matches and so on? You may think it incredible that *A* influences keep people asleep. Look around." I would like you to discuss what are these hypnotic influences that keep people asleep. Would you say they were collective influences in which everyone loses his individuality? Take a howling mob of people, as G. once said about war. When people are hypnotized by war they lose even the small amount of consciousness that they have been allocated. Have you ever seen yelling crowds and do you see that they have given up the small amount of individual consciousness that they could have? Now G. said in his solemn way that they are all feeding the Moon—that is, something below them. O. said: "Take the crowd at one of these yelling football matches, the whole lot of them are feeding the Moon because they have lost the individual feeling of themselves. All these mass-phenomena, all this screaming and shouting, mean that they lose the individual consciousness to which they all have a right." An excited man in a crowd ceases to have any meaning and is no longer the individual that he was created to be. He then becomes part of a mass phenomenon and therefore ceases to exist and loses the power of development that was given to Man as distinct from the animals. Owing to this loss of individual consciousness which typifies this age, people are throwing away all chance of individual development. This means that the god of this world has got the upper hand. A man must rescue himself from the hypnotism of life in order to do this Work, and if he does not, if he feels that the only thing to do is to be in the swim, he loses his possible identity and in place of it he has an identity card. How curious it is that nowadays no one can enjoy himself from himself but must belong to something and sign a paper in order to exist. That

is, people throw away their individual feeling of being distinct people. So I would like you all to consider what are *A* influences in life—i.e. influences created by life itself. The whole point is that *A* influences keep humanity asleep. Magnetic Centre, if it tries to get in touch with *B* influences, can to a certain extent distinguish between the two influences.

*Amwell, 9.9.50*

## THE HYPNOTISM OF LIFE

Whatever you enter into in life you get caught by. You cannot, for example, take up anything in life without being caught by it. All the things in life can be regarded from one point of view as *A* influences. I was talking to someone recently who was taking up journalism. I said to him: "Well, that is excellent, but you will be caught by it." Another man said he was taking up business. I said: "Excellent, but you will be caught by it soon." Or, let us say, a third man said he was going to become an artist. I said: "Excellent, but after a time you will be caught by it." What does it mean, this phrase, *you will be caught by it*? Of course, if we could really practise non-identifying, whatever the jobs offered to us in life, they would not catch us. But if I have just taken up journalism, as a free-lance, I find myself absolutely furious that my report was not accepted by my newspaper, but some other journalist had his report accepted. These are the many traps in life. But you have to be caught. You are no good unless you have been caught—otherwise you will not learn anything about life. There are so many traps in life of this kind that I would not like to try to enumerate them all. But I would ask you to try to see from this vision what life is like in this respect.

Now you know that the Work says that the object of life is to keep us all asleep and to prevent us from waking up. That is why life is constantly changing and nothing can be done to get us straight. One moment it is like this and the next it is like that, and we are like mass-hypnotized people who shift our heads in one direction and then in the other, because we cannot help it. To distinguish one thing rightly is a very difficult thing to do. We are all perfectly certain that we can do, that we know more about one subject than anyone else, so we are caught by this hypnotism of life.

What is this strange hypnotic sleep that we are all in, about which Gurdjieff used to speak so much? There are two things that we are told are different—hypnotism and suggestibility. Although it has been said many times over the last few years I don't think anyone has tried to see the difference between them. So let us approach it in the easiest possible way. Have you observed that you are very suggestible? Some

people say that advertising on the hoardings is a matter of hypnotism. Here you are, taking your inflamed feet along the queue, and you see: "Why not use so and so's ointment for sore feet?" and you decide to try it. Is this hypnotism or suggestibility? It is not hypnotism: it is suggestibility. I would like some of you here to give examples from your daily observation of yourselves to see where suggestibility comes in. Say I am not feeling too well and someone says: "I have never seen you looking younger." Is this hypnotism or suggestibility? Why, of course it is suggestibility. And possibly we have no idea how prone we are to act or react from suggestibility. Hypnotism is quite different. Now what do you think hypnotism consists in as distinct from suggestibility? O. said hypnotism was quite different from suggestibility. When I used to practise hypnotism in my early days, I once hypnotised a woman and she went right off into a hypnotic trance. I could see that she was really hypnotized. I said to her: "When you wake up you will sneeze in two minutes from the time you wake up," and she did. Now you cannot *suggest* to a person a similar thing. You can resist suggestibility up to a certain point, but if you are really hypnotized, as far as I can make out, you have no resistance.

Now let us come back to the fundamental idea that our second state of consciousness, the so-called waking state, is really a hypnotic state, and that we are deliberately hypnotized to be in this state. You remember the two farmers that control this earth? But perhaps I am going too far, so I will come back to say that there are some things that we are so convinced about in regard to ourselves that it is really hypnotism. A man will say: "I am convinced that I can do, that I have will, that I have full consciousness, and Real I." Nothing will be more offensive than for him to be told that this is all illusion. Here is where the study of hypnotism comes in. Now through the power of self-observation and the power of the Work you will be able to see this hypnotism that preys on everyone so subtly and thus you will be less under its influence. The hope of escape for Humanity is this Work, and it begins with the application of the ideas of the Work to oneself. This gradually begins to release you from the hypnotism which belongs to Humanity. Of course you have heard that the object of this Work is to awaken us from this strange state of sleep, which we call the waking state, and, as Gurdjieff once said, in so many words: "The hypnotic power of life is so terrible that we have to think of strong antidotes to wake people up from this hypnotism." And I will only add one thing, that when there is suddenly given to you, if the Work has chosen you, the extraordinary revelation that you are not what you thought you were, and that you are quite different from your pictures of yourself and your self-meritoriousness, etc., then you will begin to wake up from this hypnotic sleep which is called the so-called waking state of Man. The Conscious Circle of Humanity is always trying to wake us up from this hypnotic sleep. In short, the Work is to wake us up from this state of sleep in which we are so deeply immersed and in which we are so unhappy.

## ON MAKING PERSONALITY PASSIVE

Let us speak to-day of one of the most fundamental ideas of this Work. I say *one*, because there are many great and fundamental ideas that the Work teaches in regard to approaching Man and his situation on this earth. The Work teaches us that our task is to make Personality passive in order that Essence can grow. Personality is acquired by life and therefore is not essential, but the Work says that Personality surrounds Essence gradually in such a way that we feel after a time our centre of gravity as being in Personality and not in Essence. In other words, we mistake our feeling of ourselves owing to the strength of the acquired Personality. The Work also says that to change Being is to change Essence and not Personality. If you can get a development of Essence by making Personality passive in one direction or another the energy that would otherwise go into your acquired Personality would be deflected into Essence and cause a growth of Essence. This growth of Essence is called change of Being in the real sense. It matters not what acquired Personality you have in life as a successful business-man, doctor, actress, and so on. This will not cause a development of Essence. Essence is born in us. At birth we are nothing but Essence, but it is undeveloped. The difference is that by itself Essence cannot grow beyond the primitive state, so that the first stage of life is to develop Personality, but the second education is to work against Personality with the aid of the technique of the Work, and that will make Personality more passive and will allow Essence to become more active. Personally I have never found this difficult. No one can work on Essence directly but only *via* the Personality—i.e. by self-observation and working against certain features of the Personality, which is purely acquired psychological material in you. Therefore we are taught to try to observe our Personalities which are full of purely acquired attitudes, opinions, and so on, which we take as ourselves.

Now in trying to make Personality passive, let us say, *more* passive, we are following the Work and making it more possible for Essence to begin to grow at the expense of Personality. Personality surrounds Essence as the flesh of a nut, of an acorn, surrounds the germinal growing point. It is the same in the case of an egg. An acorn cannot grow into an oak-tree by increasing its flesh. It has to die so that the germinal point can grow at the expense of the flesh, of the nut. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit" (John xii.24). So our general task is to make Personality more and more passive, so that it does not take so much energy and keep us in a prison of itself. You must understand that all of you are in the prison of your Personalities with all their buffers, negative states, opinions and conventional thoughts. If you employ this Work as a tool, as a technique, you will soon see what you



have to work on at all moments in yourself. False Personality belongs to Personality and it is, as it were, the guiding devil of Personality. Personality drives us into life; Personality makes us behave in a thousand and one ways, and if we have any inner feeling in us we realize that it makes us feel very uncomfortable simply because we feel we are being used by something that is not ourselves at all. That is why this Work tells us to make Personality passive so that Essence can grow—that is, become active at the expense of Personality.

Your Personalities are the cause of all your unhappinesses. One person has acquired one form of Personality, another has acquired another form, owing to their different upbringings, so in life Personalities clash with one another, and all the unrest of the world follows through this. To make Personality passive is the great task and this task cannot possibly be undertaken unless each one of us begins to see what his Personality is like and what it makes him do and how it makes him behave under different circumstances. If we were developed from Essence there would be no such clash. It is our Personalities, guided by this devil, the False Personality, that make us so unhappy and at variance with one another. So try through sincere observation to see, to become aware of, one or two characteristic features that belong to your Personality, and try to separate. That is, try not to let the energy of your daily life run all the time into the familiar mould of Personality. You cannot save energy until it ceases to run down the familiar channels of every day moods, behaviour, every day mechanical speech. Unless you do this you will remain in the prison of your acquired Personality and will never quite understand what the Work is about. Once you begin from inner insight to work on Personality for your own sake you will begin to deflect energy from its usual paths and that energy, if you have the Work in yourself, will be transferred to the development of Essence, and you will begin to feel an inner strength that you have not experienced before, and you will begin to feel the development of Essence as distinct from Personality. The great task therefore is to make Personality passive, as I said, and you cannot do this until you can observe your Personality to some extent and see where it impedes you and drains you of force. The first step to this is to dislike the way you behave, because you all behave from your Personalities which are acquired and not really you. So in this Work one has to go inwards and get behind oneself little by little, so that one sees the Personality acting and does not agree with the way it acts. This is the first step. Take yourself for granted and you will never get anywhere in the Work, because if you justify everything that Personality does mechanically and do not begin to feel dislike of the way you behave, you will be identified with Personality and remain external, and you will not have any possibility of changing. In other words, Personality will still run your life at every moment, and you will agree with it at every moment. I ask you all finally: who of you has ever quarrelled with the way you behave or who of you has seen your mechanical moods?

I say to you, unless you begin to dislike some of these, you cannot make Essence grow. It is only from Essence that we can get understanding. The terrific noise of Personality with its guiding devil, False Personality, will prevent us from doing the Work. Our task is to make Personality passive little by little through observing it, and if any of you say you do not seem to understand this great fundamental teaching of the Work, I will tell you that our task is to make Personality passive so that Essence can grow.

Some people say that they do observe themselves. They say: "I see that I do this and I do that," and think that is all that is necessary. I would say that this is the first step certainly, but that you must begin to *dislike* behaving in this way, and it is just this dislike of yourself, which strikes at the root of your self-admiration or self-love, that is the beginning of making Personality less active and therefore Essence less passive. To justify what you observe is quite useless. Something has to pull you up sooner or later. That is, another emotion apart from self-love must begin in you and this emotion belongs to the nourishment of Essence.

*Amwell, 4.11.50*

## ON THE IDEA OF HAPPINESS

Why do some of you think that what matters is whether you are what you call "happy" or not? Why do you place your aim in that? That is not the point. It is not that the Work is to make you unhappy, but that work on yourself will change your idea of what it is to be happy. It is an undoubted fact that if you are in the Work and have worked on yourself, after a certain time you will find inevitably that what made you happy before is not what makes you happy any longer. When you become a little more interior through self-observation your hitherto forms of happiness become undermined and you begin to see that they were not real forms of happiness but having your own way. What matters is not whether you are happy or not, but whether you are at peace with yourself. What used to make you happy will not continue to make you happy. Mechanical 'I's that belong to the idea of being happy are not necessarily the 'I's that you ought to follow in the Work. In fact, you will find they make you unhappy because if you compare your present state of increased consciousness with your former state you will say: "I used to be so happy, but since I met the Work I do not feel nearly so happy." Of course these so-called happy 'I's belong to some of the illusions that characterize False Personality. For example, someone says: "He always used to be so nice to me. Whenever I wanted a new hat he used to buy me one. Whenever I was sad he took me out to dinner."

Now I will leave this subject of being happy and talk about something connected closely with it—change of Being. Very superficial trivial people ought not to be in the Work, because they will always sing this song: “I used to be so happy.” This is a false idea. In fact, it is an illusion about what used to be, even if he did get you a new hat and take you out to dinner. Now your happiness is, by derivation, *what happens to you*. This means that it is nothing to do with you but with how external life behaves towards you. You are happy when things go according to your wish and unhappy when things do not go according to your wish. If you are like most mechanical people you are very unhappy when happenings go wrong. We all think that what happens to us should be good, even without earning it. Now the world of what happens to us is a very dangerous world to trust because things may happen that do not make you happy at all. For this reason Mr. Ouspensky, when talking about this word “happy”, said that he disliked the word, that it was a word of no density of meaning when people said: “All I want is to be happy.” If you understand this Work you will see that happiness does not depend entirely on whether things go for or against you. If that is your situation you are entirely dependent on the events of external life. This Work is to make something in you independent of what happens to you. How can you think that inner peace depends on what happens to you? A machine will behave in that way but not a man or woman who is trying to become more conscious and tries to meet all daily events, whatever may be their complexion. Therefore you see the Work is about making some point in yourself more or less independent of the happenings of daily life, and the apparatus of this Work and all that it teaches you about self-observation, Self-Remembering, and so on, has to do with making a point in you distinct from the machine that is governed by happenings. I like very much to see a person with whom things have gone a bit wrong still maintaining a feeling of the Work, a person whose feeling does not depend on what happens to him or her externally but who has another centre of gravity which does not respond to the ups and downs of life.

Now there is a certain happiness that can take the place of mechanical happiness which depends on whether we can meet the unhappy situation and not identify. Here the quality of happiness deepens and becomes not an external thing dependent on what other people say or do to us, but something independent of external life. This is the only path whereby we can get real light from Higher Centres which seek to make us nourish and create in ourselves something a little bit independent of external circumstances. A person who has begun to find this can distinguish between internal happiness and external happiness, and the happiness that is found is not external but belongs to inner peace or inner stability.

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In everyone there is a tremendous battle between Truth and Falsity. For us as we are the Work stands for Truth, but being negative stands for Falsity. I have spoken to you many times about the psychological country that we inhabit. If you dream after being negative you may find yourself in the slums in considerable danger from toughs. This is simply a warning from Higher Centres that you are in a bad place. Now if you are in a bad place in yourself interiorly through being negative do you think that anything in life will help? No, you have to get into a better place in yourself before you can expect any inner peace or, if you like, before you can be happy again. So you see the Work is telling you things about yourself and where you are in yourself. There is no other teaching that I know of that lays such emphasis on what the Work lays emphasis on—negative emotions. That is why the Work says being negative brings you close to Hell and Falsity. What do negative emotions do to us? They make us see everything falsified. If you do not agree with this, observe what thoughts and emotions you have when you are really negative, or, let me say, after a phase of being negative. Do you not often wonder how you could have felt that or thought that? It seems so incredible afterwards to see how you could have written or thought or felt that, when you are free from the negative state. But we are only saved by Truth combatting with Falsity and, if we retain a little point in the Work, we know we are behaving badly. We know that we are saying something and we do not quite believe in the suspicious negative emotions that arise. That is why we must overcome Falsity with Truth. Now do you see how each of you is an arena of Truth combatting Falsity? You understand what temptation means when you see everything from the negative emotion and yet retain in yourself the point of the Work so that you will not give way quite to your negative states. Here lies for me the battle of the Work. Of course, if you do not know when you are negative, but simply are, you are a long way from seeing what this Work is about. But no one applies this to himself because for many years in the Work people are convinced that they are never negative. It is only by the development of inner taste that one knows one is negative and people who have Magnetic Centre have this inner taste and can work eventually on negative states. Inner taste is connected with inner conscience or buried conscience. This means not acquired conscience but a deep conscience that belongs to the fact that we are born as “self-developing organisms”. Now do you think that if you are born a self-developing organism you can waste your force in being negative? And don't you think that one of the most important things is to realize and see for yourself that you are being negative and that negative emotions are making you say and think what you are saying and thinking? Some people are very happy being negative. Is not this a strange happiness? But if you have reached that stage of inner development through the force of the Work that you can say: “I am not happy because I am negative,” then you are a person who has begun to work, and are you

not a person in whom whoever has taught the Work will feel a certain inner delight because you are beginning to understand what the Work is about?

*Amwell, 11.11.50*

## **JUDGMENT IN THE WORK**

One of the deepest remarks in the Gospels is the Saying of Christ: "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. vii.1). Christ says these words in His discourse about what it means to become more conscious. Now supposing your Time-body is full of judgments. Supposing that you are in the Work with other people and after a time you find that your judgment of them is entirely wrong. We are talking a great deal nowadays about our Time-bodies and I would like to ask you: "Do you think your Time-body is full of judgments?" I fancy most of them are negative judgments. So you see you may have a very intolerant Time-body and therefore may be very touchy and difficult. One reason why your Time-body may be so touchy and difficult may be because you have judged others and you have done this quite freely, thinking that you have some right to judge others according to your own small standpoint—I might say, according to your tiny standards of judgment. Now you know that the Work teaches that when you judge the other person you must try to find what is wrong with yourself. What is more paralysing to your ordinary automatic judgment than the Work-teaching that if you judge anyone you may be projecting what you do not see in yourself on to the other person? People project unaccepted psychology on to others. Let us say that a man is a liar: he does not see the liar in himself but he thinks that other people are liars and curses and swears at them in the most impassioned way, but he is projecting his own psychology. He cannot see that he is a liar. Some people project the whole of their psychology on to other people, on to politics, and so on. Listen to these phrases, all of you: we tend to project our unaccepted psychology on to other people. Why is this? Because we have no means in ordinary life of seeing what we are really like interiorly. We won't accept that we are liars so we project our lying on to others and accuse them of being liars. And it is on this basis that we judge others. We judge others because we think that they are full of faults and we do not think that the things that we are judging in them are things in ourselves. I would like to ask some of you, if you have been in the Work for some time and have begun to observe yourselves and find out that you are not like the persons you imagined you were, is it so easy to judge others in the way you used to? Therefore this very deep remark of Christ: "Judge not," has enormous

depth behind it. I would not like to suffer my Time-body again with all its wrong judgments unless I had become far more conscious about myself and had seen I had judged people wrongly. You can alter your Time-body in any place through consciousness. Do you know that seeing something that you have always attributed to others, seeing that the fault lies in yourself, means an increase of consciousness? By becoming conscious in this Work-sense you can change your Time-body. Every act of consciousness can alter not only the future but the past. The whole Time-body is a living thing, sensitive to what you are doing now.

*Amwell, 18.11.50*

### **ON THE SELECTION OF THOUGHTS**

It is very important to select your thoughts—that is, the lines of thought that you will think along. People complain that they cannot think. The reason why is that they do not start from a thought or an idea. In order to think you must have a definite thought or idea. But these thoughts or ideas come to us as a kind of inflow and we can only select which to go with and which not to go with. For example, if you have a thought or an idea entering your mind, say, the thought that no one likes you, it is just as well not to think this. So you must understand that you may have a thought but not think it, just as you may have a sword in your hand and not use it. When I left the Institute I went up to my Grandfather's Manse and read some of his theological books, in one of which it was said that a man is not responsible for his thoughts. I was astonished that among the Scottish theologians one could have such an emancipated idea put forward. It is exactly what the Work teaches. You are not responsible for your thoughts unless you think them. And if you can see that the thought is false, you certainly will not think it—that is, follow it out to the conclusion to which it leads. When you are negative you receive nothing but false thoughts—in short, evil thoughts. But although it is your fault possibly that you are negative, it is not your fault that these thoughts come to you, because they belong to that realm of the mind which is called Hell and from which we have to free ourselves if we are given the possibility of doing so.

So, thoughts are good and evil, but many of us do not understand this. One follows an evil thought and becomes depleted in health and strength and in every form of being inwardly awake. Evil thoughts are continually attacking us, and even if you are not negative, you can witness this for yourself. It was said many times: always observe which thoughts are closest to you. If you have good thoughts close to you,

you need not bother much. But if you notice that there are poisonous or depressing thoughts just outside waiting to move into the centre of your consciousness, be careful. A trace of impatience lets them in. These thoughts belong to 'I's in you that only wish to destroy you, because there is much in the psychological or spiritual world that wishes to destroy Man utterly. We are not concerned with the battle between Good and Evil in the world except in this way: that we have to find in ourselves what is going on in the world, for what is going on in the world is also going on in us. Now if you have evil thoughts and ideas and identify with them, and think 'I' to them, you are connected with the evil state of the world, but if the Work is acting on you, you will resist these evil states and thoughts and then you will be connected with the Good. Every man is a little world in the midst of the Great World, which is reflected in him and in which he takes a part personally and individually. The curious thing is that we do not understand what Evil is, so the Work begins with negative emotions as the supreme Evil and does not bother at first about giving up smoking or something like that. So, when we use the Work in connection with our thoughts as something that discriminates between good thoughts and evil thoughts, we are really using something of the supremest importance as regards our own inner development, because, apart from what the Work teaches us as to how we must work on ourselves, we have no clear guide and with the best intentions may go entirely in the wrong direction, and make our inner states worse and worse, believing we are developing.

*Amwell, 25.11.50*

## **THE WORK-IDEA OF MECHANICALNESS**

The Work speaks about mechanically good men and mechanically bad men. A man can be mechanically good or mechanically bad, and yet, strangely enough, the Work teaches that both are the same. In what sense are they the same? They are the same according to the Work-teaching about mechanicalness and cannot help behaving as they do. One man sees a bag left by a woman and steals it: another man returns the bag to its owner. But both do what they do mechanically. When I was first with Dr. Jung, he said a very difficult thing to me and he said it with great doubt in his voice: "Do you know that an engine-driver who has an accident without meaning to is not on the same level as an engine-driver who deliberately has an accident, knowing the consequences?" This extraordinary remark often used to come back to me and I did not know what it meant until I began to realize the great teaching of the Work about mechanicalness. The engine-

driver who deliberately has an accident is doing it consciously—that is, he is not behaving mechanically. I told this to Mr. Ouspensky and he said: “Yes, he has the idea, but is the engine-driver calculating the consequences of his act?” Now, leave this difficult example, and return to the idea that there are mechanically good and mechanically bad men who, from the Work point of view, are the same, because they are mechanical, which means that they cannot behave differently. When the Work first started in England, and people heard about how they had to go against their mechanical behaviour, as I have often told you, they stood up in empty buses and ate coal, etc., and this they called going against their mechanicalness. Do you think that they understood anything about self-observation? It is by self-observation that we have in this Work to try to alter our mechanical reaction to things, to go against the mechanical tracks that have been laid down from our earliest upbringing. Of course, this tremendous teaching of the Work about mechanicalness cannot be understood, save in a pessimistic way, without the corresponding idea that Man is a self-developing organism and has in him the possibility of making entirely new associations which are quite different from those laid down in him by his narrow upbringing. The study of the brain and its enormous silent areas opens to us vast possibilities of entirely new ways of reacting. Therefore you will see for yourselves that the idea that Man is born with the possibility of self-evolution depends on the fact that he has something in him undeveloped, which is verified by the findings of the neurologists that we have an enormous part of the brain completely unfurnished and therefore ready for new connections and thoughts and actions.

When we are introduced to the Work and after many years begin to feel there may be something in it, we are close to the possibility of acting from the Work-ideas instead of those ideas that have been laid down in us automatically, and a person awakening to the Work and evaluating it will begin to think in a new way—that is, to undergo *metanoia*. Now to think in a new way means that you have new associative paths in your brain. The mind, working through the brain, is capable of infinite development, and its basis lies in the fact that we have these enormous tracts unused in the frontal lobes. If we connected the frontal lobes with the truth of esotericism we would no longer be people who are dependent on the few small associative paths in the brain. So the Work emphasizes that we have to think in a new way, which means, neurologically speaking, in terms of the physical brain, to lay down an entirely new set of associations in dealing with ourselves and with life. Now ordinarily a person says “tut-tut” whenever his or her trim associative patterns are upset by a new idea. It is better for most people to remain asleep mechanically with their little patterns, yet the Work will say that whether they are so-called good people, or so-called bad people, they are, from the Work point of view, both mechanical, and there is no difference between them. The difference nevertheless lies in this: the mechanically bad person cannot be



taken into this Work, especially if he is an evil man, or a criminal, but a mechanically good person can be taken into this Work. But for the mechanically good person the problem will be how to make him or her consciously good, instead of automatically good. For such people can be in this Work year after year and never realize that their goodness is mechanical, and this is a very difficult problem to deal with, for their very goodness prevents them from understanding the Work. Now what is the first step for a mechanically good person to take in order to change? The answer of course is: to observe himself or herself. As you will find by experience, the mechanically good do not observe themselves, because they take their goodness for granted, and what a person takes for granted he never observes. O. once said: "When you live amongst mechanically good people, it tends to drive you mad. You see them all behaving in a good way according to mechanical goodness and you feel they are asleep and do not know what they are doing." He once asked me: "What irritates you most?" I began to talk vaguely and he said: "No, you are wrong. It is mechanical behaviour in others." When you are angry with someone in this Work it is usually because you feel that this person is in the Work and is merely behaving in a mechanical way, which is irritating, whether it is good or bad. Why is it irritating? Because there is no one there. It all happens mechanically. The emancipation of ourselves from mechanicalness begins with self-observation, with slow insight into the fact that whatever you do, however you react, is mechanical. Here is a religious man, mechanically good, who behaves fairly well and is at the same time a great nuisance. Why will he irritate you? Because he does not see that he is a nuisance—that is, mechanical—nor does he see that his goodness is mechanical. Now suppose such a person through self-observation becomes aware that he is a nuisance, that he behaves in such a way apart from his *real* behaviour, he will instantly be plunged into a severe conflict, which of course it is the object of the Work to produce in everyone. He may even begin to see his contradictions. As G. said: "A man lives with the greatest contradictions in him without knowing them, and the reason why he can live apparently at peace with himself is because of buffers in him which prevent him from seeing his contradictions." He said that if our buffers were suddenly taken away from us we should go mad. Any real increase of consciousness helps us to see our mechanicalness, so a man undergoing regeneration begins to cease to be a mechanically good man because he sees he is no such person. After a time in this Work your mechanical goodness or otherwise ceases to be simply a bit of machinery acting at the moment. In my case Nicoll is the mechanical person with whom I have to deal and you all have to deal with whatever you call yourselves. If you do this, you will begin to understand why the Work is so harsh about mechanical goodness and mechanical badness. But, as I said, people who are not capable of regeneration had better stick close to what they think is good and in that case they do not know what this Work is about,

because it takes years and years to know that this Work is about yourself. They will never understand that goodness means acting in the right way, which may be in one way at one moment and in another way at the next moment. They think it means acting always in the same way, instead of realizing that goodness is infinitely flexible, and is different at different times. A rigid associative path laid down in the associative centre gives a rigid sense of what is good and bad, and it is from this that we judge others inflexibly, without understanding or mercy. However, the Work makes it possible for us no longer to live such a rigid and sterile life, because, seeing in ourselves the things that we judge others for gives infinite flexibility in our associations, and this gives rise to mercy, forgiveness and all that really belongs to Good and Truth. We can then hear about the most grievous faults (apparently) in others without saying "tut-tut", because we know we have them in ourselves. But this development of esotericism belongs to conscious work because life does not give it.

*Amwell, 2.12.50*

### **WORK ON BEING**

The Work says that what is essential in a person never annoys you, but what is mechanical in a person annoys you. The situation is like this, to use a bad illustration: "A dog is a dog, and a cat is a cat, because they have different Essences, and it is absurd for you to think that a dog should behave like a cat, or a cat like a dog, and if you impose your will on them you will reduce them to a state of imbecility and fear." But this illustration is too easy, so let us return to what the Work says about what annoys you in another person. The Work says that another person's mechanicalness annoys you very much. It means of course that we have somewhere in us a sense or feeling or insight that we should not behave mechanically. Let me explain what has been said again and again in the past years. A man and a woman are mechanical, as they are brought up gradually in mechanical life. But the Work also says that our mechanicalness annoys others and shews us that we have somewhere in us something that does not wish to be mechanical. To behave consciously in a situation is utterly different from behaving mechanically. If you are always going to lose your temper at a certain point, that delineates the limit of your being. It means that your being cannot stand things beyond a certain point, no matter what knowledge you have. Work on knowledge is one thing, and work on being a different thing, which many people do not begin to comprehend yet. I mean simply that they learn the knowledge of the Work, both psychologically and cosmologically, but they never think of

applying it to themselves. That means that they do not ever see that they always behave mechanically, always lose their temper at a certain point, and so they never work on themselves. What does it mean: work on themselves? It means *work on their being*. Some people have very small being which gets rattled very quickly. Others by enlarging their self-observation and seeing that they have in themselves what they attack in others, especially mechanicalness, can begin to have a development of being.

*Amwell, 9.12.50*

### A FURTHER NOTE ON WORK ON BEING

Last time we spoke of being. It was said that there are two different lines of Work—work on knowledge, and work on the application of the knowledge to your being, which is work on being. That was said, and has been repeated so many times. It takes a long time for most people to see that they have to apply the Work to their state of being.

In a letter which I received recently, the writer said that he suddenly understood that because he was feeling depressed he had to work on this state now, and not simply wait until he got better before he could work on himself. This is a curious idea that people have, that when things are better, and especially when they have time, they will work on themselves, observe themselves, try not to identify, and once they have time to do all this, they will feel better. Now the Work says nothing about this. The Work says you must work on yourself *now*, however you are feeling, and especially when you feel pretty bad, as we all do at times. How often do people say they have no time to work on themselves and if only they had a little more time they would be able to work on themselves, that their situation is not like that of other people who have plenty of time to work on themselves. Can you imagine anything more false, a more distorted idea of what the Work means in regard to the work on one's state of being? Every moment we are in a slightly different state, owing to the turn of the wheel of events, and if we think that we do not have to work on *that* and have to wait until we feel much better, and have more time, is not our idea of the Work a travesty of what the Work is about?

Is it not strange to carry about the idea that very soon your life is going to change for the better, that things are going to be much easier, and so on? It is this illusion which is wrong, and you should understand that the Work is about your state *now*, stop identifying *now*, stop internal considering *now*, and so on. As I say, this strange illusion still remains with people. They hope that a day is coming when everything will be more comfortable and they will have time to work on themselves.

So work on being is work on your state of being at a particular moment, to apply the knowledge of the Work to that estate, and to try to separate from identifying, internal considering, and so on. If you can do this, the power of the Work can be terrific. But do not say: "When I have time, I will work on myself."

*Amwell, 16.12.50*

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF MEMORY IN THE WORK**

Towards the end of his life Mr. Ouspensky said that memory is something very important. We can observe our memory as very faulty. Yet at the same time we accept it as a criterion, a standard of judgment. People are perfectly certain that they are aware of their lives, that they are aware of what they did and thought and felt, by standards of what they call their memory. Of course it would be better to say that none of us remembers anything at all, practically speaking, and that what we do remember is entirely wrong. Let me give you an example of what it might mean to educate memory which is one side of the Work. Someone acts nicely to you and you feel very pleased. Then for some time nothing else happens. Then again this person acts nicely to you, but in the meantime you have quite forgotten how this person has acted nicely to you before. This means a very weak memory that has to be constantly supplied with encouragement. Some people can remember very well when they have received benefit from someone else, but in others the memory, a little tiny cloud surrounding their tiny consciousness, peters out very quickly, and everything has to be done again in order to restore the feeling of confidence.

Some people have long memories and some have shorter ones. Some people who have long memories have long negative memories. Is this true? Hostile feelings of revenge can be remembered far longer than pleasant events. Do you agree or not? In any case, to see one's life through memory is to distort it completely, as it were, looking through a mirror that is entirely a distorting mirror. What causes this mirror to distort? We have been speaking recently about our mechanical associations and about the necessity of trying to overcome the mechanical brain—i.e. the mechanical associations that have been laid down through our upbringing. You must understand that what we remember is so much distorted and coloured by our emotional state. When we remember the multiplication table we usually remember it quite rightly without emotional distortion, but if we were objecting very much to the number nine, for instance, when learning the nine times table, we might have difficulty in remembering it accurately.

Now the emotions that distort this mirror that memory should be

are the self-emotions. What are the self-emotions that we have to struggle with in order to reach real external considering which in Christian terminology is something to do with love of neighbour? These emotions are self-esteem, self-complacency, self-righteousness (i.e. feeling one is always right), self-meritoriousness, self-admiration, self-worship, all the various forms of thinking: "Thank God I am not like other people." On one occasion in the old days of the Work Mr. Ouspensky called together a small meeting and asked us to define in English this self-emotion that prevented us from ever breaking through our False Personality. Various people suggested words like self-love, and so on. I had just recently been reading a book by a writer called Mandeville which was to me extremely interesting at the time, and he used the word *self-liking* to describe our fatal emotion, the emotion we could not break away from, and Mr. Ouspensky said: "Something like that." In other words, apparently he thought it was closest to what he was talking about. I remember in Essex at the Farm we heard the local phrase: "He does not like himself to-day." In any case we live ordinarily in an atmosphere of self-liking and this is just as well because we would otherwise go mad. With the help of self-justifying we can continue to like ourselves even although deeper down we know we have behaved wrongly.

Now owing to self-liking, if we can call it that, our memory is very much distorted because, owing to the action of self-justifying, when we look back on the past we still are able to like ourselves, whatever we said or thought or felt. In short, our memory is completely distorted by our self-emotion. I will remind you here about what the Work says that owing to the action of buffers in us we are quite unaware of any contradictions. The function of buffers is to prevent us from seeing that we are ever wrong so that we can maintain our self-liking. But the Work says that if buffers were removed from us we would go mad. Of course, some of you have guessed that this Work is to do with seeing our contradictions through self-observation. No one can grow in a psychological or spiritual sense unless his self-liking is disturbed. How is it disturbed? By means of self-observation, through the Work point of view. And yet people still say: "From what can I start in the Work?" The answer always is: "Observe yourself over a small period and then you will begin to see that you become uneasy and only through this uneasiness about yourself can you begin to work and change your being." Now memory, if it is based on self-observation, is a very powerful thing. Conscious memory only begins in you when you begin to observe yourself consciously and remember what you observe. Some people cannot do this, sometimes because they do not want to, and sometimes because they have no power of introversion and cannot see themselves at all. They can see buses and read books and eat dinners, but they cannot see themselves internally. Now all esotericism is internal: it has nothing to do with buses or beefsteaks or the stock-markets. Esotericism is about something quite different and begins with self-

observation according to special directions and special efforts which do not happen mechanically. The first effort we have to make which is not mechanical is to observe ourselves and remember what we observe. It is the only way to reach objective consciousness—a long journey. It is comparable with squeezing out all the subjective elements of memory, and this leads to objective consciousness. Our memory is like a wet sponge full of self-emotions, which have to be squeezed out through a long period, until we get flashes of objective consciousness. When these flashes begin, as they do in people whom the Work has chosen, they then have a new kind of memory, like the mirror without distortion. They see things as they are. They see their illusions. Objective consciousness is attained when the memory is cleared of the subjective element.

*Amwell, Christmas 1950*

### **CONTACT WITH HIGHER CENTRES**

In regarding the Work as preparation of lower centres for the reception of Higher Centres, we have a definite statement, but one whose meaning we have to ponder on all our lives. You see at once that such a formulation of the Work indicates that there is a higher level of understanding accessible to us from which we have fallen away or, if you prefer, with which we have not yet attained contact in our personal evolution. You will admit that if evolution is possible there must be something to evolve into, and, looking at Man as capable of a personal evolution, this idea permeates the whole of the Work—this idea that Man is inferior to himself owing to his potentialities. We begin by experiencing life through the external senses and endeavour to attain some position and stability in life—but life will not satisfy us owing to this curious and strange composition that belongs to us. I am speaking now of course about those who have Magnetic Centre, about those who have always found something strange in life taken by itself. The development of this undeveloped side of ourselves represented by the possibility of contact with Higher Centres is not reached by further and further extensions into life and its opportunities. Something else is necessary and this something else is quite different in regard to its quality and direction from anything that belongs to the fulfilment of life-ambitions. Strain as I will to attain a higher position in life, I will not add a cubit to my stature—that is, I will not come closer in contact with the continual messages which proceed from Higher Centres. We can say perhaps that Higher Centres are continually trying to change us only we cannot hear them. Yes, but change us into what? What are they up to? What is their message? In order

to grasp to a small extent what their message is we must consider what the Work teaches, because the teachings of the Work are designed by Conscious Minds to intimate what we would know, see and understand at once if we were in contact with Higher Centres. And very few people assimilate the teachings of this Work either in their minds or their hearts but leave them in their memories where they are useless and as a result the teachings of the Work do not change their ways of thinking—that is, they do not produce *metanoia* or change of mind. With our usual ideas of life gained through contact with the senses we cannot undergo the transformation or new birth that the Work indicates. New ways of thinking are necessary and the Work gives them to us, but the trouble is that we do not think with them. We just put them down in note-books. We have to have quite new forms of Truth to reach Higher Centres, we have to have a new language, we have to have new ways of thinking which have nothing to do with the world as seen. The Truth that is coming from Higher Centres continually cannot reach us because of the falsity and pretence which only insight resulting from self-observation can penetrate. But other powerful factors can come in here such as sheer ignorance and totally wrong ideas of ourselves and our meaning on Earth. For these latter the ideas and teachings of the Work become a remedy, but only if they find a soil in which they can grow and so change the mind—that is, the whole way of thinking. This, as you know, is *metanoia*, which means *change of mind*, and is so wrongly translated in the New Testament as repentance. If the ideas of the Work lie only in the memory, they are useless, or rather, the man is useless. The Work cannot help him even if he knows it from beginning to end formatorily, nor can anyone help him. One of the Work-octaves put forward by Mr. Ouspensky was:

Mi—realization of one's own difficulties.

Re—application of the ideas of the Work to oneself.

Do—hearing the ideas of the Work, evaluating them.

If you leave out Re—i.e. the application of the ideas of the Work to oneself—you will miss the whole point of the teaching. The Work will not pass into your will and so cannot change your being. You will still continue to think that you can do, that you are one, that you have will, that you are conscious, and so on. In other words, you will remain mechanical and continue to have the same mechanical psychology, if such a paradoxical phrase can be used, as you always had. Nothing from Higher Centres will get through. You will continue to move, live and have your Being in the stench of your own mechanical life. You will not take hold of yourself through any point that connects up with the Work and really try spiritually to begin the great task of getting rid of yourself—you—a person called Mr. X or Mr. Y. And even if you work for a short time, say, for a few minutes, and gain a viewpoint that is outside yourself, and begin to see your intonations, your habits, and so on, you will in a moment go back to your old

intonations and quite forget that you longed to be freed from them in that moment of insight. But if you constantly feed your lower centres with the ideas of the Work, constantly reflect, read, meditate, practise, little by little the weight of the Work in you will eventually counterbalance the Moon—that is, your mechanicalness—and change may begin to be possible. But it will only become possible through your own inner choice, by seeing that you prefer not to be such a slave to yourself who is your greatest enemy and the cause of all your trouble, because it is only in this freedom that you can change and if you do change in this direction you will begin to hear after a time the voices of Higher Centres.

Now there is plenty said about what work on lower centres means. It is especially on the Emotional Centre that we have to work, because in its present mechanical state it prevents the contact with Higher Centres. It is nothing but a mass of self-emotions which already lead to negative emotions. When we see negative emotions in this light it will perhaps strengthen us in our struggle against them. It is quite simple—like this:—This Work has a definite goal: the connection of the lower centres with Higher Centres. If the Intellectual Centre remains under the spell of the sensory world and has no new ideas and so no new ways of thinking, and if the Emotional Centre remains under the power of self-emotions, self-love, self-pity, there will be no possibility of attaining the end of which this Work speaks.

*Amwell, 30.12.50*

## **THE SPHERE OF BEING**

It is necessary to understand that the conception of being is not easy to grasp. In one of the formulations about being given by the Work it is said that your being attracts your life, but this formulation, like most of the other formulations in the Work, has great density of meaning—that is to say, one cannot understand it superficially, because meaning after meaning will appear to you, the more you reflect and study what being is and especially in yourself. The study of your own being is essential to working on yourself. I mean, you cannot ignore your being and take it for granted and yet say that you are in the Work and doing your best to work on yourself. Such an attitude is sheer nonsense. As O. said, quoting Solovyev: “Everything has its being, a stone has its being, a flower has its being, an animal has its being, etc.” That is of course quite true, but what do we mean when it is said that a stone, a flower, an animal, has being peculiar to itself? Then again, what do we mean when it is said that our being attracts our life? Here, for example, is a person who attracts people of a certain kind. What is it



that attracts these people? What attracts these people is that person's being. Of course we do not see it in this way. We may, under certain circumstances, think it is unfortunate that this person attracts these people. What we do not understand is that the sphere of this person's being attracts only certain things and repels others. But at first we have no idea of this and even complain about it.

Now let us think that being exerts a certain sphere round it. This sphere has its own kind of intelligence. Let us take, for example, the sphere of being of a pigeon. Included in this sphere of being is its power of finding its way back from great distances. Or again let us take the sphere of being of a dog; it can pick out its master from among a crowd of people or it can find its way home when its master cannot. This belongs to its sphere of being. Or take a bird that builds a complicated nest, brings up its young, and then migrates to Africa. All this belongs to its sphere of being. Every animal possesses a sphere of being which is, so to speak, its life, and through which it is acquainted with regions of the world that a man does not know anything about. Then also in connection with the particular sphere of being with which they are endowed they have their own forms of happiness, their own forms of pain, distress and so on. We must imagine, therefore, in reflecting on what being means, that it is something that surrounds a person like a sphere and brings about what happens to him. Of course, if a person is placed in a nunnery or a monastery he is cut off, to some extent at least, from the sphere of attraction that his being would exert when he was in life, and so one realizes that such isolation has its origin in the idea of changing being almost by brute force. Whether such discipline has its effect I cannot say. It may be so in certain circumstances. In the Fourth Way the method is different. In the Fourth Way it is knowledge that must precede change of being. That is, through knowledge of one's being one can begin to separate from certain elements in it, so that eventually one has changed being so that it does not attract the same things as formerly. But this metamorphosis only begins through *metanoia* or change of mind, because, if there is no change of mind or new knowledge, there can be no metamorphosis or change of being. If we could see being through some spiritual vision, we would see clearly that certain elements in being cause all the trouble that a person complains of. In spiritual vision we would see, as it were, that something was in the wrong place, or that something was exaggerated very much or something lacking, and we would also perceive that as long as this construction of being remains as it is it will increasingly attract what it has attracted in life. Here is a man, for example, who gets violent, who is very proud, and so also very suspicious, who exalts himself in his own estimation and so feels he is surrounded by enemies—in such a case we would with spiritual vision see that the trouble lies in the structure of his being and the sphere it exerts on everyone around. All animals, insects, and so on, have intelligent spheres of being and attract the life that they are sup-

posed to lead. It is only Man that has not an intelligent sphere of being and that is why he must study his being and learn to attribute to himself any unpleasant things that recurrently happen to him and not blame other people, which is the mechanical thing to do.

How then can we change being? By applying the knowledge of the Work through self-observation to ourselves. And remember that you do not change by being told what to do. You can only change through seeing what you have to do when you realize what your being is like.

*Amwell, 6.1.51*

### **DIFFERENT 'I's IN BEING**

In continuing this difficult subject as to what the being of a man is as distinct from the given being of a cat or a dog or a horse or a stone or a blade of grass, we have to remember that Man is a three-storey creation. As distinct from animals he has three centres, one above the other, so therefore he is called a three-storey house and because of this he is capable of a development that animals cannot undergo. Most animals' being is characterized by the fact that they have only one storey or possibly two, but none of them has three. That is, no animal, even one highly developed like a dog, can speak to you, because it has not got Intellectual Centre. Dog can speak to dog in its own language or bird to bird, but an animal cannot think as Man can. A dog cannot write a book. A dog cannot saw a bit of wood and join it to another, as Man can.

In the case of men and women, through the Intellectual Centre they endeavour to exchange ideas, to communicate with one another through words. One might say it would be better if they could not, because all speaking is lying. Our being then, is divided into three parts:

Intellectual Being,  
Emotional Being,  
Instinct-Moving Being.

A Number 1 Man in the Work-sense is a man who has developed his Instinct-Moving Centre more than all the other parts of himself. In this respect his being in the instinct-moving part has developed to a certain extent. He can ride and hunt and shoot and leap over hurdles and run races and so on, or, more clever, he is a craftsman or juggler. He is a 1 2 3 Man, say. Therefore, reviewing the difficult question of Man's being, we can see already that Man has very complex being. If he has a good intellectual development he is developed in one part up to a point, but he may have no emotional development, in which case he will perhaps be 3 1 2 as regards his being.

Again, you must remember that each centre is divided into three parts. This complicates still further the idea of being in Man. Now each division of the centre, passing from the mechanical or moving division up to the more conscious, has different 'I's inhabiting it. Most people have many 'I's in the mechanical, formatory part of Intellectual Centre, and when they are under the influence of these 'I's they really think they are thinking. But it is all clichés. Some may have several 'I's in the higher divisions of the Intellectual Centre—that is, they are at a higher level of being, through these 'I's. But they may easily fall down and follow mechanical 'I's.

Again, in the Emotional Centre, the first or lowest division of the Emotional Centre is where *mechanical* liking and disliking lie, and development in this part of the centre alone gives us low mechanical being. Conscious love cannot exist in the mechanical division of the Emotional Centre. It really only begins to exist when you begin to make a conscious relationship with someone else in the Work, a Work-aim, not a life-aim, and then it may be that the highest part of the Emotional Centre may receive a touch of the Higher Centres themselves. The mechanical or lowest divisions of centres can never get in touch with the Higher Centres. Let me put this more clearly. The intellectual part of the Intellectual Centre, the intellectual part of the Emotional Centre—to take only these two centres—are capable of hearing a little of these messages from Higher Centres—that is, of comprehending a little what they are saying by inner perception—not by thinking. Higher Centres are speaking to us all the time. Because we are living in the basement of each centre, we cannot hear them and do not believe they exist. This Work is about separating from mechanical thinking and mechanical emotions because they limit our being. These two centres have to be changed before anything else can happen. To try to change your being by means of extraordinary exercises, as standing on your head, does not give any result by itself, because you have left out the two most important centres that have to be worked on and changed first of all. In fact, these exercises may crystallize you out. Unless you undergo some stage of *metanoia*, change of mind, unless you think from the Work-ideas, nothing can change your being. So the first change is to think differently, to think beyond your present mechanical thinking. What is the result—that is, if you can begin to think from the Work about life and yourself? You will begin to occupy higher divisions of the ordinary Intellectual Centre and through this maybe you will change the state of your being.

## WORK ON IDENTIFYING

Let us remind ourselves once more of some of the things that have been said about *identifying*. "Identifying", said G., "is the greatest enemy that we have to overcome. It is through being always identified that we are kept asleep and therefore have to live in a world where nothing can ever go in the right way as regards the interests of Man." What is said about identifying in the Gospels? In the Gospels "the rich man" was one who was very identified. We are told that the rich man cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. By Kingdom of Heaven is meant the Higher Circle of Humanity belonging to Man Number 5, 6 or 7. In the full sense the Kingdom of Heaven means the Seventh Circle. You must understand that mechanical Man—i.e. the Circle of Man Number 1, 2 and 3—has absolutely nothing to do with the Conscious Circle. The aim of all esoteric teaching is to connect through inner development mechanical Man with Conscious Man and this is only possible through certain kinds of work on oneself, which in this system are very carefully defined. But the greatest work is to lessen this state of always being identified and to become "poor in spirit". Someone once asked O. whether Christ taught the Fourth Way to which the Work belongs. His answer was that the Way of Christ was something much bigger, but yet when we study any one of the Four Gospels in the light of the ideas of this Work, we will realize that there are many similar things said in the Parables and Sayings of the Gospels that correspond to the teachings of this Work.

Now if we identify we are not giving ourselves the First Conscious Shock. We are controlled by the events of life. That is, we are controlled from the wrong end, by the things of the senses and the phantasies that arise from them. Self-Remembering, which has such a variety of forms, means moving inwards. It means becoming conscious at a more internal level. For example, in becoming more conscious of Nicoll, I begin to feel distinct from Nicoll, and realize that all my life I have been identified with Nicoll and that Nicoll is not really me. But such increase of consciousness does not take place in a moment. It certainly may come in a moment of illumination. But for such an increase of consciousness to become a permanent state a long time must elapse until one can make effort to be in Work-'I's and not identify with the continual cares of life which life-'I's find so interesting and in which they delight. Indeed, sometimes one is led to think that these identifying life-'I's long for unpleasant things to happen, long for horrible sensational things to take place, and I am afraid this is quite true. Look how people's faces light up when they begin to hear something unpleasant. Now this is one form of being identified and it is certainly not a form of remembering oneself. Try in practical work to see what you have been most identified with to-day or yesterday and

try to separate from this particular form of being identified and try for the time being to make an aim to remember yourself at such times. Certainly you will not be able to carry this out for long because you will find that your efforts become mechanical so much so that you cease to understand what it is you are doing. There is nothing extraordinary in this. It is everyone's experience, so do not be down-cast: try to make effort in some other direction until that becomes mechanical. That is why O. said: "We must have many irons in the fire."

*Amwell, 3.2.51*

## FURTHER WORK ON IDENTIFYING

### ABSENCE OF RESENTMENT AND THE PRACTICE OF CONSIDERATENESS

In the practical directions given in the Sermon on the Mount, after "poor in spirit" comes the word "meek". This word, *πραοτης* in Greek, means "not to resent your enemies"—hence the strange expression: "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you" becomes more understandable if it means not to resent what they say or do. In this Work we might say: "Not to react mechanically." Last time we spoke of "poor in spirit" chiefly from the standpoint of not identifying. But a resentful man is continually becoming identified through resentment. We were speaking of "poor in spirit" as the contrast to the "rich man" which Mr. Ouspensky defined as the "identified man", meaning that the "rich man" is the kind of man (or woman) who is very identified with everything, with their virtues, goodness, meritoriousness, charitable actions, talents, cleverness, appearance, position, possessions—and so, *per contra*, with their setbacks, negative moods, failures, etc. In short, they are identified with the prevailing pictures of themselves. These they carry in the album of themselves, and constantly glance at even in the most crowded moments of life, aided, as often as not, by an actual mirror. By the way, notice how you look in a mirror. What is really YOU is not THAT. It always weakens Self-Remembering, because it causes identifying. But it also can correct your picture. Now if a rich man—that is, psychologically speaking, a man who is very identified—could change his feeling of I, he would cease to be very identified. But this idea applies to everyone in the Work—i.e. that it is necessary to change the habitual feeling of I which can be compared with a centre of gravity. Or better, to a single room, brightly lighted, in a large house, where the other rooms are in total darkness or dimly lit. Such a man's energies are not spread over his being, but localized to one part of himself—as it were to one room in the great three-storey house of himself.

So he or she identifies through not having a “balancing of centres” whereby forces are equally distributed throughout the physical and psychological organization. In such a case, to quote one of the “Sayings of Christ” (found comparatively recently on the West Coast of the Red Sea at Oxyrhynchus), the person has not made the sides of himself all equal:

“If ye make not the below into the above and the above into the below, the right into the left and the left into the right, the before into the behind (and the behind into the before), ye shall not enter into the kingdom of God.”

As we are, things are not equal. One side is bigger than another. One preoccupation absorbs too much force and becomes an obsession or some form of fanaticism and starves something else, which is quite contrary to the idea of Balanced Man—Number 4 Man. Before a man can enter the Conscious Circle of Humanity he needs to study for long in what respects he is not balanced and that is to study what in himself takes too much and what in himself receives too little. Only in this way can he begin to submit to the balancing forces coming from Higher Centres *via* Buried Conscience, which we gradually hear better if we can bear to be changed, which few can.

Now, to return to the word *πραοτης* translated as *meek*, in the instructions about how to attain the inner peace or *bliss* which belongs to the Conscious Circle. “Blessed are the meek.” This refers to an inner state, not to an outer posturing, a modest look; it means a state of *absence from resentment*. To add: If we resent, as we largely do mechanically, we cannot practise external considering. This Work word appears in the New Testament as “considerateness” (*ἐπιεικεια*). Through absence from resentment and the practice of considerateness—for no one is considerate towards a person whom he resents—there is revealed that form of love called in the Work conscious love which is represented in the New Testament by the word *ἀγαπη*. It is through this chain that a man reaches first absence from resentment and second, as a result, conscious considering, so that he can “love” his enemy. He will certainly be no longer one-sided and so unbalanced. Much will have developed in him. Many rooms will be now lit up. His former feeling of I will be transformed, his consciousness increased. Conscious love clearly implies consciousness and we have all listened to some of the means of attaining it, beginning with self-observation.

## THE NECESSITY OF LIVING THE WORK

### WORK ON WRONG IMAGINATION

It is necessary to live the Work, for otherwise it becomes a pillar of salt. Its truth becomes sterile. For a truth to be a truth for you, you must see the good of it. If you think it is no good, then its truth becomes something dead in you—which may not be a desirable condition of yourself. But if you try repeatedly to live according to the teachings of the Work, then you will experience the good of it; then the good of it and the truth of it will form a marriage—the esoteric marriage of Knowledge and Being.

What does it mean to live the Work? Take an example. Amongst other things the Work teaches that we must struggle against imagination. Imagination is a tremendously powerful force. Moreover it is capable of satisfying every centre. G. said its function *was* to keep humanity from awakening. If one part of the Solar World develops too quickly, it has to be delayed. If the development of that Being represented in time and space as the Earth is outpaced by the development of Man on Earth, something must be done. G. put it in his own way. He said: "So the Powers called in the chief engineer and told him what was taking place. They asked him if he could suggest a remedy. The chief engineer, after reflecting, said he could arrange everything. So he invented imagination and gave it to Man and from then on, instead of awakening more and more, Man fell more and more asleep." Well, that is the story, and so we are told that one of the things we have to do, if we will to live the Work, is to struggle with imagination. The question will then arise in the mind: "What is meant by imagination?" What do you think yourself? Do you believe that imagination is all of one kind, or are there different kinds of imagination? And again, what kind of imagination do we have to struggle against? What particular kind of imagination did this chief engineer put into Man to hold him back from awakening?

Let us begin with thinking about negative imagination, and that is imagination arising from negative states. Or again, let us think about imagination arising from fear. Whether these two kinds of imagination are one and the same I do not know, but I am quite certain that these are two forms of imagination that we have to struggle against. Let us take the latter first. When you are afraid that your little child may not come back on a dark stormy night, you suffer from a form of imagination that is extremely difficult to resist. Of course, if you could believe in God, whatever that means, and in His Providence, you would never have such fears. That is, if you had faith, you would not fear. The trouble is that we do not have faith. Faith is belief in something which the senses do not shew us. Faith is based on what is not sensible to us. What is sensible to us under these circum-

stances is that our little child is missing and what is happening to her. Well, fear of this kind is only cured by faith as far as I can see, and faith is something that we do not know. As the unknown writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. xi.1).

Now let us turn to imagination connected with negative states. I will tell you one reason why I think it is connected. When the little child runs in, does your fear stop? But can you say that imagination arising from the negative part of Emotional Centre stops? Can it be stopped so suddenly? It cannot be. Then again, you have been taught that this imagination working in negative states keeps them going. I should say the chief engineer was concerned in this. You know one definition of negative emotion is that it is self-running. This means that you do not have to wind it up. It goes by itself. It may go on all your life and its fuel is the imagination. It is therefore here that we have to think about what imagination means in connection with the phrase that "we have to struggle with our imagination". Of course, taking a larger view, we have to struggle with Imaginary 'I' which we all mistake for Real I and whose existence in us puts us into the wrong centre of gravity—that is, into a wrong place in ourselves—so that the whole of our psychology is distorted like a wheel whose axle is not in the centre. We cannot struggle with this form of imagination directly, because we cannot believe it. We have gradually to become aware of the existence of this Imaginary 'I' which is composed of imagination about ourselves and about many other things.

Now if a man can use his imagination for a directed purpose instead of being used by his imagination—as, for example, when he is negative—he will find that his imagination is a great gift. Therefore it cannot be this kind of imagination that can be meant when it is said that the chief engineer inserted it into us. No one can do without right imagination. No one can build a bridge without directing his imagination and trying now this bridge, now that bridge, in his mind, until he finds the right kind of bridge to build. But everyone can do without the kind of imagination that attaches itself to negative states, because this form of imagination can lead people to insanity if they are not checked and prevented from going under. Therefore we can say briefly that directed imagination is quite different from imagination that directs you and that therefore the kind of imagination with which we have to struggle is the imagination that overpowers us and makes us its slave as distinct from the imagination that is directed.

Now we spoke at the beginning of this paper about the necessity of living the Work. That means, not merely hearing about it, and storing it in our memories, but actually willing what we are taught. We have taken one example of trying to live the injunction of struggling with imagination. We have in this paper indicated one definite form of imagination connected with negative states and also mentioned another form that is only conquered by faith. So if a man or woman wishes to



live this injunction in the Work, struggling with imagination, it is necessary to observe and also to notice when the imagination has come from negative states and try to separate from it. This is a very interesting form of work and can lead to insight into our mechanical psychology which enslaves us and makes us do things that the internal man in us does not wish to do. Further, let me add that if you do not *remember* the Work, you have no conjunction with it, and if you have no conjunction with it you forget it. The Work can only help you if you remember it.

*Amwell, 17.2.51*

### **THE BODY AS THE ULTIMATE DEGREE OF ONESELF**

When we take ourselves as our bodies, we get a wrong impression of ourselves. This impression, acting as a cause, produces as an effect the idea that we are nothing but our bodies. Now an effect cannot persist actively, if the cause producing it ceases. If we begin to get another impression of ourselves the idea that we are *not* only our bodies may replace the former idea. The replacement of the former idea by the latter idea is important. Actually, it is of the greatest importance in regard to anyone's psychological development. In this Work, we cannot work if we remain in the belief that we are only our manifest bodies. We will then be one with our bodies—that is, we will have no feeling of ourselves distinct from our visible, physical bodies. And it is extraordinary and only realizable very gradually how we cling to this physical concept of ourselves. One can scarcely call it a concept. It is a percept. We can see our bodies, perceive them. We look in the glass and perceive our bodies, and so mentally we take it that we are them. We leave out one little thing—namely, what sees our bodies in the glass? If you say: "We do," then do you mean that body sees body or what? It seems strange that a thing can see itself in a glass without the aid of something else. I do not think that even the gilt chairs in the mirrored drawing room spend their idle time in seeing themselves.

How are we to take our bodies if we are not to take them as ourselves? The question is connected with notes in octaves, or degrees, which are the same. The physical body is the most external degree of ourselves. That is, it is the lowest or ultimate degree through which all higher or more internal degrees, such as belong to thought, feeling and will, manifest themselves. The body does not think. The spirit of Man thinks and communicates through the body. The body is in touch with the external world and it is also our own external world. One seems incongruous, the other at least more congruous. The external world of trees, clouds, mountains, streams and oceans seems

foreign and so, incongruous. You cannot do much with a lovely view. But even our own bodies can seem strange and incongruous, at times—these fingers, nails, teeth, this hair, nose, mouth, this head, this wart—so much so that for a flash you may sometimes wonder if it really is you. All the same, it is you, but only the lowest or ultimate degree of you that enables you to be in touch with this external world. If you take the lowest degree as the whole of yourself you will, as said, miss something of the greatest importance. You will not be able to remember yourself. You are not your body. You look through your body into the external world which you would not see if you had no body because the lowest or ultimate degree would be missing. In that case the next degree would constitute your lowest or ultimate degree and you would see another world and where you are in it, as is sometimes possible in dreams, or even by direct perception. Try, then, to feel at times that you are not just your body, but that you are looking through it and seeing things and people in this world by means of it. This gives a feeling of Self-Remembering. Why is this so?

*Amwell, 24.2.51*

### **FURTHER NOTE ON THE BODY AS THE ULTIMATE DEGREE OF OURSELVES**

In referring to the great and inexhaustible subject of Self-Remembering last time, it was said that we tend to take ourselves as our physical, visible bodies. This fallacy is one of the many fallacies of the senses, that do not assist us to remember ourselves. Many people pay great attention to their bodies in different ways. But I do not think, however, that an athlete remembers himself, by the very fact of being one. Nor do I think that an emaciated hermit covered in dirt and sackcloth remembers himself, through the very neglect of his body. Both the athlete and the hermit could remember themselves, if they knew how, quite apart from the state of their bodies. Self-Remembering from one aspect is the practice of a certain relation of consciousness to one's body and through it to the world as rendered by our senses. If we take it like that, then there are three things (1) consciousness, (2) the body with its external senses, (3) the external world of things and people. If you can reach and maintain this relation, you will experience quite definitely the taste of Self-Remembering. You will taste it as long as you can maintain the triple relation—I, looking through the machine of my body into the apparently coloured and moving world of things and people. But it requires practice to do it and the power of doing it is soon spent. It is no use trying to do it heavily or seriously or solemnly. I had almost said it is no use doing it on purpose. Bear in

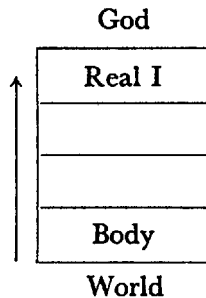
mind that the Work says that we should not work for results. One reason is that if we do we identify with the result, and perhaps, not getting one, like those who complain of God for not answering their prayers, become indignant. In a state of being identified, without any resistance to it, we cannot work at all. We cannot separate from our usual feeling of ourselves, which in this case has to do with taking our visible bodies as ourselves. Have you ever had the passing vision that you are really invisible and that we all live in a world of invisible people? Now it was said last time that the visible body is the lowest degree or note in the Octave of Man. Man, like any other manifestation, is the result of three forces and the Law of the Octave. The Law of Three and the Law of Seven stand behind all creation and cannot be resolved further. Now the Law of the Octave is the Law of Order—as distinct from chaos. Nothing can work aright unless the things composing it are in the right order. Curiously enough, we do not notice the continual revelation of the Law of Seven as being the Law of Order, although when we have to learn something we are learning also the right order in which to do it. Now order implies scale—one thing below another or one thing above another. Take *End, Cause* and *Effect*. Those three are on different scales like, say, *Do, Si, La*. If *La* represents effect, then *Si* represents cause, and *Do* represents the cause of the cause—that is, the end or aim. When you have an end or aim in view you cannot have an effect unless in between you find a cause to produce the effect. Then the end through the cause brings itself into the effect. This bears the possibility of much reflection, which helps in understanding something about the Law of Octaves, especially when we realize that the ultimate effect is on a lower plane or note than the intermediate cause; and that the primary end is on a higher plane or note than the cause. They make therefore a scale or ladder of discontinuous degrees:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| End    | Do |
| Cause  | Si |
| Effect | La |

If I will to lift a book I must find an efficient cause to bring about the desired effect and this I find in the muscles of my arm by means of which I raise the book. The will is the primary, the muscles, the mediary, the raising of the book the ultimate. It is clear that the will is not on the level or note of the muscles nor is the effect of the risen book in the same sphere as the living muscles obeying the end, lying in the will.

To return to the idea expressed in the last paper that the body is the ultimate or lowest degree of a man. In right order the end or primary is obeyed by the cause or intermediary and this is obeyed by the effect. Each in turn is on a lower degree, because the higher

cannot rightly obey the lower. As said, if there is no right order nothing is effected. So in the case of the whole man, when there is no right order, and the body is in control, nothing right is effected. The effect takes charge and as long as a man will not practise Self-Remembering, he will be in the effect and take it as himself. But if he begins to remember himself, he will become conscious in a more internal part, and a still more internal part, and will see the body not as himself but as external to himself. This "tension" or right order is the express object of the Work. It is awakening and has not always got an agreeable taste. When practising it, one sees how the familiar or easy relaxes the tension and how everything tends to prevent it. In my own case, when I am in this tension, and so conscious on the level of cause rather than on the level of effect, I can watch Nicoll and my body endeavouring to attract me back to my habitual state which they do not find very difficult as a rule. Then the focussed triple-tubed telescope shuts up and the three lenses merge so to speak, into one, and body again works me. That is, the ultimate works me, so I am in the wrong order, I am asleep, but quite sure I can effect anything.



NOTE ON DIAGRAM

In regard to this diagram, it must be understood that *high* is also equivalent to more interior. If we put the diagram horizontal, then the body is the outermost and the other parts are more and more interior, which is the same thing as higher and higher.

When a person makes an aim he has an end in view, but in order to carry out his aim, he must find an efficient cause to produce an effect. If one forgets one's aim, then the cause dies and the effect dies, because the effect cannot continue unless the end continues. *End* is defined in the dictionary as *that at which one aims, that which one hopes or intends to accomplish*, and so, *aim, object, purpose*. In this sense, *end* is first or primary and it must find its efficient cause to produce its effect. If my end, or aim, is to change something in myself, I must find out how to do it. Otherwise it will have no effect. In other words, what is so interesting in the Work is that for years one makes an aim, say, to change something, and does not see the necessity for finding out *how* to do it—i.e. how to cause this change—and so no effect is produced. And if you reflect, you will see that aim must be stronger than cause, and cause stronger than effect. Therefore a weak aim produces no effect.

## WHERE ARE YOU INTERNALLY?

It is necessary eventually that we work from realization and not from repression. To realize why I should not think, do or say a thing is quite different from simply repressing it. To *understand* why something is undesirable is quite different from merely resisting it. The results on ourselves are quite different. The inner or essential side of ourselves can only grow through understanding. The Work teaches that understanding is one of the most powerful things that we can cultivate. Let us try to see the difference between a man who acts as he does from fear of loss of reputation or of the law and a man who acts from his understanding.

On one occasion Mr. Ouspensky said to me, when I asked him what a more essential man or woman is like, that such people go on acting in the same way in spite of external circumstances because they act from principles. A man is awake when he sees the psychological meaning of Truth and then will act from his inner perception of Truth, whereas a man who is not awake will act from the truth that derives from what he is told to do, say, to keep on the right side of the law. When a man understands from inner perception why he should not murder his neighbour and acquire his property, say, gold, then whatever happens in regard to external circumstances in the world, he will not do it. This means that, even if the world of law and order has no power, and there are no critics, no police, etc., yet he will not murder his neighbour and take his gold. Why? Because he knows internally that to do that is not following psychological Truth. When men and women have psychological Truth they are acting from something inside themselves and that understanding will make their Essence grow. But if the way you act is entirely a matter of Personality, and of course of False Personality, you are not behaving from anything internal but only from what is external to you. This inner perception of Truth, this seeing the meaning of Truth for yourself, gives you the power of doing good rightly—that is, if one has any good in oneself—but to try to be good to everyone indiscriminately is quite wrong. This is a very difficult subject, however, and we must leave it and go on to something else.

The main point is that if a man behaves rightly through fear of consequences, such as losing his job or his reputation or respectability, he is governed by consequences in such a case, and such a man's Essence will not grow because, you must all remember, Essence is more internal, more deep, than Personality. To be good from Personality will not make Essence grow, but seeing for yourself how, let us say, being negative is wrong in itself, and so not being negative for this internal reason, makes your whole life different. Those people who behave well externally and yet go home and talk vilely about other

people, but in the open are very polite, have a bad internal and a polite external. All this Work is about making the internal right, whatever your external may be. A man who has reached a psychological development in one sense is a man who has developed his internal side and therefore will not act in the same way when life-circumstances change as a man who is externally governed by Personality, especially by False Personality. Remember Personality is formed by life and *has to be*. This is our first step on this earth. But a man who acts from his psychological or spiritual understanding, as distinct from his acquired buffers, attitudes, life-customs, his fear of consequences, is a quite different man from one who acts from the external checks of life. In fact, he begins to be a New Man, because he has developed an internal side—namely, this second step in his development. If you never shew your negative emotions because you are afraid that I may attack you, yet have them and enjoy them in private and with others, then you are not developed internally. You do not see yet how negative emotions destroy you internally—as lying does. Here I would bring in once more the question of where you live in your psychological world as distinct from where you are in the external world in Time and Space. If you like negative emotions but do your best not to shew them externally, these negative emotions will put you in bad and even loathsome places. When you realize that your negative emotions will put you in a bad place in your psychological country and therefore attract the unpleasant ‘T’s that live in the psychological slums, when you realize and therefore understand that this is so, then you will for your own sake want not to be negative. I repeat, you will realize this for your own sake. In short, you will understand why negative emotions are bad things, because you can see that they do harm to you and put you in bad places in yourself. Manners, external manners, are one thing, and a person may repress the manifestation of his negative emotion, say, from fear of losing his job. But he does not realize how negative emotions destroy the inner life and if he begins to be aware of his psychological world and begins to see for himself how he must not be negative because it destroys him internally, then, acting from this, he will become a psychological man. Most of us may be very careful in the external world how we behave, but we do not behave carefully in regard to our psychological world in which we behave as well as we can so that we do not lose our reputation, etc., but we do not see that we are not acting from inner perception of Truth. All of you to whom the Work begins to speak internally will be shewn that even if you are sitting under an apple-tree in the country and are full of negative emotions towards everyone, you are in great danger as regards your psychological development. You can appear, as was said, most holy and pious, and at the same time have psychologically the most infernal internal in you. Essence cannot grow except from your internal side. This is very well worth thinking about a great deal—in fact, for the rest of your life. This Work must be authentic in you

in the sense that you do it internally for the sake of it and not for anything to do with reputation. You might be able to teach this Work very well in an external way, but not believe it inside for a moment. That is why so often people cannot think in this Work properly because, as you know, the Work says it is necessary to think in a different way internally and you only think according to what you believe. If you do not believe this Work really inside, you cannot think about the Work and in that case you only teach from memory.

*Amwell, 10.3.51*

## **YOUR PLACE IN YOUR PSYCHOLOGICAL WORLD**

We speak once more about where you are in your psychological world as distinct from where you are in the material world. You can be dining at a most beautiful restaurant in the physical world and be in a very unpleasant place in your psychological world. No matter what you are offered to eat, you feel hateful inside. I fancy some of you do not quite see the difference between where you are in the psychological world and where you are in the physical world. You can even be the best-dressed woman in the restaurant and yet feel frightfully jealous. All this Work is about where you are in your psychological world. I know you have heard this many times but I think it is very difficult to grasp that one is in an outer world perceived by the senses and an inner world which is called the psychological world of your states. It is necessary for us to begin to relate ourselves to our inner world through self-observation. Self-observation is to make us see where we are internally in our psychological world. Suppose you observe you are in a very bad negative state, although you are surrounded by external luxury. Will you be happy with these external luxuries? Why not? Because you are in a very bad place in yourself. And do not think that I am exaggerating when I say that we all tend to be in a very bad inner place in our psychological world. Let us suppose that you are driving a car. You can turn two ways, down this road or down that road. Now suppose you take a wrong turning and come to a low-class place and get out and have a meal amongst evil people. You know from your experience of life that you ought to leave this place. Be careful that when you come out of the restaurant your car has not been stolen. Now take this physical car and apply it to the psychological world. Suppose you have your car stolen through not having kept an eye on it, which means noticing where you are going. Then you might find that you are in a very bad state for a long time, and if you have any sensibility towards the Work yourself, you will wonder what has happened and feel lost. What has happened? You have gone and done

in the psychological world exactly what corresponds to losing your car in the physical world. So one has to be careful about how one behaves in the psychological world and this is the supreme task of working on oneself through self-observation.

Now I sometimes think: why does a person come here in a negative state? That means, in a very bad place in his or her psychological world. Do you understand that such a person is a great nuisance to me? You should be responsible not only for driving your car in the external world but for driving your own car in the psychological world.

Now this is a very short paper on what I have been speaking about for some time, but I fancy that some of you are not responsible for your inner states and do not see what it means. So therefore we have to learn how to drive our psychological cars in the psychological world which is much bigger and more dangerous than is the external world. I assure you that you cannot afford to be badly negative for more than a very short time—otherwise you may probably be in trouble that may open you to all sorts of disasters that would never happen to you if you were aware of your inner states through self-observation. Negative states always lead to violence eventually—not only that, but they always lead to internal unhappiness. No one who is negative can have any real feeling of happiness except from love of being negative and that means to be in the worst psychological place in your psychological world.

Now we have spoken enough about where we are in the psychological world and perhaps we will not talk about this for some time, because we have so many other Work-ideas to discuss. But if some of you have not grasped what is said, then you will not understand what else is said to you.

*Amwell, 17.3.51*

## **GOOD HOUSEHOLDER**

Let us review again how the Work defines Man. As you know, the definition of Man takes various forms in the Work, such as Moving Centre Man, Emotional Man, and Intellectual Man. But to-day we will recall another way of looking at Man from the Work point of view. Man as he is on Earth is divided into Good Householder, Tramp, Lunatic and Hasnamous. You have heard many times that people must be at the level of Good Householder, if they are brought into this Work. I will give you some actual words of Mr. Ouspensky in this respect. He said: "Good Householder really means in the Work sense a man well orientated to life, who does not believe in life but sees the real value of things. Such a Good Householder has Magnetic



Centre." We see therefore from these definitions that Good Householder can be of two kinds. There is the Householder who believes in life and can deal with his affairs reasonably and again there is the Householder in the Work sense who is well orientated to life and knows his job, but who does not believe in life. That is, he does not believe that life will get him anywhere in the direction in which he wishes to go and has the feeling that life is not real although he continues to do his duty—that is, he sees the real value of things. In other words, he sees how false the aims of life are and how, in so many cases, nothing is attained.

Now we will talk about the next definition: Man as being a Tramp. This man is quite different from Good Householder, whether we think of Good Householder as a man who believes in life or as a man who does not believe in life, and yet in both cases does his job. Mr. Ouspensky said: "Amongst Tramps, you will find many artists and poets, etc., who despise Good Householder, but who are really at a much lower level and have no feeling of responsibility towards anything and do not understand what a fool is in themselves. We all have a fool in us."

Now let us take the third definition—i.e. people who are called, from the Work point of view, Lunatics. "These", said Mr. Ouspensky, on this particular occasion, "are like politicians, people who think they can do, people who think that they can change life by means of themselves, people who, if they put their theories into practice, create greater disorder because they do not calculate Second Force. This means that they think they can change everyone by some new enactment and do not realize that to change a person is a very difficult thing. These are the Lunatics, and again, they do not see the fool in themselves." The fool in you is what does not calculate Second Force, or the force of resistance to what you want to attain.

Then lastly we have this strange word Hasnamous. A man who is Hasnamous (which is a word invented by Mr. G. based on some Persian or Turkish language) is a man who is clever enough to see that he can gain power by means of tricks over ordinary people. Mr. Ouspensky said: "Hasnamous men are people whose well-being depends on the *non*-well-being of other people." At the time when G. was there he pointed out some dictators who were really Hasnamous people. On the other hand, he said that they have always existed—that is, people whose well-being depends on the ill-being of other people. Someone once said to Mr. Ouspensky: "Was Napoleon a Hasnamous man?" He smiled and said: "I did not know Napoleon personally." So we have to think of the answer for ourselves. You remember that Voltaire once said that history is a history of crime, and I fancy if some of you read a little more history than you do, you would easily see what Hasnamous means historically. Of course you must understand that Hasnamous is built on a big scale or a small scale.

And so we have five definitions of Man from this Work point of view: Good Householder with Magnetic Centre, Good Householder without Magnetic Centre, Tramp, Lunatic and Hasnamous.

Now what happens to the Good Householder with Magnetic Centre who is well orientated to his Work in life but does not believe in life? What do you understand yourself by this strange definition and why do you think that such a man has a better being than all the rest mentioned so far? Mr. Ouspensky said in this connection at the time of which I am speaking: "He often disappears after having done his duty." He said: "Such a man often vanishes. People do not hear of him. He may have gone into a monastery or he might have gone elsewhere to find out something different from life. Such a man, if he does this, may find something that makes it possible for him to develop." On the other hand, he said in so many words, that we can take it like this—the Way of Good Householder is a very long way. It will take a very long time and many lives for him to separate from himself and develop himself in the way he should by creation. Now let us talk about this Good Householder and again remind ourselves that no one must come into this Work who is not in some degree Good Householder. This Work is not for Tramps or Lunatics. People who are no good at life, people who are mad in their theories about how life should be run and imagine that by rules and laws people can be changed, are not Good Householders and are not suitable for this Work. Lunatics do not come much into the Fourth Way Work because they are perfectly contented with their own ideas and theories, but unfortunately Tramps come in very often imagining that this Work will make everything easier for them. But the quality of such people is not right for the inner discipline of this Work. Immediately they find any difficulties they are like those people spoken of in the Parable of the Sower and the Seed who, sown on rocky ground, wither away, because they have no root.

Finally, may I point out to some of you that this place here, this Group that we are gradually forming, has nothing to do with a hospital or a charitable institution. I want people who are some good already and who know something about the difficulty of meeting Second Force and seeing that the fault is in themselves. The fool in us never sees Second Force and lives in phantasies and imagination.

## THE BEGINNING OF SEPARATION FROM THE FEELING OF I IN THE BODY

Some of you, I notice, have some difficulty in understanding that if you identify with your body and get every feeling of I from it, as a consequence you cannot remember yourselves. Some of the questions asked in the smaller groups have interested me. All esoteric teaching is based on the idea that Man is not his physical body alone. A man who takes himself solely as his physical body is making a great mistake because there is far more in him than is represented by his physical body. The Work teaches that Man is given at birth an organized physical body and it is marvellous, as some of you younger people should reflect, how the complicated physical body with its different systems, digestive, vascular, nervous, secretory, and all the rest of it, can be made in the course of nine months of our time. One thing you must agree with is that in the primitive original fertilized cell from which our myriad-celled physical body is derived there must be some organizing controlling principle that connects up to all its further divisions and arranges them in order. Yes—life is order. Nothing can live if it is in disorder. Here you are given a brain with its 2,000 million nerve cells. You are given a liver, a breathing system, which can run itself, a muscular system, a digestive system, and so on. And yet we take all this for granted and cannot understand the simple idea that life depends on order, which must have a higher order that controls it. Unless everything were ordered in us, from the highest to the lowest, we should not be able to exist physically on this Earth.

As I implied, very few people think about the miracle of existence, but simply take it for granted. When something goes wrong with this order in our bodies, we have to go to the doctor. All illness is due to *disorder* in the body. All illness is due to something not being in the right order, something that does not correspond to the fundamental order of the body and its different functions, arranged in scale or order. We can see therefore without much disagreement that order is a principle on which all living organisms are based. If they are not in *order*, they die. The Work teaches that this order is connected with what is called the Law of Octaves, or law of things in order, or Law of Seven, the supreme example of which is the Ray of Creation. Here you apprehend things are in order, one below another, and all in continual creation. In the Ray of Creation one is shewn that everything descends by notes from the Unknown Origin of All Things, which is called the Absolute. The order of the body is therefore an octave, because it works. If the order of the body be wrong somewhere, then the Law of Octaves cannot work in it, because force flowing in from the highest to the lowest would be interrupted. That is, one would have disorder. Suppose, for example, that your brain were invaded

by your liver. One can see at once that if this did happen you would die, because the brain is at a much higher level than is the liver, and the liver is again at a much higher level than the skin-cells that form your skin. Therefore all order is on the principle of higher and lower—that is, that which commands and that which obeys—and that is the fundamental structure of all living organisms. Even the amoeba, this little living single cell that we have to study in the laboratories, has structure in it and has a nucleus in it that has to control the whole and corresponds to the brain. But the body is not the highest in Man. In Man, as distinct from animals, we have a peculiar case. All esoteric teaching says the same thing—namely, that Man is born incomplete. He is given his body as are animals. There is in him something that he can develop, however, apart from the physical body given to him. Animals do not have this possibility, but Man has, so therefore Man is a peculiar creation. He can develop *another body* apart from his physical body. In which direction, or where, do the possibilities of this development lie? In what we can roughly call his psychological part. This is not in order. Man is given an ordered physical body as a gift, but he is not given an ordered psychological body as a gift. He must develop this psychological body so that it becomes organized in the same kind of way—i.e. through order, as is his physical body. All this Work is about organizing this psychological body, and indeed, up to the point when this psychological body, ordered in the right way, can not only control the physical body and its actions but even exist independently of the physical body.

So we find at first that it is difficult to discover what this Work is about, and we ask questions and we cannot understand the answers and wonder whether we have got into contact with something that is just pure nonsense. But the Work is not nonsense. No one can start the Work and begin to see what it is about until he (or she) realizes that his (or her) psychological state is completely chaotic and has no order in it corresponding to the body and its order. So work begins by saying things like this to you:

“You have got to realize that you are not one but many different ‘I’s; you have no real, permanent I but a mass of changing ‘I’s; at one moment one ‘I’ speaks through your telephone (that is your voice) and at another moment another ‘I’ says something quite contradictory.”

Why do we have to realize this through self-observation? Simply because it may break up our sleep, our self-satisfaction about ourselves, and make it possible for us to understand that our psychological life is not in any kind of order but, on the contrary, in chaos. Now everything said in this Work, everything you are told to observe, has one object, and one objective, which is pointing in the same way—that is, to the realization that your inner life is in a chaos although you assume that it is not. As long as you assume, say, that you have only one

permanent I, that you have real Will, that you do not swing on the pendulum of love and hate, and so on, you are asleep to yourself, although you may be a very astute man of business or person who is cleverly adapted to external life. When a man begins to see his inner chaos through the light of this Work, when he sees all this through self-observation, and sees that he is full of illusions about himself, such a man has begun to awaken, such a man has begun to do what he was really created for, and to awaken to what his inner state is like—that is, to see the difference between his external, careful and even ritual behaviour and what he internally feels. Afterwards, when he has awakened as fully as he can at his level, he will then wish to die to a small extent to what he was before, and only then can he be re-born in a small way. When he is re-born he will no longer identify himself with his physical body because he will have an utterly new sense of I and what I means—in fact, he will be moving towards Real I, which is really Himself—but far away from all of us.

At Easter-time we perceive what was enacted physically—the Awakening, Death and Resurrection. All that we can do at present is to try to awaken.

#### NOTE ON FAITH

“Now when he [Jesus] had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion’s servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue. Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick” (Luke vii.1-10).

“For I am a man under authority.” Christ was under authority. “And I have men under me and I say to one, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh.” Christ marvelled that the centurion saw so deeply into what faith means. “Never have I seen such faith—no, not in all Israel.” Faith is seeing scale invisible, and by this vision

mountains can be removed. Christ said: "Only believe" (only have faith), which means only see where I stand in the scale of being invisible and under whose authority I am—namely, that of God, Who is a Spirit, and can only be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth. Faith is belief in something higher. Unless you have faith you cannot remember yourself.

*Amwell, 31.3.51*

### **NOTE ON SECOND FORCE**

People want the Sun straight off, so to speak, and do not understand that they have to come up against Second Force and work very hard before they can get even anything. Let me ask this question: Are they Tramps or Lunatics? In one of Ibsen's plays is a description of a very unbalanced young man who ends up his life by shrieking that he wants the Sun. When I saw this play many years ago I was impressed by the ending. I thought that here was something I did not understand. You must realize that it had never clearly occurred to me that there was Second Force in life and that therefore everything requires effort. Some of you may remember how Icarus thought he could fly to the Sun wearing the wings invented by his father, said to have been made of some kind of wax. As he rose higher and higher the Sun melted his wings and they came off and he fell into the sea, now called after him the Icarian Sea. If you can understand what I mean, he had not calculated Second Force—namely, the difficulties involved in doing anything. But the case of Icarus refers psychologically to a man who thinks he can attain Divine Being and does not understand that he has no strength and no understanding, and takes the whole thing physically, using the wrong methods, thinking that by rising up in the air towards the Sun, the external visible Sun, he can change his level of being. He does not realize that externally the Sun represents the Higher Centres in him and that he has to work on himself a great deal to reach that level, represented in visible life as the Sun. He must reach the invisible Sun in himself. He does not realize that development of being is an internal matter and quite possible if one begins to be taught how to achieve such development. In other words, he thinks externally and thinks that by means of, say, larger machinery, he may reach the Sun, or even the Stars. All esotericism, all this Work, teaches that you cannot be different unless you begin to change internally your level of being. No matter how many cars, how many Icarus wings you have, how many new plastics join the wings to yourself, you will not be able to get to the Sun in yourself—namely, your Higher Centres. However, I suppose this is difficult for many to understand

who still think they are only their bodies. Such people imagine that by going into space and rising higher and higher in space they are changing their being and that the Kingdom of Heaven is high up in the sky. But a person could change his being without having an aeroplane or Icarus wings. He might change his being, even, living in a small cell, by observing himself, remembering himself and by not identifying. Is it not extraordinary that people believe that a change of outer circumstances, like another wife, another house, another car, another government, could make things different? Do they imagine that *they* could be different? Let me say that the Work assures them that nothing would be different however they changed their external circumstances. The Work says that to be different you must change your being, because if you do not change your being you will always attract the same circumstances, the same difficulties. Go up if you like into the stratosphere—does that change *you*? All you will then do is to boast more than ever. If you fly to the uttermost parts of the earth—are you not the same fool?

Now Second Force appears to be in two different situations and to act on two different sides of our lives. First of all, Second Force seems outside you and takes, let us say, the form that you cannot get a job or pass an examination, or it makes you feel that if only you had a better situation, a better house, everything would be different. This is Second Force seen externally which will oppose you always, and please understand that Second Force in this external form is not a question whether you have money or not. Often when people get more money they find life more difficult than before. But Second Force also meets us whenever we begin to do this Work. That is the point. This Work begins with self-observation and trying, let us say, not to identify so much, or not to be so negative. Here you will find Second Force in a most accessible formidable way. You will find that you cannot observe yourself, or you cannot remember yourself, or you cannot help identifying. So Second Force is in two directions, it seems. For people who are not doing this Work, Second Force will seem to exist only outside themselves. Suppose you make an aim for yourself in connection with this Work—you will find at once that Second Force will get up against your keeping this aim. And you will find it very difficult to know how to deal with this Second Force for many years. Most people think that they could easily be what they wanted if they really wanted it. They are perfectly certain that they could be different *if they wanted to*. Let them try. The level of your being will always attract its own quality of Second Force. And no matter how you alter your external circumstances, if you can, and how much money you are left, and so on, you will have the same Second Force which arises from yourself. You have always been anxious about everything, say, and are now given plenty of money. You want to be happy, but as your level of being is characterized by always being anxious, you will continue to be anxious—now perhaps about this new money. In this Work we are given very

stern orders, as far as we can make out, that we should not be anxious. Do you understand that you cannot change your being if you still have the same thing predominating in your being—for example, always being anxious about everything? This is a psychological disease. The curious thing is that if you follow the Work and separate from the various things that the Work teaches you to separate from, not only will your being attract a quite different inner life, but also your external life will become different. You will meet new people. So it seems to me that Second Force in Life and Second Force in the Work are related. Often, when you fail in external life, it is because you do not work or think enough from yourself, and this usually means that your being will attract failure because it is too lazy.

Now many people think that God created the world just for our enjoyment, but God, you must remember, when He created, divided into three forces, active, passive, and neutralizing. This was in the nature of things. This means that everyone will have to meet Second Force in some form or other, whether he is in comfortable circumstances or not. Second Force exists externally and internally, and unless you see this, you will always blame someone. Let me ask you a fantastical question. Suppose you had been God and had created everyone to do your Will, would you not have become bored with everyone's behaving rightly? Do you not think that the serpent would have had to be introduced to make something go wrong? Some of you should really read this most interesting symbolical account given by Moses in Genesis about Man who was created in Paradise where presumably there was no Second Force. Have you noticed a little boy playing with his electric trains which all go beautifully? He gets bored. But if one truck falls off he is at once interested. The whole point is that Second Force is in the nature of things, and is not an evil god but an aspect of God in which you have to fight with Him in order to develop. Perhaps you will understand that without Second Force no one could grow internally. When we struggle with our mechanicalness and try to behave more consciously are we struggling with Second Force in us? How can we expect, if we are created as self-developing beings, that we could develop if everything went as we wanted it to go?



## A NOTE ON BUFFERS

If you are negative, you remember one lot of things: if you are not, you remember quite different things. This shews how the internal arrangement of our psychology or mind depends very much on the emotional state. Negative emotions, of course, belong to the emotional state, and as a rule they are practically the only emotions that we can experience. This is why so much work has to be done on the terrible state of the emotional centre. Of course, if we loved God with all our hearts and souls, and our neighbour as ourselves, we would then no doubt have a different emotional centre. In fact, I am certain we would. In the present state of darkness and obscurity of our emotional centre, we do not love God or our neighbour. Have you ever thought about this? Probably not. To change the terrible state of our emotional centre as it is in mechanical life, we must have some idea of something higher than ourselves. As we are, we do not think that our neighbour is higher than ourselves, and we certainly do not think that God is higher, because we take ourselves as God and only pretend to think that there is anything higher than ourselves.

All this is very difficult and it takes a long time to understand even a little about it. However, if we begin to break ourselves up from the illusions of ourselves—the illusion, for instance, that we are one, that we have Real I and Will, that we can do, that we are never negative, never identify, and have, in short, a Real I that controls us at every moment—we will begin to see that there is something higher than ourselves. Once we realize this, we will know that these terrible imperfections, which we regard as being so excellent, are heavily concealed by illusions, and, as the Work says, if you were suddenly to see what you are like, you would go mad. If, for example, you suddenly saw all your contradictions, you would go mad. Fortunately, we are not allowed to see more than we can stand. In fact, we are only allowed, in this Work, to see a little way ahead, where, so to speak, we can stand what we see. But if we had all buffers taken away we would go mad at once. Buffers prevent us from going mad and give us the sense of being perfectly all right, day by day. A little child has the misfortune of being born among sleeping people, and at first it feels contradictions, but after a time all this is smoothed over by the formation of buffers. Buffers are, as G. said, things that ease the collision of contradictions. So much so that one does not notice them. But a very small child has conscience in an obscure way whereas sleeping people do not have conscience—I mean, Real Conscience—but of course they have acquired conscience and social conscience. Now if conscience grew in us from the very first we would go mad with the state of the world. We would see the contradictions. But we are not allowed to see them. Buffers take the place of conscience. No matter how big or little, grand

or poor, you have all got this disease of buffers, and you will not face the truth. In short, you will always lie. So, therefore, we see from this short paper, that really to have conscience we must see buffers, but it is impossible except with prolonged self-observation, and often, I must say, indirect self-observation, by which I mean retrospective observation.

The Work teaches that we all have Real Conscience quite apart from acquired conscience, which latter is merely a question of how we were brought up. G. said we all have Real Conscience but it is buried. How then to bring it to the surface? Now listen carefully. The memory of Observing I is quite different from the memories of little 'I's that pop up at every moment. Observing I should, and does, eventually make it possible for you to remember what the other 'I's said lower down in the scale of your machine. Through the memory of Observing I, which I tend to call Work-memory, as you may have noticed, we see contradictions—and *what is it that frees us? Conscience.* If I become conscious through the memory of Observing I, begin to get freed from my buffers, it means that I begin to see my contradictions and will become freed from them—namely, from what has prevented me from seeing them before. What has prevented me from seeing these contradictions. The memory of Observing I is now beginning to change, and then after a time Higher Centres will see that you are trying to work on yourself in a real sense and will begin to give you traces of Real Conscience, which is utterly different from acquired or educated conscience. G. said that Real Conscience is the same in everyone, whether they be pink, yellow, blue or green. What is my state then? If my buffers get a little weaker do I feel so confident in myself as before? Or do I begin to see the illusion in myself which has haunted me all this time? If so, it will then begin to be possible for me to love God and my neighbour instead of myself.

*Amwell, 13.4.51*

## **THE NECESSITY OF HAVING A POINT IN THE WORK**

It has often been said that before we can feel that we are really connected with this Work, in spite of the number of meetings we attend, we must establish a *point in the Work*. This has already been said many times. But what does it mean, to establish a point in the Work? To have a point in the Work means to have something in yourself from which you start to think for yourself. Unless you understand something, one thing, about this Work, you have no point in yourself from which to start, to connect with this Work. And, not having established

this point in the Work, you can go from place to place, from meeting to meeting, from diagram to diagram, from teacher to teacher, and hear through your outer ears all about the Work and the different angles and approaches to it. But they will not give you a point in yourself from which you can start. Your note-books may be full of excellent remarks, you may read Plato, or the newest book out about esotericism, the latest lecture, yet all this is quite useless; it is extravert psychology and will only remain as far as it does in your memory. We are all very comfortable in our memories owing to buffers, so memory will not stab us awake. A point in the Work means that you suddenly see the truth of something that the Work teaches. You see it for yourself. You see it from your own understanding. When you see any of the truths of this Work for yourself they cease to be questions of memory, but become much deeper things, because they begin to work on you. I assure you that a person may have listened to this Work for years and years and may even remember it, but nothing may have "stabbed his spirit broad awake". I tried once to put this before some of you in terms of "Thou art the man". I return to this again. Has anything that you have learnt in this Work begun to alter your life or is it all still in your external memory? Now knowledge can rest solely in the memory. You have heard all about the teaching concerning negative emotions. But what makes the Work alive apart from lying in the memory? Some people have very good formative memories of this Work. But they have never experienced it yet. Nothing has stabbed them awake yet in connection with the teaching. They have heard esoteric truth but they have not applied it to themselves. They have not seen that they are the people concerned. I can quite imagine a person who speaks most angelically about this Work and knows all its connections without having the slightest idea what it means as a personal experience. For example, he has never seen his own negative emotions and if he half-notices them he begins at once to self-justify. He may think that by sending me very involved intellectual questions about the Work he is doing the Work. I can only answer that one must begin to understand what the Work is about—namely, about you, about yourself—and those questions will then cease completely because you will realize what you are up against in this thing called yourself which has to be changed. Now Paul said: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, *caritas*, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal" (I Cor. xiii). In what two directions of the Work does this strange word translated as "charity" lie? Obviously, surely in the second and third lines of the Work. If you have negative emotions and indulge in them without seeing that you are doing so, are you harming indeed all three lines of the Work—i.e. work on yourself, work with groups, and work in connection with the aim of this Work? Certainly, you are, and I have no doubt about it.

If I know all this Work by heart and I am negative without any correction of myself, have I got a point in the Work? Why, of course

not. I don't know what it is about yet as a personal experience. But, having had this personal experience, I may still be negative, yet I begin to be aware that I am responsible to the Work for being so. Now look at anyone in this Work and reflect in yourself why he or she is in it. What are their introducers? You may be perfectly certain that the two introducers are love of self (and all that that means) and love of the world (and all that that means). I will tell you a story about this. When I first met this Work I began to imagine myself after a short time going around in a black cloak and a black hat, hypnotizing everyone at once. I give you this example, to shew that the truths of this Work were being introduced by wrong love—by love of self and love of importance in the world. Now esoteric truths can never be rightly arranged from such love and will always go wrong. I spoke to some of you about how the emotions can change the order of truths in yourself. I said: "If you suddenly become suspicious, are all your internal arrangements altered at once? And when you realize that you are wrong, everything is re-arranged." When you have a personal experience then you have a point in the Work for then you understand something and there will gradually collect round this point all the ideas that lie without order in your memory. You will form round you the Work and all its teaching from what you understand in yourself. This will be quite a different orientation in you from that of a person who merely remembers things said in recent papers. If you have a point in the Work it will make it possible for you to form a crystallization of the whole Work round you in the right order, and then you will have Second Body and that is something that survives physical death. I would like to ask you how many parables in the Gospels refer to this. Take the parable of the Ten Virgins. They all had lamps—that is, teaching—but half of them had also oil in their lamps. These latter were accepted and the others were turned out. If you have a real point in the Work and understand it and act from it, this is oil, in what you have been taught, which is a lamp. You have your own oil. But those people who have attended meetings so faithfully and have no point yet, always going from place to place, they will not get anywhere. Why? Simply because they do not apply the Work to themselves yet. They do not see that they are negative and have to work on that, in place of hearing further talks about negative emotions. Such people are eventually no good in the Work. They have not seen the good of the truth of the Work for themselves and followed it, which makes a certain heat in a person and will begin to change the person. To suffer from the truth of the Work by seeing its goodness is one form of suffering called conscious suffering, but simply to go every night, in sleet or hail, to attend a meeting, without the slightest idea of what you are hearing as a personal experience is absolutely useless. Better that you remain at home and reflect on the kind of woman or the kind of man you are internally.

## **THE ARRANGEMENT OF TRUTH IN THE MIND**

I notice that some of you have not understood what has been talked about in connection with the ideas and truths of the Work and their arrangement according to the emotional state. Let us therefore recapitulate. Are you certain that when you are negative towards someone all that you know about that person is turned in the opposite direction in comparison with what you know when you do not hate that person? I suppose this is difficult for some of you to understand, because you do not observe yourselves. It is the emotional state that arranges such truths, such knowledge as you have, either in one way or in another. You may have all the knowledge that it is possible to get and you hate everyone and even hate the whole idea of esotericism, and all this knowledge will be arranged in the wrong way—namely, to confirm your hatred. All negative emotions cause misunderstanding, either of people or ideas. A suspicion arises in your breast that the other does not love you properly or loves someone else—does not this beautiful little arrangement called love immediately cease? So what does it all mean? It means that the injection of an evil thought can change everything in you. Why? Because it incites an emotion that is negative. All negative emotions, of which there are many, many and many varieties, will arrange Truth in a wrong order. So therefore understand why it has been said several times recently that the emotional state determines the arrangement of truths and knowledge in your mind. From this you will see why so much importance is given to resisting, overcoming, separating from and struggling against negative emotions. This has been said many times recently. All the ideas of this Work may be taught to you on the blackboard but if your attitude towards them is negative they will not fall into a right formation—in fact, quite the contrary. Emotions arrange our knowledge, and bad emotions, wrong attitudes, can destroy the efficacy of the Work-ideas in you, so much so that the more you think about the Work, the more you become confident that it is nonsense. In short, negative emotions make nonsense of Truth by their wrong arrangement of it. Then they connect with aim, because aim has an emotional side, since they hate truth, and your aim is to drag things down, as best you can. Negative emotions can only exist through false truth, through lies, or a false arrangement of truth. There is falsity in the Intellectual Centre, and falsity in the Emotional Centre. You can possibly see what I mean by false thinking, but can you see what false emotions are? All negative emotions are false and the trouble is that they have great power over other people who are not negative at the moment. A person filled with negative emotions comes into the room and instantly it is like an East wind. Everything that we were talking about he will find fault with and delight to do so. This is because he is nega-

tive in his emotional part and in consequence negative in his thinking part. Now a man who is negative in his emotional part and his thinking part is very close to insanity. I mean, simply, that the whole of his psychological life is useless. It is in wrong order. There is no point of growth anywhere in it. Such people must be turned out of the Work as soon as possible. Now, to talk to people in the Work, I am going to say that if you can notice, observe, your intellectual or thinking part as distinct from your emotional part, you may see how you are easily unhappy. A person says in his or her intellectual part, for example: "Oh, what is the good of anything?" That will instantly stimulate all the negative 'I's that luxuriate in producing negative emotions in the emotional part, and after a time they will feel depressed, negative, unhappy. Why? Because they allow this thought—"What is the good of anything?" to take charge of them. Now, the other way round, you allow a transient negative emotion to take charge of you, such as that someone does not smile at you in the morning. Instantly, you will feel a slight rebuff, so a negative emotion in you has taken charge. From that you begin to think: "What is the good of anything? No one cares for me." I often can see for myself that the negative part of Emotional Centre should be behind bars like a pack of wolfhounds. Open one door and the whole pack comes out before you know where you are.

Now, as I said, once you get negative, all your Truth that you are holding on to in the Intellectual Centre will be turned the other way round. So it is said in the Work that we must try to have good attitude to the Work, because Truth can only grow through good emotions and multiply itself through what is good, and if you have negative emotions please understand that there is no good about them. They are evil, so how can you expect the understanding of the truth of the Work to grow by means of negative emotions? Will not these negative emotions destroy the truths of the Work that you have seen and turn them round the other way or mix them up? Say you have a person who has no good will towards other people in the Work. Can that person grow in understanding? You remember the three lines of Work, work on yourself, work with other people, and work for the Work's sake. How can you, if you have bad attitudes and negative emotions towards others in the Work and only want it for yourself, how can you expect the Work to grow in you? After a time you have to learn to work without help. This may be difficult for a long time, until you see what the Work means in you. As I taught you, the Work is an organism, and if rightly constructed can put you in touch with what wishes to help you from inside—namely, Higher Centres. And if you are trying to construct the Work in yourself, and you do not notice that you are full of negative emotions, you will be working in vain, because the negative emotions will connect up the Work-ideas in the wrong way in you. So we all have this difficult problem to meet which results eventually in the realization that *we have a right not to be negative.*

## **ESSENCE AND PERSONALITY**

In order to make the Work internal so that it begins to work in you, it is necessary to think about one or another of the great ideas of the Work. As you notice, we are always speaking of this on one occasion or another. Understanding is the most powerful force that we can make in ourselves. But if you simply hear the Work-ideas and do not try to understand them, no inner connections can be made between yourself as you are and Higher Centres. People say: "What do I have to do in order to work on myself?" Now, one of the fundamental ideas of this Work is that a reversal has to take place in us and this idea is formulated in some such words as that we are self-developing organisms and we are down here on this planet in order to produce this final development in ourselves, because it is quite obvious that if a self-developing organism were created perfect it would not be a self-developing organism. Sometimes I wonder if some of you have understood this yet. We are all down here to develop something in us which life does not develop. Here you are tangled up with the world and its affairs and perhaps with success, but this does not belong to the teaching of the Work about self-development. Life develops the Personality, but not Essence. The part of a man that can grow (in the Work-sense) is the Essence. Life develops the Personality, and the richer the Personality, the more you can do in life, the better, only it does not make something in you grow, with which Esotericism is concerned. We are born with Essence and then we acquire Personality. Personality then becomes active and Essence ceases to grow. Although many of you have heard this many times before I wonder whether you have reflected on it and its meaning. Here you have a man who has attained high rank in life yet he is dead in himself. Why is he dead in himself? Everything is external—nothing internal. All his development has been external and there has been no internal development which is the thing about which the Work speaks. And I assure you that all esoteric teaching always talks about this inner development. In terms of the Work, Essence has not developed. You may have the richest Personality, but no development of Essence. In other words, you may be the most important man in life and yet dead from the Work point of view. Why? Because Essence is what is really you, what you were born with, and if that is not developed, whatever you may be in life does not compensate for lack of growth of your Essence in you. You have remained with Personality active and Essence passive, or even so remote that in the Work-sense it is said that you are dead. Dead in what way? Dead inside yourself. Nothing is really changed inside you by your life.

Now the secret of this Work is that Essence can only grow through becoming more and more conscious of Personality and slowly and

gradually seeing what Personality is in you. Therefore the Work teaches that we must observe Personality, become more conscious of it, because if you are not conscious of anything in yourself you cannot separate from it. One special thing we have to start with in self-observation is to try to observe False Personality, which is never *you*. Now when you observe yourself, which is one of the fundamental beginnings of the Work, simply because unless you observe yourself and become conscious of what you are like you cannot change anything, you have to observe what is not you, your Personality, or, shall we say, your False Personality. Here you are giving yourself airs. Is that really you? You dress in different parts in life, but are you sure this is you? So it is necessary to get behind these dressed up 'I's, because Essence can only grow from truth. I am not saying that everything in Personality, the acquired side of you, is false, but a great deal is. If you are a real craftsman it will nourish Essence. Now here is a curious thing. Essence can only grow through truth. If you want to undergo what the Work teaches, you have to develop Essence, not add simply to Personality. Suppose we could see the truth about ourselves, which, thank God, we are not allowed to see, that would make Essence grow at once. You would cease to be a figured image of yourself in life. You would see it was rather spurious, or even entirely so. Now this stalking about in life from a false idea of yourself prevents Essence from growing. This is why we feel lonely. Why? Because we are inventing ourselves at every moment and do not really feel ourselves. Let me repeat once more: all this Work from this point of view is to make Essence grow through becoming more and more conscious of Personality and seeing it is *not me, not I*. Can this be done in life? Yes, the Work says it can be done in life if you absorb and begin to understand what the Work teaches. So many people are unhappy because of a false idea of themselves derived especially from False Personality. They keep on bolstering up something that is not really them. So they invent themselves and they do not correspond internally with what they invent about themselves.

Now let us return to the idea that we must meditate on and try to understand, instead of simply knowing that Man is made a self-developing organism and that for that reason he must make False Personality passive so that Essence can grow. Then you have a reversal that can take place inside, not suddenly but gradually, in which you disbelieve your idea of yourself through observation of yourself, and then something starts in you to grow which cannot grow through external life, but only through interior meaning. If you are really good at anything, apart from False Personality, it will nourish Essence, but if it is mixed up with False Personality it will not, because it will be full of lies.

LIES KILL ESSENCE.



## **NOTE ON THE STATE OF OUR EMOTIONAL CENTRE WHEN WE ARE ASLEEP IN THE WORK-SENSE**

The fact of expressing negative emotions makes them grow and enlarge. All emotions which arise from the negative side of the Emotional Centre wish to enlarge themselves and the Emotional Centre asks for food to continue being negative. Everyone has negative emotions, some more and some less, but if you are, let us say, inclined more or less to be negative about everything and everyone, and you do not check it from conscious control, the negative part will grow and grow until you become unbearable to everyone except yourself. The negative part of Emotional Centre grows on what it feeds on and if you allow it to feed on negative things, it will grow and grow. When you reach a point of self-observation in connection with the Work, you may see that you are taking some person or event negatively and you must try to control it and not let the way you are taking the person or the event go straight down to the negative part of the Emotional Centre. The First Conscious Shock has to do with seeing how you are taking in impressions. A mechanical person cannot help himself or herself because there is nothing between him or her and the impressions coming from life, whether they take the form of persons or events. A person who is continually negative is really a very ill person from the Work point of view. An incoming impression, if you have a little Self-Remembering and Self-Observation established in you by the Work—namely, if you have begun to notice how you take things—is the beginning of the whole possibility of altering, of changing your being. However, few people have this little place that the Work seeks especially to make in you all. Most people are simply swamped by everything that happens to them, and so the negative part of Emotional Centre grows and grows until one is really in a very bad state, a really sick person from the standpoint of the Work, and I mean also by this, a person who has absolutely failed to develop himself or herself. In fact, such a person will not be in the Work. Now, begin to feel a little responsible for your own states and begin to realize what it means to see that we are all made self-developing organisms and that our self-development depends on how we behave psychologically, emotionally, spiritually, towards life. I can take an event mechanically or I can take the same event in quite another way, consciously instead of mechanically. Here lies the value of the Work, for the power of the negative part of the Emotional Centre is terrifically strong. The inclination to be negative is very difficult to overcome and we are foolish if we think otherwise. Here lies indeed the devil and hell. I must add that it is useless maintaining a resigned attitude towards everything, which is merely false and insincere. On the other hand, if you begin to practise being passive, by inner work, to what angers you, etc., that

can make you grow. To learn how to be passive to a situation or a person, that is wisdom. But I assure you it takes a long time to see what this means. But the continual expression of negative emotions, as when people talk to you saying they cannot stand this or that, will produce in people a continual growth of the negative part of the Emotional Centre.

Now let us talk once more about why the Work speaks so much about the purification of the Emotional Centre. The reason is that when the Emotional Centre is altered or purified from negative emotions you can begin to get help, you can begin to receive influences of a new kind, which help you to understand much that you did not understand before. When the Emotional Centre is made better more or less by your own work on it, you may be given strength from these Higher Centres in you which are always awake and always speaking to you. In other words, you may be helped by them. I really mean *helped*. So to enjoy negative emotions is one of the worst sins that you can commit in the Work. Sin in the original Greek means missing the mark. If we want to try to awaken, which is our great aim eventually, we must try to observe our negative emotions which stand in the way of this awakening about which all esoteric teaching speaks, whereas to enjoy negative emotions, nourish them in ourselves by inner talking, is the very opposite to what one has to do to make it possible to awaken.

There were some questions recently about what aim means. The great aim of this Work is to awaken from the sleep that we are in and one great power that keeps us asleep is our love of being negative. So, if you want to make aim in the Work, you cannot make aim to awaken just like that, but you must be more subtle, more internally educated in the ideas of the Work, and see what particular love of being negative is keeping you asleep. The curious thing is that since we have no Real Conscience we think it is quite all right to speak against people and enjoy a good, negative talk. At the same time, I must admit people who are in the Work soon feel very uneasy when they are negative and do not care for such emotions. Aim therefore must begin with seeing specifically what your Emotional Centre is like, and trying to work on some of the worst negative emotions which lie in it. The trouble is that we identify so easily with our negative emotions. In some strange way, people often feel better when they are negative. This should not happen after a certain time in the Work. They should not feel better, they should feel unhappy, feel worse. When you are negative, everything is arranged wrongly, the wrong way round. I mean, the Truth, the Knowledge of the Work, is all turned the wrong way round.

## **THE NECESSITY OF FORMING AN INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN HIGHER AND LOWER CENTRES**

One reason why we cannot get help from Higher Centres is because in ordinary life we live in moving parts of lower centres. We simply talk and chat, and so on. One or two strip cartoons in this connection are rather interesting as illustrations. Of course, if you are self-complacent, satisfied with your life, you will not try to alter this. However, it is quite possible in time, through contact with the Work, even although it has never occurred to you to work on yourself, to become dissatisfied with this mechanical way of behaving, which comes from responding to external life through the moving parts of your centres. Let us review for a moment the moving parts of the Intellectual Centre as laid down by the Work. The most mechanical part of the Intellectual Centre makes you continually repeat what you have heard, especially scandal. The emotional part of the moving part of the Intellectual Centre consists usually of curiosity, what O. called monkey curiosity. You want to find out why Mr. Smith does not live with Mrs. Smith for the moment. Then of course the satisfaction of curiosity is very pleasing. Or again, the intellectual part of the moving part of the Intellectual Centre consists in making small plans, such as: "Shall I go by bus or walk?" Now the emotional division of the Intellectual Centre means the desire to know or understand. It does not consist in wanting to know why Mr. Smith has gone away from Mrs. Smith, which is from small 'I's and uninteresting.

Now, as I said, the reason why we cannot be in touch with Higher Centres is because we live in small parts of our ordinary centres, mechanical parts. We have mechanical emotions, hatred, love, dislikes, etc. As long as a person does not see, does not become dissatisfied with himself from this point of view, he cannot do this Work. Everyone is plagued by these mechanical parts of centres that are almost like parrots, having no thought behind them, chattering all the time. Now if we suddenly rise in our level of speaking, the whole thing is to try to make a connection between our Higher Centres and our ordinary centres and for that it is necessary to have an intermediary, the boy, so to speak, who understands the Higher Centres and the lower centres. Higher Centres speak a different language from natural or ordinary centres which are based on the senses. That is why it is so important to begin to understand things psychologically as well as literally. The natural external mind thinks from the evidence of the senses. The internal or psychological mind thinks from quite a different source altogether. This is very difficult to grasp. And yet, at the same time, the Work is telling you to think psychologically or spiritually and not to think in terms of the external senses only. For example, when you think of your inner state through observation, you may find yourself

in a very unpleasant place in yourself, although you are enjoying a fine dinner with plenty of wine. Now a person awakening will be very uncomfortable if at the same time he is aware that he is in a very bad place in himself—that is, psychologically. No doubt it is much better that he does not notice that he is in a bad place in himself, for he may get indigestion if he does. So it is better for him to remain asleep to his states, and delight in the idea that he is going on to a fine supper later. That is the difficulty that confronts us when we want to make an intermediary between the external world and our internal state. There are many things that I could quote here from the Old and New Testaments that concern this difficulty. There is, for instance, the phrase: “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might” (Eccles. ix. 10). Here you have a magnificent lobster, so eat it with all your might! That is, do not make a problem about it. Yet at the same time I am talking about something much deeper than this. Man has two sides to him—outer and inner. The outer belongs to his external mind, the inner to his spiritual mind. For a long time these two are in opposition unless they have an intermediary between them. That means a Third Force, because anything that can intervene in the Work is called a Neutralizing Force or Third Force. And this Third Force means participating both in the external and the internal mind. It is no use separating the two in the method of the Fourth Way. Some people think that everything to do with life is bad: others think that everything to do with religion and spiritual life is good. They are both wrong. If we can see the good in what belongs both to internal life and external life, we will advance towards meeting this intermediary. The point is that the natural man cannot see the truth of this Work, simply because he has no intermediary. You try to explain the truth of this Work to a person who lives in moving parts of centres and you simply cannot do it. Is then the possession of Magnetic Centre the beginning of this intermediary? I certainly will not answer that question except to say that Magnetic Centre, if it is right, can see the difference between esotericism and life-influences. But, as I say, you must have the intermediary between the two; you cannot give up one for the other. You have to bring the two sides together into some kind of harmony. So therefore the Work says that everything that puts you to sleep is bad for the Work. By that is meant, everything that you do from your outside natural mind that puts you to sleep in your interior mind is bad. What awakens you is good. But, I repeat, the point of this paper is that you must have an intermediary between Higher and Lower Centres. One intermediary, as you know, is that you have to get out of moving parts of centres, out of this chattering of moving parts, and try to concentrate by attention, learn something that you did not know before. This effort is to put you in touch with the higher parts of ordinary centres and then you may hear, according to the quality of your being, traces of Higher Centres. Then you may be able to understand that you have two sides to you, one turned towards

life that you have to fulfil and one turned towards Higher Centres which you need not bother about unless you wish to awaken in your inmost spirit. The interesting point is that there must be an intermediary. I wonder what this intermediary is. Shall we call him Benjamin? Or shall we call him the puer aeternus, the eternal boy, as the Ancients called him? This intermediary is quite different from heavy intellectual thought and reasoning. Christ said: "Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of Heaven." He was talking about this intermediary between the physical and the spiritual worlds. I think one of the first examples of what this means is that a person gives up arguing with me as to whether negative emotions are wrong and begins to see for himself by direct inner perception that they are wrong without any further argument. So therefore I think that this intermediary between life and Higher Centres is quite innocent in its way, for it does not use reason but uses perception. It simply says: "This is obviously wrong," without argument. So therefore you see that the intermediary is connected very closely with Buried Conscience which simply sees that a thing is good or bad without any reason. Now if you have not any intermediary yet formed in you, you will not be able to see the truth of the Work, although you may be very good at the truth of life.

*Amwell, 19.5.51*

## **BEAUTY AND THE PUER AETERNUS**

To receive this Work negatively is useless; to receive it from fear or duty is useless; to receive it very heavily and seriously is useless; to receive it only formatorily is useless. In the long run the Work has to become emotional. Unless you feel the beauty of the Work, unless you desire it as something lovely, it cannot make right contact with you, which is to say, in short, that you cannot make contact with Higher Centres. There is a certain beauty in everything which cannot be imitated by seriousness. Do you think it would be any good for a person like me to take up ballet-dancing as seriously as I could, or any other form of exercise? I know I am clumsy and my sense of beauty, which runs through other things, does not run through this. We can see beauty in different ways. Golfers see beauty in a stroke made by a champion, fencers see beauty in their own movements, footballers see beauty in dribbling, cricketers see beauty in a bowler or batsman, and so on in a thousand different ways. A man who sees no beauty has not got a connecting link between Higher Centres and lower centres. Now seeing beauty in something is to love it. I may go to cricket-matches all through the season in pouring rain, but never feel for a moment

that it is due to a sense of compulsion. A sense of beauty is not a sense of duty. What we feel is beautiful we *will*, but if we do this Work through a sense of duty we have got it wrong, although at first we can start like this.

Let me tell you a little secret. It is very wonderful when you realize that you have a right not to be negative. Note the words—not “to have no right to be negative”. It is a most beautiful experience. In this connection let us now take the subject of identifying. I say simply to you that it is wonderful to begin to see that you need not identify with all the things with which you *are* identified. I will make myself the victim so that you can feel superior to me. Suppose at this moment when I observe myself I notice I am identified with wondering whether I should get another bottle of medicine, whether the medicine does me much good, whether I should eat more or eat less, whether I should go away for my health’s sake for a time, whether I should order a warm suit for next winter, whether I should really cut down my smoking or not, whether *X* is any good in the Work, or *Y*, whether I should put my foot down somewhere or not, and so on. Now that is a résumé of my power of self-observation at the moment, which you should all have. With all these things that I have mentioned as the victim, I am identified to a certain extent, and all this is taking force from me the whole time. Now it is a very beautiful thing to realize, as you will after a time, that you need not be identified with these small things. I say it is a beautiful thing to have this realization. As a matter of fact, let me tell you, I am not identified in connection with these things that I mentioned but they were the things with which I used to be identified. But of course, as you know there is always the question: can we afford a refrigerator or a washing-machine? Which would be better?

Now every act of non-identification saves force. It requires a conscious act which simply means that you become conscious that you are identified with something and you draw force from it and cease to identify. To identify means that force is taken away from you: to non-identify means that you take the force away from what you identify with. Now you cannot non-identify without a certain degree of Self-Remembering. As you know, external life makes us identify everywhere and at every point. You go and shout and scream at football matches or you are frightfully worried about the Korean situation. But it is quite useless. You can learn nothing from being identified. In fact, it stops you from understanding anything. The more you are identified with someone in the name of trying to help them, the less you will understand them. So therefore I say to you that there is great beauty in realizing that identifying, as the Work says, is the only emotion we know, the emotion of being identified. I repeat, there is great beauty in realizing that it is unnecessary to be identified and you have the sanction of the Work not to identify. Here lies great beauty and it has something to do with connecting with Higher Centres eventually. I

will repeat again: it is not merely that you must not identify, because that puts it in the form of a commandment. There are no commandments of that kind in this Work. The beauty lies in realizing that *you have a right not to be negative*—and without that realization you cannot remember yourself. All Self-Remembering has to do with the fact that you came down to this earth and life here does not correspond with what you came down from: and something in you knows it—that is, has not forgotten it: and that means *remembers it*. Identifying makes everything ugly. But the sense of beauty connects us with the two worlds of spirit and matter and so has to do with the intermediary or Puer Aeternus.

*Amwell, 26.5.51*

### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONSIDERING

We have recently been talking about the Work from the standpoint of the Emotional Centre, shewing how, if the emotions are wrong, we get the Work wrongly, and we have been speaking about right emotions in connection with the ideas of the Work because, as was said, if you are afraid, you cannot get this Work rightly arranged in yourself. Now, we spoke about two of the great ideas of the Work—namely, negative emotions and identifying—and in connection with negative emotions it was said that “*we have a right not to be negative*”, and in my commentary I expanded this and said that “*we have a right not to identify*”—the most difficult thing to accept. To-day we will try to talk about another two great ideas of the Work—namely, Internal Considering and External Considering.

As you know, the Work says we waste most of our energy through Internal Considering. It also says that we must replace Internal Considering by External Considering. Now what does that mean to you? I fancy it means very little because most of you think Internal Considering is External Considering, and certainly I can assure you that I am learning a great deal about the difference between these two, which I had not seen before. Now, when you are internally considering you are identified: when you are externally considering, you are not identified. I was talking some time ago, fortunately some years ago, to a woman who said she was bringing every stray cat into her house to help it to get on in life, and she thought this was External Considering. I might have said to her—which I certainly did not: “Why do you not consider your nephew who has six children and no money?” She did not see that all the money she was giving to the cats might have been given to the nephew. Now was this Internal Considering or External Considering? I leave that answer to you.

Now let us speak seriously about the difference between Internal Considering and External Considering. When you internally consider you want your own way, and you are very kind to people who appreciate you, especially if you can benefit slightly from them. But when you have to deal with people who do not particularly agree with you and you want to teach them the Work, you have then to practise External Considering. A person might say: "I don't really like you," and yet you think the person is useful for the Work, so you have to shift from Internal Considering to External Considering. All External Considering is conscious: all Internal Considering is mechanical. When a man or woman favours you, you are delighted and you think that you are externally considering. Not at all. You are simply satisfied in your self-love. In such a case, your work as a teacher would be extremely weak. Supposing I think a man or woman is worth-while to bring into the Work for the sake of the Work—that is, for the Third Line of the Work—and supposing these people dislike me and make rude remarks about me and at the same time I see that these people are useful to the Work, I am no longer internally considering—namely, thinking how badly they talk about me—but thinking about the Third Line of the Work, and therefore externally considering. To externally consider another man or woman is not to think of them from what you want—that is, from your self-love or self-interest. External Considering means to put yourself in the position of the other person: Internal Considering is to put him or her in your position, which means simply ingrowing toe-nails, indicating that you are frightened to combat for the sake of the Work. If I say to myself that I would like that person for my own sake I am internally considering: if I think that I would like that person for the sake of the Work, then I am externally considering, or probably am. People whom you bring into the Work should not necessarily increase your self-esteem because they love you. If I have a difficult person to take and I think that this person is some use for the Work I shall have to externally consider him apart from vanity or self-emotions, and then I shall be able to study him, put myself in his place and see what his difficulties are, and so on. This would be a definite conscious act.

We were speaking about Negative Emotions and the right not to have them. We then spoke of Identifying and carried on the same idea that we have a right not to identify. As regards Internal Considering it is always based on Identifying, and so we have a right not to internally consider. But External Considering is *never* based on Identifying, for it is a conscious act. As I said earlier in this paper, Internal Considering is mechanical and External Considering is conscious. So if you want to increase consciousness you have to consider what the Work says about methods or means of doing so.



### SELF-REMEMBERING

In connection with the necessity of seeing the beauty of the Work-ideas so that they fall on the right place in us, let us now try to approach the most supremely beautiful idea—namely, the idea that we must remember ourselves. This idea is of such great density of meaning that it is impossible to deal with it in summary fashion. But once you begin to understand that the meaning of Man’s life on Earth, and of course Woman’s life also, is that they were created self-developing organisms—you can appreciate better what has happened to mankind, for Man lives in a very bad state of life full of hatred, jealousy, lies and violence. The reason is that he does not remember himself, because he has fallen asleep in life and therefore is governed by negative emotions. For this reason the Work says that we are all under a hypnotic sleep and unless we try to awaken in ourselves, each one of us separately, we shall remain under the power of this hypnotic sleep where we are governed by entirely wrong influences, one of the chief of which consists in the effect of negative emotions upon us. So we have the diagram, of which I again remind you, of the different states of Man as regards being awake and being asleep. Two sleeping people will never understand one another but two people trying to awaken through the ideas of this Work may begin to understand one another. The diagram is as follows, and it is called the Diagram of the Four Levels of Consciousness.

#### FOUR LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

|   |               |   |
|---|---------------|---|
| 4 | Man Awake     | Objective Consciousness                         |
| 3 | Man Awakening | Self-Remembering                                |
|   |               |   |
| 2 | } Man Asleep  | So-called Waking State<br>(Psychological Sleep) |
| 1 |               |   |

You will see from this diagram that Man—i.e. mankind—is not awake. He is living in the second state of consciousness. Now suppose he reached the Fourth State—Objective Consciousness—he would not have to practise External Considering or Self-Remembering, because he would see things as they really are, both himself and others, and he would be Man fully Awake, which is the object of all in this Work who begin to understand in what direction it is leading. It is for this reason that it is necessary to do work every day on these three previous things mentioned in the last three papers—i.e. negative emotions, identifying, and internal considering. And, as I said on another occasion, these things are not at all easy to work against, but if we have an aim in the Work to awaken they become easier to work against because one is

shewn internally how they keep one asleep—that is, in the so-called waking state of consciousness. When you begin to awaken you have, as it were, two clocks. One tells one time and the other tells another time, but we all have an old-fashioned clock if we go on thinking in the same way as we do, and a new clock if we begin to undergo *metanoia* or change our thinking.

Now, to return to Self-Remembering, I will once more say briefly what I have often said, that you must understand from what the Work teaches that we came down from a very high level, from outside the Solar System, and were plunged through the planetary worlds on to this Earth and surrounded by flesh and blood. Then we became hypnotized by this life, and worldly things and self-love and all the rest of it began to dominate us. And yet we have something in us that this life cannot possibly satisfy by any honours or wealth or any such thing. This is the first stage towards Self-Remembering. If you cannot understand what I mean, then you must ask someone else. It seems to me that it is quite plain what I mean.

To conclude, you must all understand that this Work is to produce in you something new both in the realm of thinking and of feeling. First of all you hear the Work and this is like growing some leaves. Then you begin to feel the beauty of the Work, and that is equal to making the blossom and you see far more than you did in the leaf-state. Finally, the fruit-stage comes in which you must produce grapes. This is only possible when you see the goodness in a large way and will it. Otherwise you may produce sour grapes or embittered emotions. I can only say that too many people are leafy, i.e. they just grow leaves. For that reason I have been emphasizing recently that you must try to see the meaning of the Work for yourselves and its goodness, in yourselves, in your understanding heart. If you are evil and hate, then no fruit can come. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Does a man gather grapes from thistles? An unpleasant, negative person, prickly, is a thistle—from which no fruit can come save sour grapes. So it is necessary to work on one’s being—otherwise this Work cannot possibly produce any good fruit. So we start with *work on oneself*.

*Amwell, 16.6.51*

## **NOTE ON HORSE, CARRIAGE AND DRIVER**

In the Work-Parable of the Horse, Carriage and Driver, we are compared with the Driver who, sitting in the public-house, spends all his money on drink. That is, he is fast asleep in illusions, pleasures, hatreds and phantasies, down to which level all his energies pour unchecked. He forgets that he is created a Driver and actually has a

real Carriage and a Horse which awaits him, but beyond or above the level of the state to which he is giving way—that is outside the public-house. His energies terminate in the public-house, whereas they should have a plane of termination in the Horse and Carriage first, and any unused surplus pass on to a lower termination. For this to begin to happen, the Driver must begin slightly to awaken and stagger to the window and look out, as it were, at the vision outside which it will take him many years to comprehend, and it will take him still more years to gain the strength of understanding to leave the public-house and begin to walk, think and act outside it. Notice that in this Parable two levels are represented, the lower by the public-house, the higher by what is outside it. The Driver has to move from one to the other, but, as I indicated, this is a long matter. It depends on the gradual action of the Work itself on a person, so that what is lowest, most easy, and so most mechanical in him, begins to become distasteful. For if the taste remains the same, the man remains the same.

Now when the energies no longer pour down undirected to the level of the public-house, but become partly terminated at the level of Horse and Carriage, the Work begins to become something real, instead of imaginary. One begins to see what it is about. The life of the public-house also begins to be seen as if below you—which it is. You are then dividing into two—a lower and a higher side—without which no one can change. There is still a higher plane of termination above the Carriage and Horse. When this is present the Master appears. But long before that, the Driver must get on to the box, take the reins, and see that his brakes work.

*Amwell, 14.8.51*

## **NOTE ON MORE INTERIOR THINKING**

### **PART I**

The more interior the Work becomes, the more do we see in it. Where we saw one thing, we now see several. This development of understanding is due to more interior parts of centres coming into operation. The external parts of centres—that is, the so-termed moving or mechanical parts—receive the ideas of the Work in a general and superficial way. They do not see that each idea contains many things which, at a distance, appear as one thing. So people sometimes say: “So and So spoke and I saw one or two things in quite a new way.” This is what should happen if the Work has been accepted through inner consent, which depends on valuation. But it cannot become an experience if there is no inner consent, for the movement inwards is blocked by the lack of consent. When one thing opens up into more

things, and so on increasingly, the intelligence of the Work is growing in that person. He may think it is his own intelligence. In any case, he is beginning to see practically what is meant when ideas that can develop the inner man—that is, esoteric teaching—are compared with a small seed that grows into a great tree, or to the springing up of a fountain of living water. But it may happen that a person hearing another way of looking at one of the ideas thinks either that it is a contradiction or is offended. There is, of course, no contradiction in opening out a thing and discovering more and still more of its component parts which all fit together into a whole; and to feel offended is a sign of a mind still governed by envy. It is necessary that at first we see the Work in a certain way. Later, if we value it as distinct from life-values, we see it in another way. Then again, in another way, and so on without end. So we can never *know* the Work as sometimes it is imagined, just as we cannot know art. And with each new insight, the inner or essential in us develops towards the inexhaustible meanings of Higher Centres; and what we were, and took as ourselves, becomes less and less valuable, and more and more remote to our consciousness. All this is difficult or impossible for a rigid, literal, formatory mind.

*Amwell, 18.8.51*

## **NOTE ON MORE INTERIOR THINKING**

### **PART II**

Everything we see is caused by something or else it could not exist. We live in a world of effects. The phenomenal world, the world as seen, with all its differently shaped and coloured objects, is a world of effects. The causes of these effects are not visible. They lie behind the effects. They are not immediately evident to the senses. But they may become so to the mind. The connection between cause and effect is a mystery, because cause and effect are on different levels.

Now it is clear that it is necessary to think concerning the cause of a thing—that is, to use the mind. For example, in a detective story, there is a dead body. This is an effect evident to the senses. But the cause is not evident in the same way. Only the use of the mind will reveal it. That is, the plane or level of causes is different from the effects produced by them. And here, of course, endless errors thrive and flourish, because effects can be attributed to the wrong cause. Now if we could think from right causes we would move in the direction of more interior thought, which sees more. In one effect there are many causes. When we take ourselves as one being, we think from effect, from appearance. When we realize that we are many different beings, we begin to think from the level of causes. In short, we begin to think

more interiorly and so, instead of seeing one being, we see many beings. The Work takes us in this direction.

### PART III

But there is a still more interior kind of thinking and that is to think from *ends*. End, cause and effect form a triad. The effect could not exist without the cause and the cause could not exist without the end. The end is the cause of the cause and so of the effect. That is, the end enters into the cause and the effect. You see this chair in front of you. What are you seeing? You are seeing an effect. What was its cause? Its effective causes were many—the workshop, the wood, the tools, the carpenter. But what was the cause of the cause or causes? The cause of the cause was the end, and the end was to have something convenient to sit on. It might seem to you that the end is one. The causes set in motion by the end are many (but selected and simplified according to the intelligence at work). The result or effect is again *one*. To think from ends therefore might seem to narrow thinking. But this is not so. Every end is a particular in the universal end and the universal end is in every particular and so end is infinite. In becoming conscious of the universal in the ash-tray Ouspensky came near the infinite and felt the danger. If you reflect that the cause of anything is everything you will feel your foothold on reason is slipping. Yet it is true that at any moment in time everything is where it is and must be. Let your consciousness expand so that it can behold that. The planets are just where they are, the flying birds are just where they are, the tea-leaves in the cup just where they are, the cards on the table, the dice, the knuckle-bones lying on the sand—everything is where it is and must be at that moment of time. The universal is in every particular and every particular is in the universal, and yet every particular is different and the universal is one and the same. The angels, I have read, are said to be able to comprehend the whole man from a hair of his head; and no doubt we should be able to do something similar from a finger-print. To see the universe in a single ash-tray is to be conscious in ends. One thing becomes myriads.

But these thoughts are very difficult and in thinking in terms of *end*, we had best think, say, of Man created as a Self-developing organism as his end and notice how such an idea re-arranges our thinking and makes it more internal. At the Institute in France we had an exercise given us. In looking, say, at a matchbox, we had to think of its origin, and the cause of its origin to begin with. But I forget the steps now. Perhaps one or two will remember.

*Additional Note.* We must keep on connecting more interior parts of centres with increase of meaning. The purely formatory mind uses the external parts of centres. For that reason the ideas of the Work remain sterile—that is, they do not grow and expand in their meaning. And here the question of evaluation of the Work enters. Emotional

parts of centres see far more than the moving parts. Intellectual parts see still more and eventually connect with Higher Centres which see myriad things in what external parts of centres see as a single thing.

*Question:* What is Relative Thinking from the Work point of view?

*Answer:* It relates to the particular and the universal. It is to know the part in relation to the whole. That is, you cannot know a particular thing aright unless you know *something* of the whole of which it is a part—e.g. you cannot know aright about this Earth apart from knowing something about the Solar System, the Galaxy, etc., and so the Universe itself.

*Question:* Which is more universal—Truth or a truthful man?

*Answer:* Why, Truth. Unless you know something about Truth, how can you know what a truthful man is?

*Amwell, 25.8.51*

## ON TESTING THE WORK IN ONESELF

Self-justifying and buffers prevent us from seeing contradictions in ourselves. To bear the burden of oneself is to be aware of these contradictions almost continually—so that the fire does not go out and the Work become cold. This is the small flame lit under the retort of shifting powders. You cannot get rid of the burden of yourself save by falling asleep. Awakening is painful. But it takes a long time to understand this essential meaning of the Work. It is not only that we have to bear the unpleasant manifestations of others. We have to bear the unpleasant manifestations of ourselves. If we justify everything we do, we bring about a state of non-work in ourselves. With self-justifying, and by the silent and almost instantaneous action of buffers, there is no work. There cannot be, save in imagination. To imagine we are working is to deceive ourselves. To test our work is another matter. If we try to test our work, our consciousness moves away from imagination, self-justifying and the action of buffers, which belong to the outer man.

What can it mean to test one's work? It means, to observe one's work in the light of what the Work teaches—to let, as it were, the Work itself judge one's own work on oneself and not another person. This testing of the genuineness of one's work—for example, are you really struggling with imagination?—this assaying of what is gold and what is spurious, this separating of the fine from the coarse, sets up an inner division. You can call it the struggle between Yes and No, if it helps you. Its action is like a to and fro motion in any case, and so like "Yes, I will" and "No, I will not". Or if you prefer, you can see it under another Work-term—as a heat, a friction set up in oneself. This,

as was said, is the heat under the retort which contains the metallic powders which are continually being shifted aimlessly about by every tap of life because they are not fused into one thing, into a unity. Now this heat under the retort (drawn as a lighted candle in the *Liber Mutus*) must be kept going and not allowed to cease for long—as it does especially when the external things of life swamp us and the consciousness of the Work is lost and we fall asleep. I said you must bear the unpleasant manifestations of yourself. This is the point. You must, for example, see the contradictions in yourself. This keeps you awake. One side of you will pretend you have good reasons for what you did. Another side knows *you* were wrong. This is the friction. To say openly you were wrong is not what I mean. This sort of confession is insincere, although much practised. It gets rid of a tension and I fancy often reinforces the False Personality and its pictures. It is better for you to be caught in the act and notice how you then twist and turn. To be accused of something you have not done is still better, because it can produce strong friction if used aright. Ordinarily it simply creates water-spouts of indignation and torrents of self-pity and re- crimination. That is why the control of negative emotions is so indispensable in esoteric work. Negative emotions put out the candle and flood the experiment. They have nothing to do with that dry heat that should be under the retort. We enjoy negative emotions. We pretend they are painful, but the quality of pain that this heat of which we are speaking gives us is different. Eventually, when we lapse into negative states, we may feel pain of the same quality as that produced in us by this heat and then they act as warnings.

Let us return to the idea of testing the Work. I am going to take the first four verses of Galatians, Chapter vi. The first verse is as follows:

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”

The centre of gravity is that when reproving someone, it is necessary to observe oneself and not merely see something wrong in another. You will agree that pointing out faults in others is a common and easy occupation. It is mechanical and so, easy. (As you know, members of groups in the Work must not do this unless asked to by their victim.) When we point out faults in others, we apparently expect them to change. Of course, they cannot change any more than we can. No—what we have to do is to bear the unpleasant manifestations in others, which in the next verse is put as “bearing the burden of other people” —a difficult thing—but translated as bearing one another’s burdens— an easy thing.

Verse 2 in the Authorized and Revised Versions is: “Bear ye one another’s burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.” But Mgr. Knox in his recent translation of the New Testament renders the verse: “Bear

the burden of one another's failings, then you will be fulfilling the law of Christ." In a footnote he points out that "the more usual interpretation of the passage, which understands the burdens of one another to mean the misfortunes of others, which we are to bear by our sympathy, does not agree well with the context which goes before or with that which follows." He refers to the definition of the law of Christ in Matt. vi.14 and xviii.35 as forgiveness of others.

Bearing the burden of another's failings will produce some heat. Yes, but something more is necessary. Eventually, you must bear the burden of your own failings and not be negative. We are complacent about ourselves—not seeing our contradictions. But it is useless to have a good opinion of oneself. It makes the Work of no account. So verse 3 says:

“For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.”

Then in verse 4 we are told that we must test the Work on ourselves. Are we genuinely working?

“Let each man test his own work, and then he will be able to take the measure of his own worth, instead of another's.”

Yes, but then he will also have to bear the burden of his own failings—the burden of himself instead of finding fault with others. But he will then find that it is less difficult to bear the burden of other people's manifestations, seeing his own. So the fifth verse completes this fragment of teaching by saying:

“Each of us then will have his own load to carry.”

*Additional Note.* The point of this paper is that it makes use of one illustration given by Paul of what work on oneself means, so that a certain inner heat or pain is set up which can eventually transform us. But as long as justifying ourselves, seeing faults in others only, and being protected by buffers continue, so that we do not see contradictions in ourselves, this heat or friction is not set up. We avoid it. Paul explains the stages:

*Verse 1.* In finding fault, observe yourself also.

*Verse 2.* Understand that you must bear the burden of other people—that means, as the Work says, we must bear the unpleasant manifestations of others.

*Verse 4.* But you must truly test the qualities of the Work on yourself.

*Verse 5.* And then you must bear the burden of yourself—that is, not justify or buffer things off but bear it, and not become negative or pitiful.

All this will give the necessary heat to melt something in you.



## ON MAKING A RETORT

A negative emotion unchecked leads us into the worst places in our psychological country. This is one way of regarding the matter. If you happen to dream that you are in some low place, some slum, among unpleasant people, be careful on waking to observe retrospectively what you have been up to, and what thoughts and feelings you have been indulging in. Another way of regarding the matter is to remember the food-octave, which starts with 768. Notice it is transformed into 96 in the second storey and later into 24 also in the same storey. The second storey in the three-storey factory in which delicate chemical transformations take place is the site of the Emotional Centre. Negative emotions interfere with 96 and 24. And also, of course, with 48. So a person depresses his physical health, 96, his thinking energies, 48, and his emotions, 24. It would seem, therefore, that negative emotions are not good for us. (12 also will be interfered with.) These are important considerations when one has to face work in oneself and test it as one would a life-rope. For my own part, I find the first consideration the more important of the two. One realizes eventually that it is impossible to do the Work in negative states. One is in the wrong place. So it begins to dawn on the understanding that the Work cannot exist in wrong or false or evil places in one's psychological country and that one's first work is to protect the Work from such places and keep it sealed off—hermetically. I use this term intentionally, as belonging to the ancient alchemical teaching attributed to Hermes. The transformation of Man from multiplicity into unity, the fusing of the metallic powders in the retort into one, belongs to esoteric teaching clothed in chemical-alchemical terms. Notice the retort which is sealed off. The substances in it are protected from outside but still can be shifted by life. But the heat under the retort at length fuses them—that is, life cannot now shake them. They are one. Man has then reached the inner goal of his development.

To return to what was said—the first work is to prevent the Work from being destroyed in one through getting into the wrong places. That means getting into the wrong company, for wrong 'I's can destroy the Work—just as giving the Work to wrong people will do the same. So it has to be protected, separated off, and guarded. If life-'I's and Work-'I's are all mixed up this will not happen. If there is no sense of scale, it will not happen. A man can talk as he likes as long as he guards the Work—but unless he can observe himself well, he will not be able; and if there is no sense of scale which protects higher things from mingling with lower, he will not have a retort. Everything will be full of holes, so to speak, like the basket in the dream of Pharaoh's baker. Now valuation of the Work implies a sense of scale, and Magnetic Centre means a power of distinguishing between *A* and *B* influ-

ences as being on different scales. During this first work on oneself in regard to the Work, then, one must keep it from what is false, evil and negative. It can only take root in the best places in your psychological country, and one must come to understand this clearly—beyond dispute or argument. It must be as much a truth as that mud spoils wine. The second work is to apply heat to what has been separated off. But think only of this first work now and make it really understandable to yourself.

With regard to keeping the Work guarded from life, some of you know that certain kinds of dreams depict esoteric ideas by means of sense-images. Their language is the same as that of parables, which appear to be about physical objects but have a psychological meaning. I will speak in this language briefly as follows: if you have muddy feet and touch them, do not touch your eyes afterwards. What does that mean psychologically? Your feet touch life. Your eyes far above stand for mental sight. The feet represent the external part of you and the eyes the internal. The Work must not be muddied by life. In the Gospels Christ washes the feet of his disciples. The psychological part of us most closely in contact with the life-things of the world must be cleansed at times. This part is represented by the feet. It is the most mechanical part of us. So in Isaiah it is said that people must turn their feet away from what is holy and gives quite openly what that means:

“If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, and the holy of the Lord honourable; and shalt honour it, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will make thee to ride upon the high places of the earth; and I will feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it” (Isa. lviii. 13, 14).

*Amwell, 8.9.51*

## **FRICITION BETWEEN OLD AND NEW IN ONESELF**

One sort of formatory man is a man who turns everything into an argument. Behind his arguing he wishes to make everything fit into the mould of his own opinions or prejudices. No doubt he regards himself as a logical person. About his mind there is something bleak and barren. On such soil the Work finds no place in which to grow. It is stony ground. The habit of denial so often noticeable in the formatory man with negative thinking may not openly appear. All one may observe may be a lack of thought, a mental indifference or deadness. But if you try to penetrate behind this indifference, you will probably

come up against an actively hostile attitude to new ideas and a defensive armament of arguing about everything, that prevents him from making use of his mind. Now mental exertion is necessary to this Work. Not to use the mind is a bad thing. You are given a talent of knowledge. To bury it is no good. You must try to make it into two talents. This is one meaning of the Parable of the Talents. It has been said many times that in this Fourth Way that we are studying it is necessary not only to remember but to think about the ideas of the Work—to use the mind. Now without ideas you cannot think. In order to think you have to start from an idea. In this way, the idea grows in the mind. This Work is designed to grow in the mind—and ultimately to change the mind and so one's whole outlook. If you are going to change, the world must also change for you. You come to a level where you no longer recognize yourself as you took yourself, or the world as you took the world. If you see the world and its values just as you always did, then it is a sign that you yourself have not changed. Surely, the object of the Work is to change and the ideas of the Work teach how change is possible? If you do not keep all this alive for yourself there will be no tension within and so no friction, no heat. For the old fights with the new. Old ways of taking things fight against new ways. Suppose you have been outwardly connected for a long time with this Work and up to now have not even felt this inner conflict, this struggle, this friction in yourself. Well, that means you have never thought about the ideas and what they mean for you. You just heard about them. They never entered you. So you remain just the same and chat and smile and nod away. The experiment has failed. It never began. There is no retort and no heat. One remains in and of life solely. There is only one reality—the reality of the senses—that is, the reality of the world and its life. So one goes along with life as one always did before. You do nothing differently, so there is no friction. You do nothing differently because you think nothing differently and if you think nothing differently you cannot behave differently. I have actually seen people in the Work really behaving differently because they are thinking differently. One notices it at once, if it is only for a while. The person becomes, so to speak, invisible. Or perhaps, paradoxically, I should say, the person becomes visible. I was going to say unrecognizable, but the word does not give what I mean. When people behave as usual—that is, mechanically—one does not notice them particularly. They move and talk and do things as they always do. But if they are beginning to think differently—that is, if the Work is starting to act on them from within and has begun to change their minds—they move and talk and do things in a different way. Also their faces change because their minds change. Instead of mindless or negative faces they begin to have new faces which are no longer harnessed to negative emotions and discontent. But at the same time they will have friction—a struggle going on in them—because the realities that the Work teaches are not of the same order as the realities of life. Therefore

what is new will fight with what is old. It is not merely that old habits of thought are rooted deeply, but the world and its life which formed them seems so indisputable. Sometimes when life absorbs all the attention, everything to do with the Work seems to vanish. Well, it is necessary to struggle and bring it back into consciousness. Then it seems to get stale. Well, it may be necessary to let life in more. All this to and fro business is friction. We need life-reactions and Work actions. Both sides are necessary. But life must not run into the Work and swamp it.

*Amwell, 15.9.51*

### **INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DENIAL**

If the external man affirms and the internal man denies, the person is in a bad state. For instance, many religious people pretend outwardly to a faith which they inwardly laugh at and think nonsense. This is a worse state than mockery in the external man and belief in the internal man. Of course, there are many who are afraid to expose to the world what they really think and believe and so seem to laugh at anything serious. But there are also those who think that they think serious things nonsense and have not yet discovered that at a deeper level they do not think like that at all. For we think differently at different levels and one aspect of self-study is to realize it. The deeper, more interior levels of a man do not share the outlook and thoughts belonging to superficial levels. If the Work, penetrating inwardly a small distance, comes up against denial then no matter how much affirming is being displayed in the external man, it is stopped. Why? Because the psychological effect of denial is to block the way as much as, physically, does a stone wall. But is it not extraordinary that although we know that of tangible and material things some can be suitable or the reverse for a building in the physical world, or in the right or wrong place, we have no such corresponding idea about thoughts, feelings, attitudes, both positive and negative, in the psychological world, for of such fine, intangible substances are the building materials. And are we not compared with houses where the top storey is not yet built? We are unfinished. I suppose then, that this top storey, or most internal part—for higher and more internal have the same significance—will not and never can be built if the way inward is blocked by denial and the man is only open to the world. For the external man opens only on the world and its realities. (You have just had a telephone message to say your grandmother is ill and will you come at once and the baby has a nasty rash and the doctor has not come and the soot has fallen all over the nursery and you left your purse in Woolworth's and you simply must see that new film and Bob

hardly glanced at you this morning and it looks like a thunderstorm.) There are plenty of life-realities. But there are psychological realities also and they are on a different level. That Bob hardly looked at you this morning and that you are beginning to feel suspicious and jealous are quite different realities. They are distinct and you have got to work and work on yourself until you can perceive this without any doubt. I had nearly said, without any denial. For here is a separation that has to be made of the finest kind and with the finest knife of consciousness—or else something remains stuck to something and the path of internal development is blocked. It is the internal and the external man that must be separated. This is impossible if you take life-realities and your reaction to them as the same. They are not the same. The tree that I am looking at now is not the same as what I am thinking of it. The reality of the tree belongs to the world of sense, and anyone can behold it as well as I. But the thought I have of it is not of the world of sensibles. It is a psychological reality: it is a reality in my private psychological world. These two realities are utterly distinct. They are on different levels and things on different levels are always utterly distinct. Now the internal man and the external man are also on different levels and are therefore utterly distinct. They are not naturally so, but become so by work. There are many complex interactions between them, but the principle in the Work is that the higher level should control the lower—that is, the internal man should control the external, the internal being on a higher level than the external. Otherwise things are in the wrong order. If the relatively internal believes and the external does not, it is a favourable situation, and invites temptation safely. But if the relatively internal denies, the belief of the external will be easily shaken for it is founded on the sand and not on the rock. It will believe as long as the others say they do, for the external man is very collective and thus imitative.

As the Work goes on, we have to play a strip act. We have to discard all sorts of things—as *not being I*. We have got to make ourselves increasingly objective to ourselves. We now see ourselves dimly in a limited way. Why? Because our consciousness is so limited. In consequence, a great deal remains unconscious. Sometimes dreams help, when they shew us something about ourselves in their own language. In this little conscious island that we inhabit, Imaginary 'I' reigns arrogantly. Its constant utterance is "I am the power and the glory". Yes, the cure for self-love and self-worship is impossible unless this wretched little man or woman is shifted off his throne. This means, until this pseudo-centre of consciousness in us is moved towards the sea—that is, towards what we are unconscious of. I mean, that the area of consciousness must enlarge, which happens every time we see something about ourselves. For the inner can see the outer but not vice versa. The outer may think there is no other God but itself. The inner can know better once it gives up the fashionable art of denial. This whole question of denial lying beneath the surface requires attention.

## NOTES ON WILL, BEING AND STRUCTURE

The Work teaches that Man's being is characterized by multiplicity. It also teaches that Man has no single will but many wills. We can ask this question: are these two teachings related to one another? Are will and being indeed closely connected? To put the matter in another form—is will a manifestation of being, and in thinking of what being is, have we to think what will is? Now it must be confessed that the idea of being is not easy to grasp. One can vaguely see that everything has being and that dissimilar things have perhaps dissimilar being and that it is this that makes them different. We can grasp to some extent that the being of a stone and the being of wood are different, and also that the being of a tree is different from the being of a lion. We may grudgingly admit that the being of Man is probably different from Divine Being—whatever that means. All the same, the idea of being remains obscure in its meaning. Does it by any chance mean the *structure* of a thing? That would be easier to see. Does the being of a thing merely depend on its structure? The structure of a stone is quite different from the structure of a piece of wood. Is it, then, to be said that being is a manifestation and result of structure and that, instead of speaking of this difficult elusive thing called being, we might just as well speak of structure? If this is so, it would appear that structure is prior to being, and it causes being. Some may think so, who see the cause of the invisible in the visible. They think that matter came first and causes mind: others think that mind is prior and causes matter. The struggle between these two points of view is age-old. It is irreconcilable unless both are brought together as inevitable opposites, and simultaneously united at another level of mental vision beyond the opposites. One thought aids us to do this. If we say that material structure is the sole origin of difference of being, then matter had inherent in it from the first all the possible combinations of structure for the production of all possible kinds of being. Matter thus becomes as magical as mind and the two seem to merge into one continual miracle seen from two sides.

But let us return to the connection of being and will. As was said, one can grasp to some extent that the being of stone is different from the being of wood, of a tree from a lion, and of Man from God. Now let us substitute the word *will* for the word *being*. Does it make any sense to say that the Will of God is different from the will of Man, that the will of a tree is different from the will of a lion, and that the will of stone is different from the will of wood? We might be able to agree that the Will of God would be different from the will of Man as well as admitting that the Being of the One would be different from the being of the other. The two things, will and being, therefore, might be closely connected; they might even be different aspects of the same

thing. If that be the case, a man's being must shew itself in his will. And since, according to the Work, a man's being is multiple, so then we would expect to find his will multiple. Now a man, a woman, acts from his or her will. You act from your will. But you have many wills, each belonging to a different 'I' or group of 'I's organized into different personalities—social, domestic, business, professional, and so on. So it is only correct to say that you act from the will of the moment. But a piece of stone or of wood always acts in the same way. Its will and its being determine its behaviour and they are single. That is why it remains a stone or a piece of wood from day to day. But you are continually changing because your will is not single, nor your being. From this strange angle stone and wood have much stronger being than we have. Yes, but they are not nearly so clever. You remember that Gurdjieff taught that a cooked potato is cleverer than a raw one, and so is higher in the Scale of Being. Why? Because its uses are greater. It can become food for Man. And it follows, I think, that stone or wood carved into a statue becomes cleverer in a like manner because Man can enjoy its beauty and feed on its impressions.

But let us escape from these speculations and speak of will. From what has been said we can see that a man with a real permanent single I will have a real and single will and that if this takes place in him his being will be different from that of an ordinary man or woman whose being and will are characterized by multiplicity and so by lack of unity. But we know that all these different divergent elements in us can be fused into a unity, which means that our present level of being in the total Scale of Being from a stone up to Divine Being is far lower than it was made to be; and this we need to feel at all times. Why? It helps us to undermine self-complacency, self-righteousness, and self-merit, self-applause, and all this tedious *self* stuff, except Self-Remembering. It is Self-Remembering. The Self you try to remember is above yourself. It is there: and you need always to feel so, for that lets in a certain influx of interior light, which self-emotions shut out. Consider the effects of anger, for example.

Now when the Work begins to build itself up in you—which it will do if you do not internally deny it or if you do not put little value on it—a new point of will begins also and so a new point of being. It resists the stream of constant changing. As long as we follow each one of our passing desires—as long as we are slaves to every passing mood, we cannot form a new will. So you must begin to sacrifice some of these passing desires and moods to the Will of the Work, for in order to have Will you must give up will. So before you fly into a rage or identify with a painful mood, it is of considerable use to think of what the Work would will you to do. Do you understand that to will your anger, for instance, makes it work in your will as yourself? Surely anything rather than that! Does not one then especially need to remember that one's level of being is far lower than it should be and that is why you will as you do? For a low level of willing and a low level of being interlock

and inter-depend. One may know all about esotericism and all about this Work without ever willing it and without ever doing it. When the Work is not willed, being cannot change. Change the will and being will change. But it must be knowledge of a certain kind that one must will, in order to change one's being. Willing ordinary life-knowledge will not do this. Knowing how to make an engine and willing it, doing it, will not change being. Knowledge that can change being comes down from those belonging to a higher level who have changed their being—that is, from the Circle of Conscious Humanity. To *seek and get* that knowledge, to *study and know* that knowledge, to *will* that knowledge and to *do* that knowledge changes being. For then you will be willing in a new way. If you will always as before it means your level of being is as before. But if you begin to will in a new way, new being will result, and new being in turn will result in new willing. What you formerly willed will not be so acceptable to your being and what was acceptable to your being will not be so to your will.

*Amwell, Michaelmas, 29th September 1951*

### **WILL AND DELIGHT**

It is through our emotional state that we are especially connected with evil or good places in the inner world of ourselves. It is miraculous what a change an emotion can effect. From heaven, we are, so to speak, suddenly in hell. A moment of jealousy can do this quite easily. The image of the person of whom we are jealous becomes the devil who actually leads us into the torture-chamber; but we do not see it in this way. We do not see that we are really the victims of our own jealousy and are jealous of ourselves. No, we certainly do not grasp this for years and years and it cannot be explained in words. Insight comes from experience and Work-memory, and then perhaps only dimly. And because we mechanically see everything as outside ourselves, because our five senses persuade us so and because in consequence we can only blame others and are powerless to do otherwise, we remain our own victims. We become our own punishment. Now if we did not let something escape from us, all this would not happen. If we remained in ourselves, it could not happen. But something goes out from us and fastens on the other person and our features and our very fingers sprout with jealousy. We lose our right shape. Something is pulled out that should remain within and this happens whenever we identify and would never happen if we remembered ourselves. Indeed, is it not startling to reflect what extraordinary and grotesque shapes our psychological bodies must be continually assuming, to a Being who only sees that aspect of us? He would rarely see, I fancy, a human being



so that it is just as well we are given physical bodies to start off our careers with. He would certainly not see anything organized into a definite and abiding shape—which, by the way, it is our task to make. For we seek to make another body, another shape, apart from our given body and similar to it in so far that each part is necessary to another part and to the whole, and the whole is necessary to each part. That is why the Work has so many ideas, so many teachings, so many sides, all organized into a whole. And that again is why the Work must be entertained by us and enter our will and not be left on the threshold. The water it offers must be drunk for water signifies spiritual truth—that is, psychological truth—and it must not be fastidiously refused. It must be drunk by the mind and become psychologically *us*, just as in the sacrament of the Wine and Bread the assimilation of the truth and grace of Christ into oneself is signified. For this Work has the power of making this psychological body we need, and the arrangement of its ideas is clearer than in the Gospels where things are not put in order. But it is powerless if we deny it internally. For then how could it have power, since it cannot use the power of outer compulsion? You cannot be horse-whipped into the Work or frightened into it by religious dragons. For the Work to enter, you must invite it and agree with it and will it, and treat it internally with the highest consideration and the greatest courtesy and with true delight. I have said to you elsewhere that WILL IS DELIGHT.

Do you suppose that when the man in one of the parables about the Kingdom of Heaven (which is the Conscious Circle of Humanity) who found a treasure in the field, sold all he had and bought the field, do you imagine that he did not feel delight? Why, it is expressly said in the text "*in his joy* he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." Would he have done it if the whole matter were distasteful or bored him to death or if he thought it not quite the conventional thing to do? I fancy not. I fancy that his delight was inexpressible on finding (1) there really was a treasure, and (2) that by giving up a lot of valueless things that he had hitherto thought valuable, he could gain the treasure. Or do you suppose that the "merchant seeking goodly pearls" who found the "pearl of great price" and "went and sold all that he had and bought it"—do you suppose that he felt no delight or that his will and this delight were not one and the same? I cannot conceive the joyless will leading to anything save negative states.

One must not sin against the spirit of the Work; against a person yes—but not against the Work itself. That is not easily forgiven "in this or the next life", it is said, or perhaps not in many lives. They observed of Christ that He cast out devils by means of the devil. They explained things on the lowest level. They put an evil interpretation on every good action and every word of truth spoken: and this was called the unpardonable sin, the thing that will not be easily forgiven. I do not know myself, but I sometimes suspect that enjoying one's negative emotions approaches this condition and could become bold

enough to attack the spirit of the Work in a man or woman and so destroy the soul. At the same time, I know very well that one can be negative for long against a person and yet not be negative towards the Work or the spirit of the Work, which is a remarkable thing and no doubt accounts for the three sins specified by Christ in the words:

“Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come” (Matt. xii.31-32).

To return to the example of jealousy and something that goes out from us and fastens on the other person. This is, of course, identifying. Whenever we identify, something goes out from us which should not go out. If we could seal ourselves it would not go out, and so would not happen. But we cannot seal ourselves and so it does happen. It is always happening. But I believe from experience that we can observe a negative emotion coming and stop identifying with it in time. If we do not, it puts us in a torture-chamber. We may indeed dream that we are led to a seemingly actual torture-chamber by the person whom we are jealous of, which shews how clever dreams can be. But I leave you to work that out. I will only say again that something has gone out from you and that you have let it go out and it tortures you and it is *all yourself* and so you are jealous of yourself. All this could not happen if we remembered ourselves, for that seals us.

*Amwell, 6.10.51*

## **EMOTIONS THAT SHUT**

In connection with the Emotional Centre and its power over us for good and evil, we spoke last time about how a change of emotion can change any situation. As an instance, jealousy was taken. A wave of jealousy changes everything in a moment. It is as if a door suddenly slams within us and shuts out everything pleasant. Psychologically speaking, we are now in prison. Can you see in a vision how everywhere, all over the world at every moment, similar doors are slamming and millions of people are putting themselves in prison? The enjoyment of jealousy apparently blinds us to the place it puts us in and outweighs all the discomforts of prison. It has the fatal attraction of opium, and its effects can be as destructive. Unchecked—that is, identified with to the full—it knots and twists the skein of life and its effects may not be reparable. The faces of those who have indulged

freely in jealousy in the past are often horrible and always disagreeable. The emotion certainly does not make people more beautiful. But one may reach a stage where one earnestly—and how earnestly—prays to be delivered. At this stage one enjoys the emotion no longer. What helps here is a growing consciousness of the prison and its squalor, and indeed the filth of the whole condition of being jealous.

All progress in emotional development is marked by a dislike of former emotions. The emotion, the feeling of dislike of jealousy, the joy of being free from it and its evil prison-house, can become strong enough to master it. For you know that one emotion can only be conquered by another and stronger emotion. By itself the Intellectual Centre cannot do this. Reasoning may help, but is not enough.

What kinds of jealousy can we observe and slowly drag, as it were, struggling like snakes, into the light of consciousness which kills them? There is the jealousy of sex. This brings up the question of the relation of jealousy to violence. Among animals at the breeding-time jealousy and violence co-exist. The males try to kill each other. Then there is the jealousy of ambition. For example, men seeking office can be intensely jealous of one another, and rivalry can murder, as history shews abundantly. Then there is the jealousy of possessions—the bigger house, the larger car, the more jewellery, the louder splash. This does not seem at first sight to lead so easily to violence, but where money is concerned it certainly can. There are other kinds of jealousy also. Now the Work teaches that all negative emotions lead ultimately to violence, and jealousy is a negative emotion. I would say simply that all negative states lead to hell and shut you to everything else. The influences coming down the Ray of Creation and received by Higher Centres, which can change us, are shut out. Now if one believes in nothing else, one can admit that sometimes one is in a better state and sometimes in a worse one. We know there are far worse states than we usually experience. We can experience hell on earth in more ways than one, externally and internally. This, I repeat, must be admitted even if one believes nothing else, and for those who have difficulty with their inner denial and awkward doubts it can form a starting-point beyond argument for the reception of the Work. Now, to set about cleansing the Aугаean stables of negative emotions by running the river of the truth of the Work-teaching through them is real intelligence indeed. And, of course, this task gives one an entirely new angle on life and what one has to do. The results, ideally speaking, would be finally to eradicate *violence*; for all negative emotions lead down to violence and root in it. No one can be rising in the scale of being unless he is leaving violence more and more behind him. Eventually in one's development violence must go.

I will append here an account of an experience I had in connection with this matter some time ago. It is in the form of a dream, and is as follows:

## THE DIFFICULT-TO-CROSS DITCH

The difficult-to-cross ditch at the top of the slope is full of the bones of prehistoric animals—the remains of violent things, of beasts of prey, of monsters, of snakes. They go far down into this abyss. There is a plank to cross by, but the air seems full of restraining power, like the invisible influence of some magnet; and this, with the fear of crossing this depth—although the width is not great—holds me back. I cannot say for how long for there is no ordinary time in all this. Then I find myself across—*on the other side*. What wonderful vision do I now behold? I see someone teaching or drilling some recruits. That is all. At first sight there seems nothing marvellous. He smiles. He indicates somehow that he does not necessarily expect to get any results from what he is doing. He does not seem to mind. He does not shew any signs of impatience when they are rude to him. The lesson is nearly over, but this will not make any difference to him. It is as if he said, "Well, this has to be done. One cannot expect much. One must give them help, though they don't want it." It is his invulnerability that strikes me. He is not hurt or angered by their sneers or lack of discipline. He has some curious power but hardly uses it. I pass on, marvelling that he could do it. I could not take on such a thankless task. I come to a place, perhaps a shop, where boats are stored. Beyond is the sea.

When I wake I think of this man. To do what he is doing is so utterly contrary to anything I would do. I would need a new will to do it.

It would mean I would have to go in a direction I never went in. I thought much about this direction. How could I define it to myself? I would have been violent to those recruits. Yes, that was it. He shewed no violence. He had not a will of violence. He seemed purified from all violence. That was the secret. That was the source of the curious power I detected in him. *A man without violence*. And then I reflected that to reach him I had to get across to the other side of the deep gulf full of the bones of prehistoric beasts, where the non-violent lived and taught—the country of the non-violent, where recruits were being taught.

He had nearly finished his lesson. Beyond was the sea, and there were boats stored near it. No doubt when he had finished he was going on, somewhere. As for me, I had been given only a glance into the meaning of a new will—a will not based on violence or on having your own way. I repeat—only a glance. For I knew I had not really crossed that deep gulf filled with the bones of the violent past and left it behind finally. There were no recruits for me and certainly none of the waiting boats was mine. But from this glance I know better what going in a new direction is and what a new will purified from violence means. I know also that the possibilities of following this new will and new direction lie in every moment of one's life.

## REMEMBERING AND WILLING THE WORK

It has been mentioned, and on many occasions emphasized, that if the Work is taken only into the memory and not into the life it cannot change us. That is to say, to recall the ideas and teachings of the Work from time to time so that the memory of them does not fade is not enough, however carefully it is done. Certainly one side of the Work is to remember it. Not to remember it would be like attending classes, say, in French, and remembering nothing of what was said. The result will be that nothing of the language is taken into the memory. This can be due to a person's never realizing that he (or she) must try to register in the memory what is being taught, and that unless he (or she) makes this effort, nothing will ever be learnt, whether it be French or anything else. Not only must what is taught be registered in the memory, but it must also be recalled.

Unless it is recalled it will soon become confused and muddled up or fade completely. Have you yet noticed that it is very difficult to remember? A person may have an incoherent memory in which nothing is arranged rightly, and in consequence everything is wrongly connected. For such a person, it is necessary to work hard intellectually and get the ideas arranged in some order. Others may mix up the ideas of the Work with the price of bacon, or with what the doctor said to Aunt Sue. In this case there is no sense of scale, and therefore no valuation of the Work. Everything is taken on the same level. As a result everything is jumbled up so there is no proper memory. Again, some really have no capacity to remember ideas, although they can remember things very well. They remember who were at the meeting and where they sat, but cannot recall anything about what was said. Others again take in very little owing to wrong attitude to the Work. For the Work to enter, one must have right attitude to it. The sign will then be that it will register on the memory. Again, some may remember words spoken and nothing else. Behind the words spoken stands an idea. Being blind, they remember only the words. The sign is that if you speak of the same idea but use different words to express its meaning they will say: "But you said something quite different last year." This often bewilders them. This literal word-memory is useful provided it does not dominate the mind. Mr. O. used to ask people not to listen always to the words but to the meaning behind them—that is, to try to understand them. Then you will begin to remember the ideas, and then later you may see what are their right connections. But you need also word-memory. Often sentences you remember, and did not pay attention to, come back years afterwards, and you see the meaning of them shining through the words.

Moreover, we have especially to keep in mind that the Work demands the use of a special language. As an esoteric system it uses

special words in special ways. For that reason people in this Work can begin to understand one another, once they learn its language, better than can people in life. In life the same word may have as many different meanings as the different people who use it. For example, what does the word "love" mean? For one person in life it has this meaning, for another in life it has a different meaning, and so on. But in the Work, if the word was used, one would first ascertain whether conscious or mechanical love were meant. Also, these special words "conscious" and "mechanical" used in the Work would have to be known—and so on. From all this we can see that a word-memory is also necessary in order to take in the Work. But to return to the opening sentence of this paper, where it was said that "if the Work is taken only into the memory and not into the life it cannot change us"—recently, in these commentaries, we have spoken of the connection between love and will. It was said that if we had all possible knowledge but had no love for it our will could not enter it. That means that if we have no love for the Work, we will not *will* the Work. Unless we will the Work it cannot change us. And since this Work that we are studying is about change of being, the Work will not effect anything. Indeed, it cannot effect anything in us. We know that our being attracts our life. If our being remains unaltered everything else will remain the same; and that will be the case if we do not will the Work. If we secretly deny or sneer at, or hate the Work, no connection between our knowledge of it and our level of being can be made. But if we value the Work, if we feel love for it, we will *will* our knowledge of the Work, and from that *do* it. The sign of this stage being reached, or rather beginning to be reached, is that the feeling of *I* changes. This shifting of the feeling of *I* makes it possible for being to change. But the will must enter the knowledge of the Work, and if you have love towards the Work, it can only be will for good or good-will. Then you will have a lamp and oil in it. The strange thing is that a man may have knowledge of the Work and even see the truth of it and not will it. It may seem strange, but it is so. In this case the union or esoteric marriage between truth and good will not take place. You will have a lamp but no oil. Many years ago Mr. Ouspensky said the following at one of the London meetings. I was not present at the meeting but the note was sent to me a few days ago by a member who was. You will see several connections with all that we have recently been speaking about at meetings here:

"At a meeting held sometime in 1938 Mr. O. spoke about the danger of a division into two which can take place in people. He said that some people can go on for a long time in the Work, and there is one side of them which may be useful for the Work and which understands much, but there is another side which is useless and even hostile and negative to the Work. He said that a complete division, so to speak, on these lines can take place and can

result in crystallization into two, which is extremely difficult to break down and get right. He said this can come about when people make no effort along the line of Will. They do nothing to develop Will, and although one side of them understands a lot, yet it is all useless; the chief characteristic of the state is that although people do understand quite a lot yet they do nothing about the Work. He said there could even be quite a lot of understanding in such cases, but it is all useless. The emphasis was on efforts to develop Will as the way of avoiding this crystallization into two.”